

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 27th October, 1914.

It having come to my knowledge that through inadvertence in this office a copy of a received cable message* delivered to you upon your application of the 24th instant was not certified to before issue, I beg to forward you the attached certified copy of the cable message as received in New Zealand, at the same time expressing regret for the omission of an officer of this Department.

Yours obediently,

F. V. WATERS,

Rev. Canon Garland, Wellington.

Assistant Secretary.

* Certified copy cable message, Sydney, sub. 14th July to Canon Garland, Wellington, signed "P. Board, Director of Education."

SIR,—

Education Department, Wellington, 28th October, 1914.

On page 11 of Canon Garland's evidence touching the petition now before the Committee occurs the following passage: "In the Maori day schools under the 'entirely secular' Education Act the Bible is read and religious instruction given. I have made inquiries, and have not heard of one Maori school to the contrary; but within the last few months I have heard of the closing of a Maori school near Huntly, the children of which had been accustomed to their Bible-reading and religious instruction, but on crossing over to the pakeha school found they were deprived of these advantages." This conveys a wrong impression of the facts, and places the Department in the false position of appearing to permit in Native schools what the Education Act does not allow in public schools.

(1.) The Maori village schools (or "Native schools," as the Education Act calls them, or "day schools," as the witness calls them) are conducted under the same rules in respect of the character of the teaching as the ordinary public schools—that is, Bible-reading and religious instruction are not included in the subjects of instruction, and cannot therefore be taken within school-hours. The law is, as far as I know, faithfully observed by all our teachers—and my impression is confirmed by a telegram from the Chief Inspector of Native Schools to the following effect: "Nuhaka, 23rd October, 1914.—Canon Garland's statement that Bible is read and religious instruction given in Maori day schools has absolutely no foundation in fact, and should be withdrawn."

Some Native-school teachers, I have no doubt, give Bible lessons outside school-hours, and at many places Sunday school is held in the school building, the teachers being free to assist if they so desire. Many schools, again, are used for church purposes on Sundays and on other days, although not during school-hours.

(2.) The Rakaumanga School, near Huntly, owing to the opposition of Mahuta, was closed in September, 1908, six years ago. Some of the buildings are now let on lease to the Church Missionary Society.

Evidently the witness has been misinformed. Probably he will see his way to withdraw the statement. If not, I ask that this letter should be attached to the evidence.

I have, &c.,

G. HOGBEN,

Inspector-General of Schools.

The Chairman of the Education Committee, House of Representatives.

SIR,—

Wellington, 29th October, 1914.

I am in receipt to-day of a communication from the Inspector-General of Schools with regard to the statement in my evidence that in the Maori day schools under the "entirely secular" Education Act the Bible is read and religious instruction given. The Inspector-General comments that "The law is, as far as I know, faithfully observed by all our teachers," and quotes a telegram from the Chief Inspector of Native Schools that my statement has absolutely no foundation in fact. The Inspector-General also says he has no doubt some Native-school teachers give Bible lessons outside school-hours.

I see no contradiction of facts. I nowhere suggested that the law was not faithfully observed by all our teachers. Yet, according to my information, I could not hear of any Native school in which the Bible was not read. It may be that the instruction is not given within the *legal* school-hours, but so far as the children are concerned there appears to be no difference in their eyes, notwithstanding such instruction is not provided for in the Act.

I have, &c.,

DAVID J. GARLAND,

Organizing Secretary.

G. M. Thomson, Esq., M.P., Chairman, Parliamentary Education Committee,
Parliament House, Wellington.

Mr. Hogben given leave to add:—

That in Native schools where Bible lessons are given I believe that in every case they are given before the school is assembled or after the school has been dismissed. Those, at all events, are the instructions to the teachers.