

THE SEMI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH, ST. JOHN N. B., JANUARY 28, 1863.

CARNIVAL OF VICE AND IMMORALITY.

COMMISSIONER BARRY'S REPORT ON DEAF AND DUMB INSTITUTION AT FREDERICTON; THE TELEGRAPH'S MOST SERIOUS CHARGES FULLY SUSTAINED; VICE AND MIS-MANAGEMENT.

COMMISSIONER BARRY'S UNSPARING CONDEMNATION.

The evidence of many of the deaf female witnesses, if true, shows a shocking state of affairs. Not only were the grossest immoralities practiced in the school by the principal, Mr. Powers and Norman Woodbridge, but the principal and Mr. Powers appeared to keep in touch with several of the pupils after they had left the school, and continued the evil practices begun in the school itself.

As the whole of the evidence will be submitted, it would serve no useful purpose to give here in detail the evidence of the witnesses produced on this branch of the inquiry. I feel it to be my duty, however, in view of the vast amount of testimony taken, that I should give a resume of the most important parts of it. This I shall endeavor to do as succinctly and fairly as I can, dealing first with Mr. Powers, who seems to have been the chief offender in this respect.

The report of Commissioner Barry upon the charges preferred by the Telegraph against the officials of the Fredericton Institution for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb was withheld from the public until the grand jury had returned indictments against Homer President Woodbridge, his son, Norman Woodbridge, and George Ernest Powers.

THE CHARGES. Statement of Allegations Made by the Telegraph. The statement of the charges without the exhibits, preferred against the institution, was sent to these named gentlemen, February 1st.



These Were the Officials of the Deaf and Dumb Institution.

sumed all responsibility, and it had been so carried on to this day. The government had, it is true, given it a grant, and it would be quite proper for them to investigate the manner in which that grant had been expended, but the act did not contemplate an inquiry into the private affairs of Mr. Woodbridge, the public moneys were paid into the hands of the treasurer, and disbursed by him, and the books kept by Mr. Woodbridge were his own private books.

Whispered Dissatisfaction. Dr. H. C. Creed said he remembered one audit, in which he made certain recommendations as to keeping distinct Mr. Woodbridge's own private accounts from the accounts of the institution, and his impression was that the recommendation was subsequently followed; that he had not seen anything contrary to the recommendation in looking at the accounts since that, but he could not state positively that there might not have been some small items, because he had not always examined thoroughly these books.

FINANCIAL FEATURES. The Mix-up of the Institution's Accounts With Those of Principal Woodbridge. The revenues of the institution seem to have been derived from five sources, namely: rents of cottages, etc.; payments by parents, government grants, county grants and collections and subscriptions; the last named source of revenue being by far the most productive one.

Statement of Board's Position. Rev. Dr. Roberts, secretary of the board of management, says the board assumed no responsibility for the accounts of the institution. He frequently consulted with Mr. Woodbridge on matters affecting the welfare of the institution. There was always a very cordial feeling between all members of the committee; in all the 20 years, there was never a difference of opinion; they always accepted Mr. Woodbridge's statements and reports as they acted upon them.

Table of Financial Discrepancies showing accounts from 1833 to 1901, including maintenance, building, and special grants.

SCANDALOUS PRACTICES FOLLOWED BY PRINCIPAL WOODBRIDGE, G. E. POWERS AND NORMAN WOODBRIDGE; FEMALE PUPILS, NATURE'S AFFLICTED, TEL. OF REVOLTING CONDITIONS.

While to Mr. Woodbridge this may be a satisfactory way of accounting for these discrepancies, I think to any one who has even the most superficial knowledge of accounts, it must look both unbusiness-like and unsatisfactory.

EDUCATIONAL FEATURES. Commission Quotes Opinions of Gentlemen Who Speak Authoritatively. Having had no opportunity of comparing the attainments of the graduates of the Fredericton school, with the attainments of those of other schools of a similar character, I do not feel myself able to speak with any degree of accuracy on this subject.

"A HOPELESS MUDDLE." This is the Commissioner's Remark About Accounts of the Institution. When an attempt was made to enter upon an analysis and audit of use items of expenditure, the accounts were found to be in such a hopeless muddle that no satisfactory progress could be made.

FINANCIAL DISCREPANCIES. Apparent Yearly Shortage—How Woodbridge Accounted for It. The most serious of the charges of financial mismanagement were made in connection with the receipts and subscriptions collections from the general public.

WOODBRIDGE'S BOOKS. A Controversy Which Arose in the Early Stages of the Inquiry. The financial charges were first taken up and proceeded with until the arrival of the gentleman who acted as sworn interpreter of the deaf witnesses, and then the examination of these witnesses was taken up and continued until all who presented themselves had been examined.