

IDINGTON vs. McBRIDE.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER IN THE STRATFORD CASE.

PRELIMINARY MEMORANDUM BY THE COMMISSIONER.

At the instance of Mr. John Idington, Q.C., of Stratford, an investigation was held as to the truth, or otherwise, of certain Charges of "gross and repeated falsehood," etc., brought by him against Mr. Wm. McBride, Head Master of the Collegiate Institute there. The following is a brief introductory narrative of the case :—

In a letter from Mr. Idington to the Honorable the Minister of Education, dated 20th October, 1884, he preferred several Charges of alleged untruthfulness against Mr. McBride. The Minister intended to have seen Mr. Idington on the subject, but was unable to do so.

On the 26th of September, 1886, Mr. Idington, in a letter to the Minister, renewed his charges, with the addition of some others. To this letter the Minister replied. From his reply the following extracts are made, viz. :—

"I thought best to leave the question of an investigation for the time being in abeyance, in the hope that the irritation referred to would subside. Furthermore, your complaints were of such a character as might very well be investigated by the Board of Trustees, and if sustained would justify action on their part.

"On a re-perusal of your charge I am still of opinion that the proper place for an investigation such as you request, is before the Board of School Trustees, and would respectfully submit that you ask their intervention if, on second thought, you are determined not to let the matter rest."

From Mr. Idington's reply, dated 11th October, 1886, the following extract is made :—

"The suggestion to ask the trustees to investigate, I believe, is made in good faith, and I hope in ignorance of what really has transpired.

"The Trustees, then, and some of them still remain so, were equally guilty with Mr. McBride in making some of the representations complained of, and all were then charged with neglect of duty in failing to notice the charges as made from time to time.

"I must decline such judges passing [judgment] on me."

"In speaking of the Trustees, I must be understood as referring to them in their corporate capacity, for they have changed so, that some of the men now constituting the Board are not to be reproached with what I have dealt [with] herein. And it is quite possible when it comes to a question of re-engaging him [Mr. McBride] they may not act as did their predecessors.

"Even if they do not, the duty that devolves on you in dealing with such a man will remain, and if they do, all the more so."

Before deciding to hold an investigation into the charges preferred by Mr. Idington, the Minister, on the 13th October, addressed the following note to C. J. McGregor, Esq., as Chairman of Collegiate Institute Board. He said :—

"I send herewith a copy of the charges made by Mr. John Idington against Mr. William McBride, Head Master of your Collegiate Institute. I am informed that the charges were in-