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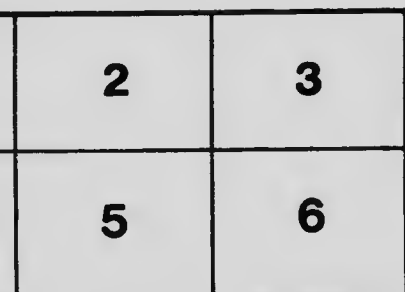
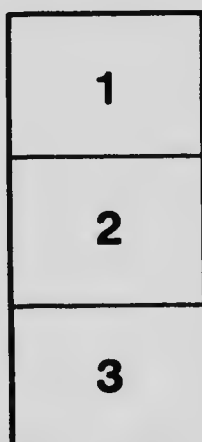
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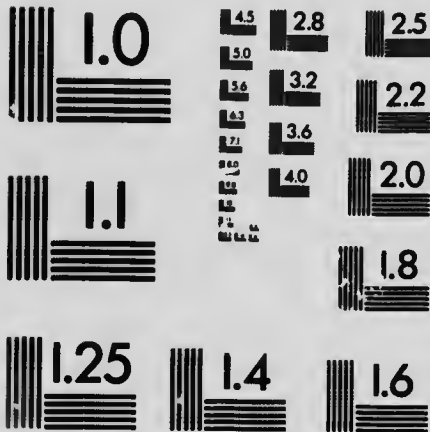
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A Shocking Example Set to the Pupils of the Public Schools

The following answers given by the Minister of Education are found in the Votes and Proceedings of the last session of the Legislature (1910):

CARELESSNESS

Q.—Did Dr. Robinson state in the school reports for 1906-07 that Miss Merle McKenzie of Courtney had passed the High School entrance examination?

A.—Miss Merle McKenzie's name, through a clerical error, appears in the report in the list of successful candidates.

Q.—Has he forwarded to her the certificate certifying that she has passed? If not, why not?

A.—No. Miss McKenzie did not pass.

The Public Schools Report informs the Legislature and the public that Miss McKenzie did pass. The Minister of Education in his answer says that was a "clerical" error.

My opinion, formed after getting all the facts I could at Courtney, is—that Miss McKenzie did pass as stated in the Schools Report.

FURTHER CARELESSNESS

In July, 1909, the Superintendent gave out for publication the list of medalists. It was at once challenged in the Press. He then gave out an amended list and admitted that a mistake had been made about Nanaimo, Grand Forks and Vancouver.

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He further admitted that he had made a mistake in the number of marks credited to the pupil at Vernon to whom the medal had been assigned. He said that pupil should have been credited with five marks more than the other pupil who had been in the first list given out as equal to him; but not named as a medalist. This amended list also was at once challenged. It was pointed out that at Chilliwack as at Vernon there were two head pupils with equal marks and only one named as medalist. The Superintendent then had again to admit that another mistake had been made either about the marks or the medalist. The correction is made in the Schools Report where it is stated that two medals were given at Chilliwack in 1909.

How can the people be sure that they are getting the truth from such a Department?

IGNORANCE OR LYING

Q.—Is it the intention of the Department to publish a notice in future Annual Schools Reports calling attention to the unreliability of the Inspectors' detailed reports as published in former Annual Reports?

A.—The Department does not admit unreliability in the case of Inspectors' Reports.

Q.—Did Inspector Wilson state in his report of his visit to the Crofton school on March 22, 1906: "Teacher working hard to secure improvement?"

A.—Yes.

Q.—Does the Public Schools Report for that school year state that the teacher during that school year was R. Offerhaus?

A.—R. Offerhaus PRESUMABLY taught at Crofton a PART of the school year 1905-06. Inspector Wilson reported that Miss Olive Randle was in charge when he inspected the school on March 22, 1906.

Q.—Was not R. Offerhaus dead and buried some time in November, 1905?

A.—The Department does not know.

Q.—Do these facts not show that the Inspector's reports are unreliable? A.—No.

In the first place you will notice that the Minister of Education does not answer in a straightforward manner the question: "Does the Schools Report for that school year state that the teacher during that school year was R. Offerhaus?" The fact is that the report does so state and the true and correct answer to the question is—Yes.

The Minister gives an exhibition of quibbling in his answer that is unworthy of any Minister of the Crown and he sets a shocking example to the pupils of the schools.

His answer shows further that he is not sure whether the Schools Report tells the truth or not. The Schools Report states in plain English that R. Offerhaus was the teacher during the year 1905-06.

The Minister says he PRESUMABLY taught PART of the year. When the Minister of the Crown has such little faith in the printed statements of his Superintendent, how can the people be expected to have confidence in them?

The Minister's answers prove beyond all doubt that the Inspector's reports are unreliable—as printed in the Public School's Reports.

The Legislature was informed by the reports that R. Offerhaus was the teacher referred to in Inspector Wilson's report. It was informed that the Superintendent knew perfectly well that such information was false, yet through his careless manner in preparing these reports he has made Inspector Wilson's report to apply to R. Offerhaus.

What better proof of their unreliability could any person wish?

The Public Schools Report informs the Legislature and the public that Inspector Wilson reported that a teacher who had been buried in November, 1905, was working hard to secure improvement in March, 1906. The Minister of Education tells the Legislature these facts do not prove that

the Inspector's reports are unreliable.

Was any other answer to be expected from such a Department?

UNRELIABILITY

The Public Schools Report informs the Legislature that Inspector Wilson charged a young lady with keeping an untidy school-room upon his visit to Port Alberni in 1906. Inspector Wilson, that young lady, and I know that such information is false.

The same School Report informs the Legislature that Inspector Gordon, upon his visit to Keefers in 1906 made the following charges in his report, against a lady teacher: "The tone of the school is poor." "The children do little work and that poorly." Inspector Gordon, that young lady and I know that such information is false.

The Legislature, for whose information the Superintendent was compelled by Section 7 of the School Act to prepare these Annual Reports, is thus given false information, which is surely always unreliable. In that school year alone about \$26,000 of the public money was paid out to 110 teachers of the rural schools, yet not one of their names appear in the Annual Schools Report as having taught the schools for which they were paid that large amount. In consequence of this omission the chances are only about one in three that the Inspector's reports of rural schools stand to the credit or discredit of the right teacher. In face of these facts the Minister of Education says—the Education Department does not admit the unreliability of Inspector's reports. This proves that it will not admit the truth.

Could you expect the truth from such a Department?

LYING

Q.—Was a letter sent from the Education Department at some time between the first and tenth of August, 1908, to Dr. E. J. Offerhaus of Lansdowne about the manner of distributing the Governor-General bronze medals? A.—Yes.

Q.—Was E. J. Offerhaus a member of the Spallumcheen school board? A.—Yes.

Q.—Did the letter contain these words? "With reference to the awarding of the Governor-General's medals, I beg to say that these are offered to pupils of schools where there is a High School established. Armstrong and Golden are the only points outside incorporated cities where these medals are competed for." A.—Yes.

Q.—Whose signature was attached to that letter?

A.—That of the Superintendent of Education.

Q.—Did Ladysmith get a medal in each of the years 1906, 1907, and 1908? A.—Yes.

Q.—Had a High School been established there then?

A.—No.

Q.—Did Kelowna get a medal in 1907? A.—Yes.

Q.—Had a High School been established there then?

A.—No.

Q.—Did Cumberland get a medal in 1908? A.—No.

Q.—Had a High School been established there for several years? A.—Yes.

Q.—Did Chilliwack get a bronze medal in any of the years 1906, 1907, or 1908? A.—No.

Q.—Had a High School been established there for several years? A.—Yes, since August, 1903.

These answers, given by the Minister of Education, prove conclusively that the statement in that letter to Dr. Offerhaus, about the medals being given to places where a High School had been established, is absolutely FALSE.

The Superintendent of Education is thus proved to be a LIAR.

FURTHER LYING

Q.—Did any official of the Education Department explain in 1908 to A. L. Coote, the Chairman of the Chilliwack School Board, that the Governor General's bronze medals were given to places where there was the most or the greatest competition

at the High School entrance examination?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Who was the official?

A.—The Minister of Education, on information supplied by the Superintendent.

The Public Schools Reports show that in 1908 Kelowna passed up 4 pupils at the entrance examination, Kaslo 5, Grand Forks 8, Golden 10, Rossland 11, Ladysmith 12, Revelstoke 13, Vernon 14, and each got a medal.

Chilliwack that year passed up 17 pupils and got no medal. This proves that there was more competition at Chilliwack that year than at those other 8 places that got medals; yet it got no medal.

In 1909 Cumberland passed up 4 pupils at the entrance examination and the medal was given back to it which had been taken away in 1908 when 3 passed up. Summerland in 1909 passed up 9, North Vancouver 8, Collingwood 8, Penticton 8, New Denver 7, Duncan 7, Matsqui 7, Cranbrook 6, East Salmon Arm 6, Ladners 6, Clinton 6, and none of them got a medal.

This proves beyond all doubt that the statement made in 1908 to Mr. Coote—that those medals were given where there was the most competition at the entrance examination—was absolutely FALSE.

The pupil at Cumberland to whom the medal was GIVEN in 1909 is the daughter of a Conservative ex-M.P.P. It would be incorrect to say that such a medal was won.

When the letter that contained that false statement to Dr. Offerhaus was made public, Chilliwack wanted to know why it had never got a medal although it had had a High School since August, 1893. The above further false statement was then made to Chilliwack.

That statement was made on information furnished by the Superintendent and so it proves him again to be a LIAR.

FURTHER LYING

Q.—Did the Superintendent of Education explain to the Provincial School Trustee Convention at Revelstoke that the Governor-General's bronze medals were given to places that sent up the most pupils at the High School entrance examinations?

A.—No.

Q.—If not, what explanation did he give?

A.—The Superintendent stated that bronze medals were first given to schools in incorporated cities.

I state positively that the answer—No—given by the Minister of Education is false.

I now publicly charge the Minister of Education with having given that false information to the Legislature.

COWARDICE

When the Minister gave that false answer, I wrote to the Premier and I offered to give \$200 to the Protestant Orphans' Home in Victoria, if he would hand me a Statutory Declaration from his Superintendent of Education backing up his Minister's answer. I never got the Statutory Declaration. If the Minister told the truth, why should his Superintendent not back it up by a Statutory Declaration?

Heaven and his employers alone can punish the Superintendent for lying.

The Superintendent had gained the advantage of preventing the resolution about the manner of distributing these medals from being brought before the School Trustee at that convention—at the cost of telling that LIE, at Revelstoke.

If he had made a Statutory Declaration backing up the Minister's denial that he had told it, the criminal law would have applied. The Superintendent would have been liable to languish in the penitentiary for 14 years for perjury, a punishment he would have richly deserved, if he had dared to make a declaration backing up the Minister's false answer.

I made a Statutory Declaration stating that the Superin-

tendent did make that explanation and I sent it to Lieutenant-Governor Paterson. I also sent a copy of it to Premier McBride.

Look at the awkward and humiliating position in which I was placed by that false statement of the Minister of Education to the Legislature.

On the opening day of the Legislature I had sent a letter to every member of it, stating that the Superintendent had made that explanation and that 12 pupils of the public schools had not got the medal to which they were entitled according to that explanation. The Minister of Education's denial made it appear that I had misled the Legislature. I had in my letter to the Legislature made it quite clear that those 12 pupils had been cheated by the Department out of the medals to which they were fairly entitled. If the Minister's denial was true, then it apparently cleared the Department from the charge.

The fact is, however, that the admitted explanation given by the Minister to Mr. Coote of Chilliwack works out exactly the same as this explanation which the Minister denies. The same 12 pupils won and deserved the medals according to either explanation; but they did not get them.

HUMILIATION

I appealed to the Lieutenant-Governor but he seems quite satisfied to allow me to occupy the humiliating and contemptible position that his Minister of Education should be in—that of having given false information to the Legislature.

How long will you, the people of British Columbia, allow the pupils of the Public Schools to be at the mercy of such an Education Department?

J. N. MUIR.

June 14, 1910.



