

(No. 88.)



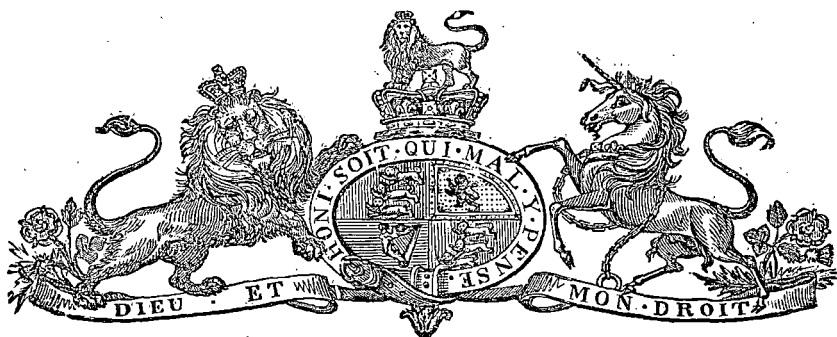
1861.

T A S M A N I A.

PETITION TO HIS EXCELLENCY

FROM PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS FOR INCREASED SALARIES.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Innes, and ordered by the House to be printed
1 October, 1861.



*To His Excellency SIR HENRY EDWARD FOX YOUNG, Knight, C.B.,
Governor-in-Chief of Tasmania, and its Dependencies.*

The humble Petition of the undersigned Teachers of the First Class appointed to Schools in Tasmania, by the Southern Board of Education,

SHOWETH :

THAT your Petitioners were appointed to Schools under the Regulations of the Board of Education of the 1st February, 1854.

That these Regulations, among other things, provide a salary of One hundred and fifty pounds per annum for Teachers of your Petitioners' standing, exclusive of School-fees.

Your Petitioners respectfully submit that the agreement on their part to serve at such rate of payment, and the agreement on the part of the Board to pay such rate of Salary for the service rendered, is neither legally nor equitably determinable by the arbitrary will of either party.

That your Petitioners have for the most part held their appointments a considerable time.

That the scale of Salary as fixed by the before-mentioned Regulations was, with School-fees, but barely sufficient to provide such a reasonable comfortable subsistence for your Petitioners as their station in life, attainments, and office demand.

That, soon after the 11th day of December last, your Petitioners received a Circular Memorandum from the Southern Board of Education, a copy whereof your Petitioners beg leave to annex hereto.

That your Petitioners invite Your Excellency's kind attention to the first, second, fifth, seventh, and eighth paragraphs of that Memorandum.

That, in spite of your Petitioners' remonstrances, the Resolution to abridge your Petitioners Salaries has been rigorously carried out; although the Resolution has been slightly modified, so far as it affected free Scholars.

That the immediate and inevitable effect of this action on the part of the Southern Board was to reduce your Petitioners' Salaries by about a third of their amount.

That although the Board, in the Memorandum referred to, expresses a hope that the loss your Petitioners sustain in Salary may be made up by the voluntary payment of larger fees by the Parents of the children in the Schools, your Petitioners, after eight months' experience, are in a position to affirm positively, in no instance has this expectation been realized; parents under the pressure of the times are reducing their School payments to the minimum rates rather than increasing them.

That the permission to exact larger School-fees from those willing to pay them was nothing new, for your Petitioners, with the recognition of the Board, have always enjoyed that privilege.

That presuming, as your Petitioners submit they had a right to do, upon the permanency of their incomes as settled by the Regulations before mentioned, some of your Petitioners have entered into engagements it will now be difficult to carry out.

That your Petitioners respectfully submit that they have not received at the hands of the Board such consideration as they had a right to expect; that they have not been dealt with as servants should be dealt with. By the Regulations of 1854, a copy of which must be exhibited in every

School, third-class Masters even are under yearly engagements, where no shorter term has been agreed upon. But a longer tenure of office is given to Teachers of your Petitioners' standing: they hold offices of no mean importance in the commonwealth,—offices whose duties demand much self-devotion and large acquirements, habits of industry and self-control; and yet your Petitioners are required to submit to a large abridgment of their hardly-earned and guaranteed incomes of but barely twenty days' notice.

Your Petitioners further submit that their incomes during the past eight months have been unequal to their just requirements. Your Petitioners must of necessity have channels of expenditure unknown to others; the advantages of study are neither so numerous nor so cheap in this Colony as in some others, or in England; the present pressure falls as heavily upon your Petitioners' Schools as upon any other part of the community; and your Petitioners are debarred, as well by the Regulations under which they serve, as by the nature and extent of their duties, from making any noticeable additions to their incomes, even though there were the opportunity of doing so.

That your Petitioners are not justly held responsible for the expenditure of the Board being in excess of the Parliamentary Grant: your Petitioners have not, nor have ever had, any control over the expenditure of the Board of Education.

That your Petitioners have no security that their Salaries as at present fixed may not be reduced more largely yet, and as arbitrarily at any future period, remote or near; for should the action of the Board in the present instance be sustained, there is nothing to prevent your Petitioners' Salaries being curtailed, or even abolished altogether, at any moment, and with or without previous intimation of the fact.

Your Petitioners respectfully submit that it cannot be the intention of Your Excellency's Government to inflict a wrong upon a body of men as deserving and faithful in their service as any. And yet, on the institution of the present system in 1854, the then Inspector of Schools expressly informed those of your Petitioners who took office under him that their appointments were permanent; others accepted engagements in England for a term at the rates fixed by the Regulations, and with no intimation that after the expiration of that term their engagements would be precarious or their emoluments curtailed; indeed, they have been more than once informed, that they fell into the same class as other first-class Masters engaged by the Board; and in the Report of the Southern Board of Education for 1859, laid before Parliament by the Colonial Treasurer and ordered to be printed on the 29th of August, 1860, the Board promulgated a system by which the emoluments of the Teachers are regulated upon another scale, says expressly, "the new method does not affect anterior engagements."

Your Petitioners would further respectfully assure Your Excellency, that had they known or conceived it possible their Salaries were secured by so frail a tenure as the mere arbitrary will and good pleasure of the Board, they would have hesitated before accepting their engagements. They relied upon the good faith a Government always keeps with deserving servants.

That, under all these circumstances, your Petitioners are persuaded that Your Excellency will recognize their claim to have their Salaries restored to the rates at which they were prior to the 1st of January, 1861, and that the deductions from those Salaries made during the last eight months should be refunded.

Your Petitioners therefore pray that Your Excellency will be pleased to order a sum to be placed on the Estimates, laid before Parliament, sufficient to repay to your Petitioners the deductions made from their Salaries during the present year; and that Your Excellency will be further pleased to take such measures as may secure your Petitioners the Salaries fixed by the Regulations of 1854, without abatement.

And your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

PHILIP CANAWAY.
EDWIN PEARS.
GEORGE ROBERTS.
JOSEPH ROPER.
JAMES RULE.
JOHN J. SALIER.

*Southern Board of Education,**Hobart Town, 11th. December, 1860.*

[MINUTES 1742—60.]

MEMORANDUM.

IN consequence of the present expenditure being in excess of the appropriation of £12,000 for the maintenance of the Public Schools in this Colony, the Board have received peremptory instructions from the Government to bring their expenditure within the proportion of the vote allotted for the purposes of Education in the Southern Districts. In order to effect this it has become necessary for the Board to direct that the following alteration in the Salaries and Allowances of the Teachers shall take effect from the 1st January, 1861 :—

1. Teachers of the First Class will receive Salaries from £80 to £100 per annum in lieu of the present rates, with £40 a year lodging allowance in town, and £30 in the country when not provided with Public quarters.

2. Teachers of the Second Class will receive Salaries from £60 to £80 per annum, and lodging allowance at £20 per annum, when unprovided with quarters.

3. Teachers of the Third Class will receive Salaries not exceeding £50 per annum, and lodging allowance at the rate of £20 per annum, in lieu of quarters.

4. The Fuel Allowances will be discontinued. The Board hope that any loss which the Teachers may sustain by the withdrawal of such allowance will be made good by local subscriptions ; but, under any circumstances, they will require as a condition under which grants in aid are awarded, that sufficient Fires be maintained in the several Schools during the winter months.

5. On the establishment of a new School, free stock will be granted at the rate of 1s. for each child in ordinary attendance, and a Map of the World will also be supplied. A renewal grant at the rate of 4d. per head per annum will be made if required.

6. In consideration of the above reductions, Teachers are authorised to charge for each pupil the sum of 1s. per week, or 20s. per quarter, in lieu of the regulated rates, to those parents who may be willing to pay the higher amount.

7. By the School Regulations, the fees should be paid in advance ; and it is therefore a subject of regret to the Board to find, upon reviewing the Teachers' Returns, that so many arrears should have been allowed to accrue. The Board are led to believe that if the Fees were promptly and regularly paid, the Teachers' income would suffer no diminution by the reduction of their Government Salaries.

8. The Board have further determined, in order to afford every facility for the instruction of those children whose parents are unable to pay School Fees, that upon adequate proof to the Board of such inability, they shall be admitted to the School free of charge, and the Master compensated for his labour in accordance with the following scale ;—

For 20 boys and under, at the rate of 4d. each per week.	
For 20 boys to 40	3d. ditto.
For 40 boys to 60	2d. ditto.

9. The Board, however, expect that the Teachers and Special Visitors will exercise extreme vigilance in granting Free Certificates, and will require that such Certificates be renewed every three months.

By Order of the Board,

MURRAY BURGESS, *Secretary.*