RETURN

To an Order of the House for correspondence relating to the dismissal of the Teacher of Salmon Arm School.

JAMES BAKER,
Minister of Education.

Education Office,
6th February, 1896.

Salmon Arm, B. C., July 7th, 1894.

Dear Sir,—I beg to call your attention to certain matters that are being agitated here just now, by one or two of the residents, they having for their object my expulsion from this School District. These parties were very forward in expressing their appreciation of my work in the school on Friday last. They stated the same thing on Saturday before the election for trustee commenced. When there was opposition nominated, Mr. T. Shaw withdrew his name as a candidate, and as soon as the result was known Mr. Palmer resigned.

Having heard them express themselves so favourably I was surprised to have Mr. T. Shaw call at our place yesterday and notify me that unless I resigned and get out of here they would try to influence the Government to cancel my certificate.

The only ground on which they can found any complaint that I am aware of is an affair that took place here last March. While passing the station one day, an irate parent came out and struck me, intending, as he said, to give me a good "licking." I tried to prevent his doing so as much as possible. I then went to Mr. Palmer, J.P., intending to have the party arrested, but he thought it better to not do so, as the man had a family and had not overly much to support them with. Had Mr. Palmer not advised me in that way I would have prosecuted. Mr. Shaw and Mr. Parmer were considered my best friends up to the school election on June 30th; they certainly were the loudest in speaking favourably in my actions. They were trustees, and if anything wrong had been done then was the time to speak of it. I am not ashamed of anything I have done or said as teacher here, and I believe the people of the valley are almost a unit in saying that I have no right to be.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) J. Irwin.

Superintendent of Education,
Victoria, B. C.

Salmon Arm, B. C.

Victoria, July 17th, 1894.

Dear Sir,—In reply to yours of the 7th inst., allow me to say that no information has as yet been received by this Department of any difficulty between yourself and the Trustees. Of course, the matter of dismissal of teacher is one to be dealt with by the Board of Trustees.

Under Statute, the Trustees can dismiss a teacher at any time by giving him 30 days' notice and stating the cause.

Yours truly,
(Signed) S. D. Pope,
Superintendent of Education.

J. Irwin, Esq.,
Public School, Salmon Arm.

SALMON ARM, B. C., July 7th, 1894.

DEAR SIR,—We the undersigned ratepayers and residents of the Salmon Arm Public School District, have heard with regret that certain parties who were friendly with our teacher until the day of the school trustee election are now boasting that unless he leaves the district they will influence the Educational Department to have his certificate broken.

We beg to state that we know of nothing Mr. Irwin has done to disgrace himself, his family, or the school children over whom he presides, and we believe he has worked for the interests of the children since coming here.

(Signed)	ARTHUR MURRAY,	(Signed)	L. H. S. ARMSTRONG,
"	RICHARD DAVIS,	"	H. CLEMES,
"	MRS. R. DAVIS,	"	MRS. A. MCGUIRE,
"	FRANK MCINTYRE,	"	ALEX. MCGUIRE,
"	MRS. F. MCINTYRE,	"	A. PAUL,
"	THOMAS DAVIS,	"	MRS. PAUL,
"	J. W. ALLAN,	"	P. M. PEARSON,
"	T. A. NOBLE,	"	P. OWENS,
"	A. MERRALL,	"	C. MCVICKER,
"	MRS. MERRALL,	"	JNO. H. FORREST,
"	S. J. RUMBALL,	"	WILLIAM MILLER,
"	ELLEN RUMBALL,	"	TOM. ATCHESON,
"	J. STACE SMITH,	"	J. J. TOBIN,
"	JEANIE STACE SMITH,	"	MRS. J. J. TOBIN,
"	MRS. WILLIAM GREEN,	"	MRS. MCVICKER,
"	MRS. E. DALTON,	"	MRS. A. ARMTSRONG,
"	D. M. BLAKE,	"	R. ARMSTRONG,
"	MRS. BLAKE,	"	H. C. FRASER,
"	H. D. HUME,	"	J. DALZELL,
"	MRS. H. D. HUME,	"	K. LAITINER.

Superintendent of Education,
Victoria, B. C.

VICTORIA, July 19th, 1894.

DEAR SIR,—Representations referring to your present teacher made by yourself and others have been duly noted.

It is always to be regretted that there should be any cause for differences between the parents and the teacher of a School District. It is only by the existence of harmony between them that the best results can be obtained.

Allow me to say that I have not received any communication reflecting on Mr. Irwin in regard to the matter referred to.

Yours truly,
(Signed) S. D. POPE,
Superintendent of Education.

Arthur Murray, Esq.,
Salmon Arm.

Salmon Arm, Jan. 19th, 1895.

We, the undersigned parents of children attending the Salmon Arm school, beg to request the removal of our teacher, Mr. Joseph Irwin, by authority given to the Council of Public Instruction under section 50 of the Public School Act. We are dissatisfied with the general condition of the school, and believe a change of teacher to be necessary in the public interest. We consider our dissatisfaction sufficient proof of the unsuitability and inefficiency of the teacher.

(Signed)	C. B. Harris,	No. of children	6
"	J. J. Tobin,	"	5
"	A. J. Palmer,	"	3
"	Joseph Harbell,	"	2
"	W. W. Shaw,	"	1
			17

Hon. G. B. Martin,
Victoria, B. C.

Salmon Arm, Feb. 6th, 1895.

Dear Sir,—I sent you a petition about school affairs. You answered my letter and said that you had handed it in to the Superintendent of Education.

We are very anxious to know what to expect; our children are not attending school and the way things are we are at a loss what to do.

Mr. Shaw has written you several times, but has not received an answer. He thinks that perhaps either your or his letters have miscarried.

Will you kindly drop me a line and let me know how things are likely to go, and oblige.

Yours truly,
(Signed) C. B. Harris,
Salmon Arm, B. C.

Hon. G. B. Martin,
Victoria.

P.S.—I am not registered as a voter, please enclose form.

Victoria, B.C., Feb. 11th, 1895.

Dear Sir,—Your communication of the 6th instant, addressed to the Honourable the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, has been handed in to this office.

In reply, allow me to say that Salmon Arm School District will be visited by an official from this Department as soon as the weather and roads will permit.

I regret that the present disagreement between the teacher and a considerable number of the parents causes the non-attendance of scholars at the school. The subject of complaint will, at the proper time, be inquired into.

I enclose blank form for registration of a Provincial voter.

Yours truly,
(Signed) S. D. Pope,
Superintendent of Education.

C. B. Harris, Esq.,
Salmon Arm, C. P. R.

SALMON ARM, B. C., Feb. 16th, 1895.

SIR,—As you are Secretary of the Council of Public Instruction, and as I am aware that there is a petition in circulation here for signatures having for its object the removal of myself and family from Salmon Arm, I beg to make the following statements in addition to those in my letter of last year.

In the month of December, 1894, Mr. A. J. Palmer made certain charges to the trustees against me. He accused me of brutally whipping his child without cause, of using abusive and ungentlemanly language to the children, &c. His own and Mr. Harris' children had a very sad story to tell, which they acknowledged they had gone over at home, so that all of them answered in nearly the same words. There were enough children present to refute their statements, however, and the following was the decision of the trustees :—

"We, the undersigned trustees of Salmon Arm school, having heard the charges and evidence against Mr. J. Irwin, teacher, have decided unanimously that said teacher was justified in punishing Mamie Palmer, and that the said teacher did not brutally punish Mamie Palmer. We also agree that the teacher did not abuse his authority."

The foregoing was signed by the three trustees of the school. Messrs. Palmer and Harris then withdrew their children from the school, since which time they have been running around home without education of any kind.

Shortly after this, Mr. R. Davis, the Secretary-Trustee, missed a spaniel dog he owned. A few days afterwards he fancied the water in his well was tasting bad, so he bailed it out and found his dog at the bottom of it. Of course the guilty parties are unknown, but there is not a shadow of doubt that she was killed before being put in, as the cribbing stands fully three feet higher than the surface of the ground at the well's brink, the water comes to within a foot of the top of the ground, and there is a board at the surface of the water where she could get up if she should jump in. The dog was an old one, and the well was beside the door, so that the family could have easily heard her had she fallen in. Mr. J. S. Smith also states that Mr. T. Shaw offered him the sum of ten dollars to give me a thrashing—a thing which Mr. Smith was too gentlemanly to entertain.

Mr. Harris is taking around the said petition, and when people refuse to sign it he asks them not to mention the matter, and states that he goes round with it at nights so that no one will be the wiser if he don't succeed. Is this the act of a gentleman? I do not know the charges the petition contains, but I object to it on the following grounds :—

1st. He is going outside the school district to get names.

2nd. Several parties are busy cutting wood for the C. P. R. contractors just now, and although they are not likely to be in the district six weeks altogether are easily induced to sign such a paper.

Trusting that the Government, should they interfere at all, will act honourably.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) J. IRWIN.
Salmon Arm, B. C.

S. D. Pope, Esq., LL.D.,
Supt. of Education, Victoria.

VICTORIA, Feb. 20th, 1895.

DEAR SIR,—Your communication of the 16th inst., has been duly received.

In reply, allow me to state that the matters in dispute in Salmon Arm School District will, at an early date, be fully enquired into by a representative from this Department.

Yours truly,
(Signed) S. D. POPE,
Superintendent of Education.

J. Irwin, Esq.,
Public School, Salmon Arm.

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION HELD AT SALMON ARM SCHOOL-HOUSE ON MONDAY, THE 11TH DAY OF MARCH, 1895, BY WILLIAM BURNS, INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS.

VICTORIA, May 3rd, 1895.

S. D. Pope, LL.D.,
Superintendent of Education.

SIR,—In accordance with your instructions an investigation was held by me at the school-house, Salmon Arm, at 2 p.m., on Monday, the 11th day of March, 1895.

The teacher (Mr. J. Irwin), Trustees, and about 60 persons were present.

After the meeting was called to order, Mr T. Shaw read the following charges against Mr. J. Irwin, teacher:—

1st. For engaging in a fight brought on by himself by abusive language, and not allowing the matter to drop after a settlement had been effected.

2nd. Closing school to attend a shooting match.

3rd. Brutally whipping without cause, taking the tattling of his own children to disadvantage of others, and using abusive and ungentlemanly language to children.

4th. Being a cause of annoyance and trouble in the neighbourhood.

Before any remarks were made, I stated that the first charge therein was considered to be unconnected with the subject under investigation, namely, in regard to matters affecting the conduct of the school.

Mr. T. Shaw then proceeded to the second charge, and stated that the school had been closed to allow Mr. Irwin to attend a shooting match on 5th November, 1894, and as a rate-payer he complained that a day's absence should be given the teacher, without any necessity, to the injury of the work of the school.

Mr. Rumball replied that the three Trustees had given Mr. Irwin permission to be absent, as had been granted to others before.

Mr. Shaw contended that in other cases this absence had been for the good of the school, and not for the benefit of the teacher only.

Mr. Irwin said that as he had received permission from the Trustees, he considered himself at liberty to close the school.

The third charge was proceeded with.

Mr. Palmer stated that about the middle of December Mr. Irwin had punished his daughter Mamie too severely, that he had requested an investigation by the Trustees, but when this was held the meeting was conducted without any order, nor was any chance given him to present his case. He was continually interrupted by Mr. Irwin and others, and thus his case was not fairly considered.

Mr. Davis (Secretary) and Mr. Rumball (Trustee) strongly denied these latter statements, and said that all interruptions came from those making the complaints, and every opportunity was given for them to speak, that Mr. T. Shaw called Mr. Irwin a "liar," and shook his fist in the teacher's face.

Mr. T. Shaw denied this, and his denial was corroborated by Mr. Harbell.

Mr. Smith said that the word "liar" was used, but he could not say by whom. Whereupon Mr. Harris replied that Mr. Irwin insulted Mr. Palmer, and kept up his insults through the whole of the meeting, and that the Trustees never even attempted to maintain any order.

Mr. Irwin said that threats to fight him were made by Mr. Harris, and other insults given, but this was again denied by Mr. Harris.

As no further evidence was given, the matter of the whipping of Miss Mamie Palmer was next taken up.

Mr. Palmer requested that his daughter be allowed to make her own statement.

Mamie Palmer (a girl of about 14) stated that she had said to another girl in school that the teacher favoured his own daughter Beattie. When the teacher heard of this, he had called her up and given her five strokes with a stick (about 18 inches long and the size of a lead pencil), three on one hand and two on the other, that the stick was broken by the last stroke, her thumb slightly cut and swollen, so that she could not use the hand that day. After the punishment the teacher told her she got that story from "a dirty liar," and said several other things to her very angrily.

Mr. H. Scadden and Mr. Harbell both said that they saw the girl's hand on her return home that same night, and noticed a severe mark, with the skin slightly cracked, as if cut with a whip.

Mr. Rumball replied that the Trustees were told that six strokes had been given, that nothing had been told them about the breaking of the switch, and that, as it was seven days before he saw the girl's hand, he could say nothing about the severity of the punishment. The Trustees should have been informed before, but he did not think the mark shown was caused by a switch.

Mr. Irwin then gave his explanation of what had led to the punishment—substantially the same—stating that the girl did her work the rest of the day as usual, that he had punished others equally without harmful results, that he used no particular violence, and that, as to the accusation of abusive and ungentlemanly conversation, it was "a make-up of herself or of some of the family."

One of the boys present (W. Rumball) said the whipping was "just middling," and he heard no rude words.

In reply to question from Mr. Palmer, the teacher said that Mr. Palmer's children were perpetually sneering at him in school since his quarrel with Mr. Palmer regarding the election, and that those who gave evidence for Mr. Palmer were men in his employ, and therefore spoke as he wished.

The severity of the whipping and the remarks made were corroborated by W. Palmer, F. Harris, and C. Harris, three of the pupils present; whereas W. Merrell and B. Irwin said the punishment was "not too much," and no such words were used.

Mr. Harris then complained that his boy had been unfairly punished by the teacher, and that since his quarrel with Mr. Irwin his children had been constantly punished and called names, and that the teacher was always willing to hear anything against them, and made promotions to suit his own child. He added that it was impossible for him to visit the school to make complaint without being insulted by the teacher.

Mr. Irwin denied these statements, explained on what grounds promotions had been made, and that the others were deficient in their work from frequent absence.

In regard to the fourth charge, Mr. Palmer considered that inasmuch as a parent he could not consult the teacher without being insulted—as fighting is improper, as the language used in school and at other times was wrong—the teacher was a cause of annoyance and trouble in the neighbourhood.

Mr. Harris remarked that the teacher had said of his child, when accused of some tattling remarks, that "it was the training the girl had got," and this he considered to be a reproach on his wife, and had been the cause of their quarrel.

Mr. Irwin denied making any such remark that "it was the training the girl had got," or that he was in any way a cause of trouble. If anyone came to school he said he received them civilly, whether they were friends outside or not, as he was then at liberty to choose his own associates. He further added that he had received a letter from Mr. Harris, asserting that his boy should "hit back" if he liked, because his boy had been punished for striking another boy with his dinner pail.

(This letter was asked for, but was not produced.)

Mr. Harris explained that his boy had been struck purposely, and when he defended himself, his son had been punished more severely than the other for fighting. He had written to the teacher in order to avoid any personal quarrel. He then handed in the teacher's reply, which showed a very unconciliatory spirit, saying that Mr. Harris seemed "to fly off the handle," etc.

Mr. Irwin adduced the increase of the attendance as a proof of efficiency and popularity. The average attendance last month had been the highest reached, and would have been much larger had the rest of the children been allowed to come to school.

Mr. Palmer considered the increase in the school was owing to the increase of population, and not to the teacher's efficiency.

Mr. Palmer then brought forward the fact that a letter had been sent by Mr. Irwin to the Trustees, asking them to close the school against its use for the services of the Methodist Church, containing in it accusations of hypocrisy against Messrs. Palmer and Shaw, and asserting that the switch had been purposely burned by them; also that the school was upset by its use for these services. He desired that this letter be produced, but the Secretary did not have it with him, nor seem inclined to produce it.

On being asked, the Secretary made no complaint about the state of the school after services.

Mr. W. W. Shaw stated that he could not send his child any longer, these disturbances placing him in a disagreeable position, but acknowledged he was satisfied with the manner in which the children were taught.

Mr. Palmer again said that the language used in school would preclude his sending his children; he did not trust the justice of the teacher, nor did he think his manners suitable when he would not recognize the parents of his pupils on the road.

Mr. Irwin denied passing anyone without recognition unless previously passed in that manner himself.

There being no other points brought forward, the meeting was closed.

I have, etc.,

(Signed) WILLIAM BURNS,
Inspector of Schools.

SPECIAL REMARKS.

In regard to the Church.—I had an interview with Rev. J. Calvert. This gentleman states that they always clean out the school, as far as possible, after services, some of the men taking it in turns to do so, but that the room has frequently to be cleaned before they can hold services. He considered the attempt to close the school against them was only to annoy Messrs. Palmer and Shaw, who were their chief supporters.

In regard to School Work.—The trouble arose by Mr. Irwin's having put back four in the fifth reader to re-commence it with those just promoted, instead of pushing them on for an entrance examination. This caused the remarks which led to the whipping received by Mamie Palmer, as Mr. Irwin's girl was one of those promoted; but the teacher asserts that the frequent absence of the others rendered this a necessity. As these pupils were absent from my inspection of the school, it is impossible for me to judge.

In regard to the Trustees.—The first trouble arose from Mr. T. Shaw being opposed, and Mr. Rumball taking his position on the Board. Mr. Irwin appears to have canvassed in this matter. When Mr. Rumball was elected, Mr. Palmer (Mr. Shaw's son-in-law) resigned, and his place being filled by Mr. Miller, the other party holds entire control. Mr. Shaw, as an old resident, feels himself slighted by this change.

I was shown a copy of verses sent round the neighbourhood reflecting on every one of Mr. Irwin's opponents and the Department in very insulting terms. As there is no one here in the habit of writing, Mr. Irwin naturally has the credit of being the author, but he voluntarily told me that he had nothing to do with them, and suspects the author to be a man residing in another section.

The Secretary acknowledges that there was no Chairman at their meeting for investigation, as they did not know how to conduct such a meeting, from having no experience; and from all evidence, it seems to have been a disorderly meeting.

The evidence of the children (on which great stress was laid) seems to prove nothing, as it may be observed that they all agreed with the side taken by their parents.

I conclude that Mr. Irwin's services will be retained by the trustees for another year, if in their power to do so, their reason being that no fault is found with his ability as a teacher, and the subjects of the dispute are really aside from school matters altogether. This will prevent Messrs. Palmer, Harris, W. Shaw and others from sending their children to school.

There has been a continual dispute going on in this section, and as Mr. Irwin has become completely identified with the one party, there can be no harmony in school matters while the present teacher is retained. The children of several families are debarred from taking advantage of the school, and the only apparent remedy is to change the teacher, as he seems to be violent in his words and quite unconciliatory in manner.

It is therefore in the educational interests of this district that there be a change of teacher, especially as there is a large number of children who will not attend the school while under his charge.

(Signed) WILLIAM BURNS.

SALMON ARM, B. C., March 15th, 1895.

SIR,—We your humble petitioners and ratepayers of Salmon Arm, pray that, acting in an official capacity, you will find it a duty to sustain the decision of our School Trustees in the charges made against our present teacher, and that he may be allowed to continue as teacher, having given entire satisfaction, and brought the school to a standard never attained before.

(Signed)	S. J. RUMBALL, *Trustee*,	(Signed)	J. L. MCINTYRE,
"	RICHARD DAVIS, "	"	M. A. DAVIS,
"	WILLIAM MILLER, "	"	MRS. SMITH,
"	FRANK MCINTYRE,	"	T. DAVIS,
"	W. W. ROGERS,	"	D. M. BLAKE,
"	P. WALTON,	"	MRS. BLAKE,
"	J. H. FORREST,	"	J. STACE SMITH,
"	K. LAITINER,	"	A. J. HEDGMAN,
"	P. M. PEARSON,	"	MRS. F. F. HEDGMAN,
"	J. MCINTYRE,	"	ROBERT ARMSTRONG,
"	L. H S. ARMSTRONG,	"	MRS. A. ARMSTRONG,
"	GEO. HUSTON,	"	J. DALZELL,
"	LEVI HUTCHINS,	"	T. ATCHESON,
"	M. RANTA,	"	T. KNOX,
"	I. JOHNSTON,	"	J. SOLO,
"	JOHN DOLAN,	"	J. K. ROBINSON,
"	ARTHUR MURRAY,	"	H. D. FRASER,
"	ALEX. MERRALL,	"	N. N. CRAIG,
"	JANE MERRALL,	"	MRS. P. HUTCHINS,
"	ELLEN RUMBALL,	"	C. MCVICKAR,
"	J. EAGLES,	"	MRS. MCVICKAR.
"	M. L. MCINTYRE,		

S. D. Pope, Esq.,
Superintendent of Education, Victoria, B. C.

VICTORIA, March 20th, 1895.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of petition signed by Trustees and others, referring to the retention of Mr. Irwin as teacher of your school.

The same has been duly referred to the consideration of the Honourable the Council of Public Instruction.

Yours truly,
(Signed) S. D. POPE,
Superintendent of Education.

R. Davis, Esq.,
Secretary Board of Trustees, Salmon Arm, C.P.R.

SALMON ARM, B. C., May 11th, 1895.

DEAR SIR,—More than two months since Inspector Burns held an investigation regarding the trouble in the school section of Salmon Arm caused by the actions of Mr. Irwin, the present teacher, and as we have received no word in reference to the result, I take the liberty of writing you, and asking that some action be taken whereby Mr. Irwin be enabled to take another field of labour as it is a continual source of trouble in the neighbourhood and greatly to the disadvantage of the children to have him retained as teacher here. There are ten children in the section that cannot possibly attend school while he is here and have been absent for five months now, and I believe the Trustees make the boast they will be compelled to attend as soon as the six months are up (by law), so if the Department will take no action in the matter, will you kindly advise me of the fact as we will be obliged to hire a private teacher, a thing we are ill able to do.

Yours truly,
(Signed) A. J. PALMER.

To Colonel Baker,
Minister of Education, Victoria, B. C.

VICTORIA, May 25th, 1895.

DEAR SIR,—Your communication of the 11th inst., addressed to Colonel, the Honourable James Baker, Minister of Education, has been duly handed in to this office.

In reply, allow me to state that no action will be taken by the Department on the report of Inspector Burns on investigation held in your district until the return of the Minister of Education. He is expected back before the close of the present month.

Yours truly,
(Signed) S. D. POPE,
Superintendent of Education.

A. J. Palmer, Esq.,
Salmon Arm.

SALMON ARM, May 15th, 1895.

DEAR SIR,—Owing to the trouble in the school here, there are about a dozen children that can't attend school at all. As it is some time since the investigation, and those hostile to us are making threats that when the time is up that the law allows, they will compel us to send our children, we are all very anxious to know what to do. We cannot send them to the present teacher, as doing so would only expose them and us to insult and abuse, rather than do so we will unite and hire a private teacher. It would come very hard on us as we are all new settlers and not well off, and besides it does not appear right or just that we should be put to so much expense and trouble. Will you kindly let us know what to do, and oblige.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) C. B. HARRIS.
Salmon Arm, B. C.

S. D. Pope,
Superintendent of Education, Victoria.

VICTORIA, May 20th, 1895.

DEAR SIR,—In reply to yours of the 15th inst., allow me to say that the report of the Inspector on the investigation held has not as yet been acted on by the Council of Public Instruction. The matter will receive attention immediately on the return of the Honourable the Minister of Education.

Yours truly,
(Signed) S. D. POPE,
Superintendent of Education.

C. B. Harris, Esq.,
Salmon Arm.

EDUCATION OFFICE,
VICTORIA, June 11th, 1895.

SIR,—This Department has for a considerable time been in receipt of complaints in regard to you as teacher of Salmon Arm School, and in view of this a public investigation into the matters complained of was held on *May 3rd last, by Inspector Burns.

From the report of the Inspector as well as from information received from other sources, it is deemed to be in the interests of the school in your district that there be a change of teacher made at the end of the present school year.

Acting under instructions, I have written to the Secretary of the Board of Trustees to give you 30 days' notice of dismissal, the same to take effect July 31st next.

I have therefore to state that your salary as teacher of Salmon Arm School will cease at the end of July.

I have, etc.,
(Signed S. D. POPE,
Secretary Council of Public Instruction.

Joseph Irwin, Esq.,
Public School, Salmon Arm.

*May 3rd should have been March 11th.

EDUCATION OFFICE,
VICTORIA, June 11th, 1895.

SIR,—From complaints made to this Department in regard to the teacher of Salmon Arm School, it was deemed advisable that the District be specially visited by a representative from this Department, and accordingly Inspector Burns held on *May 3rd last, a public investigation into the matters complained of.

From the report of the Inspector, as well as from information received from other sources, it is deemed by the Council of Public Instruction to be in the interests of the school in your District that a change of teacher be made at the end of the present school year.

I am therefore directed by the Council of Public Instruction to notify your Board under the provisions of section 50 of the "Public School Act, 1891," to give Mr. Joseph Irwin thirty days' notice of dismissal, the same to take effect on July 31st next. In other words, Mr. Irwin will be paid salary as teacher of Salmon Arm School until July 31st, but no longer.

I have, etc.,
S. D. POPE,
Secretary Council of Public Instruction.

R. Davis, Esq.,
Secretary Board of Trustees.
Salmon Arm.

*May 3rd should have been March 11th.

SALMON ARM, B. C., June 13th, 1895.

SIR,—In reply to yours of the 11th inst., we beg to state that we are perfectly satisfied with Mr. J. Irwin as teacher in Salmon Arm School.

You have papers in your possession which show that a large majority of the ratepayers are also well satisfied with him.

This being the case, we have no intention of giving him 30 days' notice to leave.

Yours respectfully,
(Signed) RICHARD DAVIS,
" S. J. RUMBALL,
" WM. MILLER,
Trustees.

S. D. Pope, Esq.,
Supt. of Education, Victoria.

VICTORIA, June 17th, 1895.

SIR,—I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 13th inst., in which you state that the Trustees have no intention of giving the teacher thirty days' notice of dismissal as per instructions of the Honourable the Council of Public Instruction contained in letter to you of the 11th inst.

Permit me to point out that the duties of Trustees are prescribed by the School Act, and they are required to perform their duties in conformity with its demands.

As already stated to your Board, Mr. Joseph Irwin's salary as teacher of Salmon Arm School District, will cease on July 31st, and further, under the provisions of the Act, the Trustees have no option in the matter of giving Mr. Irwin 30 days' notice of dismissal, the same to take effect July 31st.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) S. D. POPE,
Secretcry Council of Public Instruction.

Richard Davis, Esq.,
Secretary Board of Trustees,
Salmon Arm.

Salmon Arm, B. C., June 15th, 1895.

Hon. Sir,—I have been rather surprised at getting a notification from your Department that you are about to discharge me from this school, and I beg to draw your attention to certain facts in the case which may have escaped your notice. If I were a young man without a family I could get up and leave the Province, but I have a family of five children, one of them, being an infant. I have taught in British Columbia since 1882. During that time I have held a First Class Certificate, and I consider it unfair to be moved about at the whim of the Government, when the Trustees, and at least seventy-five per cent. of the people, are anxious for me to remain.

The charge brought against me was, that I had whipped M. Palmer brutally. This was the only charge the Government had any right, as I understand, to investigate, as it was the only one before the Trustee Board, and therefore the only one that could be appealed from. The record was that she received three slaps on each hand with a switch—a piece of alder, 3-16-inch in diameter at thickest point and about 14 inches long, tapering to a point. This agreed with her statement before the Board, but she came before Mr. Burns and stated she only got five slaps altogether—3 on one hand and 2 on the other. Her brother followed, corroborating her evidence in each case. This in itself ought to show a disinterested party there was nothing in the charge. They claimed they did not get a fair hearing from the Trustees, this the Trustees emphatically denied, and everyone present knows it was their party tried to disturb the meeting. In regard to the other charges, I have only to say that no gentleman, knowing my character, would bring them, and that they were never brought before the Trustee Board. The switch was present at the Trustee investigation, but was destroyed by an interested party before Mr. Burns came.

Now, look at Mr. Shaw's actions. At the time Harris attacked me, he called Harris everything but a gentleman. He spoke as favourably as he possibly could of me as teacher at the June examination some three month afterwards. Then when the election was over he came to my house, and in presence of my family told me I would have to leave or he would bring up this Harris affair and break my certificate, as he thought he had influence enough with Messrs. Davie and Martin to do so. He afterwards went to R. Armstrong and advised him to not send his family to school as I had had a bad character when I came here. He also told J. Stace Smith of my bad character, but Smith says he could not swear that he advised him to keep his children home. He afterwards offered Smith $10 to give me a good thrashing, and offered to help Smith out in case he should get into trouble over it. Is it any wonder that such a man should bring a charge that I was a nuisance in the neighbourhood? It's all very good to talk of law, but Shaw's place is so heavily mortgaged that I could get nothing and would lose any little I might have in prosecuting him. His great wealth, etc., is simply his talk.

Again, let me draw your attention to Palmer's case. In speaking to him of prosecuting Harris, he advised me not to, stating that everyone was on my side, and that Harris was a poor man with a large family. He also asked me for Harris' letter to me, stating that he (Harris) wanted his children to fight at school, and blaming me for not letting them do so. Harris also stated in the letter that as I would not let his children fight he expected them to come home with their eyes out. I gave Palmer the letter and he placed it in his purse in his inside coat pocket. I called on him afterwards about the matter in order to make no mistake. He used the same reasoning as before. At the investigation, before Mr. Burns, he tried to deny getting the letter, at least he said he could not remember it. Then Mr. Harris produced my reply in which I had said that his remarks about his children coming home with their eyes out were too childish for serious consideration. Over the expression "with their eyes out" he had written "with their black eyes" in heavy black ink. He is a poor writer and I could see it half way across the room. Palmer destroyed one letter, I believe intentionally, and Harris mutilated the other in order to injure me.

At the Trustee investigation, when asked why he wished to bring up the Harris affair when he had taken no notice of it while Trustee, he (Palmer) stated that I had written him a letter at the time saying I was struck unawares. This I denied and accused him of deliberate falsehood. He then read the letter which proved to everybody that I was right. What I said was, that I was struck first. This Harris has not denied. Palmer then said that I had not signed the letter. This I denied and accused him of either cutting it off or having it there. I also pointed out that the said letter being addressed to the Secretary-Trustee, was not his any longer, and that he was committing fraud in keeping it. He knew I signed it,

and he also knew if he produced the letter in presence of the Trustee Board he would be convicted of another lie. The very men who asked some years ago to have Palmer appointed J. P. would not now believe his oath. I find that he left Ontario having been sold out and unable to pay his debts.

Just after the Trustee investigation one of Davis' dogs was killed and thrown in his well. This produced a sickness which has kept his girl out of school most of the time since. Claude Harris boasted at first of their having to drink dog soup and told intimate friends that he knew who put the dog in the well. When he found it might be made a serious affair he said no more about it. When Mr. Burns was here at the investigation some malicious person, who wrote very much in their hand-writing, covered the closets with blackguard expressions.

In conclusion I beg to point out that the attendance has been higher this year than ever before, and that the highest attendance for separate months has been since they quit sending their children.

Trusting you will reconsider this matter according to the wishes of the large majority of the people.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) JOSEPH IRWIN.
Salmon Arm, B. C.

Hon. Col. Baker,
Minister of Education, Victoria.

VICTORIA, June 17th, 1895.

SIR,—I am in receipt of your letter of the 15th inst., and beg to inform you that the Council of Public Instruction arrived at their decision with regard to your dismissal after due consideration of all the facts bearing upon the case, and that they cannot reconsider their judgment in the matter.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) JAMES BAKER,
Minister of Education.

Joseph Irwin, Esq.,
Salmon Arm, Yale, B.C.

SALMON ARM, B.C., July 8th, 1895.

GENTS.,—We beg to inform you that it is the wish of a large majority of the ratepayers, as well as of ourselves, that the services of Mr. J. Irwin be retained in the Salmon Arm School. We consider him the most efficient teacher we have ever had, and believing that matters must have been badly misrepresented to the Council, we would respectfully request the Council to favour us with a copy of the Inspector's report and of the information gathered from other sources.

Yours respectfully,
(Signed) RICHARD DAVIS.
" WM. MILLER.
" S. J. RUMBALL.

Council of Public Instruction, Victoria, B.C.

VICTORIA, July 10th, 1895.

SIR,—The communication of the 8th inst., signed by yourself and the other Trustees of Salmon Arm School District, has been duly received, and having been referred to the consideration of the Honourable the Council of Public Instruction, I am directed to state in reply that the notification sent to you on June 11th last, requiring the Board to give Mr. Joseph Irwin 30 days' notice of dismissal, must be obeyed or the school must be closed. The Department will not pay salary to Mr. Irwin as teacher of Salmon Arm Public School after the 31st day of the present month.

It is not the practice of the Department to furnish Trustees with reports of the Inspectors.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) S. D. POPE,
Secretary Council Public Instruction.

R. Davis, Esq.,
Secretary Board of Trustees, Salmon Arm.

VICTORIA, B. C.:
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