

An Old Hampshire Charity.

INTERESTING INQUIRY AT BROUGHTON

On Wednesday afternoon and evening Mr. H. J. Simmonds was engaged with an inquiry into the charity left by Thomas Dowse in 1601 for the advancement of education in Broughton. The inquiry was held at the school usually used for the instruction of girls and infants, and the building was too small to provide comfortable accommodation for all who were interested, and the desks were used as standing places. It was also apparent that feeling was running high, and it was only the tact of Mr. Simmonds in handling the inquiry that kept the proceedings going smoothly. Mr. D. Cowan appeared to represent the County Council, Mr. G. Edwards Jones (barrister) was for the trustees of the charity, and Mr. Arthur A. Thomas (barrister) was for the Parish Council, while further assistance was given by Mr. Holmes, H.M. Inspector of Education for the district. Among those in the room were Capt. Dalgety, Revs. A. Woodin, T. H. Holt, H. A. Tree, Mr. Upshall (clerk to the Parish Council), nearly all the members of that body, the trustees of the charity, several ladies, and over 40 parents of children at the schools who had attended to give evidence.

Mr. Simmonds very clearly opened the proceedings. He was instructed by the Board of Education to hold that inquiry into the proposals of the County Council to provide an elementary school for 180 children for the parishes of Broughton-cum-Bossington and also the administration of Thomas Dowse's Charity. He thought the most convenient way would be for him to state the facts chronologically. The first thing that concerned them was a deed dated 1601 by which the Thomas Dowse Charity was founded, and it was a deed made between Thomas Dowse and a number of individuals who were inhabitants of Broughton. It recited that there were very many people residing within the town and manor of Broughton and Bossington, and many children, who yearly did increase, and who for want of teaching and instruction were brought up in rudeness and ignorance, and for that reason and for continuing a schoolmaster for the instructing of the children in reading, writing and casting accounts to the intent whereby they would be the better able to serve Almighty God, to attend schools of higher learning, or to become apprentices, the deed conveyed certain lands to the trustees, who were from the rents to maintain a schoolmaster who was to be resident within the parish, and to teach and instruct the children of Broughton and Bossington in reading, writing and casting accounts, and that a copy of the deed should be enrolled in the High Court of Chancery, and should be also entered by the churchwardens in the book of the parish, commonly called the book of christenings and burials, and upon the appointment of a new master public notice was to be given in the parish church upon two Sundays or holy days, and after such notice the trustees could appoint a fresh schoolmaster. In 1826 the Charity Commissioners held an inquiry, and they said in their report that the rent of the lands belonging to the charity amounted to £68, the schoolmaster had been appointed twenty years before, and his father and grandfather had held the same position, the instruction was confined to reading, writing and arithmetic, the school was open to the sons of all the inhabitants, and two of the trustees visited the schools once a year, generally the week before Christmas, to inspect it, the books required by the scholars were provided by the parents. In 1860 a proposal was made to amalgamate Dowse and the National schools at the suggestion of the Education Department, and it was by Parliament to the Education Department, and it was to them the trustees looked for support for the way they were carrying on the charity, and they were prepared to carry on the scheme in accordance with the terms of the judgment, and expected to receive the support of the department in doing their duty. They had been rather pressed to make applications which would have resulted in an alteration to the scheme. Allegations had been made against the way the trustees carried out the scheme, and he wanted to clear them up so that there should be a termination of the differences which caused so much feeling. He was satisfied that allegations were based on very little knowledge of the law. Counsel proceeded to quote extracts from reports of meetings in the village, and of the Parish Council as reported in the *Advertiser*, until

Mr. Thomas objected to having the opinions of unknown persons read to the inquiry.

Mr. Jones said then he would say at once that Dowse had been decided to be an ecclesiastical charity, and that very much shortened matters. The only other suggestion against the scheme was made by the County Council in 1903, but he did not think after what he had said there could be any difficulty in carrying on the scheme in accordance with the present day requirements, and the appointment of teachers by the managers without the consent of the local authority was swept away by the Act of 1902. The position was that they had a scheme in existence which enabled the parish to have schools paid for to some extent from the funds the trustees received from the lands of the charity, and they had power to sell those lands to build fresh schools without the sanction of the Board of Education and the Charity Commissioners.

Mr. Simmonds said he could not agree to that. Mr. Jones said it was clear the trustees could do so under the Schools Sites Act. Mr. Simmonds strongly advised the trustees not to do it.

Mr. Jones said he was very familiar with similar cases, and had advised the sale and purchase of such lands, so he had no doubt about it. If it would tend to peace, accommodation for the boys could be made at the schools they were assembled in, there was ample power under the scheme for the trustees to provide extra accommodation. He did not think it was realised that if the proposal of the local authority was carried out three-fourths of the cost would fall upon the parish; a school for 180 would cost £2000, possibly more, and that meant £1500 would be placed upon that village. When they came to consider the advantages to be obtained from economy in rates that was a very serious matter for the village, and he doubted if there would have been such unanimity at the parish meeting if it had been known it would mean a charge of £1500 on their pockets. He contended there was not the slightest necessity for such a scheme to be considered, and if they had three schools in one parish it would be disastrous for educational purposes. With regard to the wishes of the parents, he found a very small number of the children were withdrawn from religious instruction, so there could not be a very serious feeling against the religious instruction as now given, the numbers withdrawn were thirteen in one school and eight in the other. They had a new schoolmaster appointed by the County Council, and he gathered he was working satisfactorily, and there was no good reason for having another school in the place. The trustees did not wish to take up a position of antagonism to the County Council, and if by talking it over with Mr. Cowan they could secure some arrangement with them they would be pleased.

Mr. Cowan next put forward the position of the County Council in the matter. They felt that the scheme of the Education Department, and it was to them the trustees looked for support for the way they were carrying on the charity, and they were prepared to carry on the scheme in accordance with the terms of the judgment, and expected to receive the support of the department in doing their duty. They had been rather pressed to make applications which would have resulted in an alteration to the scheme. Allegations had been made against the way the trustees carried out the scheme, and he wanted to clear them up so that there should be a termination of the differences which caused so much feeling. He was satisfied that allegations were based on very little knowledge of the law. Counsel proceeded to quote extracts from reports of meetings in the village, and of the Parish Council as reported in the *Advertiser*, until

struction. There were Sunday Schools in the place which met all the necessities of the parish. He had no objection to bible teaching by the teacher, but failing that he preferred no religious instruction to denominational instruction. There was a great deal of feeling in the parish in the matter, and the seven who stood at the election for a parish undenominational school were elected.

By Mr. Jones: He could recollect one or two Non-conformists who had held charity land.

James Marsh said he was 86, and went to Dowse school, and left at 6½ years of age to go to work. There was no religious instruction given, and the schoolmaster collected the rents of the cottages and went to church. Then came Mr. Godwin, a master who attended the Baptist Chapel. He never saw the parson in the school while he went there. The schoolmaster, his son and daughter, taught the children. Mr. Tucker, who was curate in charge, built a school against the chancel, it was also used as a vestry. It had been pulled down since and there was no vestry. He remembered the Baring school being built, it was for boys and girls.

By Mr. Jones: The school in the churchyard was a church school, and it was succeeded by the Baring school. He did not remember the new scheme for the Dowse Charity. He never heard the great judge in London said all the trustees should be churchmen.

Mr. Marsh was loudly applauded at the close of his evidence.

After some argument concerning the religious persuasion of one of the old schoolmasters, William James Ayles said he offered £6 for the old pasture the trustees had to let. He did not get it; the tenant was Mr. Leigh, and the trustees had built a fence for the land. He should say it cost £15. The old pile and rail fence would have been good enough for him. If the trustees were to let the land again they would get £2 an acre for it as allotment rents. It would take thirty or forty years to get it back to good turf as it was before.

By Mr. Jones: He did not suggest that Mr. Leigh was paying too much in paying five guineas for the land. It was no mistake for Mr. Leigh to break it up for his business. Witness was a surveyor. Mr. Leigh would be a more desirable tenant to the trustees at £5 than £6 from witness, because he was a churchman (loud applause).

By Mr. Simmonds: Accommodation land was very scarce in the parish. He had to wait six years to get a piece of land to turn his horse out on (applause).

Fred Hurford said he was a farmer, and made an offer of £30 for the 30 acre piece of charity land; it was not accepted.

By Mr. Jones: That was about 1900. Mr. Mould and Mr. Smith also applied. He heard Mr. Mould offered £38. He made his offer to one of the trustees and he afterwards said he did not mention it.

Rev. Woodin said the land was now let at £25. Mr. Jones read the minutes. Mr. Mould was told he could have the land if he gave two securities and paid the rent in advance. Mr. Smith offered £30, but Mr. Brown, a trustee, was accepted at £25.

Mr. W. Steele-Tomkins said he had known Broughton all his life. He knew the Dowse scheme and had been a trustee for 20 years. He knew Mould made an offer, and the trustees did not accept it. Then Mould withdrew his offer as they required substantial references and rent in advance and he could not do that. Mr. Smith then offered £30, which they thought they could not accept, and the only other offer was Mr. Brown's. They were acting as they thought best for the trustee estate. He was not there when the Baring school was erected. Formerly there was no school for girls, and a temporary school was put up by the side of the chancel. It was a very indifferent place, but the

Mr. Fred Hurford said he was one of the largest ratepayers in the parish, he had two children at the school and was not satisfied. If the County Council would provide a first-class school it would be a boon to the parish.

By Mr. Jones: His principal objection was the accommodation at the boys; next, that all the schools should be put together, but not under the trustees. He thought there should be a better system of teaching, and the inspector had made complaints of the system. The present teacher he did not know. The new schools would mean about 8d. in the £; he should say he was a little below Mr. Cannon in ratable value. He did not consider the question just from the point of his own children but he considered other people as well. For the sake of peace and quietness he would pay the extra rate, while the children would have a more satisfactory education (applause).

By Mr. Thomas: The late master was a very satisfactory one (loud applause); he was not dismissed by the County Council but by the trustees.

Mr. Ayles, recalled, said he had taken his girl away and sent her to Southampton, as the education was so indifferent at Broughton. He got out the plans and quantities for alterations and additions as proposed by the trustees, and it would cost to alter and rebuild the boys school the price of a new one. At the other school the land sloped away, and the sewage from the lavatories had been running into it for years, so he should not think the trustees would build on that. At the Dowse school the house of the master was built of flint, chalk and loose rubble, and could not be adapted. If the County Council build they had to pay £500 towards it, but the trustees would have to meet the whole charge, so the ratepayers would benefit by the County Council building. The children of Nonconformists had not been treated right; prizes had been withheld, and in spite of letters from the County Council the attendance reward was kept back.

By Mr. Jones: He said if the trustees amended the buildings they would have to pay nearly as much if the regulations of the Board of Education were put in force. He contended his child should have the same opportunities as the child in the town; both had to face the world. There was no class room, and one could not be built for £200.

Mr. Cowan confirmed this; a class room for 30 would cost over £200.

Witness said he had no idea of making his daughter a teacher when he took her away from Broughton school, it was solely because her education was so backward. She was 13 when he sent her to Southampton, and she had been there a year.

Thomas Blake said he had four children at school, but was not satisfied. He wanted it under a little different management to what they had at present.

By Mr. Jones: He had two children who had been through the schools, and four at the schools. The children had been persecuted on religious grounds. His own children had been threatened for not attending the religious instruction. There was no complaint about the head master, but the lower standards were very backward. He objected to the present management because of the religious persecution.

Rev. H. A. Tree said he objected to another school under the present management; it would mean the continuation of the petty persecution and strife. Under the County Council the children would all assemble together and receive instruction together. Now the children who did not attend at nine o'clock had their prizes withheld. If the Council school cost more it would be cheap in the interests of peace. Strangers could not imagine the bitterness there was in that village. He had endeavoured all he could to secure peace without a school.

generally the week before Christmas, to inspect it the books required by the scholars were provided by the parents. In 1860 a proposal was made to amalgamate Dowse and the National schools at the suggestion of the inspector of the Charity Commissioners, and in 1862 an inquiry was held with a view to bringing it about, but owing to opposition the proposal failed, the trustees being anxious to continue Dowse school separately. At that time there was no doubt that the school was not carried on upon Church of England lines, and the object of amalgamation was to alter that. The result of the failure of that inquiry was an application for a new scheme for the foundation, which was argued before Lord Romilly, Master of the Rolls, and his judgment was that it was a Church of England charity, the founder was presumably a member of the Church of England for in his time there was little dissent, and in the deed there was repeated references to the Church of England. Lord Romilly advised that there should be a conscience clause in any scheme submitted, but the school master should be a member of the Church of England unless there were special reasons for the trustees to appoint one who was not, and the trustees should be members of the Church of England. The result of that judgment was the scheme under which the school had been worked, which was established on July 31, 1863, under which the rector of the parish was always to be one of the trustees, and all the trustees were to be members of the Church of England. The trustees were also to borrow the money to pay the cost of the Chancery proceedings from the charity, and they could also take the money of the charity and borrow money for the repair and improvement of the school, which was called the boys school. Clause 14 provided that the school built by Thomas Baring should be conveyed to the trustees, and by them be used as a girls school, and it was used for both girls and infants. Until the other day nobody appeared to know that the school had been conveyed by Mr. Thomas Baring to the trustees, but it was, and the deed was dated shortly after the date of the judgment of Lord Romilly. One clause stated that the master should be a member of the Church of England if possible, and the next clause was a little contradictory for it said the master and mistress should be members of the Church of England. Clause 13 provided that the repairs to both schools should be provided out of the funds of the charity, and that the salaries of the teachers should be obtained from the same source. Clause 24 laid down regular subjects of secular instruction which should be taught, and also instruction in the bible, bible history, and, subject to certain conditions, the catechism. Clause 25 said the children should attend school on Sunday, and also attend church, and clause 26 was a conscience clause. They next came to the year 1913. In April a petition signed by 236 inhabitants of Broughton all over the age of 21 years asked that an inquiry should be held for the purpose of amending the scheme for the management of the charity so far as it related to persons eligible to be managers, and to place it upon an unsectarian basis as it was prior to 1863, which scheme was contrary to the will of the founder. As a result of that Mr. Warner from the Board of Education came and had a conference with the trustees and Mr. Tree, to see if some arrangement could be come to by which the feeling that had arisen in the parish could be put an end to, but no compromise could be arranged, and on May 9, 1904, a letter was sent from the Board of Education to the Parish Council showing the legal position of the charity. After carefully considering resolutions passed by the Parish Council and previous representations made to them, the Board, in August, invited the trustees to submit proposals for a new scheme, but no such proposals had been received from the trustees, and the jurisdiction of the 1902 Act only could arise upon the initiative of the governing body, for as the income exceeded £50 a year the Board had no power to make a scheme except upon the application of the trustees. Therefore, they did not see how they could usefully

some arrangement with Mr. Cowan they could please. Mr. Cowan next put forward the position of the County Council in the matter. They felt that the scheme of Lord Romilly did not coincide with the law as it now stood, and a new scheme was necessary, and if the trustees carried out their scheme they were unable to give effect to the Act of 1902. The Education Committee considered the school for the boys was too small, and having regard to educational efficiency it would be better to have one school for Broughton and Bossington under a head master with an efficient staff for the three departments (applause). Mr. Jones had said it would be no easy matter to work a school efficiently with only 180 children: he would point out that for many years there had been three schools in the parish, not one having more than 45 children attending. The County Council wished to have the educational staff in the parish concentrated in one school, and educationally he considered one school for 180 children would be a more effective school than the present system of two schools. Two years ago the trustees and managers agreed to the amalgamation of the infants, and they were all taught in the girls school. Without going into the merits of the dispute which had been going on for years between the trustees and the Parish Council the County Council did not for a moment allege there had been any maladministration, but they said the scheme was not in conformity with the requirements of the present position, and they also said the constant state of friction in the parish about the schools must be detrimental in its effects upon education (applause). It created an atmosphere of disturbance with results that hindered the work of the teachers, and the County Council would be glad to have it brought to an end, for nobody could doubt there had been an unfortunate state of friction for a long time that could not be good for the educational system of the village. The matter had been under the consideration of the County Education Committee since September, 1903, but the trustees had not applied for a new scheme nor had they put the buildings in a condition for them to be taken over by the local authority, and at last the Council gave notice of their intention to erect a school for boys, girls and infants, having a total accommodation for 182 children. Clauses 13, 16, 18, 19, 21, 25, 27, 28, 29, 31 of the scheme of the charity did not agree with the present law upon education, and he did not see how the trustees could carry on the schools under those circumstances, and the scheme ought to be altered to meet modern requirements (applause). He gave particulars of the number of children in the parish, and said by amalgamating the schools £50 a year would be saved by salaries and there would be a better staff for the education of the children, properly organised under one master (applause). The unfortunate dispute in the parish was carried into the schools and detrimentally affected them, while with regard to the cost of the schools the parishioners would be entitled to a proportion of the income of the charity, which would go to the reduction of the rates. The Education Committee had had the matter constantly before them from September, 1903, to December, 1907, and were satisfied that the scheme they proposed of a Council school was the only one that would put an end to the strife and feeling in the parish, and so put an end to what appeared to be an interminable wordy war (loud applause). Mr. Thomas outlined the position of the Parish Council in the matter. The feeling of the inhabitants, supported by tradition and the evidence of the oldest inhabitants, was that the charity was a parish charity without any sectarian reservations whatever, and he proceeded to show that in times past there had been masters who were not members of the Church of England, and that it was not until the establishment of a National school that the sectarian question was brought in. He referred to the feeling that had increased in the parish of late years, and how a parish

only there when the Baring school was erected. Formerly there was no school for girls, and a temporary school was put up by the side of the chancel. It was a very indifferent place, but the Baring school was ample for all the girls in the parish and infants as well. Mr. Baring conveyed the school to the trustees as a Church of England school, and from the very commencement it had been a Church of England school. He did not consider there was any necessity for a school for 180. They had accommodation for 162 and the average attendance was only 120. He did not wish it to be understood that the schools could not be improved by adding class rooms, and they had offered to do so several times if permitted to do it out of the estate of the charity. The income of the Dowse charity was £90 gross, £70 net, but not including repairs, which were an uncertain quantity and were very variable. He should say £25 to £30 would cover repairs, and there were four pounds to be taken for prizes. The effect of the further accommodation would be to make an addition to the parish of the interest and sinking fund on £1500. The trustees were quite prepared to pay the money that had accumulated to the overseers so soon as the thing was settled. The totals since the beginning of 1903 were income £326, outgoings £114, balance £212. That was the state of the account up to date since 1903. He was willing that the schools should be consolidated if a single school would be better in the opinion of experts and the scheme was left unchanged. He was a ratepayer but not a large one. Admitting that the cost of teaching in a single school would be less the interest and sinking fund would inevitably outweigh any saving. Granting a new single school would be the very best result of the whole thing, it was a question how far they could spend public money unnecessarily. By Mr. Cowan: Having regard to the total school accommodation could the excess of places in the infants be met by the extra accommodation wanted for the boys. The answer was that the number of boys was 43, average attendance 37, and the floor space was available for 46. By Mr. Thomas: He was a trustee of the school, and was not satisfied with it. He knew a new lavatory was required. The Nonconformist children were not turned into the street; they were simply not admitted (laughter). He knew Mr. Petty, of Church Farm; he was a respectable man, and fit to take a piece of land of 30 acres. He did not know he made an offer for the land of £30. He saw it was in the minute book. He should be very glad to trust Mr. Petty with land. Mr. Brown was a trustee who rented the land. He had rented land himself while he was a trustee. He knew other trustees who had rented the land. He thought they all made as good bargains as Mr. Brown (laughter and applause). He thought the land might be farmed better, but the tenancy of Mr. Brown was not over yet. His lease was for seven years, and his time would be up next September, and he would have to carry out the terms of the lease. He should question whether they had been carried out. He considered the action of the trustees, in letting the land to a trustee businesslike. He knew of the offer of Mr. Ayles, but they did not know what he wanted it for. He thought it was a good thing to break up the pasture for garden. He was sure they would let it for £6 or £7 (laughter). If he wanted it he would pay £7 for it. He did not know if Mr. Ayles was a substantial person; so far as he knew he paid his way. By Mr. Jones: The Nonconformist children did not attend school until 9.45. They put the new fence to the land for the protection of the children. The population of the parish was diminishing. A Voice: It might increase if we could get small holdings. Mr. Simmonds inquired what became of the offer of Mr. Petty, but there was no explanation forthcoming. Rev. Woodin believed that the offer was withdrawn. Mr. Steele-Tomkins said he believed Mr. Petty

cost more it would be cheap in the interests of peace. Strangers could not imagine the bitterness there was in that village. He had endeavoured all he could to secure peace without avail. By Mr. Jones: He seriously said under the present management there would be a perpetuation of the strife. The awards to scholars were withdrawn, although provided by the County Council. He had appealed to the Rector and trustees; he had applied to the Parish Council to approach the trustees with a view to a round table conference. No man had done more to endeavour to settle the matter than himself (applause). He did not know about the judgment of the Master of the Rolls, but he did not think the Master of the Rolls was infallible. He had sufficient grounds when he spoke at the meetings at the time of the election to believe it was a parochial charity. The report of the Commissioners of Charities of 1826 mentioned nothing of religious instruction of a denominational character. After some argument about the position the Parish Council had taken up, Mr. Simmonds explained that undoubtedly the Charity Commissioners had made a mistake in their letters to the Parish Council; it was a misleading letter they had sent. By Mr. Jones: He recognised that the law had decided it to be a church school, but he had the letters that had been read, he had the fact that a former master was a Baptist, and that the decision of 1862 was not accepted as a fair decision even by church people, as they felt that a parochial charity had been unrighteously attached to the church. He desired to do everything to bring about peace. Mr. Jones said for the future they hoped on all sides it would be peace and not war. By Mr. Thomas: The witness said the school for boys was defective in building and the staff was inefficient. He did not know why the County Council did not provide a sufficient staff; the inspector had drawn attention to it in recent reports. By Mr. Simmonds: A compromise had been suggested; the schools to be enlarged by the trustees on condition that they granted representative managers, four foundation managers and two by the Parish Council; but now he was convinced that the only solution was the erection of schools under the County Council, then the religious difficulty would be settled and the education of the children improved. If the trustees enlarged the schools they would have to spend money, they would not get help from the County Council, and therefore they would have less reversionary interest to hand over. Mr. Simmonds thought the difference to the ratepayers would be about £60 a year. Rev. Tree said he understood that the present school for girls could be continued for the infants, while a better school for boys and girls would attract children for a higher education from other parishes, and then all would get a better education. By Mr. Cowan: If the trustees built a sufficient school and taught the Nonconformist children in a separate room that would not meet the case, it would simply perpetuate the religious differences; while under the present managers, they might have a recurrence of the unpleasantness with the head teacher. If there were such a condition as described and one member of the teaching staff were a Nonconformist, there would still be the irritating element and war would break out again. He could not see the managers were giving up very much, they would have the control of the teachers. Mr. Cowan said a good deal had been said about the deficient education in the school for boys. There was only a certain staff allowed, and when they put in an effective head master they practically took up the whole amount allowed, and the only help he had was a monitor; so the lower standards did not get a proper education, and no addition to the buildings would get out of the difficulty; but if the schools were combined they could have a better staff and consequently a better education. By Mr. Robinson: If they had the boys school for infants and the girls school for a mixed school it

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trustees and Mr. Tree, to see if some arrangement could be come to by which the feeling that had arisen in the parish could be put an end to, but no compromise could be arranged, and on May 9, 1904, a letter was sent from the Board of Education to the Parish Council showing the legal position of the charity. After carefully considering resolutions passed by the Parish Council and previous representations made to them, the Board, in August, invited the trustees to submit proposals for a new scheme, but no such proposals had been received from the trustees, and the jurisdiction of the 1902 Act only could arise upon the initiative of the governing body, for as the income exceeded £50 a year the Board had no power to make a scheme except upon the application of the trustees. Therefore, they did not see how they could usefully hold a public inquiry. The order for the appointment of managers of the school was made on July 12, 1904, when four persons were appointed by the trustees and two by the authorities. Then followed considerable correspondence with regard to the school buildings; the trustees stated that considerable expenditure had been made of late for repairs, and the local authority required them to make further expenditure. In March, 1905, Mr. Cowan held an inquiry at Broughton into the matter, but nothing came of it, the Education Committee being of opinion that the trustees should apply to the Board of Education for a new scheme. Ultimately on July 4, 1907, the County Council issued a notice of a proposal to build a new school for Broughton and Bossington to accommodate 180 children. On October 7 three petitions were received by the Board of Education against the proposal; one was signed by six trustees of the charity, four of whom were school managers, the second by 21 parents, and the third by 39 ratepayers, many of the people had signed in their double capacity of parent and ratepayer. Then the local authority asked that an inquiry might be held into the proposal to build a school and also into the administration of the charity, and he was instructed to hold it. The gross income of the charity was about £90 and the net income under £80, partly derived from land and partly from India stock and Consols. He thought the appellants against the proposal to build the new school should be first heard, but he might say he would be very glad to give all the assistance he could to put an end to the dissensions in the parish (applause).

Mr. Jones, for the trustees, said if he could do anything to forward that he should be delighted and hoped that no words of his would have the effect of diminishing that possibility. He thought he had best deal with what had been urged against the administration of the charity as it would throw light upon the agitation for the provision of a new school. There was no charge of maladministration contained in that correspondence. The scheme of the charity was based on the judgment of the Court of Chancery by a judge who was as familiar with charity schemes as any judge. It provided for instruction in accordance with the traditions of the Church of England, and it had been decided that that was in accordance with the will of the founder, and the trustees and master had to be members of the Church of England and the scholars must attend church. He read the judgment of Lord Atkinson, who found that it was intended for an ecclesiastical charity, that the trustees must be residents in the parish and members of the Church of England, but although the master, if possible, should be a member of the Church of England it was not necessary that the pupils should be those only of parents who were members of the Church of England. He held that it had been wrong to appoint a dissenter as a trustee, and also to appoint trustees who lived out of the parish, and the trustees should not have appointed the schoolmaster simply because he was the son of the former master. The schools had since been managed under that judgment of the Court of

Council school was the only one that would put an end to the strife and feeling in the parish, and so put an end to what appeared to be an interminable wordy war (loud applause).

Mr. Thomas outlined the position of the Parish Council in the matter. The feeling of the inhabitants, supported by tradition and the evidence of the oldest inhabitants, was that the charity was a parish charity without any sectarian reservations whatever, and he proceeded to show that in times past there had been masters who were not members of the Church of England, and that it was not until the establishment of a National school that the sectarian question was brought in. He referred to the feeling that had increased in the parish of late years, and how a parish meeting in 1903 by 40 votes to 4 decided to appeal to the Board of Education to put the schools on an unsectarian basis. In 1904 when the Parish Council election took place that feeling was manifested very strongly, and so it went on at the different parish meetings in succeeding years further resolutions being passed and forwarded to the County Council or the Board of Education. The present position was undoubtedly a hardship. Out of the children attending school in 1906 they came from 34 Nonconformist families and 16 Church families. With regard to the administration of the charity they said that the land had not been let to the best advantage, and some of it had been let to a trustee and had been deteriorated under his tenancy, while in other cases the trustees had not accepted the best offers for the land. He referred to articles and circulars sent round with the parish magazine, and urged that had helped to intensify the feeling.

Mr. Simmonds advised that it would be better not to go into such matters there, and asked if they could not find some basis for a compromise. Mr. Cowan asked if the trustees would be willing to apply for a scheme under which the County Council and the Parish Council would have each a representative on the managers. That was one point, the second was would the trustees be prepared to erect sufficient rooms on to the school for all the children in the parish to attend at one school so as to bring all the children and staff under one master.

Mr. Jones, after consultation with the trustees said they could not consent to the first proposal but with regard to the second they were prepared to provide the extra accommodation so as to have all the children at one school under one master, and there would be a separate room for Nonconformist children during the time religious instruction was being given by the teacher to the other children. He was prepared to advise them to sell land to provide the money for the purpose of building.

Mr. Simmonds said if they did that the Board of Education would certify them to the Attorney-General, which would involve the whole matter again going into court and a great waste of the charity money.

Mr. Thomas said if the trustees followed the course advised by Mr. Jones there would be very little money left for the parish or anyone else.

Mr. Cowan said the local authority would not consent to any scheme in which the County Council and the Parish Council did not secure representation on the board of managers (loud applause).

Mr. Thomas said the Parish Council would not be satisfied with any under which all the inhabitants did not obtain the same rights and privileges (applause).

Some arguments then followed between Mr. Simmonds and Mr. Jones as to the powers of the trustees to dispose of the trust lands, at the conclusion of which it was decided to hear the evidence and then again argue the law if necessary.

Thomas Hinwood, grocer, chairman of the Parish Council, said he had lived in the parish 45 years, and was one of the school managers appointed by the County Council. He was well acquainted with the school lands and knew those who had held them

good thing to break up the pasture for garden. He was sure they would let it for £6 or £7 (laughter). If he wanted it he would pay £7 for it. He did not know if Mr. Ayles was a substantial person; so far as he knew he paid his way.

By Mr. Jones: The Nonconformist children did not attend school until 9.45. They put the new fence to the land for the protection of the children. The population of the parish was diminishing.

A Voice: It might increase if we could get small holdings.

Mr. Simmons inquired what became of the offer of Mr. Petty, but there was no explanation forthcoming.

Rev. Woodin believed that the offer was withdrawn.

Mr. Steele-Tomkins said he believed Mr. Petty withdrew.

Mr. Cowan said this keeping the children out of school until 9.45 was a most serious difficulty and a disturbing influence to the school. All the children came down together, and some were playing about round the school while the others were receiving instruction.

Mr. T. Cannon said he was a large ratepayer, and the accommodation in the parish schools was ample. He strongly objected to an expenditure of £2000 for new schools. Several of his men lived in the parish, and he heard no complaints from them about the schools.

By Mr. Thomas: He lived at Chattis Hill, 1½ miles away. He had no children attending the school, and he had never measured it. He thought there was a class room in the school, but he had not been into every corner. He used to be a large employer of people out of the parish. He had not seen the lavatory at the school for the boys; one half of his objection was as to cost, and the other that it was not required. He could not say if the parish was increasing or decreasing.

By Mr. Cowan: As a ratepayer he objected, but he was no educational expert.

Mr. Cowan said the 1891 population was 842, and it increased about 20 in ten years.

Mr. Simmonds said he thought he could say the population was practically stationary.

Mr. Cowan said the increase was 2.2 per 1000 per annum.

The inquiry adjourned at this stage.

Upon the resumption of the sitting in the evening Mr. J. Leabourne said he was a member of the Parish Council, and did not think the extra accommodation was required. If it were he was in favour of the present trustees providing it. He was not asked about it at all at the last Parish Council election. He had children at the school, and was satisfied with the instruction given. He had not heard other parents complain. His daughter taught at the Sunday school. He was opposed to other authorities than the present trustees providing schools.

By Mr. Thomas: Nobody addressed him about the school question at the election, he saw the address of the other side and read it. It was issued the day before the election, and he did not agree with it. He was eighth or ninth on the poll. All those who issued the address were before him on the poll. He understood the trustees were willing to provide the accommodation required by the County Council, and it would be more economical. The address was issued on Saturday night, the election was on Tuesday, he called that one day (laughter).

Dr. Lyne-Stevens said unfortunately he was a large ratepayer in the parish and he did not see the need for a school for 180, he did not know where the children were to come from. So far as he was concerned the population was stationary (laughter). He employed workmen who lived in the parish, and he had never heard any complaint.

By Mr. Thomas: He understood there was no fault to be found with the Baring school, he thought the other school would be better with a class-room. He was informed that that could be done for £300 to

formist, there would still be the irritating element and war would break out again. He could not see the managers were giving up very much, they would have the control of the teachers.

Mr. Cowan said a good deal had been said about the deficient education in the school for boys. There was only a certain staff allowed, and when they put in an effective head master they practically took up the whole amount allowed, and the only help he had was a monitor; so the lower standards did not get a proper education, and no addition to the buildings would get out of the difficulty; but if the schools were combined they could have a better staff and consequently a better education.

By Mr. Robinson: If they had the boys school for infants and the girls school for a mixed school it would make things better.

A number of other witnesses were present, but they were not called as the hour was getting late.

Mr. Thomas moved, and Mr. Cowan seconded, a vote of thanks to the inspector for his courteous conduct of the inquiry, and on Mr. Simmonds rising he was received with applause. He appreciated the deep feeling in the parish, and complimented the audience on keeping such good order, especially in such a crowded room. The inquiry had cleared the air, and he hoped it might prove the basis for a possible compromise (applause).

With this the proceedings terminated.

THE CAMDEN TOWN MURDER. WOOD ACQUITTED.

At 8 o'clock on Wednesday night the jury at the Central Criminal Court found Robert William Wood not guilty of the murder of Emily Elizabeth Dimmock. Dramatic scenes marked the close of a notable trial. Mr. Justice Grantham began his summing up shortly after 6 o'clock, but it was not until he reached almost the end of his survey of the evidence that there came anything in the nature of a strong direction to the jury. Then he said: "In my judgment, strong as the suspicion in this case is, I don't think the prosecution have brought the case home clear enough to the prisoner, with the exception of the evidence of McGowan. The evidence of McGowan, if implicitly relied upon, would justify you in finding him guilty, but that evidence is considerably controverted." It was seventeen minutes to eight when the twelve jurymen, who during the six days hearing had given close attention to every detail of the case, retired to consider their verdict. Not much more than a quarter of an hour had sufficed to decide the issue. The jury filed into the box, the spectators hurriedly resumed their places, and a moment or two later, Mr. Justice Grantham resumed his seat on the bench. All waited anxiously for the words which were to decide the fate of the prisoner. The spectators had to restrain their impatience while the formality of calling over the names of the jury was gone through. Then the usual question regarding the verdict of the jury was put to the foreman, and the reply came in clear tones, "Not guilty." Instantly a great cheer burst forth, and was renewed again and again, despite the attempts of the officials to secure silence. It was a striking testimony to the popularity of the verdict. During the whole of the forenoon Wood was again in the witness box. He underwent a searching cross-examination by Sir Charles Mathews, of whose moderation and fairness Mr. Marshall Hall took occasion later to speak in terms of high praise.

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