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REPORT

OF THE

MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR,

(ACTING PROVISIONALLY AS MINISTER OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.)

READ BEFORE THE KING TO THE HAWAIIAN LEGISLATURE,
April 28th, 1848.

*To the Nobles and House of Representatives of the Hawaiian Islands
in Legislative Council assembled:*

By command of the King I lay before you a brief report for the Department of "Public Instruction," the duties of which by an act of His Majesty and Privy Council have devolved upon me since September last.

The event which threw upon me this charge is one of melancholy interest. The late worthy officer of this Department, was, by a sudden and unexpected stroke of Providence, laid aside from its duties in July last, and finally removed from all earthly cares and responsibilities on the 7th of November. Wm. Richards was a good man, a man of spotless integrity, of open disinterestedness, and a tried friend of our nation, to whose interests he had been devoted for 24 years, nine of which were spent in the service of His Majesty. To him our nation owes much, and I can truly say, no man was more extensively and sincerely beloved by our people than he.

As a small testimony of His Majesty's regard for his faithful servant, a competent provision has been made for the support of his afflicted widow; whose moral virtues and example, as well as her long and arduous labors by the side of her husband, entitle her to our warmest sympathy and sincere regard.

Owing to the death of that Minister, the Department of "Public Instruction" has been greatly embarrassed and its various affairs have been but partially attended to. Efforts have been made to procure a suitable person to fill the office, but without success. It is hoped, however, that this difficulty will be remedied in a short time. At the request of His Majesty's Government, the Rev R. Armstrong has rendered important assistance to me in the discharge of the duties of this department since the 6th of December last and most of the reforms noticed hereafter have been owing to his exertions.

Much pains has been taken to procure full and accurate reports from all the School Districts for the year 1847; to this end a cir-

cular was addressed to all the superintendents, in December, requiring them to report promptly and definitely according to law; yet much delay and great difficulty have been experienced in obtaining these reports. It is believed, however, that the following table will exhibit a tolerably correct account of the state of the Schools.

ISLANDS.		
Hawaii,	6	No. of Districts.
Mau,	4	No. of Protestant Schools and Teachers.
Molokai,	1	No. of Protestant Scholars.
Lanai,	1	No. of Catholic Schools and Teachers.
Oahu,	6	No. of Scholars in Catholic Schools.
Kauai,	3	Whole No. of Teachers and Schools.
Niihau,	1	Whole No. of Scholars in Public Schools.
Total,	22	Amount of Teacher's wages for a single day.
	495	Amount of Teacher's Salaries for 1847.
	16529	No. of days taught by all the Teachers in 1847.
	129,316	Whole cost of the Public Schools for 1847.
	625	Amount received and paid out in 1847.
	19644	Amount of Debt remaining Dec. 31st, 1847.
	\$104.63	No. of Readers.
	\$19,168.91	No. of Writers.
	99,621	No. in Arithmetic.
	\$21,706.48	No. in Geography.
	\$21,756.22	No. in Child's Philosophy.
	\$6655.49	No. in Moral Philosophy.
	9642	No. in Sacred Geography.
	5599	No. in Vocal Music.
	8450	
	6052	
	280	
	1098	
	360	
	810	

A Table of the National Schools on the Hawaiian Islands, for the year 1847.

It should be remembered that the amount of School debt reported at the opening of the Legislature of last year, was \$8,907. This has been a most serious obstacle to the prosperity of the Schools; operating to the discouragement of teachers, perplexing the Superintendents and producing dissatisfaction in the whole establishment. This also accounts for the amount of debt which still rests upon the schools. During the year now under review, it was diminished by about \$3000, and I am happy to state, that since the commencement of the present year, the debt has been entirely paid off, in some of the districts and in others greatly diminished. This has been effected partly by suspending the schools in those districts for a season, and partly by a more careful attention to the collection and disbursement of the school funds.

Where the public labor has been properly managed, and the avails of it carefully husbanded, the proceeds have been sufficient to sustain the schools. But the difficulty has been to have the work properly superintended and the avails of it carefully appropriated. The labor tax is very unpopular, although the avails of it have been exclusively devoted to purposes of education; most of the people would prefer to pay a round sum, of a reasonable amount, either in money or produce, and it will be for you to consider the expediency of the change. In my opinion a trial should be made for raising a revenue for school purposes, different from that which now exists, and a better system of accountability established.

Much complaint exists in some districts, because those who have three and four children are entirely exempted by law from the burden of the schools; and there is certainly some ground for such complaint, inasmuch as many able-bodied men, with considerable property, do nothing at all towards the education of their children, while the burden falls, in many cases, on the feeble and the more destitute who are the least able to bear it, and derive the least advantage from it.

Some teachers have expressed a strong desire to take land in payment of their claims for wages due; some of these debts have stood for several years and it is extremely desirable that they be paid off to the satisfaction of the parties.

The efforts made by this department to secure a correct census of the Islands, I regret to say, have not been successful, and it will be for you to consider what better plan can be devised to accomplish this desirable end. The reports of births and deaths are too imperfect to form the basis of any calculation as to the increase or decrease of the population.

The average number of scholars reported for the year 1847, exceeds that of any former year by about 1100. The number of youth in all the schools on the Islands may be safely estimated at 20,000; and it is believed that in no year since the introduction of Christianity has the cause of national education advanced more steadily and surely, not to say rapidly, than during the past year. It is a cause which takes deeper and stronger hold of the national

mind, and if vigorously sustained cannot but procure the most lasting and important benefits.

But there are obstacles of the most serious nature yet to be overcome before common schools can prosper to the degree that it is desirable they should. Some of them may be here mentioned.

1st. The indifference, ignorance and negligence of parents.

There is a great want of family government and parental control over the children; in multitudes of cases none at all; the attendance of the children at school is consequently irregular and their progress slow. This discourages and embarrasses the teacher and greatly hinders his success in his work.

It is true, however, that many parents do manifest a commendable interest in the education of their children, and cheerfully co-operate with the teachers and superintendents in securing their attendance at school, as well as providing books and stationery for them.

2nd. Another hindrance to the progress of common school education is the want of suitable books and stationery. Not that such articles are out of their reach; for they are to be had at very reasonable prices; but they are not bought, in part owing to the poverty and in part to the indifference of the parents.

3d. A third obstacle is the want of good school houses. As a general thing they are wretched, cheerless grass huts; mostly without seats, desks, floors or apparatus; many of the school houses too are destitute of the means for closing either doors or windows; and in the rainy season are both uncomfortable and unhealthy.—The appropriation for schools having been almost entirely exhausted in the support of teachers and superintendents, but little has been left for the repair of the old school houses, or the erection of new ones. It will be seen by the foregoing table that only \$2535 have been expended on school houses during the year 1847.

A considerable number of schools have been entirely broken up for want of suitable houses; others have been necessarily suspended, in the rainy season, from the same cause; and a few are kept in private houses, or under the shade of trees. Much expense will be necessary to erect new school houses and put old ones in such a condition as the interests of education require, and it is believed the present appropriation is inadequate to the object.

There have been a few good, substantial school houses built recently by private subscription, and a few others by the public labor.

4th. A fourth serious obstacle to the success of the common schools, is the want of intelligent and faithful superintendents for school districts. Many who have held this office have exhibited an amount of skill and fidelity even beyond what might have been expected of them; for which they deserve the approbation of the Government and the people. They have done much to stimulate the teachers, parents and children in their various duties, and have exerted a happy general influence. Others have proved both unskill-

ful and unfaithful; exhibiting a bad example before the people, negligent of their duties, and in some instances producing, by their indiscretion, difficulties between the religious sects. The collectors have also in some instances been lax and unfaithful in the discharge of their duties; hence the amount received for school purposes has been much smaller than it should have been. Neither has there always been a good understanding between the superintendents of schools and the collectors; a mutual jealousy too often exists between them which weakens the hands of both and operates to the injury of the schools.

5th. A fifth obstacle is the want of suitable teachers.

While many of the teachers are sufficiently intelligent, worthy and upright in their lives, they fail in governing their schools; and hence they are too often scenes of noise and disorder. Other teachers are deficient not merely in this particular, but in knowledge, industry and general faithfulness. In some of the districts it has been impossible to procure a suitable number of even tolerably qualified teachers. All this clearly indicates the duty of the Government to cherish and sustain by every lawful means in their power, every institution in the land from which well qualified teachers may be expected to issue.

In some of the schools laudable attempts have been made to connect some sort of manual labor with school instruction. This we look upon as very important and should be encouraged by every proper means.

The Royal School being sustained entirely by Government, its expenses for the last year have been \$3,411.04. There are now in that school 13 pupils. It is still under the instruction and care of its former faithful teachers, and is in a prosperous condition.

The seminaries mentioned in former reports as assisted by the Government in the way of land, are still in successful operation.— These are the Protestant Seminary at Lahainaluna, the Protestant Female Seminary at Wailuku, and the Catholic Seminary at Koolau.

The Boarding School for Boys at Hilo has a high reputation; and also a select school for boys at Hanalei, Kauai.

There are also a few important select schools at several of the Missionary stations, taught by the Missionaries.

Of schools for white children exclusively there are but two on the Islands; one of them at Punahou in the vicinity of Honolulu, in which there are 33 pupils; and the other in Honolulu, containing 16 pupils. Instruction is given in the English language, and in the former the dead languages and some of the higher branches are taught.

Besides these there are three other schools in Honolulu, and one in Lahaina, in which the English language is exclusively taught to white, half caste, and native children. All these schools are supported by private funds and have a good reputation.

In all not far short of 200 children are now being taught in the English language, in the schools just mentioned.]

The number of ordained Clergymen on the different Islands are as follows:

Protestants, - - -	26	Catholic Priests, - - -	15
Protestant Male Assistant Missionaries, - - -	12	Catholic lay Missionaries, - - -	10
Assistant Female Missionaries, - - -	39		<u>25</u>
	<u>77</u>		

As Missionary labor is of great importance to the Islands, it is desirable that the lands held by the several Missionaries should be secured to them by fixed tenures. I would therefore recommend that all such lands be declared by law to be national, inalienable property, perpetually secured for the purpose for which they were given to the several members of the Protestant and Catholic Missions now on the Islands.

The number of children of Protestant Missionaries on the Islands are as follows:

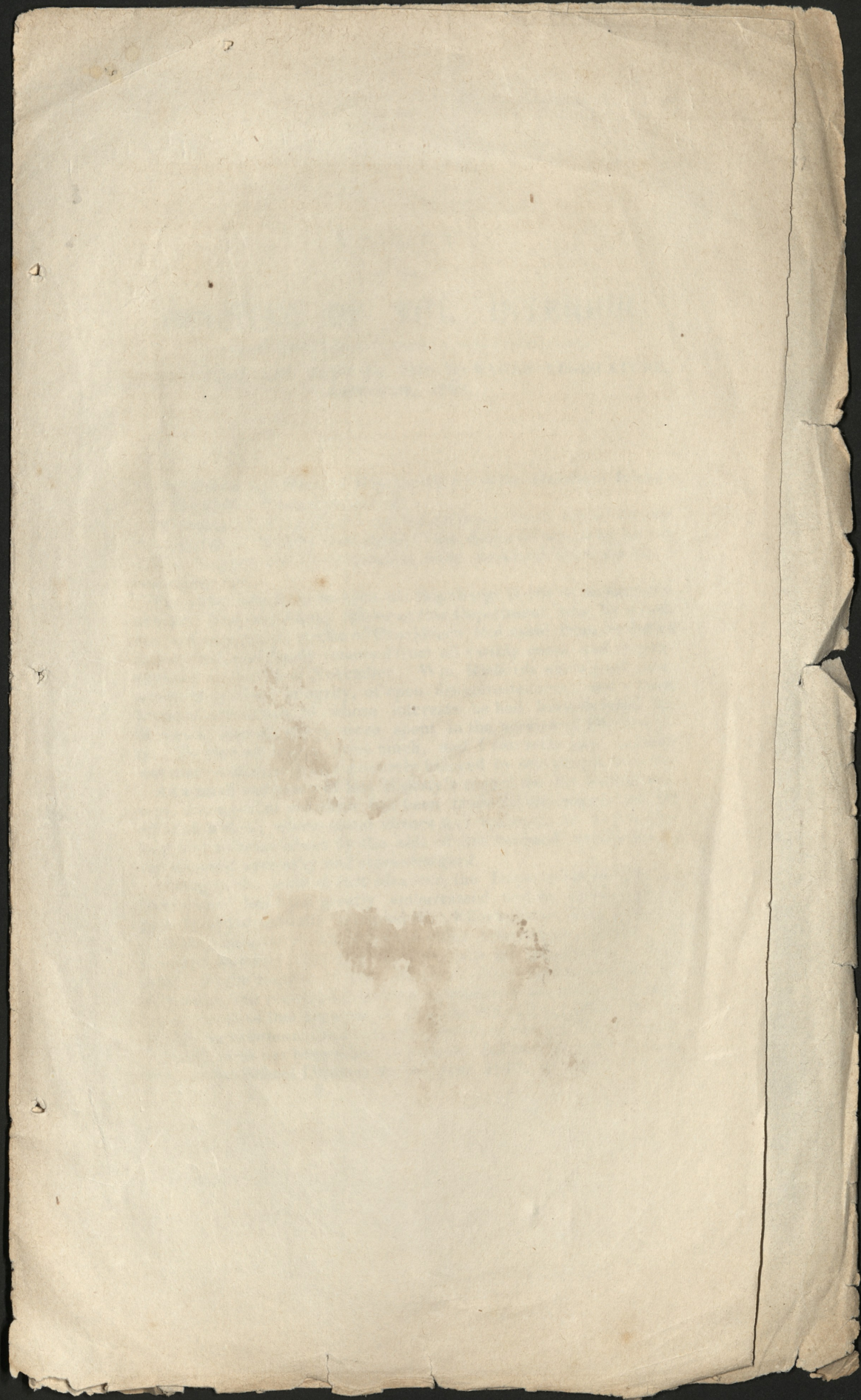
Over 10 years, - - - - -	39
Under 10 years, - - - - -	90
	<u>129</u>

The future prospects of these children deserve your serious consideration.

Great pains have been taken to have the laws relating to toleration impartially administered; no cases of collision between the different sects, of any serious importance have come before this department since I have had the honor to exercise its functions.

God preserve the King.

KEONI ANA.



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