10 o'clock, and when it was over they all lay down, and remained there till next morning, when they dispersed to their respective localities. Samuel Foley, the only blacksmith here at the time, and the first in Illawarra, with his family, witnessed the event as well as myself, but no other white people saw it. Foley's house was beside where I was living.

"REMINISCENCES OF EARLY ILLAWARRA", by ALEXANDER STEWART (published in the "Illawarra Mercury", 1894; reprinted 1934).

A CRISIS IN EDUCATION (1879):

In the spirit of the Old Diggers who used to make themselves unpopular in Greece and the desert by telling their juniors how much worse things had been on the Somme, we offer for the consolation of the Teachers' Federation and its allies this pathetic appeal, dated 12th November, 1879, from Mr. D. Richardson, teacher at Minnamurra School.

"I beg to make application for removal to another school by reason of indifferent school buildings and residence. The schoolroom is altogether unsuitable: in wet weather the rain the rain comes through the roofing so as to leave scarcely one dry seat or desk, and the children are compelled to stand anywhere about the floor at which a dry spot can be found — writing on slate or paper is out of the question. Again, the school is not nearly large enough for the number in attendance, nor is the seating accommodation adequate.

"During the winter the westerly winds blowing through the openings between the slabs, and the drought from the floor which is at a considerable height from the ground, are very injurious to the children's health, and are, consequently, the cause of diminished attendance.

"2. What is termed the teacher's residence is very inferior, and far from proof against the rain. There being no place nearer at which accommodation can be obtained, I am forced to board at a farmhouse about a mile from school where circumstances are unsuitable for study, not to mention other inconveniences.

"3. In case of removal to more comfortable quarters, should the Council approve of the same, my sister will undertake to teach needlework."

(Sad to say, Mr. Richardson's application was rejected, after Mr. Inspector Jones had heartlessly commented:

"Mr. Richardson is qualified to manage a school requiring the services of one or two pupil teachers. His present situation is doubtless an uncomfortable one, but being young and unmarried, he is better able to bear the inconveniences of it than a married man and should manifest greater patience and self-denial in the matter").

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