

203. *Hon. Mr. Miller.*] Do you say you would not consider mere reading of the Scriptures of any value in the schools supposing all classes could agree to read selected portions at certain times without explanation? Would that be of no value in the event of the system you propose being impossible?—I should object to that, because I do not believe any person could be appointed to select passages that would satisfy all denominations. Who would you have? Should it be the Minister of Education?

204. You think it is not possible to agree upon passages?—I think not. It would exclude the Roman Catholics.

205. Are there not passages of Scripture to be met that all might agree upon?—There are, but I think not to satisfy everybody—certainly not us, and I think not the Roman Catholics.

206. If passages could be agreed upon, do you think that would be better than nothing?—I do not think it would, because, in my opinion, it would be a sham. It would not satisfy the people more than the present system.

207. Surely the children would go away with the texts imprinted upon their memory, and they would recur to them in after life?—I do not think it would be of any real benefit. It would, moreover, be in the power of the master to use Scripture in an improper and irreverent way.

208. Then, in the event of the State refusing this denominational system, there would be no alternative?—I do not know of any.

209. Except, of course, the various denominations having their own schools?—Yes.

210. *Hon. Mr. Dick.*] Was the petition from the General Synod unanimous?—As to the first paragraph I think it was, but not as to the last. I objected to it.

211. Did the whole of the members of the Synod think it was the duty of the Synod to send such a petition?—I think so, though one or two may have objected to the terms. Some objected to the last paragraph.

212. The second paragraph, that means that each denomination must have its own teacher or religious instructor for these children?—I think that was intended to apply merely to country schools, where it would be impossible to have different schools for each denomination.

213. It does not say so?—I think that was intended, and that it is supplementary to the first paragraph.

214. Your idea is that each denomination should have its own instructor?—Yes.

215. You think religion should be taught every day?—Yes.

216. And in school hours?—Certainly.

217. If there were children of half a dozen denominations in one country school, how would you arrange they should be all taught the same day?—It could not be done in some country places.

218. What would you suggest as a remedy?—Possibly in country places the people might agree among themselves.

219. Would you be willing in small schools that a Wesleyan teacher should teach your scholars?—No; I would have a conscience-clause.

220. But you say you would teach religion every day. Would you have one clergyman every day to go?—It would be a matter of arrangement, no doubt. It would be impossible that a clergyman could go every day to country schools; they have not sufficient time.

221. But you would not allow the denominations to unite and give religious instruction unitedly?—Not unless they agreed. Possibly they might agree in country districts. The Wesleyans and others do not object to our teaching.

222. Have you seen the class-books of the State schools?—Yes.

223. Have you seen Nelson's Reader?—No.

224. Do you consider no religious class-book to be of any avail?—A mere allusion to religious subjects does not, in my opinion, meet the question at all; not in the least degree.

225. You would be satisfied with nothing short of each denomination doing its own work?—I think nothing less will satisfy the country.

226. You rather prefer that each denomination should have its own schools, and be paid by results?—Exactly so.

227. Do you extend that to all denominations—even the non-Christian?—I do. I think all citizens alike being taxed, none should have any special burden thrown on them that others have not. No denomination should be subject to a heavy special tax to support schools of their own. It is immaterial whether they are Chinese or Jews: they pay taxes like the rest of the community; and, if they will supply the amount of secular education which the Government requires, I think they are entitled to a due quota of any Government grant.

228. *Hon. Mr. Acland.*] As to the first clause of the Primate's petition, do you think that would be brought into force except in large towns?—I do not think so; only in moderately large towns.

229. In large towns, then, you think it could be?—I think so.

230. In some districts you think it would not be brought into force?—I think not.

231. The second clause would apply to the more scattered districts?—Yes; with a conscience-clause.

232. You think it probable that in some cases the different denominations would be able to agree upon a person who could give religious instruction?—I think possibly in country districts they would be able to very often agree on some plan for the purpose.

233. You consider that an hour on Saturday, in addition to Sunday-school teaching, would be sufficient in such a case?—It might be all that would be possible.

233A. You think it undesirable to drag the children to school apart from school hours?—Very undesirable. It cannot be done.

234. You think that would be very likely to set the children against religion?—I think so.

235. *Mr. Feldwick.*—The Primate's petition asks for grants-in-aid. The present capitation is £3 15s. I suppose you agree that denominations with separate schools should also bear their