

366. Those are the prominent features of the system. I understood you to express assent to them except as regards the first—that the schools should first be erected at the cost of the separating body?—Yes. Why should not the State erect schools for our children, when it erects them for other people's children, when I say there would be admission into the school for every one, and there would be no interference with the religion of those who were not Catholics? Of course, I consent to that. I think it is perfectly just—not only politic, but just. I think it would be an obligation on the promoters and governors of the school not to attempt to interfere with the consciences of other people.

367. Do you think it right that religious instruction should begin at prearranged hours?—Yes; we do that ourselves. That is our practice.

368. *Mr. Barron.*] I understood you to say that no attempt had been made to influence the religious opinions of children of other denominations at Catholic schools?—Yes.

369. Are you aware whether any attempt has been made to influence the religious opinions of children attending the State schools?—I am aware that such has been the case.

370. Is it in the lesson-books, or simply through the teachers?—It is done in a variety of ways. It is very hard to know what books are used in the Government schools. There is a great variety of books, and some of the books are very frequently changed in the schools, which is a very great evil, and a cause of expense to the parents. I believe, generally speaking, now there are what are called the Royal Readers. I have looked over them carefully, and have not yet discovered anything to which I could positively object. With regard to the histories used in the schools there are many things to which I do object. With regard to what I complain of—interferences with the Catholics—there are some teachers so senseless and bigoted that they cannot restrain themselves—cannot keep themselves off the Catholic conscience. There are some cases of that sort; and the whole tone of the school is entirely anti-Catholic. The teachers are all non-Catholics, and the pupils are non-Catholics; and very many are exceptionally bigoted, and are constantly insulting Catholics in their play-hours and when going to and from school.

371. I understand you to mean that this is one of your strongest objections to the present system?—My strongest objection is one of principle. I say that the secular system, on principle, is one that the Catholics cannot accept.

372. Even although it was possible to remove the objections as to religious opinions?—I hold that the difficulties cannot be removed. The system is quite opposed to our principles. I sincerely believe there is a desire on the part of very many not to interfere with us; but I say that interference is inseparable from the system. It is impossible that the Catholics cannot but be offended and injured by the system, simply because of the system it is.

373. Your objection is that no system of education is possible that is not founded on dogmatic teaching?—I say no real system is possible without that.

374. You say that the Government is bound to do for Catholic children what they do for other children: the Government are giving a free, secular, and compulsory system of education?—The State is bound to do for Catholic children in the matter of education—are bound to give out of the public funds devoted for the purpose of education a share to the Catholic children equal to the share given in proportion to other people's children.

375. But I understood you to state that the Government was bound to make the same provision for Catholic children which it is making for other children?—What I mean is this: to give the Catholic schools the same allowance given to non-Catholic secular schools.

376. The State is providing one system, free, secular, and compulsory, free for Catholics as well as for other colonists; therefore, when you say the Government is bound to do for Catholic children what it is doing for other children, to that extent I presume you admit it is doing so?—Now, I affirm, the Government is expending exclusively on the secular sect the entire revenues of the country devoted to educational purposes. The Legislature is doing that with its eyes open, because it knows that the Catholics are opposed to the system on principle, and will never accept it; and the Catholic people are taxed as if they accepted it like other people. Therefore, I say it is unjust to expend on the secular sect the entire revenues contributed by the whole of the people of the country.

377. Then the Education Act, as passed by the Legislature, is unjust to the Catholics because they are taxed to maintain a system of education which they cannot use?—Precisely; that is my contention.

378. You hold it is unjust to tax Catholics to maintain a system of education of which they do not approve?—Yes.

379. That system of education is provided by the Government of the country; the Government of the country is elected by the people of the country. Is it not as unjust to tax Catholics to maintain a Government which is unjust to them in the most essential particular—this of education—as it is to tax them to maintain a system of education which is unjust?—Not equally unjust, but it is unjust. The Government has no right to perpetrate an injustice on any man in the community.

380. You say the education system is of first importance?—Nothing of greater importance.

381. Therefore, when you say it is not equally unjust, you mean more unjust?—I mean nothing of the sort, because "more" is not "equally;" they are not synonymous terms.

382. *Hon. Mr. Hart.*] You said you object to Collier's History of England as used in the State schools: What are the titles of the histories used in the Catholic schools—what are the names of the authors?—There are a variety of histories used in Catholic schools. We use the Christian Brothers' books in some schools, and the Catholic History of England in others. The publisher of the Grandwell series sent to me the mail before last copies of these books used by the London School Board, and asked me to look over them and give him an order if I approved of them. In a literary point of view they are excellent, and there is nothing objectionable in them at all that I could see. Therefore I sent an order for some, and shall adopt them; but hitherto we have been obliged to use what we could get.