

644. Will you please state the Roman Catholic system of education, its machinery, and ramifications, explain its workings, and give all the details possible of the efficiency and cost?—How many hours will you give me? A question of this sort cannot be answered to do it justice in the space of a few minutes.

645. What alterations in the State system of education would you suggest to remove the alleged grievances of Roman Catholics without inflicting injustice to other denominations?—There we enter upon a rather large field. In the first place, our only claim is fair-play and equity. In order that that should be accomplished, there would no doubt have to be very great changes indeed, because we should require to have a fair share of public money, as well as a share of school endowments, and assistance in the maintenance of normal schools. In a word, we should be on a footing of equality with our fellow-colonists. If I may make a suggestion I would propose that as a first instalment of justice there should be some consideration shown to the Catholics for this reason: the children whom we educate in our schools represent a positive saving to the State. It is reckoned that every child costs the State £4 per head. We have 6,000 children or thereabouts in the colony that are being brought up in the Catholic schools at a cost free to the State, and I think, therefore, we should get that amount which is saved to the State, and which would represent a grant of, say, £24,000. If we turn these children out of our schools, and on to the State, the State will be called upon at once to provide for those children, to build schools, and provide for their education generally. The £24,000 would of course be exclusive of the amount necessary for the erection of new schools. We have got our own buildings; we have raised them at our own expense. Although the Diocese of Auckland is behind the rest of the colony on account of the peculiar circumstances in which we have been placed, still I find we have expended a sum of £28,000 in the establishment of schools, not including maintenance. The amount has been spent in sites, buildings, and school furniture and fittings. I might add that this £28,000 does not include the two schools for which we have had Government aid.

646. May I ask whether you have any debt on your schools?—Yes; there are debts.

647. What amount?—That is a matter that I have not gone into, but it is relatively small—I should say £2,000 or £3,000.

648. Do you think that the cost of maintaining the schools is fully commensurate with the advantages obtained?—Most decidedly so; so much so that if we could only have a greater number of schools I feel confident that the advantages to be obtained by the colony at large—the social body of the colony—would be very great indeed. We see the effects of the want of proper education at the present day. “Larrikinism,” and the rest of it, proceed from the want of education.

649. What guarantee can the State have that these schools are furnished with the necessary educational material—that is, masters and so on?—Their guarantee would exist in the inspection of the schools by the State. I would add that the efficiency of a school arises more from the results than from fittings.

650. As a recent arrival from England, are you conversant with the system of State schools in England?—Yes; it is a system which perhaps is a shade fairer than the system which exists here, but is certainly far from being just. The State system in England enjoys a grant from the Privy Council, and from the taxation of the public, whereas the Catholic schools enjoy only capitation grants from the Privy Council, but are excluded entirely from the rates which are raised for the Board schools. Although they have certainly outstepped the reasons and motives for which they were originally founded, yet, with the enormous wealth they have at their command, they unquestionably tend to press out all competition.

651. Then, do you think that the English system would meet the views of the petitioners?—No; it would be a shade better, a step higher, but certainly would not be right or fair.

652. [First clause in Synod's petition read.] Do you believe in that?—Entirely.

653. [Second clause read.] Do you believe in that clause?—Yes; we are quite at one there.

654. [Third clause read.] Do you believe in that?—No; not entirely. I join issue with that, because we do not look at the Committees as being the parties to whom the right of teaching religion belongs, and therefore the appointment of teachers ought to depend upon the bishops and priests of the Church. But I agree very nearly with all that has been read.

655. *Hon. Mr. Dick.*] You state that the want of religious education is productive of crime. Do you state that from statistics?—No; I have not gone into the matter fully. But it is the conviction which has gradually and surely grown up in my mind.

656. By religious instruction do you mean any sort of religious instruction?—Of course, I am not going to preach a sermon to the Committee. We always uphold the rights of other denominations to impart their own kind of religious instruction.

657. And their instruction will hinder crime as well as the Catholic instruction?—Certainly.

658. Then, you have not compared the proportion of crime in France and Italy, or France and Ireland?—Not numerically; but we must neither look at France nor at Italy as model Catholic countries. It is a very sad sight indeed. But I think we might look at Ireland—I do not speak of it in connection with the political troubles in which that country has been involved—but certainly the moral standard of virtue in Ireland is far higher than in many other European countries.

659. But France does not give religious instruction?—It gives something worse than what our colony gives. It gives a positively atheistic education. Ours at any rate is negative. In France it is positively atheistic.

660. From statistics, do you suppose that there is more crime in France than in Italy, where there is a religious education?—I am afraid we cannot look upon Italy now as a specimen of a Catholic country. Certainly, since political changes have been introduced into Italy, crimes have been vastly increased, and, if we compare Italy of to-day with Italy of fifty years ago, the statistics of crime will be far greater. This is only plain common-sense. If children are not taught to do themselves and their passions violence, they follow the natural inclinations of their fallen nature, and give way to crime. The great advantage that the denominational system has over the secular