

681. *Mr. Fish.*] Having the answer to the last question, we gather this : that you advocate the various Churches appointing the teachers, and the State appointing the Inspector?—Yes.

682. Is it not a fact that a large number of the Catholic children in Auckland attend the State schools?—Unfortunately it is true.

683. Do you find that portion of the Catholic children who attend the State schools any worse in their moral and religious bearing than those who attend the Catholic schools?—We find that they are very much more deficient in respect to their parents, and in their conduct in after life ; that they go wild.

684. Have you had time enough to know what they do in after life? Is not the system too young?—“By their fruits ye shall know them.”

685. Have you had time to find out what their fruits are?—Others have. In Auckland, where the girls have had a much more efficient training and teaching than the boys, the result is that the Catholic young men of the last generation have almost disappeared. But, on the contrary, with the female portion of the diocese it is so true, as I know by the number of dispensations that are required for mixed marriages. The Catholic girls have not got the Catholic young men ; they cannot find them.

686. Then, in Auckland you have got a lot of bad little Catholic boys and a lot of good Catholic boys, and you attribute that to the circumstance that some go to the State schools and others do not?—Not as the sole cause. There will always be both good and bad. There will be a cockle with the wheat.

687. Are we to understand from your answers that you consider dogma a necessary part of education?—Certainly, from a Catholic point of view.

688. Then, the Catholic boy or girl taught religion without dogma would be ill taught?—Certainly.

689. Are you aware that the denominational system has been tried in Auckland?—I understand, from the history of the past, that there was an unfortunate attempt made at something of the sort, which has proved to be a failure. But we must not argue that, because a failure has occurred in an individual case, therefore the system is bad.

690. You stated in answer to a question a short time ago that there were peculiar circumstances attachable to the Catholics in Auckland?—Yes.

691. Would you mind saying what those peculiar circumstances are?—Principally these : that the Catholic Church, in order to flourish and work as it ought to do, requires the co-operation and assistance of its bishops ; and it so happens that the Diocese of Auckland has for years been acephalous—without a head, without a bishop—and, of those bishops who were appointed, some only remained for a short period, as in the case of Dr. Croke. His successor came in a very feeble state of health, and was not able to take an active part in the government of the diocese ; and the result has been that the Catholic Diocese of Auckland has been left without the fostering care of its natural guardian and overseer.

692. Are you aware that the Catholic clergy have been refused permission to impart instruction in the State schools after hours?—We never applied for it.

693. Do you not think that the clergy of every denomination could instruct without breaking up the present system?—I am afraid they might be liable to a repetition of the same scene as Dr. Moorhouse stated had occurred at Melbourne.

694. *Hon. the Chairman.*] What was that?—One minister had a shower of Bibles at his head.

695. *Mr. Fish.*] Supposing the State was to say, “We will put aside one half-day per week for religious instruction.” Would not that suit the Catholics?—It would be better than nothing, but it would not satisfy us at all ; because with us religion necessarily pervades the whole life, as we live and move and are in the presence of our Maker. Religion half a day in the week is certainly better than nothing, but is open to the objection that it is relegating religious instruction to the parents.

696. Then, it is necessary that religious instruction should be given to a boy every day, the same as he takes his breakfast?—Certainly. It need not always take the dogmatic form. But, when religion is a thing that is only allowed to come to the surface as it were on sufferance, it breeds contempt in the minds of youth.

697. Do you not think that the evil to the boy or girl would be as great by having too much religion taught?—Certainly ; we may have too much of a good thing ; but in moderation, and in the proper proportion, it would not be an evil.

698. You will be prepared to admit that if a denominational system were established in this country it would largely increase the cost in the administration of that system?—Perhaps it might. Even though it should, I maintain that the advantages to be derived would be amply commensurate with the extra cost.

699. Assuming that, the extra cost would be so great that it would cause the whole system to collapse, that is to say, that it would be beyond the means of the country to provide such a system?—No doubt it will before long under the present system. We cannot afford to go every year and spend half a million of money.

700. Then, suppose that it is too much for the State, would you still advocate the same system that you advocate now?—Certainly ; but it is open to argument as to whether it is the business of the State at all to provide education for the children of those who are in a position to pay for it. The State may properly come in and subsidize the poor parents.

701. Then, you would rather the State did not educate at all unless under a denominational system?—Certainly.

702. *Mr. Swanson.*] Do you not consider it the duty of the State to educate its children?—Not to assume to itself the duty of education. On the basis of Christianity I maintain that it does not belong to the State primarily. It belongs first of all to the parent, and secondly to the Church, whatever the Church is. The State then comes in to subsidize, the same as we subsidize penury and want.