

771. *Mr. Barron.*] I understood you to say just now that you failed to see why your faith should be treated differently from that of other denominations at the hands of the Government. What do you mean by that?—*Mr. Barnicoat* had asked me whether we should be prepared to forego any contribution from the Government simply for building purposes. Why should we?

772. You do not mean any treatment different from that of other denominations?—In the present circumstances we have to support all the State schools and our own as well, without any aid whatever.

773. But no other denominations get any different treatment from that?—The other denominations, though with a certain amount of protest, as in the case of the Church of England, have fallen in with the system; they have done so more easily than we do, because our convictions are stronger.

774. So that the treatment you receive is exactly the same as other denominations?—The Government says, "We ignore all denominations." Rather than submit to that we have gone to this sacrifice. The Catholic population, it must be borne in mind, does not represent the moneyed class of New Zealand; it represents the poorer classes, and therefore the sacrifice is all the greater.

776. I understood you to say that secular education apart from religious instruction is productive of crime?—Yes.

777. And that Catholic children were better instructed in religion than other children?—I believe so; in fact, it must be so at present, because all religious instruction is excluded in State schools.

778. Then, you think that the children taught in your schools are better taught than in the State schools?—They have a better chance.

779. You have mentioned in evidence that the proportion of Catholics to the total population of the colony is one-seventh?—Yes.

780. Do you know that it has been shown by statistics that a much greater proportion of the children sent to industrial and reformatory schools in the colony belong to the Catholic faith?—I have heard that asserted; I am not in a position to contradict it. It is a circumstance which I am at a loss to understand if it be true. Of course, statistics are facts, and if it is so I cannot account for it, because as you are aware the moral code of Catholics is stated to be more rigid than that of Protestants.

781. If it has been shown by statistics, however, that there is a much greater proportion?—I have nothing to do but to admit it if the statistics are reliable.

782. You say that Bible-reading by Committees is not sufficient in the way of imparting religious instruction?—Not from a Catholic point of view, simply for this reason: that the Holy Scriptures were never intended to be used as a catechism.

783. Do you not think that the reading of the Bible as a lesson-book in the State schools would have a beneficial effect in moral teaching?—It is fragmentary, and therefore certainly better than nothing, but it is in no wise adequate for the requirements of the Catholic body. We consider that it is not right to make the Bible a text-book.

784. You have said also, or admitted, that the teaching of the Church is of the first importance for the welfare of the State. Do you think the State should be made in all things subordinate to the Church?—You mean as to whether it is Church and State, or State and Church. The view that I take, in common with all bishops of the Church, is that, as the soul is the more noble part of man, and the interests of eternity are greater than those of time, the Church takes precedence as regards its own special sphere of action, but not in other matters which are outside the sphere of the Church.

785. Do you consider that the State should be made subordinate to the Church in all things?—Not in all things.

786. Then, a State system of education which does not impart religious instruction is better than no system of instruction at all?—I should certainly say that the voluntary system would be better than a State system which ignores religion. It stands to reason that, if religion and morality are excluded from education, we cannot tell where our future generations will be. We shall be upside down from a social point of view as well as in a religious point of view. There will be no respect for authority, and respect for authority is the basis of society as well as of religion.

787. You say that the total cost of the system is £2,400 in your province; that is, secular and religious education combined?—That, of course, would not include such things as school fittings, pianofortes, and other expensive articles. These are included in the other total of £28,000.

788. My object is to show whether you impart secular and religious instruction at a less cost than the State does?—We do.

789. How many children are taught for this £2,400?—1,340, if I remember aright.

790. And suppose you were to make allowance for everything that would be a charge against the instruction you impart, how much would the amount be?—I would hardly like to risk an opinion. With the books and such things it might run up to about £3,000.

791. Even then it seems to be much more economical than the State system?—It must be so, because our teachers for the greater part teach not so much for the love of money as on principle.

792. *Hon. Mr. Acland.*] There was a question about the duty of the State to give education to all children. You mean it is the duty of the State to educate those whom the parents do not. You also think that when any considerable body of citizens, feeling themselves unable to use the State schools, wish to educate their children through their own denomination, they are entitled to a grant-in-aid for that purpose?—I will not even go so far as that. I do not see why respectable people should look to the State at all for the education of their children. If they have the means of supporting them they have also the means of educating them.

793. Although the State was paying for the teachers, you would naturally wish to have the power of appointing them?—Yes.

794. Would you object, if the State Inspectors found a teacher was absolutely incompetent, that they should have the power of removing him?—Certainly not.