

matter, and I strongly suspect there is a large proportion who do not sympathize with their wise and learned teachers.

827. Then, do you admit that the bulk of the laity of the Church of England are in a state of dense ignorance in that respect?—I am sorry to state they have been largely leavened by evil example and evil living. Many of them were brought up in dissent, and you cannot change a man's skin with the change of climate.

828. Then, you admit that the clergy do not represent the laity in this matter, on account of their ignorance?—The only true test we have of the feelings of the laity is this: that in the Diocesan and General Synods we have elected lay members. A majority of the lay members must have assented to the resolution in the last General Synod to send this petition, and they expressed the educated opinion of our laity. I do not think they expressed the uneducated opinion of our Church people.

829. Can you tell the Committee that Church people do not send their children freely to the State schools?—Certainly we do. We make the best of the system, but we object to it.

830. Have you heard any serious objection from the laity of your Church against the present system?—Except so far as their opinions have been expressed in the Synods. It is not customary for the laity to teach their clergy, and therefore they are not likely to express their opinions to me.

831. *Mr. Swanson.*] What do you mean in saying they are not likely to give an expression of opinion in your presence?—I think they would be more disposed to learn than to teach.

832. I presume the intelligent portion of the laity are those who agree with you?—I do not know what deduction you infer. The representative laity agree with the clergy.

833. Do the electors of the colony agree as a body with the clergy?—How am I to gauge their opinions unless I gauge it by the only test available—the test of their representatives in the Synods who are elected.

834. Are not the representatives sent to this House equally as fair a test of the opinions of the people as any sent to the Synod?—Most decidedly not on this matter, for this reason: that on the hustings nothing must be said about religion, therefore this question cannot come upon the hustings at all. I know this question has arisen at the hustings, "Shall we have the Bible in schools or not?" but that is not the question at issue.

835. Has not this question been the question before the electors for the last three elections?—Apparently it was, but as a secular question; and, unfortunately, the class of people who govern elections are not the persons who take an interest in Church matters. I have heard it said in Wellington that two or three persons can carry any election. It looks, therefore, as if it was a caucus system.

836. Are you aware that the clergy in preaching sometimes tell the people how they ought to vote?—I am not aware of it; but I think if they do they behave very properly; they are as capable of giving an intelligent opinion as any one else. Laymen do the same thing to an infinitely greater degree with half the amount of knowledge.

837. But is it not caucusing to use the Church for that object?—I think if the clergy find themselves pressed they would be justified in using that means. Those people who provoke caucuses are the parties blamable.

838. Do you consider it is the duty of the State to see that the children are educated?—Yes, to see that they are educated.

839. If the denominations have had the assistance of the State in money and buildings and land to carry on education and failed, was it not the duty of the State to take it up?—It would have been the duty of the State to see that the conditions of any grant were carried out.

840. And if the contractor did not do the work, what then?—I presume it must be done by some one else.

841. But suppose the State took the work in hand when the contractor failed?—Then, that is violating the maxim that the State should not interfere in any business unless necessary.

842. But is it not necessary to educate the people?—It is not necessary to take education out of the hands of the people. I do not admit that the previous system broke down, and if there were two or three failures that was no reason why the State should take the whole thing upon itself.

843. If the State has for any reasons taken the education of youth into its own hands, is it not as well that it should teach those branches of knowledge that all parties are agreed upon?—That is begging the question. All parties are not agreed upon it. You eliminate a factor which some parties consider paramount, and assume there is agreement when there is disagreement. I would rather have a boy taught the three Rs, with the fear of God, than all that can be taught in the schools if he is made an infidel.

844. If the State is to teach the children, would it not be best for the State to keep clear of religion, and to teach only what most of the different sects have agreed upon?—I have first to grant your "if," and then to answer upon an hypothesis.

845. Is it desirable the State should see her children educated?—Will you define education? I hold that the education of the religious and moral element in man is an essential element in education.

846. Is it better that the children should grow up without education than that they should grow up without religion?—There is no such alternative. It is an assumption.

847. *Mr. Munro.*] What is the character of the religion you would have taught in schools?—I would let the different sects recognized in the State each teach their own religion. To get a common measure of religion is out of the question.

848. Do I understand you to say each sect should be at liberty to teach its own doctrines?—Yes.

849. You do not think it possible for the religious denominations to agree among themselves as to a common text-book containing religious instruction?—No; experience teaches us that that is