

absolutely impossible. You have to eliminate so much to suit different parties that you have nothing but the grand idea of a God left.

850. A man taught that would be a better citizen than if not taught any religion at all?—Quite so.

851. Do you mean that denominational education means teaching the dogma of the different sects?—The State would only know what was taught the children in secular matters. The State should pay capitation for ascertained results in secular education, and allow the different denominations to do as they chose as to religious teaching—the State would know nothing of that.

852. *Hon. Mr. Barnicoat.*] Do you think those who had separate schools, whether large or small, should be satisfied if they received the capitation the State pays now?—Speaking for myself I should be satisfied. I should think the State would say to those who would not use the State schools, “We will give you so much per head for educating your children in your own school.” You strike out a general rule in that way, and all reasonable people would be satisfied. Of course, there would be some unreasonable people who would never be satisfied.

853. The State now pays £4 per head. Do you think the petitioners would be satisfied with that £4 whether their schools were large or small?—I think the denominationalists ought to be satisfied with that. I would be.

854. *Mr. Barron.*] Did I understand you to say that you were opposed to the present system, as excluding three-fourths of the people?—No; my opinion—whatever it is worth—is that, for one reason or another, the present system is not in accordance with the wishes of three-fourths of the people.

855. Then, you object to the system because you consider the majority of the people has not a system of which it approves?—Yes.

856. Then, should not any change in the present system be only such as would be approved by the majority?—I presume that is the law on which all changes are made. From an expression of opinion, which has been asked for, I believe it has been found over a limited area that the majority object to the present system.

857. Do you say your chief objection is that the system is not approved by the majority?—That is not my chief objection. My chief objection is that the present system practically excludes religious instruction.

858. You are aware that by our system of representation Parliament is supposed to be elected by the majority of the people?—You lay a stress on the word “supposed;” but I am also aware that on this matter it does not represent the wishes of the people.

859. But, whatever the outcome may be, the theory is that Parliament represents the majority of the people?—Yes; that is the theory—a pious fraud.

860. Do I understand you to say it is the duty of the State to educate the people?—I presume the State, in violating a political maxim, had some object in view—that is, the making of good citizens. I think it is right the State should see that the people are educated. I say the State should supplement, not supplant. It has supplanted. If the State saw any child that was not being educated, the State should see that it was educated. It is not doing that now, for the compulsory clauses are not being worked satisfactorily, and therefore the most dangerous classes of the people are not being educated at all. The people who are attended to are those who would attend to themselves, and the people who should be attended to by the State are not attended to at all.

861. You consider it the duty of the State to see that all children are educated?—Yes.

862. Then, any system approved by Parliament may be presumed to be adopted by the majority?—No. That is contrary to my conviction.

863. *Mr. J. Buchanan.*] Have you any experience in reference to the administration of the Act in Wellington?—No. I have been on a School Committee, and might be still a member, but holding my views I thought it was not quite loyal to them to remain a member. I have been more or less connected with education myself, and I was manager of three schools in Ireland. The manager there has the sole control of all schools under him. The schools under my charge were practically denominational. We had the two systems combined. I was one of the few clergy in Ireland who thought it was compatible to allow the State to interfere at all in schools.

864. When a member of the Committee, did you find it was the desire of the Committees to bring within their schools the children of every class in the community?—We had nothing to do with that matter. We met once a month, and attended to the affairs before us. There was a proposition made to bring into operation the compulsory clauses, and it was negatived. We felt it would be impossible to do it. I believe the same Committee has since declared they are in force, but they are a dead-letter.

865. Are there any officers to enforce it?—I believe not.

866. Will the police enforce it?—I am not aware.

867. Then, virtually, there are children left out?—Practically there are children who are not educated.

868. They are practically excluded?—There is no actual physical exclusion, but there is a *vis inertia* to keep them out.

869. Virtually, for what are termed the Arabs, there is no admission?—I believe there is a large section who are not in the schools.

870. Would it not be the duty of the State to recognize a distinction of classes, and provide ragged schools?—I am afraid that would not act in the colony. I think it would be the duty of the State to compel all to come in, and let those who object go out.

871. Is not the Act in favour of the better classes, rather than in favour of the poor?—Most decidedly.

872. *Hon. Mr. Acland.*] If the State does not educate all children down to the lowest, do you think the present system is practically a failure?—I should say it is a failure where it ought especially to succeed, and that it is a success where it is not required.