

223. Is that Mr. Lowe's room?—Yes. I do not carry the key about with me. It is left in the drawer.

224. Then, you do not think it was possible for any one to obtain that information out of the Committee-room?—I say that it was impossible for any one to obtain it out of the Committee-room, but I do not say it was impossible for any one to obtain it out of the cupboard.

225. Did you yourself afford any information to any person in connection with the matters before the Committee?—No, sir.

226. Did you discuss them with any person outside the Committee?—No.

227. *Right Hon. R. J. Seddon.*] Did you give Mr. Le Grove a copy of the Bill as well as the syllabus?—No; he had only a copy of the syllabus and a copy of, I think, the Inspectors' report—the latter not a confidential paper. The only confidential paper he had was the syllabus.

228. You say you do not know whether the members of the Committee got their papers or not—you simply addressed them to them. Were the papers enclosed in an envelope?—Yes, enclosed in a sealed envelope. I took the first lot of papers—those sent out on the Friday night between 10 and 11 o'clock p.m.—down to the messengers' room myself. The papers which were sent out on the Monday afternoon I sent out from J room. I rang for the messenger, and he came up and took them down.

229. Have you heard that some of the members have not got their papers—that the papers went astray?—I have heard the rumour, that is all.

230. But none of the members have complained to you? Did any member ask for a duplicate set?—Yes; Mr. Hanan asked for a copy of the Examination and Classification of Teachers paper. He got it on Monday, the 7th September, at 11 a.m., and returned it at 10.40 a.m. on Thursday, the 10th. That was only the one paper.

231. But you have not heard definitely of any of the papers going astray, nor had any definite application made by members for a duplicate set?—Only at the Committee meeting yesterday morning, the 10th instant, I heard two or three complaining that the papers had gone. It appeared that complaints were being made that the papers had gone between the meeting on Thursday week, the 3rd instant, and the meeting yesterday, the 10th instant; but that was an impossibility, unless the members had taken the papers away themselves, because, to my knowledge, no one has been to the cupboard.

232. *Hon. Mr. Guinness.*] When you lock up the papers in your cupboard and take the key to Mr. Lowe's room, do you hand it over to any officer there?—No; I put it in the drawer.

233. Is there a cupboard in Mr. Lowe's room where it is the custom for Committee Clerks to put the keys of their cupboards?—Yes; we put them all in the one box.

234. Do you know whether that drawer is kept locked, or left open?—That I could not say. When I go there it is open.

235. The drawer is never kept locked, is it?—I do not know.

236. *Mr. Massey.*] How long did Mr. Le Grove have the paper away that you gave him? When did he return it?—I could not say for certain. I think he returned it yesterday morning when I asked him for it.

237. You asked him for it?—Yes. I asked him for it for the purpose of completing my own file.

238. You think it was on Thursday, the 10th, that he returned the paper which he received on the 3rd?—Yes.

ERNEST YEVLILY REDWARD, Clerk to the Crown Law Officers, examined on oath. (No. 8.)

239. *The Chairman.*] Did you receive from the Printing Office the draft of a Bill regarding secondary schools?—I did.

240. How many copies did you receive from the Printing Office?—I got fifty copies.

241. What was done with them?—Forty-eight were handed to Mr. Hogben himself. The other two I have in the office. They are still in my possession in the Crown Law Office.

242. Were they ever out of your possession from the time you received them from the Printing Office until you sent them to the Education Office?—No.

243. Have any other persons had access to the two copies in your possession?—No one other than the Law Draftsman.

244. So that no information could have been obtained from the Bills in your possession?—No.

245. I suppose you would not see a draft Bill before it went to the Printing Office at all?—The printing all goes through my hands.

246. Was there any opportunity of any person receiving or using that from the time it came into your hands—or prior to its coming into your hands—until it came back printed?—No; a Bill goes direct from me to the Overseer of the Printing Office, and comes back direct from him to me.

247. You do not think it possible, then, for any information to have been obtained in your office by outsiders?—No.

248. *Right Hon. R. J. Seddon.*] This is the draft Bill—it has not been approved yet?—That is so.

249. It has not been circulated?—No.

SIR EDWARD OSBORNE GIBBES, Assistant Secretary to the Education Department, examined on oath. (No. 9.)

250. *The Chairman.*] Did you receive the printed copies of the Secondary Schools Bill from the Crown Law Officers?—Yes.

251. How many did you receive?—I do not know. I did not count them.

252. Did you have charge of those copies after they came into your Department?—Yes; general charge. They were sent to me, and were kept in my room.