

tional, Baptist, Church of Christ, Seventh Day Adventists, Unitarian, &c. Many of these would tell the Committee of the great evils (incident to such a scheme) that they have seen in other lands.

- (4.) Witnesses from the body of teachers who know best what the effect of the introduction of such a scheme will be. No Teachers' Institute has favoured the scheme. At least 85 per cent. of Teachers' Institutes, including the national organization, have declared emphatically against it. It is estimated that fully 80 to 85 per cent. of the teachers are opposed to the scheme.
- (5.) Witnesses who would speak on behalf of the labour organization of New Zealand. These represent a part of the populace on which the compulsory clause of the Act bears with most force.
- (6.) Witnesses from the body of educationists throughout New Zealand, including the staffs of University Colleges and the Inspectors of Schools.
- (7.) Witnesses from the expert educationists of the Education Department, including the Inspector-General of Schools, the Editor of the *School Journal*, and the Department's Inspectors.

We respectfully submit our emphatic protest against large sections of the people not being heard on this question. It is impossible for any two men to represent all these diverse views, but as the Committee finds itself unable to hear them we shall do our best to put the case fully before you. We wish it to be clearly understood, however, by this Committee, by Parliament, and by the people of this country, that under the conditions imposed our case can be only very incompletely presented.

Secular Education—the Solution of the Educational Problem.

"Hence, in all communities where social and political freedom have found scope, the sentiment on behalf of the public schools definitely severed from ecclesiastical control and directed wholly by State officials finds increasing support. In such communities the Churches which have broken loose from older institutions cease to seek control over the week-day school and are content to maintain a hold over the family through voluntary effort in Sunday schools" (Professor J. J. Finlay). This sums up the whole educational advance along this line, and the movement in England has been typical of a similar movement all over the world. In England it was not till Mr. Foster's great Education Bill of 1870 was passed that public schools for the people really came into existence.

The English Example—New Zealand's Warning.

Foster's Bill: In 1870 this Bill was accepted as a compromise between the Nonconformists and the Anglicans, although educational stalwarts like Mr. Dale, of Birmingham, and Dr. Barrett, of Norwich, protested against it as a surrender of the Nonconformist principle. By this compromise what was called simple Bible lessons might be given at the option of the Boards in Board schools. But subsequent events showed that this compromise was not to be accepted as a final solution. The Anglicans were constant in their attack upon what they termed the colourless religious teaching in the Board schools and swift to make encroachments upon that system, until we are brought to Balfour's Voluntary Schools Bill, which, among other things, threw all denominational schools on the rates. The wrathful remonstrance of the people compelled the withdrawal of the Bill. But in 1902 the present Education Act was forced upon the people. This Act was the Bishops' Bill as formulated by them in convocation. By this Act denominational schools are supported by the rates, and the right of entry into such schools is given to the Churches controlling them, while their headships are closed to all who cannot accept the Anglican creed. As a result the country has for the last twelve years been rent by sectarian strife. Passive resisters have been summoned by scores of thousands, thousands have had their goods distrained, and hundreds have been imprisoned, some of them including ministers, three, four, and up to eight times. After such a hard and bitter experience it is little wonder that the feeling of the country is rapidly moving towards the secular system as the only way out. Within recent years manifestos in favour of the secular solution have been largely signed by both Nonconformist and Anglican ministers, while the Labour party and others are pledged to the secular system.

The Rev. Sir William Robertson Nicoll, the most representative Nonconformist divine and journalist of the present day in the British Empire, has said in the *British Weekly*: "The whole drift of Liberal opinion seems steadily settling in this direction [that of secular education]. It is the one solution of the problem. All the rest are makeshifts. We are quite willing to accept the penultimate solution of the problem if it can be arrived at. No doubt many earnest Nonconformists are still very much opposed to the abandonment of State religious instruction, and they are in all probability strong enough to enforce a temporary and not a lasting settlement. Be it so, but the temporary settlement will not give satisfaction, and there will be unrest till the inevitable goal [that of secular education] is attained." The late Drs. Dale and Parker were also satisfied that secular education was the only solution. Dr. Clifford, the eminent Baptist clergyman, has also given expression to similar views.

In New Zealand we have profited by the lamentable experience of England and have won through to the secular solution without serious set-back to our educational progress. The endeavour made by the first Parliament to endow religious sects fortunately failed, for the Queen vetoed the measure. In 1847 an Education Ordinance was passed by which power was given to the Government not only to establish and maintain schools, but to contribute to the support