

Mr. W. H. Kelly, M.H.R., was elected unanimously as the selected Protestant candidate for Wentworth in the forthcoming Federal election.—*Sydney Daily Telegraph*, 26th January, 1910." (*Hansard*, Vol. cv, p. 731.)

J. Rayne, M.L.A.: "I am a native of a place not far from Sydney. . . . Well, I can tell you that I would sooner break stones on the road than be a public man in New South Wales. Unless a man is prepared to lend himself to all sectarian, miserable ideas, then this Parliament will be no place for him—if it becomes anything what it is in New South Wales. . . . I know what it has been. . . . Let any may go there in election time, or go there now, and in some of the districts you will see the people stand off from one another as if they belonged to different countries altogether." (*Hansard*, Vol. cv, p. 738.)

Hon. B. Fahey, M.L.C.: "Now, what is the result of religious teaching in New South Wales? At the last election sectarianism was positively so rampant that one clergyman stumped the country, addressed the electors, and said, 'You vote for that man and you vote for Rome; you vote for this man and you vote for good honest Protestantism.' That is in black and white in the journals of New South Wales. That is the result of religious teaching in the schools of New South Wales. Are they living in a free country there?" (*Hansard*, Vol. cvi, p. 1708.)

Queensland Evidence up to Date—The Present Position there.

H. F. Hardacre, M.L.A., writing on the 22nd June, 1914, says, "The adoption of the New South Wales system has largely increased and strengthened the demand for State aid to denominational schools, and made it logically and politically almost impossible to refuse it." Again: "The entrance of the 'system' has largely increased sectarian bitterness and strife in public and political life."

Edward G. Theodore, M.L.A. (Deputy Leader of the Opposition), writing on the 27th June, 1914, says, "It cannot truthfully be said that the system of religious teaching in the State schools of Queensland is generally accepted. A great many people look forward to the time when an opportunity will be given the people to vote on the question again. It seems almost certain that when the question is again put to the poll the people will favour a return to the old purely secular system. The working of the system of religious teaching in the schools has caused sectarian bitterness and strife, but it is difficult to say to what extent. The contention usually arises from the claims of certain sects for denominational aid as a concomitant of religious teaching in State schools, and from the treatment received by some children as a consequence of their not attending the religious lessons. There are numerous cases of friction between parents and teachers and parents and ministers regarding the religious instruction, chiefly in reference to the children who do not receive the instruction. In some cases of small schools these children have had to go outside, with nothing to do, while the religious lessons were being taught to the other children. It is beyond doubt that there is a much more pronounced demand from the Roman Catholics for aid for their schools, and for other privileges. Other denominations possessing schools of their own are also clamouring for aid for sectarian schools, which is chiefly responsible for the religious controversy, and, in some instances, sectarian bitterness in Queensland during the last two or three years. There are in Queensland 1,270 primary schools. Ministers availed themselves of the Religious Instruction Act to visit only 570 schools; 700 schools were not visited by ministers of religion during the year [1912]. There was a net enrolment of over 100,000 children. A monthly average of only about 27,000 attended the religious instruction, although ministers may visit the schools for an hour on any day or days stipulated by the School Committee. The individual visits averaged only twenty-five for the year."

Says another member of the Queensland Legislative Assembly, "It [the Act] has provided Roman Catholics with a lever which they will use in the future" (22nd June, 1914). Yet another member says, "Politicians in order to get party advantage may grant State aid to denominational schools."

Thus the easily accumulated evidence of leading public men on the spot goes to show that the affirmations of the advocates of the New South Wales system that that "system" is generally accepted—the Presbyterian, the Congregational, and the Lutheran Churches in Queensland all opposed to the adoption of the "system" there—that it causes no friction, that it does not breed sectarian strife, have no more value than the fairy tales of a rich imagination. In addition to these evidences of its moral failure (for what breeds indifference, intolerance, and strife is not moral) we would adduce more positive evidence from New South Wales itself.

In 1902 the New South Wales Government appointed an Education Commission to investigate the educational systems of Europe, Britain, and America with a view to the improvement of its own system of education. Two years were devoted to the investigation, and in 1904 they presented their report. Referring to the New South Wales system of religious instruction the report of Mr. Knibbs says, "The present system is seriously defective in regard to its scheme of influencing the ideals of childhood, and yet in any true education the cultivation of noble ideas is of transcendent importance" (p. 28). Could anything be more damning than this? and from the lips of their chief educational specialist? Next the Commissioner proceeds to bury this much-lauded "system" in a very grave of unconscious contempt. He was profoundly impressed by the scheme of moral instruction in vogue in the State schools of France—a scheme which was awarded the "Grand Prix" by the International Jury of the "Exposition Universelle Internationale" of 1900. (The popular notion that the French State educational system is at bottom atheistic is contrary to all the facts.) Owing to the comparative failure of the "right of entry" the report recommends, on page 27, "It is desirable that definite instruction in ethics should be given as part of the general programme. For this purpose the scheme of France may well be taken as a model. . . . There can be no doubt whatever of the high value of such a pro-