

gramme." Then follows a table of French statistics relating to juvenile crime, showing how such crime had steadily diminished since the introduction of the scheme of moral instruction. More convincing evidence of the moral failure of the New South Wales "system" cannot be conceived. The system has so far failed as a moral factor that Commissioner Knibbs recommends the adoption of the French scheme of moral instruction!

*The Evidence of Criminal Statistics: A Comparative Study—New South Wales and Victoria.*

If fair comparison is to be made the local conditions must be practically the same. Such necessary similarity of conditions obtain in New South Wales and Victoria. For fifty years of her history Victoria was a constituent part of New South Wales. Both States have developed side by side under the same laws; both have had their much-talked-of birth-stains; both have one large city—Sydney has about 36 per cent. of the population of New South Wales, while Melbourne has about 47 per cent. of the population of Victoria. The only essential divergence is in the State system of national education, Victoria having adopted the "secular" system in 1873. Then let the comparative criminal statistics bear their witness.

Summary convictions per 10,000 of the population for ten years, 1901–10: Victoria, 222 per year; New South Wales, 323 per year, or 50 per cent. more than Victoria.

Superior Court convictions per 100,000 of the population for ten years, 1901–10: Victoria, 29 per year; New South Wales, 48 per year, or 60 per cent. more than Victoria.

Number in gaol per 10,000 of the population for ten years, 1901–10: Victoria, 7·8; New South Wales, 10·8, or 45 per cent. more than Victoria.

Convictions for drunkenness per 10,000 of the population for the years 1901–10: Victoria, 110 per year; New South Wales, 170 per year, or 59 per cent. more than Victoria. For 1912, New South Wales had increased to 206, and Archdeacon Boyce, in commenting upon the fact, said, "This increase denotes an increasing weakening of moral fibre and loss of self-restraint." New South Wales, too, was recently described as the most drunken State in the Commonwealth.

Illegitimacy: 1900–9 (ten-years period)—Victoria, 5·6 per 100 births, or 56 per 1,000 births; New South Wales, 6·9 per 100 births, or 69 per 1,000 births. (New Zealand for the same period is 4·5 and 45 respectively.) 1905–9 (five-years period)—Victoria, 5·6 per 100 births, or 56 per 1,000 births; New South Wales, 6·8 per 100 births, or 68 per 1,000 births. (New Zealand for the same period is 4·5 and 45 respectively.)

Divorce (laws in both States give equal facilities): 1900–9 (ten-years period)—Victoria, average per year, 121, or 3·9 per 40,000 population; New South Wales, average per year, 218, or 5·8 per 40,000 population. 1904–9 (six-years period)—Victoria, average per year, 137, or 4·4 per 40,000 population; New South Wales, average per year, 210, or 5·6 per 40,000 population. 1909 (one year)—Victoria, 138, or 4·5 per 40,000 of population; New South Wales, 275, or 7·6 per 40,000 of population.

These statistics are taken from the official returns of the Commonwealth Year-book, the New South Wales Year-book, the Victorian Year-book, and the New Zealand Year-book. Further, there is not one particular kind of crime in which New South Wales has not the worst record. Thus the official returns are all in favour of Victoria, the State which has the secular system of national education, and all against New South Wales, with its religious teaching by the State. Moreover, for any class of crime New South Wales has the blackest record in Australasia, while New Zealand has one of the fairest.

Gentlemen, we claim to have fairly and sufficiently proved the moral failure of the New South Wales system. But to prevent misunderstanding it should not be inferred that the moral failure implies the moral impotence of Bible lessons. The reason lies in the viciousness of the method. Religious teaching which is mechanical, perfunctory, compulsory, and unjust has in it no moral value. That which does not come from the heart does not go to the heart. Another reason for the moral failure is in the necessarily diminished sense of responsibility of the home and the Church. When the civil authority arrogates to itself functions which do not belong to it the natural effect must be a weakened sense of responsibility on the part of those alone responsible, the home and the Church. This is borne out in this particular case by well-known facts. Take the following, *e.g.*: the population of New South Wales is, in round numbers, about 300,000 greater than Victoria, but Victoria has 576 more Sunday schools, 6,000 more Sunday-school teachers, and 60,000 more Sunday-school scholars than New South Wales.

*Australian Teachers and the System.*

Despite the above facts it is asserted that the teachers accept the "system" without protest and that they even speak well of it. In reply let certain facts be considered: (1.) The teachers in some of the States are born into the system. They have had experience of no other. (2.) The teachers are appointed directly by the Minister or the Governor, so they have not to run the gauntlet of Education Board and School Committee. This is a most important point. (3.) In the four States the teachers have to submit to restrictions and fetters which our New Zealand teachers would not tolerate for a moment. As we shall show from official sources, they are muzzled and bound hand and foot; *e.g.*, in none of the States are they allowed so much as to publicly comment, especially critically, either on the system or its administration, with the exception that in New South Wales they may dare to open their mouths if they can secure the permission of the Minister for Public Instruction; they must not actively take part in any sort of public meeting; they must do nothing to offend the opinions of their neighbours, &c. But more of this later. Says the Hon. B. Fahey, M.L.C. (Queensland), "Let me tell honourable members that if the teachers of New South Wales were permitted to express their views on the teaching of religion as it is now taught in that State, not 5 or 6 per cent. but 90 per cent. of those teachers would be opposed to it" (*Hansard*, Vol. cvi, p. 1768).