

that is that those members did not want their names mentioned because of the fact that they are frightened that reprisals might be made on them.

34. Then may I conclude that you have published all the replies you have received?—No, I cannot say that—I do not know. I am not the organizer.

35. Was not Professor McKenzie over in Australia a couple of years ago?—I do not know.

36. Would you recognize this circular as sent out by your organization [circular signed by T. A. Williams and John Caughley, dated 20th July, 1914, handed to witness]?—Yes, that has been sent out by us. The petitions have been presented to Parliament.

37. Your organization did make inquiries, doubtless, in Australia, from what you have shown in evidence?—Yes.

38. And you have indicated that you have not published all the members' names because they are afraid of reprisals?—Yes, I understand that is so.

39. Have you received any others?—I could not say.

40. Has your organization?—I could not say definitely. Mr. Williams is not here, but I could find out.

41. What is your office?—My office is simply that of acting-president for the time being.

42. Would you be surprised to hear that you have not been furnished with all the replies received in response to your inquiries in Australia?—I should not be surprised to hear that they are not all quoted here.

43. Would you mind reading the letter that Mr. Williams sent to Australia asking for information [letter handed to witness]?—It reads:—

“DEAR SIR,—

“Baptist Manse, Sydenham, Christchurch, N.Z., 29th May, 1914.

“Doubtless you are aware that the Bible-in-schools party, led by Canon Garland, is agitating in New Zealand for the adoption of the Queensland system of religious instruction in State schools. The party would have us believe that that system is generally accepted, and works without friction and sectarian influence wherever it has been adopted. So if you would kindly give me your opinion and experience of the working of the system in Queensland in the form of answers to the ensuing questions I should be greatly obliged.

“1. Is the system generally accepted as an equitable and final solution of the question?

“2. Has the working of the system tended to cause sectarian bitterness and strife?

“3. What is the attitude of the State teachers towards their own compulsory ‘general religious’ teaching? Have any conscientious teachers been forced out of the schools?

“4. Have there been instances of friction—(a) Between ministers and School Committees, (b) between objecting parents and teachers, (c) or in any other respect?

“5. Is there a growing public opinion that State Protestant religious teaching in State schools should, in equity, be followed by grants in aid to denominational schools, and to Roman Catholic schools in particular?

“6. Is there any other point you would care to mention?

“I realize that I am presuming somewhat in troubling you, but if you could let me have your reply without undue delay I should be greatly obliged. If you would have any objection to the public use of your name your feeling would be scrupulously respected. Thanking you in anticipation, I beg to remain, yours sincerely,

“T. A. WILLIAMS,

“Baptist Minister.”

44. You are satisfied that that document was sent out by your organizer?—Yes, certainly.

45. Have you been made aware of this reply which was addressed to him?—I may have seen the reply, but I could not say. I have seen so many.

46. Would you mind reading the contents?—The letter reads:—

“100–108 Queen Street, Brisbane, 18th June, 1914.

“Rev. T. A. Williams, Baptist Minister, Sydenham, Christchurch, New Zealand.

“DEAR SIR,—

“In reply to your inquiry of the 29th ultimo, reply to which has been delayed owing to my absence from town, I have pleasure in stating that the Bible in State schools system referred to, as adopted in Queensland, is generally accepted by the public and by the various Churches, with the exception of the Roman Catholic. It is now over three years since the Bill was passed. It took about a year to get the necessary books prepared, but since the introduction the experience has been that the system works without the slightest friction. During a recent visit to the Dominion I formed the impression that the Queensland system was not really understood in New Zealand. The Department of Education have prepared two text-books for the use of junior and senior divisions. These books were compiled by a committee of the most experienced school-teachers and Inspectors, including some of the Roman Catholic faith, and they have been admitted to be an improvement on the text-book used in New South Wales, which was drawn up and adopted many years ago. The text-books include some of the finest literary passages in Holy Writ, and the essential points on which all Christians are agreed. These books are read in the usual course in the school, and the teacher simply asks questions to ascertain if the scholar understands the passage read. Nothing in the nature of dogma or sectarian interpretation is permitted. Where circumstances permit ministers or other duly accredited religious instructors are allowed to enter the schools during fixed hours and give special religious instruction. This provision is availed of in the larger centres of population only, but in the sparsely settled districts where no special religious training is available the school text-book is the only religious teaching which the children receive, and without such simple instruction they would grow up in entire ignorance of the great facts of common Christianity. As regards our Roman Catholic friends, they have been agitating for many years for State endowment for their schools. On a percentage basis this body is about