

across the border?—Are you not referring to the time when there was no border, when the two States were one?

111. No, no matter whether it was called Victoria or New South Wales, there never was in that country any convict settlement or any convicts in any appreciable degree: are you not aware of that?—No, my information is to the contrary.

112. You know Dr. Fitchett is an accepted historian on the subject?—I have read other historians.

113. You will not produce a greater one than Dr. Fitchett?—That is a matter of opinion.

114. Did you know that the *Argus* and the *Age*, leading newspapers in Melbourne, and newspapers which also support your point of view on education, speak in the strongest possible language about the number of crimes in Victoria and the inadequacy of the police and their failure to bring the criminals to justice? I think your figures should be multiplied by ten. For instance, this is an extract from the *Argus*, Melbourne, of the 8th January, 1913: "With, say, only 10 or 20 or 30 per cent. of the more serious crimes sheeted home to the perpetrators, there is naturally a strong disposition on the part of criminals to try their luck. In Victoria, for example, the chances against detection must be about as four to one." Are you aware that is the opinion of one of the leading newspapers?—I should not be surprised if that were the opinion of every leading newspaper in every big town in the world.

WEDNESDAY, 14TH OCTOBER, 1914.

JOHN CAUGHLEY, M.A., examined. (No. 4.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your position?—Headmaster of the West Christchurch District High School.

2. And whom do you represent before the Committee?—The New Zealand Educational Institute.

3. Are you instructed to appear for that Institute?—Yes. I will read the official minute: "Mr. Grundy moved, Mr. Lamb seconded, That Mr. Caughley be asked to represent the Institute before the Committee of the House on the Bible-in-schools Referendum Bill. Agreed to." I also wish to read the resolutions passed at the Institute giving authority to support this. First, there was one at New Plymouth the year before last, as follows: "That the N.Z.E.I., believing that the present secular system of education is the only just system of national education, is opposed to the Bible-in-schools movement." Remit 60: "That in the interest of education it is desirable that the Institute should take steps to combat the attempt to introduce Bible-teaching in schools." "By leave of the Institute Miss Chaplin moved remit 55 in the following form: 'That the N.Z.E.I., while recognizing the value of Bible-teaching and of religion, is opposed to the Bible in Schools League's programme.' Seconded by Mr. Evans." Then there was an amendment moved by Mr. Templar, which was negatived by forty-two to seven, and Miss Chaplin's resolution was carried by forty-two to seven. Then, at a meeting on the 29th July last this resolution was carried: "Mr. Caughley moved, Mr. Burns seconded, That the N.Z.E.I., while recognizing the value of Bible-teaching and of religion, is opposed to the Bible in Schools League's programme, and, representing 95 per cent. of the certificated teachers of New Zealand, appeals to Parliament against the unjust proposal of a body of petitioners to compel teachers to give religious instruction to which some object in conscience and for which the parents require a conscience clause. Carried on division by twenty-seven to four."

The Bill before the Committee would make possible one of the most revolutionary changes in our educational system in the relation of the State to religion and in the constitution of our legislative system. Yet it is proposed that Parliament should, without dealing with the merits or demerits of the changes proposed, pass the whole question over to the decision of the individual voter, who would vote on impulse, on sentiment, on religious prejudice, but who would certainly not be able to examine the issues involved nor appreciate the constitutional and educational questions which, even if put before him, would be outside the powers of the average elector. He would be appealed to to support the Bible, to give the Bible to the children, and he would see little else in this revolution.

With every desire to be brief, therefore, it is my duty to make before this Committee, and thus before Parliament, a full statement of matters of the most fundamental importance concerning the welfare of education, the up-bringing of the children of the Dominion, the true interests of religion and of the Bible, in whose interests, it is alleged, this movement is made. It is also my duty respectfully to urge on the Legislature to put to the fullest test the proposals and the claims of the League which has originated this agitation. The questions which I will raise are ones which in the midst of an election, and of a referendum heated by religious passion, will be entirely overlooked. Yet these questions are such that surely no body responsible for the education of the children can afford to allow to go by the board by mechanically handing over the whole matter to the irresponsible decision of individual electors to whom these vital matters would be non-existent.

In order to save time I propose, with the permission of the Committee, to read the main statements herein given, passing over where possible the details of the supporting arguments and quotations given in proof or in support. The whole of the statement herein given is, however, the undivided evidence which I place before you.

With regard to quotations, I wish to explain that I do not claim that the person quoted supports the whole of the opinions I am bringing forward, or that the person quoted may not oppose my position on other points. I merely claim that the quotation in each case is in harmony.