

No. 211.—Petition of NITA PARK and 989 Others; No. 245—Petition of LUCRETIA BAKER and 50 Others; and No. 289—Petition of GEORGE A. PAGE and 17 Others.

PRAYING that the Religious Instruction in Schools Referendum Bill be passed into law.

I am directed to report that the Committee is of opinion that the proposals in the Religious Instruction in Schools Referendum Bill, introduced this session by the Hon. James Allen, should not be allowed to become law.

30th October, 1914.

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No. 42.—Petition of AUGUST FROMONT and 1,312 Others, and 59 similar Petitions (as per Schedule, *vide* I.—13).

PRAYING that the Religious Instruction in Schools Referendum Bill be not passed.

I am directed to report that the Committee is of opinion the proposals in the Religious Instruction in Schools Referendum Bill, introduced this session by the Hon. James Allen, should not be allowed to become law.

30th October, 1914.

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No. 12.—Petition of Professor THOMAS A. HUNTER and 21 Others, and 77 similar Petitions (as per Schedule, *vide* I.—13).

PRAYING that the national system of education on its present free, secular, and compulsory basis be maintained.

I am directed to report that the Committee has heard evidence on the subject-matter of these petitions—much latitude being allowed witnesses in the desire to get all the facts—and is of opinion that the New Zealand State system of free, secular, and compulsory education (under which our children have received incalculable benefits, and under which, after thirty-seven years' experience, our people—the immense majority of whom have passed through our schools—compare most favourably morally, socially, and religiously with the people of any other part of the world) should be maintained.

30th October, 1914.

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No. 316.—Petition of Most Rev. THOMAS O'SHEA (Coadjutor, Bishop of Wellington), Right Rev. WILLIAM HENRY CLEARY (Bishop of Auckland), and 2,488 Others.

PRAYING that, if the petition signed by 140,000 persons, as alleged, in favour of the Religious Instruction in Schools Referendum Bill has been presented to your honourable House, the same may be referred to a Committee of your honourable House, and that your petitioners may be afforded an opportunity of being heard thereon.

I am directed to report that, as no petition signed by 140,000 persons in favour of the Religious Instruction in Schools Referendum Bill has been presented to your honourable House, the Committee has no recommendation to make.

30th October, 1914.

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