

No. 299.—Petition of E. J. HUNTER-BROWN, of Nelson, and 1,611 Others.

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

I am directed to report that the Committee has heard evidence on the subject-matter of this petition, 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 fifty 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.

Further, that the Committee is fully alive to the value of biblical and religious instruction, and is of the opinion that full opportunity should be given for the adoption of a voluntary system, such as that known as the Nelson system, in which the teaching is imparted outside the school hours, under which the State exercises no authority in religious matters, and under which there is no compulsion or violation of conscience.

5th December, 1927.

SPECIAL REPORT.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Education Committee desires to record its hearty appreciation of the able and tactful manner in which the Chairman, Mr. Hudson, has controlled the business of the Committee during the session. It further desires that this resolution shall be recorded on the minutes of the Committee and reported to the House.

29th November, 1927.

T. K. SIDEY,
Member of the Committee.

FINAL REPORT.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Education Committee, consisting of eleven members, has held twenty-three meetings during the session, with an average attendance of seven members. The Child Welfare Amendment Bill and the Education Amendment Bill were fully considered by the Committee and duly reported to the House. Fifty-nine petitions, the majority of them dealing with the question of Bible in schools were also considered and reported on.

29th November, 1927.

R. P. HUDSON, Chairman.

Approximate Cost of Paper. Preparation, not given; printing (475 copies), £6.

By Authority: W. A. G. SKINNER, Government Printer, Wellington.—1227

Price 6d,