

9. Do you think that would go so far as to cause them to inquire as to what denomination he belonged to?—I am not sure; because, as I look at the book, it appears to me a fair compromise between the two bodies—Romanists and Protestants.

10. Would a Protestant community be likely to appoint a Roman Catholic teacher to a school where there was to be only one teacher?—Speaking from the three books I have referred to, and from the information given in the notes, I do not think that a fair-minded Committee ought to have any difficulty. I could answer the question more fully if I had seen the whole set of books. Those that I have seen give no dogmatic instruction in the notes that ought to embarrass the Committee very much in choosing a teacher.

11. Do you know that there are some Roman Catholic teachers in the schools at the present time?—Yes.

12. Do you think that the children of New Zealand are irreverent in respect of religious instruction?—That is a wide question.

13. Do you think they are worse than the youth of the other colonies?—I think not, from what I hear.

14. *Mr. Willis.*] Do you think that Bible-reading in schools would serve any good purpose without interpretation; do you think that any good would be done by the mere reading?—I do not favour the reading of the Bible, as such, in the schools.

15. The question I asked you was: Would it, in your opinion, serve any good purpose without interpretation?—It would widen scripture knowledge for those scholars who did not get instruction at home.

16. I am not asking you with reference to general knowledge; I am looking at it from a Christian standpoint. Do you think that a moral effect would be produced?—To have much moral effect the book would have to be taught or read by a Christian man.

17. Do you think that reading the Bible, or, rather, Bible-reading, in this way would satisfy the Roman Catholics?—No.

18. You do not think that the priests would sanction the children being sent to these schools if there were Bible-reading in the schools?—No; I do not think so.

19. Do you think that supposing these books to be adopted, that admission of them to the schools would generally give full satisfaction: that there would not be a further demand for more religious instruction in the schools?—These questions are difficult to answer.

20. Do you think it would give full satisfaction to all denominations?—No; for this reason: One of the Anglican bishops recommended his people to accept it in the present distress. He did not explain what he meant by the "present distress," but we most of us understand it.

21. That half a loaf is better than no bread?—Possibly.

22. *Mr. Collins.*] Are you acquainted with the nature of the school reading-books as used in the State schools?—Yes; fairly well.

23. Do you consider that the character of the reading-lessons, both as regards prose and verse, sustains the charge that the present system of education in this colony is a "godless system"?—No; that is to say, I find nothing anti-religious in them.

24. You find that there are distinct references in them of a religious and even biblical character?—Yes.

25. This text-book, as regards the Roman Catholic body: Do you think that if it were introduced into our schools it would be held by them that they should not or could not take advantage of our system of State education, and they would therefore urge it as a further plea for a State grant?—I think it would.

26. It would strengthen their demand?—I think it would.

27. *Mr. Fraser.*] Have you had any experience of any attempts made to give religious instruction in the schools?—No personal experience.

28. Could you say whether or not it would be possible to give instruction to the children in the schools out of school-hours?—I could not say; but I could give you the experience of a friend in Auckland belonging to the Presbyterian body who had a good deal of experience.

29. But your own opinion is that the mere Bible-reading in schools without comment would not be of any service, as religious instruction?—Perhaps I should not answer the question just in that form. It would be of some service.

30. Well, without being of any material service it would not accomplish what the ardent supporters of this movement want?—It would be of some service in the way of general scripture information and morals, but it would not go higher than that.

31. It would not, in your opinion give effect to the purpose of religious instruction?—I do not think it would; it might be a help to it; but without comment of some kind it would be of little service as religious instruction.

32. Do you object to Bible-reading as a part of religious teaching in schools, or is it only to this text-book ("The Irish National Scripture Lesson-books") as religious instruction in State schools?—I object to religious teaching in the schools. I am not in favour of introducing the whole Bible into the schools. I have, I think, already stated that as a text-book this particular book does not come up to my idea of what a Scripture lesson-book should be. It follows almost word for word the authorised version or the Douay version. If a change is to come at all, I imagine a text-book compiled in a popular way, and not following so closely the words of either the authorised or the Douay version.

33. Do you think that if this text-book were introduced into the public schools of this colony, it would be the thin-end of the wedge towards bringing about in the future denominational education?—That is how many of our people regard it.

34. *Mr. E. M. Smith.*] I judge from your answers that you are under the impression that it is better to retain our present system, and that the introduction of the Bible and religious instruction