

instance in which we refuse any pupil admission to our primary schools.

292. In the practical working of your system, how do you manage to secure that children come clean in person?—Our teachers look after that. If it is a serious case the clergy re-monstrate with the parents, and ask that the children be sent clean to school; and if this is not done we have the children washed and made decent before they come into school.

293. Are many of the children educated in your diocese the children of poor parents?—Yes, I dare say the majority of my people are poor; but we have no abject poverty in the country any where. I am speaking of people of small means—labouring people, and with large families.

294. Can you say whether this weekly payment or payments for the education of the children is felt a severe financial strain?—A very serious strain. There are many with very small wages, comparatively speaking, and they have to pay the expenses of the Church, also contribute towards the erection of schools, and then support all these schools. It is a very serious matter for them.

295. Can you state, from your own knowledge and observation, whether the class termed "ragged children" are practically refused admission to the State schools?—I am not able to say from my own knowledge; but I have heard that they have been refused on what I consider fair authority; but I am not able to state it as a fact within my own personal knowledge.

296. Can you state, from your own observation, whether or not the ragged children in the city of Dunedin, for example, are being educated by the State?—I think some are educated by the State.

297. You have said you believe the standard of efficiency in your schools is equal to the standard current in the State schools?—Yes.

298. You arrive at that from personal examinations conducted by yourself?—Or that, together with the fact that we get pupils who have been at the Government schools, and who have not made much progress. At the same time I wish to qualify the latter statement. Their want of efficiency may not be the fault of the system; it may be the fault of the children themselves; but, judging from the percentage of marks made by the children of public schools at their examinations and the percentage gained by children of my own school, who are put through a more severe test and examination, I come to the conclusion that our children are certainly as efficient, and more efficient, in many instances.

299. Is there any system in operation in England which, if brought into operation in this Colony, would satisfy the Catholics of this Colony?—No system that would satisfy us. The Catholics in England are intensely dissatisfied with the present system, but the system there is very much more equitable and just than the system here, but it does not satisfy the Catholics or the Church of England.

300. Do you understand the system which is ordinarily defined as the system of payment by results?—I do.

301. How would you define that system?—It means this: that there should be first of all a certain allowance as an average attendance of pupils. I consider that only fair to the teachers, because children are not all equally clever, and parents are not always solicitous that they make progress, and it is very disheartening to a teacher to be placed in an unfavourable position through no fault of his own. I consider that the system ought to include payment on a certain average attendance, and then any further payment should be made in accordance with the results produced from his teaching in the school.

302. Would such a system meet the views of the Catholics of this Colony?—Quite; they would be very glad indeed to have such a system.

303. What average of attendance would you consider reasonable to form the basis of such a system?—The lowest average of attendance?—That would be decided entirely by the circumstances of the locality. An average attendance which would be fair in one locality would not be fair in another. The average attendance in a thickly-populated locality should be more, in my judgment, than that required in a sparsely-populated one. That is a mere matter of detail altogether.

304. I understand that you said that the payment by results will satisfy you as a petitioner?—Yes, fully.

305. Mr. FELDWORK: You said that the fee in your schools is 1s. per week per child?—That is the charge we have in our common schools.

306. Do you know of cases of special hardship if the charge were enforced?—I know many instances of special hardship, but we do not enforce it in cases of hardship. In cases such as men out of employment and helpless widows, we make up the sum ourselves in order that the teachers may not suffer. In one school I had I was obliged to pay £25 one year, £26 another year, and £27 4s. another year in order to make up for the fees, so that the teacher should not sustain a loss.

307. So that the teachers' salaries are precarious, depending on these fees?—We generally give them a fixed salary, and if the fees do not amount to the salary we have to make up the balance.

308. Do you think, in the event of State aid being given, you would have schools in the smaller towns?—Certainly; we have them in the smaller towns at this moment. We had a school for years at which there were only fifteen Catholics, and we paid a teacher for teaching these fifteen children.

309. What would you say in the case of sparsely-populated rural districts where there is a Government school?—That is an exceptional case, and must be treated exceptionally.

310. You are aware that in Mr. Curtis's Bill those not availing themselves of State schools should provide their own buildings. Would you be prepared to do that?—We are prepared to take an instalment of justice on the understanding that we are at liberty to demand full justice.

311. Have you formed any idea of what would be a sufficient sum to be paid per child based on payment per results?—My answer to that is this: I think we are entitled in justice and equity to the same capitation allowance as is given for other people's children.

312. Perhaps you have some idea of what would be sufficient?—I suppose we would be satisfied with what the other people got.

313. Then the amount would have to be fixed by the Education Boards, according to what was paid to other schools?—Certainly; we ask no more.

314. MR. DE LAUTOUR: I think you said you had eighteen schools in your diocese. I did not observe whether you told the Committee the cost of those schools?—For land and buildings for school purposes, £30,500, in the last twelve years. I am not able to give the statistics before twelve years ago, as I only came to the country a little over twelve years ago; but during my time in the country we have spent on the erection of schools, and providing sites and buildings for school purposes, £30,500. I cannot state accurately what the cost of maintenance has been during that period, but I could give a very good guess. I know what the maintenance would cost the Government—£5,500 a year. It does not cost us so much as it would cost the Government, owing to the manner in which we work; and I think I am speaking justly and truly when I say it has cost us about £3,000 a year. The way I arrive at that is this: we have at the present moment nine male teachers, independently of pupil-teachers and thirty female teachers, independently of pupil and assistant-teachers, and, taking one with another, all round, they cost us about £100 a year, and that would make about £3,000 annually, and that is about what it costs us; and the cost to the Government, for the same number of children, would be £5,500.

315. Is not the pressure upon your people more excessive in country districts than in thickly-populated districts?—I do not know that it is more excessive, because of the extra cost on the buildings and the enhanced value of the land in the thickly-populated parts.

316. In some country districts are there not a greater proportion of Catholics—for instance, at St. Bathans?—I am not prepared to say that Catholics are in the majority in some country districts. I am not prepared to say that even at St. Bathans they are in a majority; but I think at St. Bathans there are more children attending the Catholic school than attending the Government school. I am under that impression, but I am not certain.

317. MR. MUNRO: Is there any possibility of the bodies agreeing amongst themselves as to a class-book containing religious instruction?—None whatever; at all events, so far as we are concerned.

318. There is no common Christianity?—Not for us. We must teach our religion wholly and fully, or not at all.

319. You know the system agreed to—that of the Commissioners—in Ireland?—The Catholics were never a consenting party.

320. Would the Catholics be content with a capitation grant?—They will be glad of anything in the direction of justice, but they will never be satisfied with anything short of complete justice.

321. MR. SWANSON: I think you stated that the Catholics never received any endowment or monetary assistance from the Government?—None whatever in my diocese.

322. Do you say, as an absolute fact, that the Catholics have received no educational endowments?—Not in my diocese.

323. I am talking about the Catholics of the Colony?—They have some small endowments in other dioceses.

324. Do you consider it the duty of the State to see that its children are educated?—I do not think it is. I think the State is going beyond its function in becoming a schoolmaster.

325. Do you think the majority of the Catholics of the Colony are of that opinion?—Yes; those who are capable of forming an opinion, who are sufficiently educated and sufficiently instructed to understand the question.

326. Are you aware that some such proposition as you have made has been in practice in the Colony, where the money was divided amongst the different denominations?—Yes.

327. Are you aware that it broke down completely?—No, I am not; nor do I believe it either.

328. Are you aware that the people of your denomination in Auckland actually petitioned to have a different system?—That does not prove that the denominational system broke down. It proves maladministration in Auckland, if you will, but it does not prove that the denominational system broke down.

329. If the Government find the money for the different denominations to pay the teachers, will that not transfer the servants of the State—the teachers—to be the servants of the clergy?—No.

330. For instance, would you not claim the power to dismiss any teacher that does suit you?—Yes.

331. Then whose servant will he be?—I should be able to dismiss him, but I would not interfere with the State paying him. The State can watch over the expenditure of its own money, but under the denominational system I will not have a master in my school who misconducts himself.

332. Have you any objection to anything now taught in the State schools?—Yes; there are a great many things taught which are odious to Catholics.

333. Will you state an instance?—Take the histories. Any one acquainted with the histories will know that there are many things offensive to Catholics in these books.

334. Would it satisfy you if these histories were altered or dismissed from the schools altogether?—No; because I am opposed to the system altogether.

335. Would it be possible for the clergy to overtake the religious education by teaching on holidays, Sundays, and after school hours—if they were all energetic, and devoted as much time to it as you appear to do?—No.

336. If this system of education you propose were agreed to, would it not have the effect of breaking up the present system of education?—I will divide my answer to that question. First of all, even if it did, that would be no objection to my mind, because I am opposed to the system on principle. It would be a good thing, I think, to break it up. Secondly, I do not think it would do so, for everybody except ourselves is satisfied with the present system.

(To be continued.)