

252. What is the number of both sexes attending the Catholic schools within your diocese?—1,530.

253. Are you aware of the proportion of Roman Catholics in New Zealand to the whole European population?—The last census showed it was about one-seventh.

254. Have the Roman Catholics any conscientious objections to availing themselves of the State system of education; and do you believe that the Catholic parents, sooner than send their children to the State schools, would rather forego their being educated at all?—With regard to the latter part of the question I wish to put that aside for the moment. With regard to the first part of it I think the efforts made to establish schools for themselves, and the numbers who have signed the petitions, prove that they have conscientious objections to sending their children to Government schools. With regard to the latter part it is difficult for me to give a decided answer so as to meet every individual case, because people when placed under the necessity will endeavour to do the best they can under the circumstances—doing what their conscience will permit them to do under protest. It would be very difficult for me to say whether they would allow them to go uneducated altogether or send them to Government schools under protest. That question I could not undertake to answer. I think some would prefer to do it, and a good many too.

255. What do you mean by protest—a protest from the priest?—A protest on their own part. They would do it unwillingly, under the influence of coercion.

256. What is the number of Catholics in your own diocese?—The last census showed 16,400, and I calculate now there would be 18,000.

257. How many State schools are there in your diocese?—I cannot exactly say, but I think there are about two hundred altogether, but I could not be certain; I have not counted.

258. All these are supported by the Government?—All the State schools are.

259. How many schools have you solely supported by the Roman Catholics in your diocese?—Eighteen.

260. Are the schools attended by other than Roman Catholic children, and, if so, please state the probable percentage?—There are very few of other denominations attending our schools, perhaps between two and three dozen; not more. Some of them have none at all. The great majority have none except Catholic children.

261. Do these Catholic schools receive any endowment or assistance from the Government of the colony; if so, please state what they receive?—They receive no assistance whatever, and never did.

262. What is the annual charge made for each of the pupils at your schools?—It varies according to the means of the parents. If they can afford to pay 1s. a week we expect them to do so in our primary schools.

263. Do you give free instruction to those who cannot afford to pay?—Yes.

264. And have you any of this class attending your schools?—We refuse no one in our primary schools.

265. Has any attempt ever been made to influence the religious opinions of the pupils of other denominations in your schools?—None whatever.

266. How are the funds provided for establishing your schools?—On the voluntary principle; people contribute.

267. Do you consider the parents of other Christian denominations have objections to their children attending Roman Catholic schools?—Decidedly, they have.

268. Do you find the Roman Catholic children have a better knowledge of Scripture than children of other denominations, and in other branches of education are they quite up to the current standard of education?—I say Yes to the latter part; the former I am not able to give an answer to as to what the religious knowledge of children of other denominations may be; I have not examined them.

269. Have you any objections to Roman Catholic schools being under the supervision of Government Inspectors?—Not the least.

270. From what source do you receive school-teachers?—We receive them from the school public generally.

271. Are they solely educated by themselves for that purpose?—No; we get many that come from Home, from the Old Country, and we sometimes advertise for them. Sometimes teachers come and offer their services, and if we find them eligible, and they suit our circumstances, we employ them.

272. Do they undergo an examination before you appoint them as teachers?—Not a formal examination. We inquire as to their qualifications. They have generally letters of recommendation from persons whose opinions we respect; but we have no formal examination.

273. Do you disapprove of the State secular system of education, and, if so, please state your reasons?—I disapprove of it entirely. I think it is calculated to injure the community at large very seriously. I do not look on it as really a system of education. I regard it as a system of instruction in secular matters, which is the smaller and less important part of education.

274. Do you approve of denominational education; if so, upon what grounds?—I approve of denominational education on the ground that there only real education can be given, and cannot be given anywhere else.

275. Will you please state to the Committee the Government system of education, its machinery, ramifications, explain its workings, and give all the details possible of its efficiency and cost?—It is rather a general question and not very easy for me to answer. I do not know what precisely you mean by the Government system of education. If I am to answer the general question in a general way, I say the Government system of education is really not a system of education at all. It does not deserve the name, because it excludes the most important part of education. I mean the exclusion of religion. We found all education on religion, whilst we teach secular subjects to the best of our ability: we always hold that in subordination to the teaching of religion.