

309. What effect it has had on the national character of that system?—I am not in a position to answer that question.

310. I ask you whether it has destroyed the national character of that system—broken it up into dribblets of denominationalism?—I am not in a position to answer that. I have no knowledge of it.

311. Is it your candid opinion that it is the duty of the State to teach religion?—I would like that explained.

312. You are a minister of a most distinguished Church, which severed its connection with the State?—Yes; but not on these grounds.

313. Was it not on account of the interference of the State?—It was not a question of the interference of the State with the teaching in public schools. It was upon the ground of the State entering upon the province of the Church. It was on the ground of the interference of the State with the independence of the Church in spiritual matters.

314. Do you think it would be a proper thing to call upon the taxpayers to support a system of religious teaching?—I think the great body of the taxpayers wish that some element of religion should be attached to the education given to the children of the colony in our public schools. If the people of the colony as a whole say it ought to be, it is quite right that the State should adopt it. Most of the people are agreed that there should be some religious teaching in the schools. We cannot get absolute unanimity on any system; but I cannot see any objection to going as far as there is substantial agreement among the people of the colony.

315. As a member of the Wellington Education Board, do you know to what extent clergymen have taken advantage of the provision in the Act of 1877 to give religious instruction to the children before or after school-hours?—I believe it has been tried, but it proved to be a failure; they could not get the children to attend.

316. Do you know to what extent it was tried?—It was tried in Otago, and also in Canterbury; in one or two cases in Canterbury it has succeeded. In the district where the Hon. Mr. Bowen's brother is the clergyman, it has succeeded well; but that is only an isolated case. The difficulty is to get the children to attend outside the school-hours, when there is no teacher to keep them in order.

317. Would you be surprised if I told you, from my own knowledge, that it has succeeded in many schools under the North Canterbury Board?—I am glad to know that it is so.

318. Are you aware that, from a return laid upon the table of the House, only 7 per cent. of the whole of the schools of the colony were visited with the view of imparting religious instructions by the clergy of the various denominations?—It is very likely; I believe it would be utterly a failure; you cannot get the children to attend, and the clergy have not the time.

319. If they took only 7 per cent. of the schools of the colony you could scarcely say that the thing has been properly tried?—Where it has been tried, as I am informed, it has been a failure.

320. As a matter of personal experience I know that it is the opposite?—I am very glad to hear it.

321. *Mr. Lang.*] Here is the paragraph in the Bishop's address following that which was read by the Chairman. [Paragraph read.] Do you think that by getting this book into the public schools it would weaken the plea of those who want denominational education on the ground that there is no religious instruction given in the State schools?—Yes; the Bishop is quite right in that statement.

322. *The Chairman.*] There is another paragraph before that to which I would like to call your attention. [Paragraph read.] Can you tell us what is meant by "accepted by all"?—I do not know what it means.

Major-General SCHAW, C.B., in attendance and examined.

323. *The Chairman.*] The Committee, after hearing the evidence given by yourself and the other gentlemen, considered that, as this is an important National question, it was desirable that the evidence should be printed for the information of the members of the House, and no doubt also for the information of the general public. With that view, it was decided that the evidence should be taken down in shorthand, and that the gentlemen who had previously given their evidence should be asked to repeat it. I understand that you appear here as Secretary to the Wellington Scripture Text-book Committee, and that you represent that Committee?—Yes.

324. Do you represent any other organization?—In this way I represent other organizations: The associations at the other large centres of population have appointed a sort of executive Committee here to make arrangements with the members of the House who have introduced the Bill now before the House, so that the Bill may meet the views of all those associations; as the secretary of that Committee I represent the whole of these associations, but only in that way.

325. This Committee will be pleased to hear your statement?—I presume the printed evidence given on the previous day will still stand part of my evidence. [See Appendices I. and VII.]

326. If you wish it; will you put it in?—Yes; I will put it in. Also a statement giving statistics in connection with the various associations; also the Synodical address of the Bishop of Wellington, or so much of it as regards this particular object.

327. That portion which refers to this subject will be inserted in the minutes? The Bishop has been communicated with. Every opportunity has been given to the Bishop to appear before this Committee, but so far he has not indicated his intention to appear before the Committee, either personally or by representative?—I think I mentioned he was absent from town. He has now returned.

328. He has been communicated with a second time?—Then, Sir, I will proceed with what I have to say. From the statistics of the associations which I have handed to you it will be observed that representatives of nearly all the Protestant religious bodies are on these Committees. The Church