

opinion of a departmental officer is superior to the opinion of a Commissioner appointed by the House to report on this matter.

69. The opinion of Mr. Knibbs was not the opinion of the Commissioners—are you aware of that?—Who were the other Commissioners?

70. The other Commissioner was Mr. Turner?—You said “Commissioners.”

71. Yes, I said that distinctly?—Will you show me where Mr. Turner’s opinion is contradictory to Mr. Knibbs’s?

72. You know in the report both Commissioners signed this statement: “Each Commissioner is responsible only for the facts and conclusions set forth in the chapters written by himself, and is not responsible for those appearing in the chapters written by his fellow-Commissioner”?—I am quite well aware of that. I want to point out this fact—that if there is nothing in Mr. Turner’s report which contradicts Mr. Knibbs’s I think we are at liberty to say that in the joint commission he acquiesces with the opinion of his colleague.

73. That is a matter of opinion?—They were jointly named in the order from the Legislature to draw up the report.

74. And failed to send in a joint report except in the chapter from which I have read. The opinion becomes not the opinion of the Commissioners but the opinion of Mr. Knibbs and Mr. Turner respectively. Are you aware that Mr. Turner reported at page 73 as follows: “Moral teaching—It will suffice to say that our own State seems to have made the best attempt at solving the difficulty of religious instruction in schools by the facilities it gives clergymen and accredited teachers under clause 17 of the Public Instruction Act, and by the excellent general Scriptural instruction contained in the Irish National Scripture-books which are still in daily use”?—I am aware of that. I will read what goes before it: “Moral teaching—The teaching of religion has no place in the regular programme of the French school, and it does not appear that there exists any special provision for dogmatic or general instruction in the subject. The existence of God is assumed, and reverence to His name is inculcated. One’s personal views on the value of religious teaching to children of public-school age need not be intruded here.”

75. Do you remember hearing of an educational conference held in 1904 following upon that report?—No.

76. It was held on the 5th April, 1904, by the Department of Public Instruction in New South Wales, and was a conference of Inspectors, teachers, departmental officers, and prominent educationists presided over by the Minister of Education, and His Excellency the Governor and His Eminence Cardinal Moran were present?—No.

77. The whole question of education, including religious instruction, was discussed at that conference?—I am not aware of the conference at all. I object to questions of this nature. You ask me whether I am aware a certain conference was held, and then the matter drops. I said that I am not aware of it. These apparent admissions of various things are being brought out with no object whatever. I do not see how they can bear on the question at all.

78. As one who has studied the subject I was really surprised you did not know of it. The conference went into the whole question. Did you ever hear of any alteration being made in the system of religious instruction in New South Wales in consequence of Mr. Knibbs’s report?—No.

79. Would you be surprised to know that the departmental statement dated the 29th September, 1913, is as follows: “Dear sir, I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th instant relative to the recommendations made by the Education Commissioners as to the system of ethical instruction in this State, and in reply I have to inform you that no alteration in the system of ethical or religious instruction in this State has been made as a result of Mr. Knibbs’s recommendation”?—That is addressed to Canon Garland, and I would like to see a letter in which that is a reply to. I would point out that there have been conferences held all over Australia in connection with education, and no change has been made. Would you give me the date of that conference?

80. The 5th April, 1904, and the proceedings were published by the Government Printer?—As you have asked me the question, am I aware of the fact that no changes were made, I say that does not in the least whit detract from the correctness or even the wisdom of the remarks made by Mr. Knibbs. “We never find that any Commission report is adopted either *in toto* or in part after it has been given. Mr. Knibbs did not make any radical suggestions with regard to the system except with regard to the introduction of the French ethical system. That was not introduced as a result of his report. Mr. Knibbs records facts and observations on the question of religious instruction, and whether the report was adopted afterwards seems to me immaterial.

81. In your statement you say, “Mr. Carmichael, Minister of Public Instruction, said in 1913, ‘The clergy were not taking advantage of their opportunities,’ &c. Do you happen to have your authority for that?—That appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of the 7th May, 1913.

82. Did you take that to refer to the primary schools, similar schools with which we are dealing with in New Zealand?—Yes.

83. You are not aware he was not referring to primary schools but only to high schools?—I am positive that it does refer to primary schools. It says, “The clergy were not taking advantage of their opportunities. . . . If religious instruction were not given in the schools the onus fell on those who had the right and had not availed themselves of it.” Mr. Hole also asked that the system be applied to high schools, but Mr. Carmichael said he was not prepared to extend the system.

84. May I read the newspaper report in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of the 6th May, 1913: “Archdeacon Irvine, in introducing the deputation, said that by reason of recent alterations to certain public schools they had become high schools, and there was no provision in the present