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ROMAN CATHOLICS AND EDUCATION.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEE OBJECTED TO.

DEPUTATION TO THE PREMIER.

RELIGION IN SCHOOLS.

A large deputation representing the Australian Catholic Federation waited upon the Premier (Hon. A. H. Peake) at the Treasury on Monday morning and presented a number of requests concerning the proposed Education Bill. The deputation was introduced by the Speaker of the House of Assembly (Hon. L. O'Longhin), and W. Travers, M.P. Mr. O'Longhin explained that it had been anticipated that the Bill would be introduced yet, there was no need for the Catholics to speak, but after further consideration the Bill would be introduced. The Premier, however, explained that he had been advised to introduce the Bill to show the views of the Catholic Federation before the Ministry. The leader of the Lieutenent of the Catholic Federation, Mr. T. E. O'Neil, (secretary), and Mr. Travers, explained that the Catholics, who, while paying for the education of their own children, were also paying a share of the State expenditure on education, protested against the carrying into effect of many of the proposed changes. Mr. O'Neil opposed the proposed elaborate scheme of higher education, because the State primary education, whilst the number of children attending the State Primary Schools and colleges was increasing, the tendency on the part of the young, already too pronounced to take up avocations, would tend to be increased due to the new system. It would be attended with the effect of destroying the industries of the populated centres rather than to the agricultural and pastoral areas so much in need of better education. Further, that higher education could be adequately provided by existing educational establishments, the University, the technical and industrial schools, private secondary schools, the Adelaide School of Mines, and kindred institutions. He further stated that the number of scholarships open to the students attending all schools was very inadequately provided for.

A State monopoly or an unbridling uniformity in education was undesirable and a grave injustice to those who could not afford it. Mr. O'Neil made a comparison with John Stuart Mill that a school was not a charity, but a part of the community's income which he should use for the education of his children, and that the only excuse the State had for taking over such an institution was that in his hands it could not pay for such an education. Mill held the government responsible for the education of the children, and that they shall possess the means to receive such an education.
Definite Religious Training Required.

Furthermore, the Catholics called for a system of education excluding definite religious training, or any system of public education, which was not to be provided for them.Lord John Morley, speaking of the Catholic question in 1870, said: "As long as we are not able to secure the education of our children in a manner that will enable us to be educated in a manner that will enable us to be useful and happy in their society, we cannot be satisfied with any system which does not give us that opportunity." 

They also quoted Professor J. S. Mill, who had said: "The right of a minority to educate their children as they please is as much a question of civil rights as any other." 

Proportional Representation on Council.

If the recommendation of the Royal Commission embodied in the proposed Education Bill were adopted, they claimed that it would lead to a system of representation that would be unfair to the Catholics. They argued that since their number was smaller than that of the majority, they would not have an equal voice in the council. They believed that proportionality would be a fairer system, as it would ensure that each group had a voice proportional to its size.

They pointed out that the current system gave religious minorities a voice out of proportion to their numbers, which was unfair to the majority. They believed that this was one of the many reasons why the majority was dissatisfied with the current system. They argued that a proportional system would ensure that all groups had an equal voice in the council.

Efficient Private Schools.

They also believed that private schools should be efficient and that they should be subject to the same standards as state schools. They argued that this would ensure that all children had access to a good education, regardless of the type of school they attended. They believed that this was a fair system, as it would ensure that all children had the same opportunities.

They pointed out that the current system allowed for a small number of private schools to operate inefficiently, which was unfair to the majority. They believed that this was one of the reasons why the majority was dissatisfied with the current system. They argued that a proportional system would ensure that all schools were efficient and that all children had access to a good education.
In all such cases they claimed an examination independent of the Education Department of the State. They claimed that the examinations should be open to competition to all children in the State. In respect to the matter of scholarships, the Premier distinctly noticed the Queensland scheme would come into operation as from January 1.

A scholarship with a service of two years will be granted to every candidate who shall pass the entrance examination, and the scholarship will be held by the candidate until the candidate has passed a high school, grammar school, or other secondary school examination. The scholarship will be extended for two years if the candidate secures a pass in the Queensland junior public examination, and for a further year if the student secures an approved pass in the Queensland senior public examination.

They further claimed that in all examinations the papers of the students should be set and the marking of the papers done by an independent examining body, independent of the Education Department in cases in which the pupils of the State are examined against each other. They also objected to the Education Department prescribing the standards of learning and the methods of such examinations. Such a procedure would unduly handicap students who were not trained under the system of the Education Department.

The Premier's Reply.
The Premier thanked the federation for having drawn his attention to the matter, he said, as he was of the opinion that the question should be raised in the House of Commons. He also drew attention to the fact that the Government had already been given to Parliament, that it was not prepared to allow the Education Bill to proceed this session, and that the Government would not support the Education Department in the proposed Education Bill. The cases of the Premier and the Government, he said, had been determined and had been determined to prevent progress not only with that measure, but with such as the Education Act, the Education Bill, and the Bill for the appointment of another judge. All those measures had been determined to prevent the Education Bill, which involved a great deal of public expenditure which the State at the present time could not afford. He had already stated in the press that the Government would do well to re-examine the Acts, but the Ministry did not think it wise to spend the time of Parliament upon measures which could not be put into effect.

Commission's Recommendations Modified.
No doubt they had studied closely the report of the Education Commission, and they were pleased to receive the deputation, he said, and to be a body of excursionists who considered the matter of education of the State or the other States on the Education Commission. They knew from the information which had already been given to Parliament, that the Government had not yet determined to proceed with the Education Bill, and that the Education Commission had been appointed for the appointment of another judge. All those measures had been determined to prevent the Education Commission, which involved a great deal of public expenditure which the State at the present time could not afford. He had already stated in the press that the Government would do well to re-examine the Acts, but the Ministry did not think it wise to spend the time of Parliament upon measures which could not be put into effect.

Three Main Principles.
They must know that the State up till now had stood firmly to the three main principles regarding the education system—free education, religious instruction, and the threat of the State. They must be careful not to attack from two sides, those who wished to introduce religious teaching against the views of others. He trusted that the House would remain firm in its principles and that the House would be guided by the advice of others who desired to introduce religious teaching.