

Mr. G. J. Smith.

SCRIPTURE TEXT-BOOKS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

ANALYSIS.

Title.	Chairman, and reported to Minister of Education.
1. Short Title.	5. Minister to tabulate results and notify in <i>Gazette</i> .
2. "Scripture text-books" defined.	6. If proposal carried, lessons to be given.
3. Vote to be taken.	7. If objection made, children not compelled to be present.
4. How vote to be taken. (a.) Voting-papers to be provided by Education Boards. (b.) Scrutineers to be elected. (c.) Chairman and Scrutineers to see that voting-papers supplied. (d.) How to vote. (e.) Voting-papers to be counted, result declared by	8. Teachers' conscience clause.
	9. Act to come into operation on 1st January, 1896.
	Schedule.

A BILL INTITULED

AN ACT to refer the Question of the Introduction of Scripture Text-books into the Public Schools of the Colony to the decision of the Householders, as defined by "The Education Act, 1877." Title.

5 BE IT ENACTED by the General Assembly of New Zealand in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

- 1. The Short Title of this Act is "The Scripture Text-books in Public Schools Act, 1896." Short Title.
- 10 2. The term "Scripture text-books" means "The Irish National School Books of Scripture Lessons." "Scripture text-books" defined.
- 3. At the annual meeting of householders in each school district under the provisions of "The Education Act, 1877," and its amendments, to be held next after the passing of this Act, there shall be submitted to the vote of the householders then present the proposals set forth in the Schedule hereto. Vote to be taken.
- 15 4. The vote upon such proposals shall be taken as hereinafter provided, that is to say:— How vote to be taken.
- 20 (a.) The Education Board for each district shall provide the various School Committees within its jurisdiction, prior to such annual meeting as aforesaid, with a sufficient supply of voting-papers in the form set out in the Schedule hereto; Voting-papers to be provided by Education Boards.
- (b.) The meeting shall elect two householders present at the meeting to act as Scrutineers; Scrutineers to be elected.
- 25 (c.) The Chairman of the meeting, with the assistance of the said Scrutineers, shall take care that every householder present entitled to vote for the election of the School Committee for the ensuing year is provided with one voting-paper; Chairman and Scrutineers to see that voting-papers supplied.
- 30 (d.) The voter shall strike out one of the proposals on the voting-paper, and the voter shall be deemed to have voted in favour of the proposal which is not struck out; How to vote.

Voting-papers to be counted, result declared by Chairman, and reported to Minister of Education.

(e.) The said Scrutineers so appointed as aforesaid shall collect the voting-papers, and shall proceed at once to count the votes given in favour of each proposal submitted; and, after rejecting all informal votes, shall report the result to the Chairman of the meeting, who, after declaring the result of the voting, shall forthwith report the same, and forward the voting-papers to the Minister of Education. 5

Minister to tabulate results and notify in *Gazette*.

5. The Minister of Education, on receiving from the Chairmen of the various School Committees such report and voting-papers as aforesaid, shall tabulate such results and publish the same in the *Gazette*, and ascertain therefrom the determination of the voters throughout the colony on the proposals submitted; and if he finds that a majority of the votes recorded throughout the colony are in favour of the proposal that the lessons contained in the Scripture text-books shall form one of the subjects of instruction in the public schools of the colony, he shall forthwith notify in the *Gazette* that such proposal has been carried; and, notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in "The Education Act, 1877," or any amendment thereof, the lessons in the said Scripture text-books shall form one of the subjects of instruction in all the public schools of the colony, and the Minister of Education shall make provision accordingly. 10 15 20

If proposal carried, lessons to be given.

6. After the notification of the carrying of the proposal as aforesaid, the lessons in the said Scripture text-books shall be given daily in every public school in the colony on the day on which the same shall be opened, and for and during the first thirty minutes of the first school-hour in the forenoon, and before such teaching the Lord's prayer may be repeated. 25

If objection made, children not compelled to be present.

7. No child shall be compelled to be present at the giving of the said lessons in the said Scripture text-books whose parent or guardian shall make objection thereto in writing. 30

Teachers' conscience clause.

8. If any teacher shall satisfy the Education Board for the district that he or she objects, on grounds of conscience, to use the said Scripture text-books, such teacher shall be relieved from the duty, and in such case the Education Board shall make other provision for the said lessons in the said Scripture text-books being given. 35

Act to come into operation on 1st January, 1896.

9. This Act shall come into operation on the *first* day of January, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven.

Schedule.

SCHEDULE.

EDUCATION DISTRICT OF

SCHOOL DISTRICT.

I VOTE that the lessons in the Scripture Text-books shall form one of the subjects of instruction in all public schools of the colony.

I vote that the said lessons shall not form one of the subjects of instruction.

Directions.

The voter must strike out the proposal which it is desired shall not be given effect to.