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Pagan Patriotism

By
H. R. Argubhart, M.A.

A PAMPHLET TREATING OF:

1. The Minister for Education versus Mr. A. W. Page, M.Sc.
2. The Oath of Allegiance as the Mother of Hypocrisy.
3. Infidel Teachers who Invoke the Aid of the Deity, and Christian Teachers who bow the Knee to Baal.
4. The Unenviable Position of Rectors of

an, Methodist, Rep-
colleges on the Honor
Dilemma.

in Theory and in

an Interpreter of

650 Pagan patriotism

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"Love of country is not everything here below.
One is a man and a son of God, before being
a Frenchman or a German."

-Ernest Renan.

21 SEP 1988

PAGAN PATRIOTISM

A Lecture by

MR, H. R. URQUHART, M.A.

Author of the Anti-war Pamphlets

"Christianity and War, a Challenge to the Churches."

"Men and Marbles."

"Court-martial or Post-mortem."

FOREWORD.

This address on "Pagan Patriotism" was delivered in the Strand Theatre, Auckland, on Sunday evening, 11th June, 1922. Some slight additional matter has been inserted which time did not permit discussion of during the course of the lecture itself.

Two of the evening's interjections seem worthy of attention. When the speaker was advising teachers to adopt a certain course of action with regard to the Oath of Allegiance, someone interjected, "What about superannuation?" My unknown friend here touched on a tremendously potent factor in sealing the lips of those who, but for the danger of jeopardising their right to participation in the benefits of this scheme, would speak out with no uncertain voice against known acts of injustice. Let me say at once that the evil influence here referred to, which attaches in greater or less degree to all schemes of superannuation, pensions and titles, should be fought as one would fight the plague. Benefits accepted on such terms and

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spiritual growth will consider the explanation there given sufficiently ample; for those who neither know nor understand I am content to wait until we pierce the veil beyond, when all mists of doubt and of misinterpretation will assuredly be rolled away.

Yours in the cause of Truth,

H. R. Urquhart.

*“Maranatha,” Exmouth Road,
Northcote, Auckland,
New Zealand.*

at such a price are to be loathed and abhorred, for they can become more destructive of a country's real manhood than can the ravages of war or of pestilence. A clear and undominated conscience even with dire poverty as its last and lonely companion is infinitely to be preferred to an old age of ease and comfort purchased at the price of compromise with truth.

Again, when the speaker was referring in words of approval to the beliefs of anti-militarists, a friend interjected "You were not always of that opinion." This I freely admit. For two years I was attached to the Otago University Officers' Training Corps, and for some time held a Captain's commission in the Auckland Cadet Force. Many of the brave lads who went to the front in the recent war, and some who died on the field of battle, received their first training in the art of warfare from me. They were as sincere in following their instructions as I was at the time in giving them; but my eyes have been opened since those days, and henceforth my endeavour shall be to open the eyes of others, and thus in some measure undo the pernicious work of previous years. In an appendix will be found a copy of my letter of resignation so far as military work is concerned. Those who know and understand the nature of

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[Chairman: OSCAR MCBRINE ESQ.]

Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—

Before entering upon the subject set down for to-night's discussion, I should like to take this opportunity of thanking the New Zealand Labour Party for the courtesy it has extended to me in granting the free use of this platform to-night.

It is by no means the first occasion on which I have been shown consideration by those interested in the Labour Movement.

In 1915, when the Great War was raging in Europe, I sought to have published a pamphlet entitled "Christianity and War: A Challenge to the Churches," which attempted to set forth the true Christian attitude with regard to war.

I submitted it to two religious printing establishments, to the "Christian Student Movement Press," and to the Churches of Christ "Austral Publishing Company," both of Australia. Although each of these firms had a personal guarantee from me against any financial loss in the matter, both regretted that they could not undertake the work. I freely admit that the book championed a most unpopular cause at the time,

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namely, the cause of Christianity, and that because of stringent War Regulations printers were extremely nervous; but the book found a publisher, nevertheless, and consequently saw the light of day. On the last page it bears this imprint: “N.Z. Worker Newspaper Coy., Ltd., Trades Hall, Auckland.”

Strange, passing strange, is it not, that a book, the object of which was to draw attention to the spirit and teaching of Jesus Christ, whom all Christians believe to be the Son of God, should be rejected by two printing firms, established and maintained by definite religious movements, and that ultimately it should be run off on machines housed in the same building that shelters that **evil** Socialist Sunday School which a few weeks ago aroused the ire and indignation of certain ministers of this city, because of its alleged God-dishonouring teaching.

Although I have at no time definitely allied myself with the Labour Movement, I wish, through you, Mr. Chairman, to extend to the New Zealand Labour Party my sincere thanks.

At the close of our talk to-night I shall submit a resolution for your kind consideration. I trust that all will find it convenient to remain the few extra minutes necessary to attend to this important matter.

INTRODUCTION

My purpose to-night is to review the case of the young teacher, Mr. A. W. Page, M.Sc., late of the Christchurch Boys' High School, who was dismissed from the ranks of the teaching profession because he found himself unable to take the Oath of Allegiance unless safeguarded by a conscience clause couched in these words: "So long as such undertaking continues not to conflict with what I consider to be my duty to God."

I wish it to be understood from the outset that I have personally nothing but the kindest of feelings towards every man I may be called upon to criticise to-night. It is as Public Servants and Ministers of the Crown that I attack them, and if I fight with the gloves off, as I intend to do, and hit hard, as I shall do, it is only because so few seem to appreciate the full import of this apparently simple case of dismissal, and because if the many **do** realise and understand the danger, they are maintaining a silence of which I cannot under any circumstances approve.

During the course of this address I shall be compelled to make use of the term "God," perhaps frequently. Let it be understood that when I use it, it is used in no narrow, restricted, orthodox sense, but with the widest and broadest possible meaning.

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I shall go further, and say that when I use the term “God,” I mean a God who will not altogether condemn such a man as the great French sceptic, Ernest Renan, who, although strenuously denying the divinity of Christ in the ordinarily accepted Christian sense, yet said, when speaking of the Crucifixion of this Great Teacher:

“Rest now in thy glory, noble pioneer! Thy work is achieved, thy divinity established. Fear no more to see the edifice of thine efforts crumble through a flaw. Henceforth, beyond the reach of frailty, thou shalt behold, from the heights of heavenly peace, the infinite consequences of thy deeds. At the price of a few hours of suffering, which have not even touched thy mighty soul, thou hast purchased the fullest immortality. A thousand times more alive, a thousand times more loved since thy death than during the days of thy pilgrimage here below, thou shalt become so truly the corner-stone of humanity, that to tear thy name from this world were to shake it to its foundations. Between thee and God men shall distinguish no more. Thou that hast utterly vanquished death, take possession of thy kingdom. Whither, by the royal road which thou hast shown, ages of worshippers shall follow thee.”

I cannot think that the man who wrote that passage will be eternally damned. I think that somehow God will make room for him.

INTRODUCTION

The God that I speak of to-night is a God, I think, who, in spite of the condemnation of many Christians, will find some words of praise for that other French sceptic, Voltaire. The Voltaire who, throughout his long life, proved himself a true brother to his fellow men and the fearless champion of all those whose very lives were imperilled by the superstitious beliefs of his day—the Voltaire who, on his deathbed, made this noble confession: “I die adoring God, loving my friends, not hating my enemies, and detesting superstition.”

Again, the God that I speak of to-night is a God who has reserved some other place than the flames of hell-fire for that great, broad-minded American infidel, Robert Ingersoll. The Robert Ingersoll who, when accused of seeking to destroy the Christian's hope of immortality, said:

“I am not trying to destroy another world, but I am endeavouring to prevent the theologians from destroying this.

“The dying hopes that death is but another birth, and love leans above the pallid face and whispers, ‘We shall meet again.’

“Hope is the consolation of the world.

“Let us hope that, if there be a God, he is wise and good.

“Let us hope that, if there be another life, it will bring peace and joy to all the children of men.

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“And let us hope that this poor earth on which we live may be a perfect world—a world without crime, without a tear.

“I have made up my mind that if there is a God, he will be merciful to the merciful—upon that rock I stand.”

Briefly, then, the God that I speak of to-night is a God whose heart is tender enough and whose mind is broad enough to find room and place for all such sceptics and infidels as Renan, Voltaire, and Ingersoll, and for all others whose search after truth is both passionate and sincere.

I. MR. PAGE'S DISMISSAL :—

ITS FULL SIGNIFICANCE

Let us now consider the reasons for Mr. Page's dismissal, and the full import of the Government's action.

Mr. Page is a young man, clever, even brilliant ; he is not yet twenty-one years of age, but he has already taken his M.Sc. degree with first-class honours.

He had won the confidence of his pupils, the respect and admiration of his fellow teachers.

He was dismissed, at a moment's notice, not because of incapacity : Mr. Page was looked upon as one of New Zealand's most promising teachers by those competent to judge ; not because of a debasing influence on the pupils entrusted to his care, not because of any misdemeanour ; but because he foresaw in taking the oath of allegiance which recent legislation made necessary, that an occasion might arise when the demands of State would conflict with his duty to God, and, being a Christian, he wished to safeguard his position by adding this proviso to the oath : " So long as such undertaking continues not to conflict with what I consider to be my duty to God."

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For this, and this alone, I repeat, Mr. Page was summarily dismissed from the ranks of the teaching profession by the Government of the day.

You may say: “What has this to do with me? It is Mr. Page’s private affair, it concerns him alone.”

Sir, I submit it is **not** Mr. Page’s private concern; I maintain that it is, or ought to be, the concern of every true man and woman in this Dominion.

You cannot do grave injustice to one member of the body social without injury to the whole organism. When a noble vessel, driving through the mighty deep, has her side pierced by the sharp edge of an uncharted rock, will you tell me that that is the concern merely of those who occupy the cabins immediately affected; is it not rather the concern of every soul aboard that ship, from the captain on the bridge to the stoker working in the very bowels of the vessel?

And to-night I am here to tell you that this **is** your concern, and **my** concern, and the concern of every man and woman who understands the meaning of the terms Freedom and Justice.

When your Government dismissed Mr. Page because in a conflict of duties he wished to serve God rather than man, it then openly asserted its absolute supremacy in all things spiritual as well as temporal. In effect it said, “Henceforth you

MR. PAGE'S DISMISSAL

will be permitted to serve and obey God only in so far as such service, and such obedience do not conflict with any demand made on you by the state.

In the light of these facts, the following resolution passed at a conference held last Easter, at Nelson, is fraught with more than usual interest :

That this Conference of Churches of Christ, representing the whole of the Dominion, affirms its continued loyalty to the Imperial Throne. We regard loyalty to the King as part of our Christian duty, and now especially when disruptive forces are so insistent and seditious utterances come from high places we are pleased to express our unswerving determination to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.

I wish to point out to these Christian friends that Cæsar no longer is content with such restricted loyalty. He now demands not only the things which were formerly rendered unto him, but even the things which should be rendered unto God alone. Octopus like, the huge tentacles of state have already a strangle hold on the churches, but like the dead, inert stones over which this monster is wont to crawl, they perceive it not.

Christians heretofore, when called upon to swear an oath of allegiance have either refused, as was the practice of the early Quakers, or else have naturally assumed that it was taken for

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granted by all concerned, the Government included, that such a proviso as Mr. Page insisted on was, from the very nature of the Christian position, absolutely necessary and indispensable. Back somewhere in the mind there was always that assumption more or less consciously present. But those days are now definitely past—the dismissal of Mr. Page clearly indicates the Government's attitude to this oath: loyalty to King George V. must be absolute and must take precedence of loyalty to God Almighty. This, then, is the position, this the full meaning and import of an apparently simple and innocent act. The State has made a daring attempt to dominate you body, soul and spirit, and if you would have it otherwise now is the time to let your voice be heard.

II. PROTESTS LONG OVERDUE:—

COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CONGREGATIONS AND ANGLICAN
SYNOD

It seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that protesting voices from many quarters should have been heard long ere this.

The "Daily Press," might surely have been expected to make some comment on such an important issue. But no! These were the subjects of the leaders and sub-leaders of the Auckland dailies of that date:—

"The British Budget," "Tariff Reciprocity," "The Proposed Dairy Pool," "The State in Business," "The Savings Bank," "A Taxation Enquiry." All these, you will note, deal with purely material interests. Not one word relative to the Government's high-handed treatment of Mr. Page. But let us leave the newspapers, for after all, even those most intimately concerned would readily admit that these are purely commercial enterprises run by men more vitally interested in the making of dividends than in the making of nations.

But if we cannot expect newspaper proprietors to interest themselves in such matters, surely we can look with confidence to Christians, to churches and especially to the Council of

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Christian Congregations to make some definite and worthy pronouncement respecting a matter of such deep interest to the whole Christian community.

But so far no protesting voice has been heard save that of the Rev. Lamb Harvey, in a letter to the “Herald.” The Council of Christian Congregations met only a few days ago, but it was both blind and dumb so far as this God-dishonouring action of the Government was concerned. Again, during the very week that Mr. Page’s dismissal was announced in the local papers, the General Synod of the Church of England was in session in this city. Here we had an august assembly of many of the alleged spiritual leaders of the Dominion. A body of men whose vocation, whose whole training should have led them to sense and sense immediately the danger that threatened the very foundations of the moral and spiritual life of this country, yet not one voice of protest was raised when the Government, by its dismissal of Mr. Page on such infamous grounds, declared its supremacy in all matters spiritual as well as temporal. That the members of this Anglican Synod had some glimmerings that there **was** such a thing as conscience, and that the State at times opposed its dictates, is evidenced by the words used by Bishop Averill, for in referring to the New Zealand Marriage Laws, he said:—

PROTESTS LONG OVERDUE

"We have got to see that the State does not stop us from standing up for ideals. If the State makes us do what we believe is against our conscience we must resist the State. I believe it is our duty to do so."

Now here was a Christian teacher actually doing what members of the Synod had vitality enough only to talk about. They kept silent, and so it happened that while this lone champion of religious liberty and of the rights of conscience was being strangled by a pagan government, the General Synod wasted part of its time in seeking to settle the momentous question of whether its leading bishop was to be called Primate or Archbishop, or by a combination of these two most unscriptural names.

When you see callous indifference of this kind among those who claim to be spiritually minded, you are really looking upon the hideous marks indicative of the death of a once vital, strenuous, and pulsating spiritual life.

In Marie Corelli's book, "The Sorrows of Satan," one of the principal characters is a young woman. She is beautiful, artistic, educated, and lovable; the daughter of a noble family, but a family that for long years had been impoverished. Her father, anxious to replenish the coffers of his estate, gives her in marriage to a man of wealth who was the personification of everything that was vile and evil. The soul of the girl revolted at the thought of such an unholy union—to avoid

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it she determined in the long run to take her own life. She retired to her room and prepared herself for bed. There reclining, propped up by pillows, she drinks the fatal draught. The room is ablaze with light, and while her young life slowly ebbs away she gazes intently into a mirror which she grasps in one hand, while with the other she jots down her dying sensations and describes the marks of death as one by one they are indelibly written on that once beautiful and smiling face. And if to-night I can do no more, I can, at least, hold up a mirror so that **you** may witness some of the marks of a decadent and dying religion; but at the same time I ask those of you who are interested in the young people of our Dominion this important question: What, in the name of all that is pure and holy, is to become of a generation of children reared in such a God-dishonouring atmosphere, taught by teachers who dare not, on pain of instant dismissal, declare their full and unfettered allegiance to God, and governed by a pagan Minister of Education, whose God is the Navy, and who has the arrogance and audacity to urge through Parliament legislation which shall empower him to dismiss from the teaching profession all those who refuse to fall down and worship the gods of brass, of wood, and of stone that he himself has set up?

PROTESTS LONG OVERDUE

Rouse yourselves from your death-sleep, ye Ministers of Religion, ye Christian men and women, or be content to die in obloquy, remembered only as men who had eyes to see but saw not, who had ears to hear, but heard not.

III. FUTILITIES :—

(a) BIBLE IN SCHOOLS MOVEMENT

(b) CITIZENS' INTERCESSORY SERVICES

I wish now to devote a few minutes to the consideration of certain movements which have enlisted the sympathy of many of the citizens of Auckland, but which to my mind, under present conditions are absolutely futile. Let us refer to at least two of these futilities.

First then why waste further time and energy over the Bible in schools movement? What sane purpose do you thereby serve? What avail would it be to teach the children that God is over all, that He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, when the Minister for Education has actually dismissed the one and only teacher who evidently believed that doctrine? Until the law insisting on the taking of this oath, is revoked or altered, until it **is** possible for a teacher to serve God rather than man, all such teaching is vain and idle, nay it is worse than this, it is the veriest hypocrisy and contemptible camouflage.

Again, what does it avail you to hold Citizens' Intercessory Services in your Town Hall every Tuesday at noon? Here is part of the advertisement announcing the first of these meetings :—

FUTILITIES

The Citizens' Intercessory Services are purely a laymen's movement. These are times vibrant with stern challenge to the Christian faith, and the object is to give opportunity to citizens to join together once a week in an acknowledgment of their belief in God as King over all.

Fine sounding words, no doubt, but absolutely futile so long as you are willing to take an oath of allegiance which, read in the light of Mr. Page's dismissal, clearly makes George V., and not God at all, King over all.

But listen again to part of the newspaper report of this same meeting:—

DECLARATION OF FAITH FIRST CITIZENS' SERVICE HOUR OF INTERCESSION

The first of Auckland's mid-day intercessory services, held in the Town Hall concert chamber yesterday, proved beyond all doubt that there is a strong and genuine desire on the part of citizens to make these services a real power for good in the spiritual life of the community. There was an attendance of over 400 men and women.

The Mayor, Mr. J. H. Gunson, presided, and with him on the platform were Bishop Averill and a number of well-known citizens. In a preliminary address, Mr. Gunson stated that the services had been instituted by laymen citizens, and would be controlled by laymen for the grand objective of a due recognition of God as the Supreme Ruler.

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Now, Mr. Chairman, I have not the slightest wish to disparage any such attempt made to raise the moral and spiritual tone of this community; but let us as men face the actual facts, as men let us deal with realities and not with futilities.

Therefore, with all due respect, I say, let those who meet at the Town Hall, the Mayor, Bishop Averill, and all others who wish to express their belief in God as the Supreme Ruler, recognise this fact: That such a doctrine held and expressed by any teacher in this Dominion would occasion his instant dismissal, and that so long as they treat this state of affairs with indifference, so long as they profess not to see what should be patent to all, just so long will their services be futile, and their declaration of faith a mere repetition of words void of all meaning and sensible content.

IV. THE SYLLABUS ON CIVICS :—

LOYALTY IN THE MAKING

Let us now examine the syllabus so far as the subject of Civics is concerned. The instructions to teachers read as follows :—

Loyalty should be the dominant note. Lessons should be selected and presented in such a way as to lay stress on the need for sympathetic co-operation not only on the part of the various Dominions within the Empire, but on the part of every section of the community within which we live.

I want you to notice that the syllabus here speaks of sympathetic co-operation, that in itself is always a good thing, but note very particularly that the sympathetic co-operation here spoken of is limited to the various Dominions within the Empire, and to the various sections of the community within each Dominion.

At once I say, and say emphatically, that such co-operation as this is too narrow, too restricted.

Sympathetic co-operation between the various Dominions within the Empire and between the various sections within each Dominion is certainly an excellent thing, but to my mind it is equally important that this co-operation should

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extend to all countries outside of our Empire. To fail to realise this means a failure to sense the true spirit of the age, for in the hearts of the most loyal subjects of this Dominion there is a yearning to stretch out the hand of loving sympathy to our brothers and sisters of other lands: in the minds of the most thoughtful of the community the conception is ever growing that all nations are of **one** flesh.

These desires should certainly find themselves reflected in the syllabus guiding the efforts of the teachers of this Dominion.

No man can be a fit Minister for Education, no man can be a loyal subject whose spiritual growth is stunted—whose vision is blurred, and who can see nothing but flags, guns and ammunition, when mention of foreign nations is made.

We must learn to be bigger and braver men, we must learn to love more, and hate less, if we would seek to shape the destinies of the rising generation.

Our scholars must be taught that the world, after all, is just one big home, and that as in the private home each member has his special contribution to make towards the happiness and good of all, so is it in the larger home. No one country, not even ours, has the monopoly of all the virtues, but each country has something to contribute which the other does not possess, and thus honour and esteem are due to all.

TEACHING OF CIVICS

Nothing but evil can result from the constant attempt to exalt our own nation in all circumstances, and at all times, and to belittle the efforts of others. It would be a healthy exercise to discuss with scholars things of which we, as a people, should feel ashamed, as well as things of which we may be justifiably proud.

Too many pupils leave our schools with wrong conceptions of foreign lands. If you make mention of India, the average schoolboy at once conjures up visions of the Black Hole of Calcutta. This is wrong—this is sinful. You might as well seek to base a judgment of the British people on the “Moplah” incident. You have all heard of it—news of the tragedy appeared in our papers only a few months ago. Here are one or two paragraphs from the Auckland “Herald” report of this matter:—

INDIAN TRAIN TRAGEDY ASPHYXIATED PRISONERS AN INQUIRY OPENED

DELHI, Nov. 30.

An inquiry into the cause of the deaths of 56 Moplah prisoners who were asphyxiated on a railway journey from Tirur to Podanur, has opened at Tirur.

A traffic inspector named Reeve said that he examined the van, and found that the wire-gauze-covered ventilation apertures were much smaller than was usual, and had been blocked with paint.

On arrival at Shoranur at 8.30 p.m. the sergeant heard the prisoners shouting for

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water. He told them he would get water for them at Podanur. He did not open the doors of the van as he saw no special reason.

At Clavakore he went into the van. He heard nothing unusual. There was not so much noise, but further requests for water were made. He telegraphed to Podanur to have some buckets of water ready, and on arriving at Podanur he took the water to the van. He then found all the prisoners lying down, some of them groaning, whereupon he summoned medical aid.

One of the prisoners examined by the inquiry committee, said that the first time the train stopped all asked for water, but received no answer. The next time the prisoners called out that many were fainting, and would die, and it would be enough if the doors were opened. The witness fainted soon after and remembered nothing more till called to attention at Coimbatore.

Witness said the prisoners were sweating profusely and could not breathe. Some were so thirsty that they drank their perspiration, squeezing it from their clothes. Some unsuccessfully tried to remove the gauze from the openings in the sides of the van. All were obliged to stand, but they soon began to fall down. They then lay on top of each other. He also said that they fought each other.

Another prisoner declared that on one occasion a voice outside told the prisoners that if they persisted in quarrelling they would be shot.

The senior medical officer for Malabar stated that the surviving prisoners received every attention when proceeding to Coimbatore. He also expressed the opinion that the prisoners were asphyxiated because there were too many in the van, both for air and for space. Even with the ventilating gauze removed he was not sure if the van was fit for conveying human beings.

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The district medical officer denied that any of the bodies were mangled, but expressed the opinion that he would not have recommended the carrying of 100 prisoners in such a van.

After this tragic incident, perpetrated in our own enlightened days, perpetrated by officials of our own alleged Christian Government, let us for ever wipe from our school books and from our memories everything that pertains to the Black Hole of Calcutta.

Let us rather know India as a nation of thinkers, a nation which had an advanced civilisation when our forefathers were barbarians, a nation of seekers after God rather than of seekers after wealth, a nation that has produced in our own times a Mahatma Ghandi, the greatest Christian outside of Christendom, and a poet of the highest rank, Rabindranath Tagore.

When treating of Russia let your students know something more than the names of its rivers, lakes and seas. Let them know that Russia was the home of that grand old man, Count Leo Tolstoy ; let them know something of his life and work, and of his profound influence on the Russian people, and let them fully realise that he was a man of whom Russia has as great reason to be proud as we have to be proud of William Shakespeare.

Do not, as formerly, let Krupps and the Kaiser dominate altogether your picture of Ger-

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many, but let your scholars know, also, of the contributions this country has made in the realms of science and philosophy, and that the world of music would be much the poorer had it not been for such men as Bach, Handel, Beethoven, Wagner and Mendelssohn.

And so on throughout your teaching—the aim being to demonstrate, not that the British race has a monopoly of all that is best, but that even the humblest nation has something to contribute to the sum total of human happiness and good ; but, above all, let the children begin, even in their school days, to breathe in something of the spirit of universal brotherhood, and to this end the study of Esperanto might well be encouraged.

Let us again examine the Syllabus. Paragraph (2) speaks of “The inculcation of patriotism and loyalty to King and country.”

Much might be said on this subject. Time will not permit, but I should like to point out just two things :—

- (1) You now live in a country where God is outlawed by the Minister for Education and by the State.
- (2) You now live in a country where loyalty to a King takes precedence of loyalty to the Creator of that King.

No true loyalty can thrive in such an atmosphere. No sound superstructure can be built on

TEACHING OF CIVICS

such flimsy foundations. Loyalty of this kind must continue to be an ever present menace and danger to the State. No king who is a true man would demand such blasphemous loyalty ; no subject, who is a true Christian, should accord it.

V. PAGAN PATRIOTISM:—

“Curst be the country where man has no sympathy for man, where money is loved for its own sake and a sort of stagey patriotism flaunts itself as public spirit.”—N. N. Ghosh.

A word or two now on the subject of “Pagan Patriotism.” What really is a Pagan? Benjamin Kidd, in his remarkable book, “The Science of Power,” points out that “The Pagan was originally a villager, the worshipper of local and therefore of false gods. He was the antithesis of the universal. The Pagan man, or state,” he says, “is that man or State whose standard of right does not extend beyond his, or its, own interests.” Viewed in the light of these definitions the framers of the Syllabus for the guidance of our New Zealand teachers were all pagans. Their vision was too limited, they had no conception of the universal, or of the oneness of humanity; their God was a purely local, or tribal one, and the only teacher in all New Zealand who really knew and served the God of the Universe, was summarily dismissed for his presumption.

Listen again to Tolstoy; this is what he says: “Every official prospers in his career the better, the more patriotic he is. Every writer, teacher, and professor is more secure in his place the more he preaches patriotism.” Although the truth of

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these words is only too evident in this country I wish it to be understood that I am not here to ridicule patriotism when it is of the right stamp. I am certainly not one of those who can see good in all countries save in their own, and if I criticise to-night it is simply because I see the evil channels into which a perfectly legitimate feeling is being diverted.

The patriotism I would encourage would be a patriotism void of offence to patriots of all other countries. First the home circle, then one's countrymen, then humanity; that is the true order of development; an ever-widening circle of human sympathy. To centre one's thoughts on one's country and people means a broader horizon, a wider vision than to centre one's thoughts on one's family alone. To feel the bonds of brotherhood with regard to one's own nation is a stepping-stone to feeling the bonds of the universal brotherhood. If a man cannot realise the meaning of this narrower brotherhood of his own nation, how can he really know anything of the wider, all-embracing brotherhood? or, putting the same thought in the words of Scripture, "If a man love not his brother whom he **hath** seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

But the question now arises, how are we to arrange things, what have we to do in order to secure this love for one's country? If you are

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a father, or a mother, I ask you, how do **you** secure the love and loyalty of your own sons and daughters? Do you insist on their saluting **you** once a week? Do you compel them to sing a song every Monday or Friday afternoon, asking God to save you and to confound the domestic arrangements of your next door neighbour? Do you make them sign an oath of allegiance to you? If you do, you will not make men and women of them; you will make hypocrites who will seek the first opportunity of breaking away from you. No, the more your effort is consciously and definitely directed to this end of securing love and loyalty, the less you are likely to succeed. The best of you realise that if you are true companions to your children, that if you are just, that if your whole lives reflect your love for them, your children **will** love you—your children **will** respect and honour you. There will be no need of any compulsion, no need of saluting, no need of songs and oaths. And so it is with a country, and with its children. Edmund Burke admirably sums up this idea in these words: “If you wish to make men love a country, make that country lovely.”

Now what is the method adopted in our schools for inculcating loyalty? The Minister for Education thinks that if you force the children to salute the flag often enough **that** will do it. He thinks that if the children sing “God Save

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the King " often and loudly enough, **that** will do it. Teachers being older and hence, according to the official view, more prone to the sin of disloyalty, have, in addition, to take the oath of allegiance, and the Minister glories in the fact that all save one have done so. It is nothing to him that all the infidels and agnostics in the ranks of the teaching profession have found it necessary, in order to retain their positions, to call on God, in whom they do not believe, to help them uphold this sham and pagan brand of loyalty ; it is nothing to him that he has made arrant hypocrites of such men ; he insists on loyalty at all costs, hypocrisy, canting humbug, and insincerity are all alike welcome in the ranks of the teaching profesison, but sincere, God-fearing men are anathema to him.

The Minister, in one of his statements, made use of this expression : " The flag has **got** to be respected." He surely forgets that respect and love are things to be " won," not " compelled." If your flag is clean all right thinking men and women will naturally respect it as an emblem of triumphant righteousness ; there will be no need of compulsion.

Mr. Parr goes further, and says that if a pupil has instructions from his parents that he is not to take part in these patriotic proceedings he is not to be excused, he must stand to attention in the ranks until the ceremony is over, and

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face, of course, all the childish ridicule and persecution that such an attitude would most probably arouse. Is the Minister for Education satisfied that he himself would have the courage to face an ordeal of this kind? His methods of inculcating patriotism by such forceful means are similar to those employed by Frederick William I. of Prussia. It is reported of this harsh and autocratic ruler that one day, as he rode through the streets of Berlin, he saw a poor Jew slink out of his way. He stopped, seized him, and asked the reason. “Sire, I was afraid of you,” stammered the man, “and sought to escape.” The King caught him by the back of the neck, and, laying on him with his riding whip, roared in fury: “Love me, you shall love me! I’ll teach you to love me.”

But I have said sufficient on this aspect of the subject. Surely you will agree that such trifling, paltry means as Mr. Parr would employ will not rear the men and women you need to make a great country. You will make puppets, you will make hypocrites, you will make shufflers, you will make a nation of slaves, you will certainly never make a nation of true men and noble women, and I am here to-night, it may be, I grant you, a voice crying in the wilderness, but nevertheless a voice urging you to stop and think, and to drive this false, this pagan patriotism from your land.

VI. THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE AS THE MOTHER OF HYPOCRISY :—

(a) INFIDEL TEACHERS WHO INVOKE THE AID OF THE DEITY, AND CHRISTIAN TEACHERS WHO BOW THE KNEE TO BAAL. (b) LABOUR'S CONVICTIONS IN THEORY AND IN PRACTICE.

And now I wish to say something in reference to the oath itself, and its bearing on teachers, with a word also in regard to Labour's convictions in theory and in practice.

The oath all teachers were asked to take reads as follows: "I do swear that I will be faithful to bear true allegiance to His Majesty, King George the Fifth, his heirs and successors according to law, SO HELP ME GOD."

Much might be said of the futility of compulsory oaths of allegiance. It could well be contended that an oath is like a rope stretched across the pathway only a few inches from the ground. It is far more likely to trip up men who walk as honest men should, with head erect and shoulders square, than the shufflers whose downward gaze notes the danger and leads to a safe side-stepping. It might be truthfully said that the imposition of this oath of allegiance is a revival of the obnoxious Test Acts of the reign of King Charles II., and that the men responsible for them, Mr. Massey, Mr. Parr, and

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their colleagues, are political throw-backs, men who lag superfluous on the stage of human progress. Again it might be pointed out that the concluding words of the oath, “SO HELP ME GOD,” are out of tune with the opening words, “I do swear that I will be faithful,” since Jesus Christ, whom all Christians hold to be the Son of God, has said very definitely and distinctly, “Swear not at all.”

But there is one aspect in which those who insist on oath-taking may be looked upon as the arch-manufacturers of hypocrites. I want you to examine somewhat more precisely the four concluding words of the oath, “SO HELP ME GOD.” Notice that each of these four small words is printed with capital letters throughout. They are fraught with much meaning. I am now speaking to the teachers of this Dominion, from the more or less obscure Kindergarten mistresses and assistants, to the heads of our great secondary schools, whose work, though more in the limelight, is not thereby necessarily rendered any more worthy. Now, as men and women, you either believe in God or you do not believe in Him. Let me call those of the first class believers, or Christians, and those of the second, unbelievers, rationalists, atheists, infidels, or what you will along that line. I know the distinction here made is a rough one, but it will do. Now, a word to those of the first class, to the believers

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or Christians: You know that Mr. Page was dismissed from the profession to which you belong because he gave to God His rightful place. Mr. Page considered the true order was first God, then the State. The Government reversed this order and said first the State, then God. Under these circumstances what did you mean by repeating the words "SO HELP ME GOD"? As sane, reasonable men do you really expect God to help you to exalt the State, and to relegate Him to a second place? I leave that with you; but do not come to me with a smile intended to indicate the possession of more than average shrewdness and say that although you took the oath of allegiance it really meant nothing, for you treated the whole matter as a huge joke. "Many people protect themselves by laughing. I have more than once seen an alcoholic laugh heartily at his wrecked home and lost job," says the author of "The Dominie's Log," Mr. A. S. Neill. My trifling friend, I tell you that you cannot with impunity joke at the expense of God Almighty; it is **you** who really are the joke, the butt and sport of the soul-destroying gods of Insincerity and Compromise. If such be your nature consider well whether it is possible for you who are insincere in this to demand sincerity from the scholars entrusted to your care.

Now what of that second section of teachers, the unbelievers, you who proudly call your-

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selves atheists, rationalists, intellectuals, or agnostics? What precisely did **you** mean when you so meekly repeated the words “SO HELP ME GOD,” when your boast previously was that you did not believe in the existence of God at all, and when you had so often smiled in a superior way at the simple faith of the Christian? Where was your backbone that day? What sudden disaster overtook your atheism? It was surely of a brand that tended to growth of tongue rather than to development of backbone. The Christian section had at least **one** representative who stood true to his convictions in the day of trial; where was yours? I tell you candidly that if one of you had stepped out and said, “I cannot take this oath because it is made in the name of God, and I do not admit there is such a being,” you would have won my admiration; for what this country needs more than anything else to-day is honest men, be they Christians or atheists, who will stand true to their convictions, rather than men who trifle with conscience. You said you were followers of Robert Ingersoll. I tell you that if I know anything of Robert Ingersoll he would not have acted thus. He would have been ashamed of you and justly despised your cowardice, for the moment you repeated the words “SO HELP ME GOD,” when in truth you denied His very existence, you were false to your convictions such as they were; you sold

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your manhood, your birthright, for a paltry thirty pieces of silver.

To both parties, therefore, to Christian and to non-Christians alike, I would say this, that before you can train children to be honest and straightforward, it is essential, it is imperative that you yourselves should first be honest and straightforward.

Too many of you have failed to come out of this test creditably, and it is precisely here that the weakness of our people is beginning to manifest itself. Of pure physical courage we have abundance. Witness the heroic efforts of all concerned to save the crew of the "Wiltshire"; witness the cheerful endurance of the crew itself. It was noble, it was magnificent, and this was only one of thousands of such cases. No; I do not arraign our nation for lack of physical courage. I am, indeed, proud of the qualities our race ever exhibits along this line. I ask for nothing nobler, and my humble prayer is that when my testing time comes, and when your testing time comes, we, too, may prove ourselves worthy of these noble traditions.

Would that as a people our moral courage was equal to our physical. Unfortunately it lags far behind, and in this connexion I have a word to say to my Labour friends.

No one who really knows you, and who has seen you at your daily toil, as perchance you en-

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tered the virgin bush and with keen axe brought to mother earth with fearful rending sound and terrific crash those giants of the forest ; or who has seen you in the great iron and steel works of the world as you dexterously handled those huge masses of molten metal, or has been with you as you descended into the very bowels of the earth to delve for coal, and then, perchance, has witnessed your heroic, almost superhuman efforts to rescue your mates when disaster has overtaken that mine ; or who, it may be, has been with you in your frail fishing boats as you battled valiantly with fierce storm and angry sea ; in short, no one who has seen you at any of the thousand and one dangerous tasks to which so many of you are called in order to earn your daily bread, dare say that you lack physical courage. There, gentlemen, you are magnificent, you are worthy of all admiration—I take off my hat to you in silent reverence for your splendid heroism.

But listen quietly just a moment longer. Away back previous to the outbreak of war you talked much about the proletariat, you spoke about the workers of other lands and said they were your brothers ; that the oppressive capitalist was your real enemy ; you talked “big” in those days when your ‘Scott Bennetts’ and others occupied the Opera House platform. You had convictions that war was wrong, that it was a trick of the capitalist to further enslave you.

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Now if you and your comrades throughout the world, who talked and thought with you, had only had the moral courage to stand by those convictions (for after all they were incontestably sound and right) you would have gone a very long way to making that war impossible. But what did you do? You peeped over this shoulder, and you peeped over that shoulder to see if the crowd was following you, and when you found the crowd was not following you, **you** turned round and meekly followed the crowd. Many of you cursed the Flag and damned the drum and the band, but you shouldered your .303 service rifle and went forth to shoot the very workers you had so lately called your brothers. And listen further, you left behind a mere handful of men to uphold the cause you believed in, but had not the moral courage or backbone to stand up for.

Oh, I have the profoundest admiration for the man who can put **this** foot firmly down, and **that** foot firmly down, square himself to the world and say, "Gentlemen, here I take my stand. Hands off my conscience. You may bind me; you may fetter me, but you shall not chain my spirit." But what in reality do we find. The Government, or some other authority, says to you get off that left foot and stand on your right, and meekly you raise your left and stand on the right. Then it says, now get off that right and stand on the left, and obediently you do it. And

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there you go, left, right ; left, right ; moving to the tune set you like a parcel of marionettes. You jazz with your consciences as readily and adroitly as you jazz with your feet ; morally we are fast becoming a nation of “ movies,” a nation of shufflers, of weak compromisers, and triflers with conscience. Well can I understand Henry Thoreau’s mood when he exclaimed, “ Oh, for a man who **is** a man, and has a bone in his body that you cannot pass your hand through. Our statistics are at fault, the population has been returned too large. How many **men** have we to the hundred square miles ; how many **men** ? Scarcely one ! ”

VII.—UNENVIABLE POSITION OF RECTORS
OF ANGLICAN, PRESBYTERIAN, METH-
ODIST, BAPTIST, AND QUAKER
COLLEGES ON THE HORNS OF AN
UNCHRISTIAN DILEMMA :—

“ THOU ART WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES, AND ART FOUND
WANTING ”

In conclusion, let me ask what precisely is the position of Rectors of denominational schools—Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist and Quaker ? Not by any means an enviable one—to my mind the rectors of all these schools should hang their heads in shame, and all non-protesting ministers of religion, too, for that matter, for they have allowed a Pagan Government to triumph over them ; they have permitted the flag of Christianity to be trampled in the mire, and that of Paganism to be hauled to the masthead without so much as a faint protest. Imagine, if you will, these Christian rectors of schools, which, mark you, have been called into existence because the State did not accord to God His true place, taking an oath of allegiance to an earthly king ; swearing to obey his heirs and successors, and yet not daring to add the proviso, “ So long as such undertaking continues not to conflict with

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what I consider to be my duty to God !” What, in the name of reason, does it avail you to open such schools with prayer and with reading of scripture, and to seek to surround the scholars with a Christian atmosphere when with the hand you meekly sign a document which accords to the State Supreme Power, and relegates God to an inferior position ?

The fact is that the Christian teachers of this Dominion are on the horns of an awkward dilemma from which there is no possible escape. Either they admit that in all matters, spiritual as well as temporal, the State **is** supreme, and that consequently there is no need for Mr. Page’s proviso, “ So long as such undertaking continues not to conflict with what I consider to be my duty to God,” in which case they are not Christians at all, but unmitigated pagans ; or else they do **not** admit that the State is supreme in all matters, spiritual as well as temporal, and that therefore this proviso **is** necessary, in which case they come perilously near being what honest men call knaves for not at once acquainting the Minister for Education of their attitude, and risking dismissal, as Mr. Page has done.

Naturally one might have imagined that seeing Mr. Page had been dismissed from the State schools because he wished to serve God rather than man, and seeing, moreover, that he was a teacher of marked ability, he would have been

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inundated with requests from these Christian rectors of Christian schools to come on to their staffs, but Mr. Page has received no such invitation, for if one of the rectors were to act thus, he would render himself liable to a fine of £50. Now you are beginning to see the unenviable position of these men. I am making no wild statement, it is an indisputable fact that they are allowing themselves to be dominated by a pagan government, which has decreed that it will permit them to obey and serve God only in so far as such obedience and such service does not conflict with demands made on them by the State.

Once again I ask, is it for you, my fellow Christians, to point the finger of scorn at the Socialist Sunday Schools because forsooth **their** teachers do not accord to God the lip-praise that you give Him? At any rate, until I get proof to the contrary I will give them the credit of believing what they preach; I will give you the credit, if credit it be, of preaching what your actions clearly show you do not believe.

In days gone by men and women were ready to stand the tortures of the rack and the faggot rather than deny God even with their lips; to-day the threat of imprisonment or of a £50 fine will frighten the majority of Christians into a cowardly and abject silence.

VIII. (a) THE TEACHERS' DUTY (b) A RESOLUTION

"THEY ENSLAVE THEIR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN WHO MAKE
COMPROMISE WITH TRUTH."—RUSSELL LOWELL

But let these aspects of the question pass. What I wish to make clear is this, that history right down through the centuries has abundantly proved that the demands of the State may come into conflict with the declared will of God. Jesus Christ recognised this possibility when he said, "But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to the Councils and they will scourge you in their synagogues. And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake for a testimony against them." Scores of Christian martyrs have witnessed with their lives to the existence of this same danger. Hence it becomes imperative for every man who believes in God, on being asked to take the oath of allegiance, if he takes it at all, to add such a proviso as Mr. Page did, "So long as such undertaking continues not to conflict with what I consider to be my duty to God."

Now I am quite willing to believe that hundreds of Christian teachers, when they took the oath, back in their minds more or less consciously recognised the necessity of the proviso that Mr.

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Page actually committed to writing. I do firmly believe that scores of you would have hesitated before taking the oath if the Government had definitely said at the time that the allegiance asked for must be absolute, and qualified by no mental reservations or provisos; indeed, many of you would have refused to take it under such circumstances. But now that Mr. Page's dismissal has made the position absolutely clear I am going to ask those of you who call yourselves Christians what you intend to do about the matter? Are you content to continue drawing emoluments from a Government which denies you the right to serve God rather than man; a Government which has actually dismissed one of your comrades for expressing his determination to do so? You who believe precisely as Mr. Page does, you who have been taught, perhaps, from infancy that God must take first place in your heart and mind, what do you intend to do about this matter? If your Christianity really means anything, I tell you that you have a duty to perform, both to yourselves and to Mr. Page. Not to face that duty is to weaken the whole moral fibre of your nature. I fully realise that the position is a most difficult one—it may mean the jeopardising of your status as teachers. But do you mean to tell me that you are willing to put a paltry salary and a teacher's certificate into one scale of the balance and your manhood, love

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of truth, justice, and all that links you to God in the other, and then hesitate for one instant as to your final choice ?

Briefly, then, here is the position : If, mentally, when you signed the oath of allegiance, you allowed the proviso which occasioned the dismissal of Mr. Page, or if, after reading and studying the facts connected with his case, you find yourself as a believer in God, precisely where Mr. Page himself is, then it becomes a sacred duty to acquaint the Minister for Education immediately of this fact, let him dismiss you by scores and by hundreds, but let no other teacher who calls himself “a man,” apply for the positions thus vacated. If you have the courage to do this I venture to say that means will soon be found of reinstating you without violence to your conscience ; but, if not, then let the public at the next general election turn out this Pagan Government and support only men who are pledged to repeal this God-dishonouring act. Remember that you yourselves make Governments ; they are not something higher and mightier than you ; they are your servants, not your masters. Why act like a Frankenstein and create a monster only to tremble and cringe in fear before the very thing you yourselves have created ?

I am told that the Secondary Masters of the schools of this and of other cities are petitioning the Government to favourably re-consider the

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case of Mr. Page. All such petitioning, to my mind, is absolutely futile ;

“ You may as well go stand upon the beach
And bid the main flood bate his usual height.”

For he who thoughtfully studies the signs of the times must see as one reverend gentleman of this city so aptly put it, “ That officialdom has set its face against freedom.” Under these circumstances petitioning will accomplish nothing, but if even a score of God-fearing teachers of this Dominion act along the lines I have indicated, it will have more effect than train loads of petitions.

To me the call seems both clear and urgent, for all those who **do** see to stand firm. I thank God for a Mr. A. W. Page. I thank God for the mother of such a boy. To-day they stand alone—certainly a small beginning, but, like the first bud of spring, sufficient to announce the coming of a more glorious season, the day of a wider, a broader, and deeper universal sympathy ; a day when man shall no longer weld fetters to bind his brother man, but when the only compulsion known shall be that inward compulsion which springs from an enlightened conscience. This nobler conception of the spirit of true freedom is the child of no wild Utopian dream of mine : it is a reality, that with irresistible force shall shatter the fetters of bondage and triumphantly

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expand until the whole human race is federated into one great family under the white flag of peace and purity, when man shall regard fellow man as his brother, not in canting speech, but in love and in reality.

I wish to thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for the kind and encouraging hearing you have given me throughout this evening, and, with the chairman's consent, I beg to move the following resolution. I may say that I have purposely refrained from making arrangements for anyone to second it. I leave the matter entirely in your hands. I have no desire to snatch a vote at the last moment. I wish to deal with realities, not with shams and appearances, even in the matter of a resolution. With these preliminary remarks I beg to move:—

“That this meeting of Auckland Citizens desires to express its keen appreciation of the stand taken by Mr. A. W. Page, M.Sc. (late assistant master of the Christchurch Boys' High School) in refusing to take the Oath of Allegiance unless safeguarded by the proviso: ‘So long as such undertaking continues not to conflict with what I consider to be my duty to God,’ and deplores the fact that such a reasonable and necessary Christian attitude should have occasioned his

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instant dismissal from the ranks of the teaching profession: Moreover, it would point out that the Government's refusal to accept the proviso suggested by Mr. Page is tantamount to declaring the State's complete lordship over the individual even in matters of conscience, and as such is a most unwarranted interference with sacred personal rights—an interference that no self-respecting free people should for an instant tolerate."

The motion was immediately seconded, and on being put to the meeting by the Chairman, was carried unanimously by a show of hands.

APPENDIX I.

THE PRIME MINISTER AS AN INTERPRETER OF SCRIPTURE

During a discussion this session in the New Zealand House of Representatives on the "War Disabilities Removal Bill," the Prime Minister, Mr. Massey, in opposing an attempt to have the Conscientious Objectors to Military Service included in the benefits of the Bill, made use of these words:—

"I believe it is the duty of every Christian to defend his country. Christ said: 'I come not with peace, but with a sword,' which means that while we are not justified in attacking others, we are bound to defend our own country, and the man who refuses to defend his country is not doing his duty."

Unfortunately for the reputation of New Zealand's leading statesman as an expounder of Scripture, Christ Himself, in the verses which immediately follow the Prime Minister's quotation, explained precisely what He meant by the sword He referred to. These are His own words, and His own interpretation:—

Matthew, Chap. 11, v. 34: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."

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35. "For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

36. "And a man's foes shall be they of his own household."

Now, even a child in the Faith would at once understand that Jesus here referred to the fact that the natural effect of following His teaching would be to make a clear demarcation between the spiritually and the materially minded, and that henceforth these would range themselves into two hostile camps, even although the combatants in some cases would embrace no more than the close relations of one family.

Any man, therefore, who separates from their proper context the few words quoted by our Prime Minister and gives to them the interpretation he gave on that occasion is either a knave seeking to trade on the assumed ignorance of his hearers, or else a mere blunderer deplorably ignorant of the contents of his own Bible.

The Prime Minister, still stumbling on in the dark, continued his speech in these words:—"If all our people objected to defend the Empire, New Zealand would be under the heel of despotism to-day. I would sooner see it under the waters of the Pacific than that this should happen."

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This may be good Imperialism, but it is certainly bad Christianity, since Jesus Himself lived and died as one of a conquered race under the proud heel of Rome, thus showing that while subjection may be fatal to Imperialism and to the holding of lucrative official positions, it is not necessarily destructive of genuine Christianity.

I refer to this incident merely to show the type of politician responsible for passing this law insisting on your taking the Oath of Allegiance, and if any further proof were needed of their utter confusion of mind and deep ignorance of the Christian position, it is seen in this, that while a teacher is compelled to invoke the aid of the Deity in the words “SO HELP ME GOD,” he is summarily dismissed from the ranks of his profession merely because in fairness to the God whose aid he is compelled to invoke, he wishes to add the very necessary and reasonable Christian proviso, “So long as such undertaking continues not to conflict with what I consider to be my duty to God.”

APPENDIX II.

EXTRACTS FROM THE "NEW ZEALAND HERALD"

OATH FOR TEACHERS SCHOOLMASTER OBJECTS AMPLIFICATION WANTED "MY DUTY TO GOD"

(By Telegraph.—Press Association)

CHRISTCHURCH, Thursday.

A master at the Christchurch Boys' High School, A. W. Page, has refused to take the oath of allegiance required of all teachers, unless he is allowed to amplify it with a conscience clause. In consequence Page has ceased to act as a teacher.

Page wished to add the following proviso to the oath provided by the Education Amendment Act, 1922:—"So long as the above undertaking continues not to conflict with what I consider my duty to God."

The Canterbury College authorities, who control the Boys' High School, declined to take responsibility for accepting the oath in this amended form, and for the present at any rate Page has ceased to act as a teacher.

TEACHER AND OATH THE CHRISTCHURCH CASE POSITION TO BE FILLED BOARD CONFIRMS DECISION

(By Telegraph.—Press Association.)

CHRISTCHURCH, Tuesday.

The refusal of Mr. A. W. Page to take the oath of allegiance without a conscience clause was referred to in the report of the

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College Committee submitted to the Board of Governors of Canterbury College. The report is as follows:—“That the action of the chairman of the board, who, after taking legal advice, declined to permit Mr. A. W. Page to continue to teach at the Boys' High School in consequence of his refusing to take the oath of allegiance in terms of the Education Amendment Act, 1921-22, be approved, and that applications be invited to fill the vacancy caused by Mr. Page ceasing to be employed at the Boys' High School.”

The report was adopted by the board without discussion.

FELLOW MASTERS' TRIBUTE GOOD INFLUENCE ON BOYS

(By Telegraph.—Own Correspondent)

CHRISTCHURCH, Tuesday.

The six senior members of the staff of the Boys' High School have sent the following letter to the Hon. C. J. Parr, Minister for Education:—

“We, the undersigned senior masters in the Christchurch Boys' High School, wish to pay our tribute to the work which is being done by Mr. Page at the Boys' High School. We do this, as we understand Mr. Page has been suspended for adding a conscience clause to the oath that teachers have been required to take. We consider Mr. Page's work is far too valuable to be lost to the State because of a legal informality. There is no more conscientious, capable, or painstaking worker than Mr. Page among the junior assistants of the school. He has had allotted to him this year two of the most difficult classes in the school, and has taught them with such remarkable assiduity and skill as to obtain results that would probably have been beyond the patience of any other master to obtain. This is a simple statement of fact. It is the

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result of Mr. Page's unusually high ideals and of his loyalty to his work and to his school. He is following out the Froebelian instruction of living in the lives of the scholars, so far as conditions permit.

"We have no hesitation in saying the loss of Mr. Page to the school would be a distinct loss to education. Some of us have had many opportunities to hear Mr. Page teaching, and consider his influence with his scholars is always of the best. We never have heard from him anything that suggested the slightest disloyalty to the school or the country, and should be each of us extremely sorry to lose Mr. Page as a colleague."

THE ONLY OBJECTOR STATEMENT BY MINISTER

(By Telegraph.—Press Association.)

WELLINGTON, Tuesday.

The teachers in the public and private schools throughout New Zealand have complied with the requirements of the Education Amendment Act and taken the oath of allegiance, said the Minister for Education, Hon. C. J. Parr, to-day. There was, so far as he was aware, only one refusal to take the oath, and that was by a teacher at the Christchurch Boys' High School. All the other teachers had taken the oath with no demur.

APPENDIX III.

ATTITUDE OF AUSTRALIAN TEACHERS

TEACHERS' LOYALTY

N.S. WALES FORMULA

DISAPPROVAL EXPRESSED

(From Our Own Correspondent)

SYDNEY, June 14.

The introduction into the State public schools of the loyalty formula, "I honour my God, I serve my King, I salute the Flag," has been the cause of much dissension among the teachers of the State public schools, and a resolution has been carried expressing disapproval of the action taken by the Minister.

Synchronising with the initiation of the ceremony in 2000 public schools all over New South Wales, the New South Wales Federation of Public School Teachers carried a motion affirming the loyalty of the public schools, and declaring that the directions issued by the Minister are unnecessary. The mover of the motion, while dissociating himself from any disloyal elements considered that a mere repetition of the formula was making patriotism too easy. It was mere lip service. The loyalty of the New South Wales schools during the war was beyond question.

Lip-service methods were a psychological blunder, according to the president of the federation.

It was also pointed out that the suggestion had been made that the teachers themselves should take an oath of allegiance. This, declared one delegate, was absolutely unnecessary. It would make no difference if they swore that oath on a stack of Bibles as high as the town hall. The teachers' loyalty could not be questioned.

APPENDIX IV.

FROM
The Officer Commanding
24th COMPANY
Auckland Senior Cadets

To Officer Commanding
SENIOR CADETS
AUCKLAND

RESIGNATION OF CAPTAIN H. R. URQUHART

In forwarding you my formal resignation from the Territorial Forces of New Zealand, I wish to state briefly my reasons for so doing.

At the beginning of 1914 I attended the Student Christian Union Conference of the University of New Zealand, held that year at Woodville. The deep spiritual tone of the Conference made a profound impression on me and I began to question inwardly whether the Church's position in regard to war was Christian and tenable, and also to ask myself whether I was right in holding a commission in the N.Z. Territorial Forces.

I felt inclined to resign then, but unwilling to take any rash step and fearing lest my new attitude might prove to be only temporary and due to momentary religious enthusiasm, I decided to remain as I was for the year 1914, and if at the end of that time I was still of the same opinion, to resign my commission. The result of the year's quiet thought and prayerful meditation convinced me that I could no longer consistently retain my position as Captain, and yet call myself a follower of Christ. Hence my resignation.

I am aware that the fact of war breaking out in the middle of 1914 may lead to my present action being misinterpreted, but one who sincerely desires to follow after truth must bear this and walk up to the amount of light he possesses.

I shall not burden you in the meantime with further explanation, but wish to state that my connexion with the Defence Department has always been of the happiest—the conduct of every officer and sergeant-major I have come in contact with has always been most gentlemanly, helpful and obliging. I much regret the fact, especially at this grave juncture, that the clash of National and Christian ideals has thus for me led to the parting of the ways.

H. R. URQUHART,
Captain, 24th Company,
Auckland Senior Cadets.

AUCKLAND,
22nd. Feb., 1915

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