

New South Wales, Queensland, &c., who is loyal to Catholic principles and Catholic conscience, can with peace of conscience set up as a teacher of such "unsectarian" or (as a League publication calls it) "common Christian faith." Among instructed Catholic teachers in New Zealand there is complete unanimity on this point. The same remark applies to Queensland. This was, in fact, admitted by even so ardent a Leaguer as the Hon. Mr. Barlow, who was Minister in charge of the Government Bible-extracts measure in the Queensland Parliament in 1910. He refused to entertain the idea of a conscience clause for teachers. Why? "At least 30 per cent.," said he, "of the teachers belong to a certain religious persuasion which is opposed to Bible-reading in State schools; if these teachers were exempted from giving the Scripture lessons the purpose of the referendum would be defeated" ("Debates," Vol. cvi, p. 2014). For similar reasons Canon Garland and the League in Queensland opposed a conscience clause for teachers; for similar reasons they now oppose it in New Zealand. They well know that no loyal and faithful teacher would, if left to his own conscience, have act or part in the so-called "non-sectarianism" of the present Bill. So, under the pretence of "liberty of conscience" and "equal rights," they want to force the Catholic teacher to be false to his faith, to teach a "general religion" condemned by his Church, and to sell his soul to the League for bread-and-butter. This is how the League "trusts the teachers" and provides "equal rights for all and special privileges for none." Then I give detailed evidence to show that there is profound dissatisfaction among the teachers in connection with this matter, and I go on to quote Bishop Gallagher and others on the question. Next I quote official testimony to show that some years ago the teachers' "general religious instruction" was deprived of any useful religious character in 50 per cent. of the schools. Then I quote the testimony of the Rev. Mr. Chambers (Warden of Trinity Grammar School, Sydney) that at the present time this "general religious instruction" is practically abandoned or rendered useless. Then I quote Archdeacon Irvine to a similar effect, and I go on to deal with the purely negative evidence.

*Mr. Hanan:* I would like that read.

*Witness:* This is what I say: Against the clear-cut, positive evidence of Catholic principles referred to above what evidence has the League to offer that the instructed and loyal Catholic conscience serenely accepts the "non-sectarian," "undogmatic," "common Christian faith" which is the residuum of Protestant teaching? Not one scrap of evidence whatever. (a.) We have no evidence whatever that any teacher imparting this "skeleton" Christianity is instructed in our Catholic principles and discipline bearing thereon, or (b) that he is loyal thereto, while (c), on the contrary, it has been made clear that no Catholic true to the principles and discipline of his faith can have act or part in the propaganda of such an "emasculated caricature" of God's revelation. As shown in my principal evidence, Mr. Board (now Director of Education) has shown himself, by the serious garbling of official testimony, by no means an impartial witness, and his statement that no protests have been lodged by Catholic teachers is at best but negative testimony, and even as such quite futile and of no effect. In the first place, such protests would hardly be encouraged by the well-known love of the high administrative officials for their system. In the second place, they would be obviously useless, if not imprudent. A protest to the Department would be met by some such reply as this: "We are here not to alter the law, but to administer it. You say your conscience does not permit you to teach this 'unsectarian general religion' required by the Act. We have bought your conscience in open market. Defy it and you and your children shall eat; obey it and you and they must starve. Take your choice." That is the choice that the League offers to Protestant, Jewish, Catholic, and other conscientiously objecting teachers. Disloyalty to conscience is rewarded with assured abundance; loyalty to conscience is penalized by hunger, by heavier monetary penalties than are visited upon the magsman and the coiner. And the League organizer tells confiding women that this is "freedom of conscience"; that this is "equal right to all" and "special privilege to none"; that those hearers of his who do not "trust the teachers" will be ordered at the day of judgment "to depart into the pit of Tophot" (*Gisborne Times*, 20th April, 1914).

11. *Professor Hunter.*] Is the Catholic Church in any way in alliance with the National Schools Defence League?—It is not, and by the very nature of their principles and ours it cannot be. We can no more identify ourselves with the object of the National Schools Defence League than oil can mingle with water. We stand for the essential union of religion and education in the school. We stand for an atmosphere of religion pervading the schools. We stand, not necessarily for the teaching of religion every moment in the schools, but for a religious "atmosphere" in the school—for religious principles running through and through the whole fibre and substance of education. The National Schools Defence League stands for the suppression of religious instruction during school hours; it stands for the divorce, so to speak, of religion from education. We can never join with them; we have never joined with them; and we shall never join with them. In the matter in dispute between us and the Bible in State Schools League we stand where we have ever stood, upon our own ground, not entangling ourselves in alliances with anybody, but nearest to the League and willing to join the League if they will only eliminate those unjust proposals of theirs, which we could never accept without surrendering sacred rights and principles which we believe God gave, which we have no right to surrender, and which no League has the right to take away.

12. Has the Bishop noticed that in the Bible in Schools League list of testimonials in favour of the New South Wales system it is stated that the Catholic children in one school were permitted to go out into the shelter-shed during the period of religious instruction? And, if so, what does he think would be the effect on the Roman Catholic children?—The purport of the question is that in New South Wales, according to the testimony published by the League, some Catholic children were permitted to go into the shelter-shed during the period of religious instruction. This is the case: so bitter is the feeling of Catholics against the system in New South Wales that