

by the State teacher. Moreover, the ballot-paper in the Bill makes the following distinction for an obvious controversial purpose: The religious instruction to be imparted by the teacher is not described as "religious instruction"; that term is applied only to the denominational religious instruction given by the clergy under the right of entry. The very same scheme of State biblical teaching is called in Australian laws "departmental regulations and reports," &c., and in the literature of the League, "religious instruction," "general religious teaching," "general religion," "common Christianity," &c. In regard to this matter, further reference will be made later on.

2. The term in the Bill, "no sectarian teaching," means (so far as it has any meaning) the same thing as "unsectarian," "undogmatic," "undenominational" religious teaching. The Bill plainly means that the State teacher is free to impart this sort of "teaching"—or rather, what he, or some or other educational authority, may be pleased to consider "unsectarian," &c., teaching. Moreover, the ballot-paper and the League assert there is such a thing as "unsectarian" or "undogmatic" teaching. This statement is seriously misleading. As a matter of fact, there is, and there can be, no such thing as "unsectarian," or "undogmatic," or "undenominational" biblical or "religious instruction." It is a mental fiction. It is a sectarian misuse of the terms "unsectarian," &c. The Sydney Orange organ, the *Watchman*, some time ago described itself as "unsectarian." Even so well-known an Anglican clergyman as Rev. C. L. Drawbridge, M.A., describes the Church of England as "unsectarian" in his "Religious Instruction and How to Improve It" (London, 1903, p. 234). This will give an idea of the wide range of anti-Catholic and denominational teaching that is possible under a so-called "unsectarian" scheme of biblical lessons.

3. In the present connection "unsectarian" biblical teaching is intended to signify the "skeleton Christianity" (as Isaac Butt called it), or the residuum of Protestantism, that is arrived at by casting out of the Bible everything which the rival and antagonistic League denominations are not agreed about. It is what an official League pamphlet describes as "common Christian faith," or what the League of 1904 referred to when it said in an official pronouncement "that the Bible contains great truths which all Christian men now hold in common, and that it is possible to read it in a broad and unsectarian spirit" (*Otago Daily Times*, 25th May, 1904). This "common" Christianity is the abstract or "common" basis of English and Scottish Protestantism after they have flung aside their differences and arrived approximately at some sort of common denominator.

4. On the 29th June, 1910, a judgment bearing upon this subject was rendered by the Illinois Supreme Court (U.S.A.), by a majority of five to two. It was published in the *Illinois Official Reporter* of the 20th July, 1910, and was copied extensively in the United States Press (in *America*, for instance), and (among other journals of these countries) in the *New Zealand Tablet* of the 16th April, 1914. The judgment in question recites the many things which the pupils in public schools "cannot hear the Scriptures read without being instructed" in and "about which the various sects do not agree." And it declares that "any instruction on any one of these subjects is necessarily sectarian, because, while it may be consistent with the doctrine of one or many of the sects, it will be inconsistent with the doctrine of one or more of them."

5. But even that watered-down compromise would be "sectarian" and "denominational" to the Catholic, the Jew, and many others, just as (in Mr Balfour's words) from the viewpoint of the Jew, all Christian teaching is "sectarian" and "denominational," and, from the viewpoint of the Catholic, all Protestant teaching is "sectarian" and "denominational." Some years ago Dean Fitchett (now a member of the League executive) described "undenominationalism" (another name for "unsectarianism") as "anti-Anglicanism." And in the Dunedin Anglican Synod of 1901 he said "he could not see how there could be any undenominational teaching that was not denominational in relation to the Anglican Synod." Catholics, for their part, can never accept such a "compromise" on the Bible. Such "common" or "unsectarian" Christianity is, to them, intensely sectarian. There is no more use in quarrelling with them over this rooted conscientious conviction than there is in quarrelling with them over the colour of their hair or eyes.

#### XI. "UNDOGMATIC TEACHING."

1. Neither could the teacher's biblical lessons, under this Bill, be other than dogmatic. A glance at the "Australian" manuals shows that the system "prevailing" there contains a considerable mass of "dogmas" or "doctrines" concerning God, with dogmatic sermon-headings for many lessons. The Bible in Schools League of 1904 demanded the introduction of the biblical lessons on the dogmatic Reformed principle of "private judgment." (See pronouncement in *Otago Daily Times*, 25th May, 1904.) The organizer of the present League called upon the Government to accept the "theological views" of the League in regard to the "referendum," and to reject the "theological views" thereon of another section of the community (*Dominion*, 27th May, 1914). Rev. Isaac Jolly (a member of the League executive) also demanded the introduction of biblical lessons into the schools on a Reformed dogmatic basis which he stated thus: "The fundamental principle of the Protestant Church was that the Word of God carried its own message to the heart, without any intermediary at all" (*Ohinemuri Gazette*, 13th August, 1913). This is, in effect, the "personal assurance that God is speaking to him," which is editorially described in the *Outlook* as "one of the cardinal principles of Protestantism" (9th June, 1914). Here we have not alone a dogmatic basis, but a *sectarian* dogmatic basis, for the scheme of the Bible extracts promoted by this Bill. Rev. Dr. Gibb (a League vice-president) warns teachers that they must be prepared either to teach religious dogma or to be considered unfit for the Public Service. Here are his words, at Invercargill, as reported in the *Southland Times* of the 25th June, 1914: "A great deal was made of the fact that a child might ask a teacher who Christ or God was. But if a