

(c.) Both the petition and the ballot-paper conceal a considerable number of facts which are essentially required for a clear and proper understanding of the educational changes which are proposed.

4. It will be useful to quote here an extract from the recent manifesto of the Catholic Bishops of New Zealand. They say in part:—

*“Six Issues in Three.”*

“The ballot-paper in the Bill submits three highly complicated issues to the electors. It does not allow the elector to vote on them separately; he must combine the six separate and confused controversial issues, treat them as if they were one plain, simple issue, and vote a single ‘Yes’ or a single ‘No’ upon them all! As a matter of fact, the alleged ‘three’ issues contain no fewer than the six set down hereunder:—

“(a.) The Government to provide ‘selected Bible lessons’:

“(b.) These lessons to be read ‘within school hours’:

“(c.) The teacher to ‘supervise’ the reading:

“(d.) No sectarian teaching to be allowed:

“(e.) Right of entry to clergy ‘for religious instruction’:

“(f.) Right of parent ‘to withdraw his child from Bible-reading, or from religious instruction, or from both.’

“Some of these issues (as will be seen) are hopelessly ambiguous, misleading, or obscure. On each and every one of them (so far as they can be understood) opinion in New Zealand is profoundly divided. Yet the elector is denied the opportunity of expressing an opinion upon them separately. He must pretend to regard the six hopelessly obscure and polemical issues as if they were one clear, straightforward issue, admitting no other answer than a plain ‘Yes’ or a plain ‘No.’”

### VIII. WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

1. This ballot-paper provides for “selected Bible lessons.” But in their agitation for the Bill the League proclaimed that it wanted “the Bible”—not lessons or extracts from the Bible. In its petition it demanded “Scripture books provided by the Education Department.”

2. Genesis, Exodus, St. John’s Gospel, and so on, are “Scripture books.” Is it proposed to introduce “Scripture books” in this plain and direct sense of the term? The petition-card clearly suggests “Yes.” The League’s title—“The Bible” in State Schools League—plainly asserts that “the Bible” (that is, “the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments”) into the State schools. Over and over again the League organizer (Canon Garland) has declared that the League wants “the Bible” in the schools. (See, for instance, the *Outlook*, 19th February, 1913; *New Zealand Herald*, 1st October, 1912.) And in the *Manawatu Daily Times* of the 17th December, 1912, he declared that “they” (the teachers) “were asked to teach the Bible just as they taught their other text-books.” Rev. R. Wood (League organizer for Otago) speaks of the League campaign as “the battle for the Bible” (*Outlook*, 11th November, 1913). Canon Garland says the League demands that “the Bible should resume its place among the reading-books on which moral instruction is based” (*Lyttelton Times*, 9th November, 1912). Hundreds of such quotations could be given, declaring to petitioners, directly or indirectly, that “the Bible” is to be used as a text-book in the public schools.

#### *Attacks on Opponents.*

3. Great numbers of Christian people (clergy and laity) firmly believe in the Bible as part of education, but object to the League’s particular scheme (which is the scheme of this Bill) as unjust and destructive of religious liberty and rights of conscience. Among these are Catholics, who alone have made vast sacrifices for biblical and religious education. All of these, and other conscientious objectors, are combined by League orators and writers under comprehensive terms of bitter and unjust invective. I mention these things here as matters highly calculated to prejudice our interests in the deliberations that may take place over the present “referendum Bill.” I am prepared to submit hundreds of such evil and unmerited designations. Let these few suffice here: They are described as “hostile to the Bible” (*Outlook*, 25th November, 1913); “Romanists, atheists, and Unitarians.” (*Outlook*, 27th May, 1913); “Secularists, atheists, and Roman Catholics” (Rev. Dr. Gibb, in *Dominion*, 18th August, 1913); a “combination” of “Rome and atheism” (matter supplied by the League to the *Outlook* and other papers, e.g., *Church Gazette*, 1st March, 1913); “the anti-Bible party” (e.g., *Dominion*, 18th March, 1914); *Outlook* (30th June, 1914). Dean Fitchett (a member of the League executive) describes opponents collectively as “a tatterdemalion crew, with whom Falstaff would not have marched through Coventry, but all very dear to Dr. Cleary” (*Outlook*, 24th June, 1913). The League organizer (Canon Garland) goes still further. He ranks the opponents of the League as herein fighting for the same cause as the demons of the nethermost abyss (Eph., vi, 12; Col., i, 13). “The principalities and power of darkness,” said he at Mosgiel, “are fighting against the League” (quoted editorially by the *Otago Daily Times* of the 13th March, 1913). Nay, in a sermon to Anglicans at Gisborne, he promised a sentence to “depart” to eternal woe, “at the day of judgment,” to hearers who could not see eye to eye with the League—“no matter how good our motives may have been”; and the words of doom were (he said) based upon the revealed “mind” of Christ, which “is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever” (*Gisborne Times*, 20th April, 1914). They are therefore applicable not alone to Anglicans, but to all who bear the Christian name.

4. Such are a few of the terms applied to honourable and conscientious opponents of the present measure, such as the Anglican Primate (now President of the League) was in 1905; such as the members of the Nelson Presbytery; such as that foremost Presbyterian Sunday-school