

and the much-enduring comp. cannot always be made the scape-goat. Here are a couple of cases in point, collated from America. 'Owing to the over-crowded condition of our columns this week,' says an American exchange, in its Christmas edition, 'a number of births and deaths have been unavoidably postponed until next week.' That is only a case of harmless and entertaining ambiguity; but sometimes the blunder is distinctly misinforming and misleading. *America* draws attention to a recent example perpetrated by a New York daily of world-wide standing and reputation. It occurred in the head-lines department of the paper—that flaring and picturesque if not over-reliable feature of American newspapers, which is the work of what our contemporary calls 'journalistic impressionists.' Often in even the best papers,' says *America*, 'the headline gives no idea of the substance of the news below. Often it is misleading, and sometimes it actually contradicts what follows. Here is an example from a New York paper known throughout the world, of the misleading headline: 'Church Union in New Zealand Urges Race Suicide.' On reading the article one finds that the recommendation came from the "Christ Church Labor Union."

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Upon which our contemporary reads this high-pressure journalist the following homily: 'Had the composer of headlines not been an impressionist, he would have reflected and seen how improbable was the idea that any church organisation should have made the recommendation. He would have remembered that unions are not connected with churches. He would have recognised that "Christ Church, New Zealand," if referred to a church, would be as absurdly general and vague as "Grace Church, United States." Then had he any education, he would have recollected that there is a city of some such name in New Zealand; he would have opened the Gazetteer and found: "Christchurch, capital of the province of Canterbury, New Zealand." Lastly, he would have changed his headline and corrected the proof, the former becoming: "A New Zealand Labor Union Urges Race Suicide," and the latter: "A Christchurch labor union, etc." This would make the matter unsensational, but it would be decent journalism.'

The W.C.T.U. and the League

Considerable interest attaches to the attitude so far taken by the Women's Christian Temperance Union towards the Bible in State Schools League's agitation, partly because the organisation has a fairly numerous following and partly because the League had regarded it as a foregone conclusion that they would secure a block vote from this influential body and its friends. As already recorded in these columns, the annual Convention of the W.C.T.U., held recently at Nelson, declared emphatically against the League's proposals—a decision which the Rev. G. H. Balfour, minister of First Church, Dunedin, described as 'the greatest disappointment which he had received during his stay in the Dominion.' A strong effort is now being made by the Bible-in-schools clergy to induce the separate branches of the W.C.T.U. to refuse to endorse the resolution passed by the Convention. As we learn from the *Nelson Colonist* of April 24, the effort has failed signally in the case of the Nelson branch, at whose meeting on April 22 a motion endorsing the Convention resolution was passed by a very large majority.

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The *Colonist* report shows that the speakers in support of the motion made their position perfectly clear, and, for the most part, took their stand on sound and definite principles. Mrs. Field, who moved the motion endorsing the Convention's condemnation of the League's scheme, 'considered that it would be very unwise to ask teachers who were not in sympathy with Bible teaching, even to supervise the reading of the text-book; and that the public school was not the right place for denominational teaching. . . . The W.C.T.U. stands, as it ever has done, for undenominational Bible teaching, and for freedom of conscience for teacher, parent, and child.' Mrs. Lambert, who

seconded the motion, opposed the New South Wales system because it 'tends to take away liberty of conscience.' And the president (Miss Atkinson) contributed the following admirable statement of principles bearing on the question. 'Miss Atkinson,' says the *Colonist* report, 'said that she could not support the Bible-in-schools platform . . . because she considered it based on an injustice. The State pays the teachers in the public schools, and the whole community is taxed equally to provide the funds. If the League's system were introduced, the Roman Catholics, who have no educational grant, would immediately apply for one, and the other churches would follow their example. Denominational teaching would then take the place of our present free and unsectarian educational system. It would also be unjust to the teachers, who were almost unanimous against the introduction of any religious test. Teachers must be able to put their whole heart into their teaching, and if any such test existed, the best men would refuse to teach in the public schools.' From this it would appear that the educative work that is being done in the press and on the platform to combat the League's propaganda is already bearing fruit.

THE BIBLE-IN-SCHOOLS CONTROVERSY

A 'QUESTION NIGHT' AT HAMILTON

BISHOP CLEARY TAKES A HAND

A public lecture in favor of the Bible-in-Schools movement was given in Hamilton on April 29 by Rev. A. Miller, a prominent official of the Auckland League. It was announced that answers to questions would be a 'feature' of the meeting. The double combination of a public meeting with answers to free questioning was an unusual feature in the League's propaganda. The Right Rev. Dr. Cleary attended, on very short notice, at the special request of Dean Darby and representative parishioners. By an awkward coincidence, the meeting was held on Auckland's 'Dreadnought day,' and the Bishop had to cancel certain public and private engagements in order to be present. At the close of a temperately worded lecture by the Rev. Mr. Miller, the Bishop, with the chairman's permission, briefly stated the attitude of Catholics to the secular system, their desire to see the children in the public schools receive Biblical and religious instruction, their sympathy with the League's aims up to a certain point, and the chief grounds of their objections, for reasons of religion and conscience, to the League's proposals. These objections involved clear, practical issues of moral right or moral wrong for legislators, voters, parents, teachers, and pupils. In illustration of this the Bishop put a lengthy series of questions affecting in a practical way the morality of the proposed coercion of conscientiously objecting teachers, taxpayers, etc. In every case, without exception, the practical moral issue was evaded. The questioner time after time called attention to this fact and several times pressed, but in vain, for a statement of the specific moral principles governing the various issues raised. For instance, a request was twice made to show a voter is morally justified in aiding a proposal to refuse New Zealand teachers liberty of conscience to object to the League's proposed 'religious instruction,' as it is termed in Australian law. The 'reply' was, not an appeal to any Biblical or other principle of morals, but to alleged social or scholastic convenience or necessity—on the assumption that there was no other way out of the difficulty. What would happen to a Jewish teacher persistently and permanently refusing to impart the 'Australian' New Testament lessons on the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ and the martyrdom of St. Stephen—much of which the conscientious Jew would regard as blasphemous? The 'reply' was to the effect that Jewish teachers are comparatively few and that they would take a sensible view of the matter