

CHRISTIANITY AND POPULAR EDUCATION.

THE relation of Christianity to popular education is a parental relation. Christianity has always been the originator and promoter of education. Of the church, indeed, this must be said with some qualifications; for there have been periods when nothing in the world was more frightfully unchristian than the ecclesiastical machine. Christianity consists of the teachings of Christ, and of the life, individual and social, which is based upon his teachings and nourished by communion with him. Christian truth and Christian life were in the world when the ecclesiastical powers were the most corrupt and malignant—hiding sometimes in the fastnesses of the mountains, and waiting for the downfall of their persecutors. Even in these days it is a mistake to identify Christianity with the various ecclesiastical machines; the church often happens to be the very thing that needs Christianizing. If, therefore, it is true that the church at certain periods has shown scant favor to other than theological science, it is nevertheless true that the drift of Christian teaching and discipline has been toward the diffusion of learning.

The uniform testimony of the Sacred Scriptures is of this tenor. The value of knowledge is everywhere insisted on. It is, indeed, asserted that knowledge must rank below love; but if the Scriptures seem to disparage knowledge, it is the knowledge that despises virtue. Every careful reader of the Bible knows that the value of intelligence as the foundation of character and the solid basis of national welfare is taught with iteration and emphasis in both Testaments. Neither is the knowledge thus praised exclusively religious knowledge. The man of the Biblical history most renowned for his wisdom, and most applauded for his pursuit of wisdom, was not conspicuously a theologian, but a man who seems to have mastered what was knowable in his time of the "humanities." This wisdom of Solomon's did not keep him from falling into an abyss of sensuality; but the record does not intimate that his fall was the fruit of his learning; it was rather in spite of his learning. His wisdom is always commended and never censured. The Bible, the Christian's text-book, may be claimed as the friend of learning.

Even in the ages of darkness, when the Bible was not in the hands of the people, the churches and the monasteries kept alive what learning was left in the world. Through all

this period the councils of the church steadily required the clergy to provide gratuitous instruction for the young. Theodulph, one of Charlemagne's bishops, issued the following instruction to his clergy: "Let the elders establish schools in towns and villages, and if any of the faithful wish to intrust to them their children to be taught letters, let them not decline to receive and teach them, but with the utmost care instruct them. And when they thus teach, let them take from them no recompense for their service, nor accept anything from them, except what parents, in the exercise of charity, of their own accord may offer them." This epistle of Theodulph is a fair sample of numerous admonitions addressed during these times, by councils and dignitaries, to the inferior clergy. Charlemagne himself gave orders that schools be opened everywhere "to teach children to read," and that "in every monastery some one teach psalms, writing, arithmetic, and grammar." The great King's zeal for learning is noteworthy when it is remembered that his literary acquisitions stopped short with the art of reading, and left room for a dispute among the historians as to his ability to write his name. The reasonings of his decree show how closely he connects learning and religion; he urges that, just as good conduct is prescribed by a definite rule, so also must teaching and learning be systematically carried on, "that those who seek to please God by right living may not neglect to please him also by right speaking."

The Reformation was itself at once the effect and the cause of a great revival of learning. Erasmus, the hero of the Renaissance, and Luther, the hero of the Reformation, were both apostles of the new education. The right of private judgment implied the necessity of the universal diffusion of knowledge, and both Luther and Melancthon wrought strenuously toward this end. The founders of New England, Protestants of the Protestants, by no means forgot this corollary of Protestantism; their history shows on every page how great was the estimation which they placed upon knowledge, and how close was its relation in their minds with religion. Within thirty years of the landing of the Pilgrims education had been made compulsory in every colony except Rhode Island, and this was done, as their law declared, chiefly with the purpose of circumventing "that old deluder Sathan,"

who seeks "to keep men from the use of the Scriptures by persuading them from the use of tongues."

It is scarcely necessary to trace the close connection between the church and the school in the early New England commonwealths. From these came forth the impulse which has made education universal all over the Northern States of this Union; so that its schools are the earliest care and the loudest boast of every sprouting emporium and every noisy mart; so that the pioneer's axe loses its virgin edge upon the timber of which the log school-house is builded; and the ambitious piles of brick or stone, devoted to the education of the people, rival, in all the centers of commerce, the warehouses and the elevators and the factories.

That the motive of education is, in these latter days, much less frankly religious than it was in the days of the Pilgrims, must be admitted. The reasons given in the town meeting and in the city council, when appropriations are urged for public schools, are not the kind of reasons that would have been suggested in Plymouth or in Salem two hundred and fifty years ago. The reasoned basis of popular education in the popular mind is twofold: it includes philanthropy and self-defense. A considerable number of our citizens recognize the latter as the only admissible ground on which a public-school system can rest. Philanthropy they do not believe in; or, at any rate, they contend that the state has no right to go into the business of philanthropy. But the right of self-preservation does belong to the state; and if popular ignorance threatens its security, and even its very existence, then the state has the right to provide and even to require popular education. That this is a valid basis of state action on the subject, so far as rights go, will not be disputed. Whether the education which proceeds from this as the principal motive is likely to be effective in the development of the highest character in the citizens so educated would be an interesting inquiry.

But the philanthropic motive is present in the minds of many of those who advocate the education of the people. Their desire is not merely to avert a peril from the state, but to confer a benefit upon the pupils. Mr. Mill affirms, in his essay "On Liberty," that the failure to provide for a child "instruction and training for its mind is a moral crime both against the unfortunate offspring and against society" (p. 204). This is a recognition of the child's rights, and Mr. Mill goes on to say that the state ought to secure to the child his right to education. The love of equal rights, and the disposition to give every human being

a fair chance, is still, let us trust, an influential motive in the minds of those who advocate popular education. And this motive is the fruit of Christianity. Look on this picture, painted by the author of *Gesta Christi*, and ponder his comment:

"Schools are open to all. The rich are forced to give of their abundance for the education of the poor. Not only are common schools open to every class, but higher schools and colleges of learning are provided for the masses. Even laws are made compelling attendance, and provisions are made by individual charity for those who are poor and ill-clad. This is one of the most remarkable fruits of this religion in modern times. It is a forcible distribution of wealth to confer the highest possible blessings on the needy. It is a confession of society that the most ignorant, degraded, and destitute person is a brother of the most fortunate, and must have every opportunity to exert his powers. If one could imagine the proposition made to the archai of Athens to tax the rich in order that the helots might learn to read the Greek classics, or a measure before the Roman Senate to set apart a new revenue for providing teachers for the plebs and the slaves, one could rightly measure the progress of the Christian sentiment of equality in these eighteen centuries."

That popular education, as it exists in this country, is the offspring of the religious sentiment, is matter of history. But, like many another unfilial child, education has shown a strong disposition of late to disown and desert her mother. The tendency has been gaining strength to withdraw education from all association with religion, to eliminate religion wholly from education, and to claim for education all the saving virtues of which society has need. There are those who think that the diffusion of science and literature will prove a sufficient agency for the promotion of the welfare of the state; and that the learning thus diffused not only may be but must be separated from everything that bears the semblance of religion.

I have not mentioned this demand for the entire secularization of our schools for the sake of opposing it at this point in the argument, but rather for the sake of calling attention to a manifest deterioration of public morals which has kept even pace with this secular tendency in education. Twenty-five or thirty years ago most of our public schools were under Christian influences. No attempt was made to inculcate the dogmas of the Christian religion, but the teachers were free to commend the precepts of the New Testament, in a direct, practical way, to the consciences of their pupils; and some of us remember, not without gratitude, the impressions made upon our lives in the school-room by the instructors of our early days. All this has been rapidly changing; and, contemporaneously, it is discovered that something is wrong with society. Grave dangers menace its peace;

ugly evils infest its teeming populations. Pauperism is increasing. The number of those who lack either the power or the will to maintain themselves, and who are therefore thrown upon the care of the state, is growing faster than the population. The cure of this alarming evil is engaging the study of philanthropists in all our cities. Crime is increasing. The only State in the Union that carefully collects its moral statistics brings to light some startling facts respecting the increase of crime within the past thirty years. In 1850 there was one prisoner in Massachusetts to every eight hundred and four of the population; in 1880 there was one to every four hundred and eighty-seven. The ratio of the prisoners to the whole population nearly doubled in thirty years. But it may be said that this increase is due to the rapid growth of the foreign population in Massachusetts. There would be small comfort in this explanation if it were the true one; but it is not the true one. The native criminals are increasing faster than the foreign-born criminals. In 1850 there was one native prisoner to every one thousand two hundred and sixty-seven native citizens; in 1880 there was one native prisoner to every six hundred and fifteen native citizens. The ratio of native prisoners to the native population more than doubled in thirty years.

And this, be it remembered, is in Massachusetts—the State in which education of every kind, public and private, has been longer established, and is more munificently endowed and more thoroughly administered, than in any other State of the Union. Massachusetts expends, through her public schools, for the tuition of every pupil enumerated in her school population, nearly sixteen dollars a year. Added to this public provision is the great array of universities, colleges, academies, and seminaries, amply endowed, far surpassing those of every other State in number and in excellence. What education can do to promote morality has been more thoroughly done for Massachusetts than for any other American State. Nevertheless, the statistics show an alarming increase of the vicious and dependent classes in Massachusetts. There is no room for supposing that the case of Massachusetts is any worse than that of the younger commonwealths. Those who have had opportunities for observing the conditions of society East and West will not be inclined to believe that the morals of the old Bay State are any lower than those of New York, or Ohio, or Illinois. If other States would collect the facts as carefully, and publish them as fully, we should see similar conditions existing everywhere.

Neither is it necessary to draw from these

facts any pessimistic inferences as to the general decadence of society. This retrograde movement, we may well believe, is local and temporary. The causes out of which it arises may be discoverable and avoidable. What they are is a question to which the social philosophers, big and little, are devoting much study. Mr. Henry George has his theory of the increase of pauperism; and since pauperism and crime are closely linked together, the one evil cannot be explained without uncovering the causes of the other. The Socialists, not content to stop at Mr. George's half-way house, go far beyond him with their philosophy and their remedy. The Protectionists have their theory of the case, the Free-Traders theirs, the Prohibitionists theirs. Besides these there are not a few who, in looking more deeply for the sources of these increasing curses, are inclined to lay the responsibility for them at the doors of our schools. If the schools were what they ought to be, they say, these streams of baleful influence would be dried up at their sources, instead of overflowing the land. The only radical cure of these mischiefs is the reform of our educational system.

The explanation last named is partial, and the censure which it implies is too sweeping. If any man believes that popular education is the panacea for all political and social disorders, he must, of course, believe that the present disorders are due to a defective system of education; but one who does not expect the regeneration of society from methods purely educational, will not be so ready to arraign the schools as the authors, by commission or omission, of the social depravity now existing. If the methods of education had been faultless, and other causes which have been all the while operating had continued in operation, we should, very likely, have witnessed an increase both of pauperism and of crime. This accursed harvest springs from more than one kind of sowing, and will not be extirpated by any one kind of implement. The growth of the vicious and dependent classes is due to many causes.

A defective industrial system has something to do with it. The relations of capital and labor are not what they ought to be. The strife between them is unnatural, and it has been fostered by a bad political economy which erects selfishness into the supreme rule of human action. Any one who thinks that it makes no difference what men believe is commended to a careful study of the influence of certain economical theories upon the relations between employers and employed. In cases of this nature temper is a great matter; and the temper engendered by the current

economy is the reverse of Christian. The collisions and conflicts that grow out of this evil temper have produced a certain portion of the increase of pauperism and crime.

Another cause is the massing of the populations in cities and in great manufacturing centers, where multitudes are deprived of the sacred restraints of home, and deprived for the want of them.

The great fluctuations of industry produced by changing fashions and by sudden and brief rages of one sort or another, creating demands for labor that quickly blaze up and are as quickly extinguished, will account for part of it. This shifting, uncertain life that our artisan classes are largely compelled to live is not friendly to morality.

The influence of immigration upon morality is suggestively set forth by Mr. W. T. Harris :

"All parts of Europe and some parts of Asia are sending us their immigrants. Each immigrant brings some peculiar moral habits which clash with our own. The result is that each and all, immigrants and natives, have to learn tolerance. But moral punctilios cannot be trifled with safely. When people are politically compelled to be tolerant of petty customs that they believe to be immoral, there follows a relaxation of genuine morality itself. Even when a false, bigoted prejudice that has rooted itself among the moral virtues is pulled up, the cardinal virtues themselves suffer injury."—*Journal of Social Science*, xviii., 122.

Heredity, too, is a great factor in the production of pauperism and crime. The paupers and the criminals bring forth with great fecundity after their kind, and a careless pseudo-charity has encouraged them to persevere.

Above all, deplore it as we must, it is the historical fact that the rapid increase of wealth in any country is always accompanied by the lowering of the moral standards. The most pernicious class of youth in America to-day is largely recruited from the children of the new rich, who are debauching themselves and corrupting those about them with fearful energy. And the schools are not chargeable with the existence or the mischief of these youthful malefactors. They have little to do with the schools, except to infect them with their own idleness and vice; and the better the schools are, the less likely such pupils are to remain in them for any length of time.

There are reasons enough, therefore, for the deterioration of public morals outside of the school-houses. Against all of these evil tendencies of which we have been speaking the schools, with all their imperfections, lift up a barrier. They promote industry and thrift and self-support. They check, measurably, the increase of crime. Just as they are, they exert a salutary influence upon society.

Nevertheless, it is altogether possible that this depravation of morals is due in part to defects in our systems of education. Our schools have counteracted these evils to some extent, but much less effectively than they might have done. The best possible system of education would not have prevented them all, but it would have prevented more of them. The increase of pauperism and crime would have been less rapid and alarming if our schools had been more wisely organized and conducted.

It may be, therefore, that this unfilial daughter, having learned by experience that she is not sufficient of herself for the regeneration of society, will welcome a word or two of admonition from the mother whose counsels she has of late rather testily rejected. Suffer it she must, if she do not welcome it; for Christianity will by no means abdicate her right to deliver her testimony on this and every other subject that deeply concerns the public welfare.

The first demand that Christianity has to make respecting popular education, is that it be directed toward the formation of character rather than the communication of abstract knowledge. And inasmuch as character is largely developed by work, the intelligent Christian will insist that our public schools ought to give a great deal more attention than they ever have done to industrial training.

It may be supposed that the attempt to make Christianity responsible for such a demand as this is strained and extravagant. Doubtless there is a sentimental sort of Christianity by which "secular" interests of this sort are little regarded, but it is not the Christianity of Christ nor of the apostles. When we reflect that every Jewish boy was compelled to learn a trade; that the Founder of Christianity was himself a carpenter; that the greatest of the apostles maintained himself by the labor of his own hands, and most explicitly laid down the law to the converts in the churches that he founded, "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat"; that, in the frankest contrast with the great teachers of Greece, like Plato and Aristotle, who declared all labor to be degrading to a freeman, the Christian fathers, from the very first, sung the praises of self-supporting industry, and pronounced idleness disgraceful, we readily see that the interest of a genuine Christianity in the industrial training of the young is neither affectation nor afterthought.

The feeling that something ought to be done by the public schools in the way of industrial education has been gaining force for several years. "Mercantilism" has laid its hand heavily upon the common schools; and the training provided by them has largely

ministered to the love of trade. Much of this has been unintentional and even unconscious; mercantilism is in the air, and it insensibly pervades our schools, and our school-books, and the traditions and methods of education. A boy comes out of the grammar school pretty well qualified to be a clerk, but with very little preparation for any of the handicrafts. It begins to be a serious question whether the state ought to devote so much time to the training of traders; whether it might not be wiser to afford instruction that shall turn the minds of the young in other directions also. The great majority of the pupils in our grammar schools will earn their livelihood by manual industries of one sort or another. Is it not well to recognize this fact in our systems of education, and to shape our courses of instruction in such a way that they may serve the needs of pupils of this class?

It is sometimes said that the state owes to its children only the rudiments of a general education; that it ought to equip every citizen for the discharge of his political duties, but that it is not under obligation to teach men trades or professions; that the state is going a step too far when it undertakes to make men lawyers, or doctors, or carpenters, or machinists. The objection is valid. It is not the function of the state to furnish technical or professional training. But there is an industrial training which is neither technical nor professional; which is calculated to make better men and better citizens of the pupils, no matter what calling they may afterward follow; which affects directly and in a most salutary manner the mind and character of the pupil, and which will be of constant service to him through all his life, whether he be wage-worker, or trader, or teacher, or clergyman. The training of the eye and of the hand are important and essential elements in all good education. These elements the state is bound to furnish.

The question immediately arises, how much can be done in the common schools to promote industrial education? Some experienced educators insist that nothing can be done; that no time can be found for such instruction in the already over-crowded curriculum of the common school; that the attempt would introduce confusion; that if anything is done, it must be through the establishment, by voluntary agencies, of separate industrial schools, in which pupils may receive training out of school hours, or after they have completed the common-school course.

To these objections it may be answered that a little heroic surgery upon the swollen curriculum of the common school would be extremely healthful. In the graded schools of

our cities the average pupil who completes the course spends from eight to ten years in studying arithmetic. It must be possible to reduce this time considerably, by the condensation and simplification of text-books. The same may be said of geography and of grammar. Time enough could thus be gained for such purposes, with great advantage to the schools.

It is sometimes proposed that the industrial training of the public schools should be confined to the pupils of the high schools. But this would greatly restrict the advantages of such training, inasmuch as but a small fraction of those educated by the state reach the high schools. Moreover, the majority of the boys who enter the high schools are already strongly inclined toward commercial or professional callings; and the industrial education there offered them would, for this reason, be less welcome to them, and less influential in guiding them toward skilled or productive industries. It would undoubtedly be well to connect an industrial course with the high school; but the greatest benefit of such instruction would be gained by the pupils of the two highest grades of the grammar schools. The average age at which pupils leave the grammar school is fifteen; between the ages of thirteen and fifteen instruction of this kind can be most successfully imparted. This is precisely the age at which boys are apt to be restless and insubordinate; a little manual work in connection with their studies would afford vent to their surplus energies, and prove a valuable aid in maintaining discipline.

The foundation of this industrial training is drawing, which is now taught in many of our public schools, and which ought to be made compulsory in all of them. No branch of study now included in the common-school curriculum is more "practical" than drawing. At the basis of all mechanical work lies the art of mechanical or projection drawing; at the basis of all industrial art lie the arts of design. The man who is to follow any kind of handicraft, or who is to be engaged in the production of any fabrics or articles that have form or color, whether it be spades or shoes, or chairs or wheelbarrows, or wagons or plows, or hats, or harnesses, or houses, needs to have his eye and his hand trained in learning to draw. A number of young men in a machine-shop lately came to the draughtsman in that shop and asked him to give them lessons in mechanical drawing. They were beginning to see, what neither they nor their parents could have been made to understand while they were in school, that no man can be a first-class mechanic in any of the trades who does not know something of mechanical drawing.

The application of art to industry is steadily extending into all departments of work. The commercial value of almost everything that is made is affected, more or less, by its artistic form. The commonest tool or utensil is more desirable if it is shapely and symmetrical. Therefore, the arts of design are constantly coming into play in all mechanical or manufacturing industries, and every workman needs instruction in them.

Even those who are to follow mercantile or professional callings are finding use, continually, for knowledge and skill of this sort, and are often greatly disabled for the lack of it. Who is there that does not need, every month of his life, the power to make an intelligible representation with the pencil of something that he wishes to describe, or of something that he desires to have constructed? A little elementary training in drawing when he was a child would have given him this power; the want of it is a constant source of regret and annoyance. The notion that drawing is a mere "accomplishment," an ornamental branch of education, can be entertained by none but the ignorant. Nothing is taught in our schools the utility of which is more obvious.

The foundation of industrial education is thus laid in many of our common schools through the introduction of drawing. All that is needed is that the work in this department should be more thoroughly done.

In addition to this, instruction should be given in the use of the common wood-working tools, such as the hammer, saw, plane, chisel, and gouge. One of the rooms of every grammar school should be a shop, fitted up with work-benches and the requisite tools; and a capable mechanic should be placed in charge of it, as one of the regular corps of teachers. From four to six hours a week in the shop would be sufficient for each pupil; and the boys of a large school could be divided into classes, so that a single instructor could easily manage them all. In two years of such training, under a competent teacher, the use of these common tools could be acquired, and a practical skill in construction and in the manipulation of materials, which would be of the greatest advantage to all pupils, no matter what callings they might intend to follow, and which would give to many of them suggestive hints in the choice of a calling.

It is probable that to these simpler wood-working tools lathes might sometimes be added, and that the simplest processes of iron-working might also be taught. The girls in the same schools should receive thorough instruction in plain sewing and in ornamental needlework, and might also learn modeling in clay. The details of the plan are yet to be

adjusted; but the need of introducing this kind of instruction into the common schools of our cities is already so obvious that the working plans must soon be forthcoming. In the smaller country district-schools the difficulties would be greater, but there, happily, the need is less. The boys and girls in these schools have plenty of chance for industrial training.

Already the matter has passed beyond the stage of theory, and successful experiments have been made in several places. In connection with Washington University, in St. Louis, is a school for manual instruction in which this plan of giving a broad general training in the various processes of mechanical work has been carried into operation with great success. In this school three hours of every day are devoted to books, one hour to drawing, and two hours to work with tools. The three years' course is about the same as that of the ordinary English high school, with the manual instruction added. In the first year the pupils learn the use of the wood-working tools, including the lathe; in the second year they work at the forge, learning the various manipulations of wrought iron, and also take some practical lessons in molding, casting, soldering, and brazing; in the third year they go into the machine-shop, and are drilled in bench work and fitting, turning, planing, screw-cutting, etc. More than two hundred boys are receiving instruction in this school.

In Toledo, Ohio, a manual training school has been established in connection with the public schools, to which pupils from the senior grammar grade, and from the first year of the high school, are admitted. In Gloucester, Massachusetts, in Boston, and in Montclair, New Jersey, similar schools have been connected with the grammar school, for pupils from eleven to fifteen years of age. The report from all these quarters is highly encouraging. The practicability of combining manual with intellectual training seems to be clearly indicated by these experiments.

The advantages claimed for this combination by Professor Woodward, of the St. Louis school, are briefly these:

"1. Larger classes of boys in the grammar and high schools. 2. Better intellectual development. 3. A more wholesome moral education. 4. Sounder judgments of men and things. 5. Better choice of occupations. 6. A higher degree of material success, individual and social. 7. The elevation of many of the occupations from the realm of brute, unintelligent labor, to one requiring and rewarding cultivation and skill. 8. The solution of 'labor problems.'"

With several of these anticipated results the present discussion is not directly con-

cerned; but they must all be regarded as beneficent; and the reasons given by this distinguished educator for expecting them to follow are based not only on a sound philosophy, but on a large experience. The fact that the intellectual development of pupils thus trained is not retarded but greatly quickened by the combination of manual work with their studies, appears to be established. The boys and girls of the half-time schools in England, who spend part of the school hours in labor outside the schools, easily keep up with those who devote to their studies twice as much time. And these pupils are generally engaged in laborious and monotonous employments, far less attractive and stimulating than those of the manual training school.

One of the best effects of this method is seen in the awakening of pupils who, in their text-book studies, are dull and incapable, but who find in the manual work something in which they can excel. This puts them on better terms with themselves, with their teachers, and with the school; and the self-respect and hope thus inspired lead them to attack their mental tasks with a better resolution. Professor Francis A. Walker, in an excellent paper read before the Social Science Association, speaks strongly of this result of manual training in schools.

That the school discipline would be more easily maintained under this system, I have already suggested. This must result from "a more wholesome moral education"; and Professor Woodward can tell us how surely this is secured by the industrial method:

"To begin with, I have noted the good effect of occupation. The programme of a manual training school has something to interest and inspire every boy. The daily session is six full hours, but I have never found it too long. The school is not a bore, and holidays, except the name of the thing, are unpopular. I have been forced to make strict rules to prevent the boys from crowding into the shops and drawing rooms on Saturdays and after school hours. There is little tendency, therefore, to stroll about, looking for excitement. A boy's natural passion for handling, fixing, and making things is systematically guided into channels instructive and useful, as parents freely relate. . . . Gradually the students acquire two most valuable habits, which are certain to influence their whole lives for good—namely, precision and method. As Professor Runkle says: 'Whatever cultivates care, close observation, exactness, patience, and method, must be valuable preparation and training for all studies and all pursuits.'"

That the judgment would be educated by such practical lessons; that labor itself would be dignified and elevated; that the skill and facility thus acquired would render him who acquires them more versatile, more fertile in resources, and less liable to be stranded in dull times and when industries are constantly

shifting, are predictions that do not greatly tax our faith. That the salutary effect of the introduction of the system upon the moral as well as the material welfare of the whole country would be clearly visible before many years, appears to me indubitable. The French Imperial Commission, appointed several years ago to examine this question, visited Belgium and studied the effects of the apprentice schools then in operation. At that time fifty-four of these schools had been established in that kingdom, and the commission testifies: "The official reports published in Bruges, in 1863, show that everywhere instruction and habits of regular employment have produced the most successful results in improving the morals, not only of the children, but also of the parents, and that mendicity and vagrancy have almost entirely disappeared from those districts" in which these schools have been founded.

This, then, is the first admonition that an intelligent Christianity must leave with those who direct the policy of our schools. You have been building on a foundation too narrow; you must enlarge your basis; you must learn that character is the principal thing, and that character is the result of a harmonious development of all the powers—of the eye and the hand and the practical judgment and the will, as well as of the memory and the logical faculty; and you must not forget that industrial training affords a discipline almost indispensable to the right development of character.

BUT if the Christianity whose chief concern is righteousness has a right to reprove our state educators for having omitted to furnish this indirect but most effective method of moral discipline, much more has it the right to rebuke them for their gross neglect to provide direct and systematic methods of moral education. The failure to awaken and develop the moral nature of the pupils in our schools is notorious and disastrous. Moral training has become altogether secondary; the attempt to secure it is but feebly and uncertainly made.

I have before me a consolidated list of examination questions presented to teachers by county boards of examiners in the State of Ohio. This list is said to include "the whole range of the questions sent in [to the State Board] by the examining boards of the several counties," and it undoubtedly presents them in fair proportion also. Running the eye over them, it becomes evident at once that while the ability of these intending teachers to impart instruction on all other subjects is fully tested, there is very little effort made to find out what their purposes and ideas are respect-

ing the moral training of their pupils. Upon theory and practice of teaching there are one hundred and fourteen questions; upon orthography, forty-eight; upon reading, thirty; upon penmanship, twenty-four; upon grammar, one hundred and six; upon arithmetic, one hundred and four; upon geography, one hundred and sixty-two; upon history, nineteen; upon physiology, seventeen; upon civil government, ten; upon book-keeping, ten; upon algebra, eighteen; upon physics, twenty-eight—six hundred and ninety questions in all. Of these, two questions, under the head of "theory and practice," refer to the development of moral character—these two, namely: "Do you teach morals and politeness?"—as if it were optional with the teacher whether he would do so or not,—and, "How would you undertake to cultivate the morals of your pupils?" Now, when the State in its inquiry into the qualifications of teachers makes the ratio of morals to other subjects as two to six hundred and ninety, we could hardly expect the teachers whom it employs to be very thorough or enthusiastic in imparting moral instruction to their pupils.

As a matter of fact, we get a great deal more moral teaching in our schools than this astonishing exhibit would indicate. Many of the teachers recognize their responsibility in this matter, even if the state does not enforce it upon them; and they find ways of impressing the truths of morality upon the minds of their pupils. In their conventions and institutes, the question of moral instruction is often earnestly debated. On the whole, it is rather surprising that teachers should manifest so much interest in this matter, when those who employ them appear to care so little about it. It is not at all to be wondered at that many of the teachers are utterly remiss in this part of their duty, and that the moral education of the young in our public schools is, in general, sadly neglected.

Mr. Harris, in the essay to which reference has been made, points out that certain of what he calls the mechanical virtues, such as punctuality, regularity, and obedience, are taught quite effectively in the discipline of the school. Cleanliness, also, which comes near being a theological virtue, is pretty faithfully inculcated in the lower grades, while the whole regimen of the school ought to be a steady exercise in truth-telling. These are important results, and they are a necessary outcome of the law of the school. For all of this let us be duly thankful. But beyond these are wide ranges of conduct in which children need careful and systematic instruction. The great duties of self-control—the duty of temperance in the indulgence of

all the appetites, of restraining the passions, of ruling the spirit; the social duties of honesty, and justice, and fidelity to trusts, and courage, and honor, and magnanimity, and neighborly kindness, and toleration, and sympathy, and charity; the sacred obligations of citizenship—all these, and many others, ought to be diligently impressed upon the consciences of children in school. The statute of Massachusetts sets this matter forth in large and noble characters:

"It shall be the duty of the president, professors, and tutors of the university at Cambridge, and of the several colleges, of all preceptors and teachers of academies, and of all other instructors of youth, to exert their best endeavors to impress on the minds of children and youth committed to their care and instruction the principles of piety and justice, and a sacred regard to truth; love of their country, humanity, and universal benevolence; chastity, moderation, and temperance, and those other virtues which are the ornament of human society and the basis upon which a republican constitution is founded; and it shall be the duty of such instructors to endeavor to lead their pupils, as their ages and capacities will admit, into a clear understanding of the tendency of the above-mentioned virtues to preserve and perfect a republican constitution, and secure the blessings of liberty, as well as to promote their future happiness, and also to point out to them the evil tendency of the opposite vices."

What this lofty statute demands is not only possible, it is the very first and highest matter to be cared for in every system of education, public or private. With all their other gettings, the children of our schools ought to get, and may get, a clear understanding of these great matters. Doubtless, as I have said, many conscientious teachers endeavor to impress moral truths on the minds of their pupils; but what is done is done in a desultory and uncertain fashion; no systematic attempt is made to develop this part of the child's nature.

It is sometimes denied that morals can be taught from books, and asserted that such teaching is best when it is incidentally rather than formally conveyed. I am not yet convinced that this is true. The objection proceeds upon the theory that morality is something altogether transcendental and mystical, and cannot, therefore, be didactically treated. It is true that what Professor Shairp calls "the moral motive power" is a personal force rather than a formula; nevertheless, there are great truths of morals which are scientifically verifiable; laws which are as well established as the law of gravitation, or the law of the trade winds; laws which can be stated so clearly and simply that the average boy or girl of twelve or fourteen can perfectly understand them. The pupils of our schools need to have these truths put into their minds, in clear statements, that they may be remembered as guides of conduct in coming years.

The law of veracity, for example, with the natural and inevitable rewards and penalties annexed to it, is capable of a perfectly clear statement. This law can be scientifically verified. All the experience of life will tend to its verification. Get it once lodged in a boy's mind, and he can no more get away from it than he can get away from the laws of motion. Now I think it is a great deal more important to get that law fixed in a boy's mind than it is to teach him the process of extracting the cube root, or to instruct him in the law of storms, or the law of ocean currents. I doubt whether many of the pupils of our public schools ever do get that law fixed in their minds. They know, in a general way, that it is wrong to lie; but the eternal reasons for veracity, and the sure penalties of mendacity, they do not understand. To give them these truths in simple propositions; to show them the facts on which these propositions are based; to point out to them the operation of the moral laws, as you point out to them the operation of the physical laws or the physiological processes of digestion — this would be to many of them an inestimable service. They would remember the law; their observation would constantly confirm it; and it would influence their conduct all their lives long.

Precisely the same thing may be said of all the other great laws of conduct. They may be clearly stated, and their natural rewards and penalties indicated; and the state is bound to give this kind of instruction, whatever else it may withhold. To leave so great a matter as this to the teacher's option, and allow him to give moral instruction incidentally, as if it were not a matter of prime importance, is to disparage and degrade the whole subject in a fatal manner. We are bound to dignify it by making it a part of the regular course of study.

Suppose the teacher tells the pupil, casually, these truths of morality of which we have spoken. The pupil is likely to take them as the teacher's individual opinion. If the pupil has great confidence in the wisdom of the teacher, these truths may make a deep impression on his mind; if he has not, they will make very little impression. In any case, they will not come to him as the ascertained and established facts of science, as truth that has been verified by observation and experiment. That is the way in which they ought to come to him. The moral laws ought to be put upon an equal footing, in the pupil's intelligence, with the laws of physics or physiology.

It is sometimes supposed that no effective moral teaching is possible, save that which refers to the Bible as authority. This is a great mistake. Doubtless many of us would rather have the Bible taught in the schools as the text-book of morals — if it could be intelligently taught — than any other book. But this is not possible. And, although no other knowledge of morality can be so good as that which would be gained by a reverent and intelligent study of the Bible, yet a knowledge of the great moral laws and their penalties, sufficient for the practical guidance of men in earthly affairs, can be gained from the experience of men and the study of human nature. The moral laws revealed in the Bible are also impressed upon the nature of man. They were in full force and effect before the Bible was written. As soon as moral beings began to exist in their present relations these laws began to operate. The facts of morality are stated in the Bible because they are true; they are not true because they are stated in the Bible; they were true before a word of the Bible had been uttered. Every law of the decalogue, as my old teacher of morals, President Hopkins, always insists, is a natural law. Surely there can be no objections to teaching natural law in the public schools; and of all natural laws, those which relate to conduct should first be taught by the state. The neglect to provide this kind of teaching is sheer fatuity; every citizen who is a Christian, and who believes that righteousness is the principal thing, is bound to cry out against it, and to demand, unceasingly, that this great defect in our systems of popular education be remedied without delay.

The systematic and intelligent teaching of morals in the public schools would, undoubtedly, accomplish much good. Nevertheless the fact must not be overlooked that truth of this kind, to be most effective, must be vitalized by a genuine religious faith. Religion is the inspiration of all highest morality. And while religion cannot be taught in the public schools, those teachers who possess this faith may, without any dogmatic instruction, impart it to their pupils. "It is for the teachers," says Mr. W. T. Harris, "not to claim to introduce formal religious ceremonies, but to make all their teaching glow with a genuine faith, hope, and charity, so that pupils will catch from them their view of the world as the only view that satisfies the heart and the intellect and the will."

Washington Gladden.