THE EDUCATION QUESTION.

BY DR. HODGE.

C. SHERMAN, PRINTER. 19 St. James St.

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BY THE REV. CHARLES HODGE, D.D.

THERE is a substantial agreement among religious men, as to the most essential points involved in the education question. We are well aware that the difference between the religious community and those who, in many instances, control the action of our legislative bodies in relation to this subject, is radical and irreconcilable. We are sorry to be obliged to add, that many religious men, from different motives, have been led to throw their influence in favour of this latter party, who advocate the exclusion of religious instruction from our public schools. The religious community, however, as a body, we hope and believe, are united and determined in their opposition to any such destructive course.

Before proceeding further, we will briefly indicate the points as to which, with individual exceptions on either side, there is, as we believe, a substantial agreement, especially so far as our own Church is concerned, in relation to this whole subject. The evidence is abundant and conclusive that the great mass of our members, ministers and laymen, are convinced, 1. Of the absolute necessity of universal popular education. 2. That this education should be religious; that is, not only that religion ought to be in some way inculcated, but that it should be made a regular part of the course of instruction in all our non-professional educational institutions. 3. That the obligation to secure for the young this combined secular and religious training, is common to parents, to the State, and to the Church. It does not rest on one of these parties to the exclusion of the others, but, as the care of the poor, it rests equally on all, and the efforts and resources of all are requisite for the accomplishment of the object. It is included in what has been said, that the obligation in question presses all these parties as to the whole work of education. One portion of the work does not belong exclusively to one of them, and another portion exclusively to the others, but each is in its sphere responsible for the whole. That is, as the parent is bound to provide not only for the religious but also for the secular education of his children, the same is true with regard to the State and to the Church. 4. That in the existing state of our country, the Church can no more resign the work of education exclusively to the State, than the State can leave it exclusively to parents or to the Church. The work cannot be accomplished in the

way in which she is bound to see it accomplished, without her efficient co-operation. The Church, therefore, is bound, without interfering either with the State or with voluntary institutions, to provide the means of thorough secular and religious training, wherever they are not otherwise secured. 5. That in the performance of this great duty, the Church cannot rely on the separate agency of her members, but is bound to act collectively, or in her organized capacity. Consequently, the Board of Education, in aiding in the establishment of schools, academies, and colleges, is acting on sound principles, whatever mistakes may have been made in the application of those principles in particular cases.

There may be, as before remarked, individual dissentients from one or another of the above positions, but the almost unanimous decision of one Assembly after another, and the concessions of those, who under misapprehension of the ground intended to be assumed, had taken the part of objectors, prove beyond doubt the substantial and cordial unanimity of our Church as to all these points.

I. The first of these positions need not be argued. The necessity of general popular education is universally conceded. If such education is necessary to other nations for their prosperity, to us it is necessary for our existence. Universal suffrage and universal education condition each other. The former without the latter is a suicidal absurdity. Everything connected with our political well-being, with the elevation and personal improvement of the people, and with the extension and establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom, is more or less directly involved in this great question. The work which as a people we have to do; which, next to the preaching of the gospel, is most immediate and most pressing, is to provide and apply the means for the education of all classes of our varied and rapidly increasing population. This education should be such as to meet the exigencies of the people; giving not merely to all the opportunity of acquiring the rudiments of knowledge, but furnishing the means of higher cultivation, for those who are disposed to avail themselves of them. This may be taken to be the public sentiment of the country and of the Church. In almost all our States provision is made more or less effectively, not only for the establishment of common schools, but also of academies and colleges endowed and sustained by public funds. The free High Schools of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia are among the most elevated of our educational establishments.

II. The second position, viz., that education in all its stages ought to be religious, is one of the great dividing points in relation to this subject. On one hand, it is contended that religion, the Christian religion, including its facts, doctrines, and moral principles, should be a regular topic of instruction in our public schools and higher educational establishments; and that the whole process of education should be conducted with the design of cherishing religious principles

and feelings. On the other hand, it is assumed that the State has nothing to do with the religious instruction of the people; that religion must be left to be inculcated by parents and the Church; that the only legitimate sphere of state action is secular education. Indifference or hostility to religion; a dread of the union of the Church and State; an apprehension of ecclesiastical domination; the opposition of Papists to religious instruction, and even to the reading of the Bible in the public schools; the difficulty arising from conflicting sects, have led a very large part of the community to advocate or acquiesce in the exclusion of religion from all places of education sustained by the State. It is regarded as the simplest solution of a complicated problem, to confine the State to secular education and leave religion to be otherwise provided for.

This is the ground publicly assumed by the majority of our public men; it has received, directly or indirectly, the sanction of several State legislatures; it is avowed and acted upon by superintendents and commissioners; it is advocated by some of our most influential religious journals, and by many of our prominent religious men. In the year 1842 and 1843, laws were passed by the legislature of New York, forbidding "sectarian teaching and books" to be employed in the public schools. Everything was regarded as *sectarian* to which any person would object on religious grounds. Every book, therefore, even the Bible, and every sentiment to which the Romanists objected, were banished or expunged when demanded. All religious instruction and prayer have in many cases been proscribed. Teachers have been threatened with dismission, and actually dismissed, for using even the Lord's Prayer. E. C. Benedict, Esq., President of the Board of Education of New York, delivered in August last an address, in which he asks, "What should be our rational rule of conduct? Whenever we find a few children together, shall we compel them to lay aside their occupation for the time and read the Bible, or say prayers, or perform some other religious duty? Will it be sure to make them better? Will it be sure to give them religious instruction—to require it at the dancing school, the riding school, the music school, the visiting party, and the play-ground? Shall studies, and sports, and plays, and prayers, and Bible, and catechism be all placed on the same level? Shall we insist that secular learning cannot be well taught unless it is mixed with sacred? Shall algebra and geometry be always interspersed with religion instead of *quod erat demonstrandum?* Shall we say *Selah* and *Amen?* Shall we bow at the sign of *plus?* Can we not learn the multiplication table without saying grace over it? So of religious instruction, will it be improved by a mixture of profane learning? Shall the child be taught to mix his spelling lesson with his prayers, and his table-book with his catechism? If there were any necessary relation between religious and secular instruction, which required that they should be kept together, the subject would have another aspect. But no one has ever maintained that the religious teacher

the minister of religion, and the office-bearers of the Church, should mix secular instruction with their more sacred and solemn inculcations.

"Now, the reading of the Bible, the repeating of the Lord's Prayer, the Apostle's Creed, and the Ten Commandments, in school, is ritualistic and educational. It is not for improvement in secular learning, nor in sacred learning. Turn the tables—substitute for reading of the Scriptures at the opening of the schools, the simplest and least offensive of the religious ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church—reading from the Missal some portions of it to which in itself there would be no objection; insist that the school should bow at the name of Jesus; shall always speak of the Virgin Mary as the Blessed Virgin or Holy Mother of God, and see if all of us would be willing to send our children there day by day. See if the pulpits and the ecclesiastical conventions throughout the land would not re-echo the word of alarm; and why should we compel the Jews, who are numerous in our cities, to listen to the New Testament, to repeat the Lord's Prayer, or the Apostle's Creed, or to be taught the mysteries of redemption, or leave the schools?"*

It is against this doctrine, which is now so extensively embraced and so effectively acted out, that the great body of Christians in this country, and of the Presbyterian Church especially, enter their earnest and solemn protest. They regard it as a virtual renunciation of allegiance to God, as destructive to society, and as certainly involving the final overthrow of the whole system of public education. If the Bible and religion are excluded from our public schools, they and their abettors will very soon be swept away, if the country remain, what it now is, Protestant and Christian.

It is to be borne in mind that a very large part of our population is almost entirely dependent for instruction on the public schools. If, therefore, religion is to be excluded from those schools, a large proportion of the people will inevitably grow up ignorant of religion. Commissioner Flagg says, in reference to the State of New York, that "to every ten persons receiving instruction in the higher schools, there are at least five hundred dependent on the common schools, for their education." Dr. Cheever says: "Perhaps not more than a sixth part of the families in our country ever attend church, or any other schools than the free schools. Consequently, five-sixths of our whole youthful population are left unprovided with the knowledge of the Bible, and any religious instruction, if you exclude it from the free public schools."† We do not answer for these numbers. It is not necessary for the argument to assume more than must be conceded, viz.: that parochial schools, Sabbath-schools, and pastoral and parental instruction leave a very large part of the population dependent for their education on the public schools, and therefore, if religion be banished from those institutions, a large

* Quoted by Dr. Cheever. The Bible in our Common Schools, pp. 237, 8.
† The Bible in our Common Schools, p. 134.

portion of the people must grow up in ignorance of religion. This, then, is a fact to be deliberately considered by those, and especially by those Christians, who advocate the separation of secular and religious education. They are practically consigning thousands of the people to utter ignorance of God, of Christ, of morality, and of the method of salvation. They cannot avoid the fearful responsibility which they thus incur. The man who cuts off the regular supply of water from a great city, and tells the people they must get water as they can, that the public aqueduct is not the only means of supply, would not act more absurdly or with greater cruelty, than the men who deprive the people of the ordinary and long-continued means of religious instruction, and bid them look elsewhere for the most essential kind of knowledge. It is vain to say that religion can be inculcated in the family. Why not leave secular knowledge to be thus inculcated? It is the simple and admitted fact, that, if left to parents, secular education will be, and must be, in the great majority of cases, neglected. But more parents are competent and disposed to teach their children the rudiments of human knowledge, than are qualified or inclined to instruct them in religion. If therefore, religious instruction be left to parents, it will in most cases be entirely neglected. It is no less vain to say it is the office of the Church to teach religion. Very true; but the public schools have in all ages been one of the principal and most effective agencies of the Church for accomplishing this mission. You cut off her right hand, and bid her do her work. You debar her access through her members to the young, and bid her bring them up in the fear of God. The Church is the body of Christians, and all church action is not the action of organized ecclesiastical bodies. Much of the efficiency of the Church is through the activity of her private members, operating as Christians in all the walks of life. The command to teach all nations, given to the Church, is executed not only by the action of presbyteries and synods, of bishops and presbyters, but also by the agency of all the professed followers of Christ, acting in obedience to his command. To tell the Church, therefore, to provide for the religious education of the young, and yet forbid her members to teach religion in the public schools, where alone they can have access to the greater part of them, is simply a mockery. Presbyterians may attend to their own children, and we trust they will do so; Episcopalians may attend to theirs; but who are to attend to the multitudes who recognize no such ecclesiastical connection? Nothing, then, is more certain than that to exclude religious instruction from the public schools, is to give up a large part of the people to ignorance of God and duty. This is not a matter of conjecture, but a fact of experience; and we beg every man who has the welfare of his country, or the good of his fellow-men at heart, to look this fact deliberately in the face, and to pause before he gives his sanction to the popular doctrine of an exclusive secular popular education.

But, in the second place, the whole theory of separate secular

education is fallacious and deceptive. The thing is impossible. The human soul is in such a sense a unit, that it is impossible the intellect should be cultivated without developing, favourably or otherwise, the heart and the conscience. You might as well attempt to develope one-half of a man's body, and allow the other half to remain as it is. It is impossible to introduce ideas and facts beyond the mere relations of numbers and quantity, into the mind without their calling into exercise the other powers of our nature. If a child is to read, it must read something. But what can it read in prose or poetry, in history or in fiction, which will not bring up the ideas of God, of right and wrong, of responsibility, of sin and punishment, and of a future state? How can a teacher reprove, exhort, or direct his pupils, without an appeal, more or less direct, to moral and religious motives? If he tells a child that a thing is wrong, can he avoid telling him why it is wrong, what is the standard of duty, and what are the consequences of wrong conduct? He cannot appeal to conscience without awakening the sense of responsibility to God, and creating the necessity of instruction as to what God is, and as to our relations to him as his creatures. If it be true that we live and move and have our being in God, if our finite spirits are at every point in contact with the Infinite Spirit, the attempt to ignore God, and to bring up a child in ignorance of the Supreme Being, is as absurd and as impracticable as the attempt to bring up a living creature, out of contact with the atmosphere.

This, however, is not the worst of it. The separation of religion from secular education is not only impracticable, it is positively evil. The choice is not between religion and no religion; but between religion and irreligion, between Christianity and infidelity. The mere negative of Theism is Atheism. The absence of knowledge and faith in Christianity is infidelity. Even Byron had soul enough to make Lucifer say:—

> "He that bows not to God, hath bowed to me."

As in a field, if you do not sow grain you will have weeds, so in the human mind, if you do not sow truth, you will have error. The attempt, therefore, to exclude religion from our common schools, is an attempt to bring up in infidelity and atheism all that part of our population who depend on these schools for their education. There is no middle ground here. If a man is not good, he must be bad; if he is not a Theist, he is an Atheist; if he is not a Christian, he is an infidel; and, therefore, a course of education which excludes religion, must from the necessity of the case be irreligious. Mr. Webster, in his argument on the Girard College case, says, speaking of the exclusion of Christianity from that institution: "There is nothing original in this plan. It has its origin in a deistical source, but not from the highest school of infidelity. It is all idle, it is a mockery, and an insult to common sense, to maintain that a school for the instruction of youth, from which Christian instruction by

Christian teachers is sedulously and vigorously shut out, is not deistical and infidel in its purpose and in its tendency." Again, in still stronger language, when speaking of the plan of keeping the young entirely ignorant of religion until they get their education and can judge for themselves, he says: "It is vain to talk about the destructive tendency of such a system: to argue upon it, is to insult the understanding of every man; *it is mere, sheer, low, ribald, vulgar deism and infidelity.* It opposes all that is in heaven, and all that is on earth that is worth being on earth. It destroys the connecting link between the creature and the Creator; it opposes that great system of universal benevolence and goodness that binds man to his Maker." This language is not too strong; and it is not too strong as applied to the system of excluding religion from our common schools, because, and in so far as, those schools are the sole means of education for a large part of the people.

It is indeed admitted by many advocates of exclusive secular education in common schools, that any institution which asumes, for any considerable period, the whole education of a child or youth, "and yet gives no religious instruction or training, is justly said to give an irreligious and godless education."* - Very well, this is all we contend for. We readily admit that if adequate provision could be made, and was in fact made, for the instruction of the young in religion elsewhere, there would be no such absolute necessity for its systematical introduction into the common schools. Though even in that case it would be impossible to train and govern advantageously any body of youth, even in secular knowledge, without constant appeals to moral and religious truth. But the fact is, that the common school does assume the whole education of a multitude of children; it is the only education they ever receive, and therefore is in their case "irreligious and godless," if it is merely secular.

The principle of excluding religion from State institutions, cannot be, and is not consistently carried out, even by its advocates. All the popular objections about sectarianism, the union of the Church and State, the injustice of excluding Jews and Romanists from educational institutions which they are taxed to sustain, bear against schools for the deaf and dumb with as much force as against common schools; yet by common consent not only Christianity, but Protestant Christianity, is inculcated in all such establishments. Would the public endure that all religious instruction should be refused to the deaf and dumb, because a Jew or a Romanist might object to the nature of that instruction? It may be said, that the only instruction which the deaf and dumb receive is communicated in schools designed for their benefit exclusively, whereas the frequenters of common schools can be taught religion elsewhere. This answer does not touch the principle of the objection, and it is not a fact. The deaf and dumb are taught to read, and when that is accomplished,

* New Englander, April, 1848, p. 244.

they might be sent to their friends to be taught religion. And this is the course which consistency would require our opponents to take; but the operation of their principle is here seen too clearly to admit of its being carried out. The children are all together, and constantly under the eye of the observer, whereas the children of the common schools scatter to their homes as soon as the school is dismissed, and therefore the effect of the absence of religious training is not so clearly seen. It is not, however, the less real. And the man whose heart and conscience would revolt at the idea of leaving the deaf and dumb in ignorance of God and Christ, should not do in the case of thousands, what he would not venture to do in the case of tens.

We are fully persuaded that the attempt to banish religion and the Bible from common schools, which owes its origin and success to Papists, infidels, and scheming politicians, which is opposed to the practice of all Christian countries, to the judgment of all the great statesmen of the forming period of our country, and to the general usage of our forefathers, Presbyterian and Puritan, will, if persisted in, result in the overthrow of the whole system of popular education. The people will bear a great deal. They may allow men to trifle with their interests; they may submit to measures which encroach upon their rights; but if you touch their conscience, you awaken a power before which all human resistance is vain. If history teaches anything, it teaches the danger and folly of wounding the moral and religious convictions of men. We owe all the liberty the world possesses to tyrants trespassing on the domain of conscience. Christians, determined not to do what God forbids, and resolved to do what God commands, are the authors and preservers of civil and religious liberty. If our public men, for the sake of conciliating the Papists, or of avoiding trouble, undertake to say that Protestant Christianity, in this Protestant and Christian country, shall not be taught in our public schools, we venture to predict that they and their schools will be very summarily overthrown. The reason why so little resistance has been manifested to the edicts of the legislatures and superintendents, is that the people utterly disregard them. They care not a farthing for what the State officer at the seat of power says as to what their children shall be taught. The time for resistance will come when these State officers undertake to carry their edicts forbidding religious instruction into effect. We know of public schools, both in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, in which the Westminster Catechism is taught every day; and we believe that, in very many cases, the children in our own common schools are taught just what their parents see fit to have them learn. The safety of the system of public instruction depends on its freedom; on its being left to receive the form and application which the people may choose to give it; and upon our public men keeping the system out of the control of Papists and Infidels. The country may be deluded and cajoled, and we think here lies the danger, but the people will never submit with their eyes

open to a merely secular, which is only another name for an irreligious and godless education.

Among ourselves there exists, so far as we know, scarcely a diversity of opinion on this subject. The Southern Presbyterian Review, in an article against "Denominational Education," says, while advocating the State system: "Religion, as a distinct and most important part of knowledge; revealed religion, as the received religion of our country, so far from being excluded from general education, should be made a prominent part of it, from the primary school to the university." It is the principal object of the book of Mr. Stephen Colwell (a strenuous advocate of State, as opposed to Church schools), to prove the right and the necessity of religious instruction in common schools. "There has never," he says, "been a more suicidal position taken by the most unwise of our politicians or statesmen, or the worst of our internal foes, than this exclusion of Christianity from public education. The worst enemy of humanity could not have devised a doctrine more dangerous to our republican institutions. It is fortunately too absurd, too monstrous, too unthankful, to take deep and lasting root in American soil."* Whether absurd and monstrous or not, it is the reigning doctrine of the day among those who control legislative bodies. On page 105, the author says: "If we have succeeded in conveying to our readers our own conviction of what is due to the present and coming generations of children in our republic, of the civil and religious obligations which will rest on these children when they arrive at maturity, and of the facilities of doing good then to be enjoyed, they cannot fail to see that the church or denomination which opposes religious instruction in the public schools, is at war with our institutions, with our civilization, and with the public peace and safety. That Bible upon which the largest portion of the judicial oaths of the United States are administered; that Bible which is the fountain of our Christianity, and which our whole system, civil and religious, assumes to be the Word of God, is the Bible which should be held up to the children in our public schools, announced to be a revelation from the Most High, the will of God, the Old and New Testament of Christianity. It should be taught the children to that extent, and in that way, which an enlightened and liberal piety would dictate." Again, on page 116, he says: "In one sense, it is true, there can be no compromise in religious matters; that which is vital to Christianity cannot be surrendered or kept out of view. The Bible cannot be sacrificed nor kept out of view to conciliate the prejudices of any, whether priest or infidel. It is the manual of Christianity. We cannot concede that the Bible is a mere human production, because it is of the essence of Christianity that the Bible is a revelation from God."

It is then the settled conviction of all parties in our church, and

* Position of Christianity, &c., p. 98.

of the great body of the religious public, that popular education, by whomsoever administered, should in this country be Christian and Protestant. This is a position which we hope and pray may never be given up.

III. The third position is, that this combined secular and religious education of the young, is the common duty of parents, of the State, and of the Church. It has indeed been argued that if it is the duty of the Church, it is not incumbent on the State, and if incumbent on the State, it is not the duty of the Church. But this is a fallacy. It might as well be said, that if it is the duty of parents, it is the work neither of the Church nor of the State, and if it binds either of the latter, it does not bind the former. The truth is, that it binds all the above-named parties equally.

There are other things besides education which impose this common obligation. Individuals, as men and Christians, are bound to relieve the poor; but this obligation rests also on the State, and on the Church in her organized capacity. So, too, the care of the sick belongs, as a duty and privilege, to individuals and to society as a secular and religious organization. Has not the Church its deacons for the very purpose of taking care of the sick and of the poor? But does this exonerate either individuals or the State from this great natural duty of religion and humanity? The fact, therefore, that education may be proved to be the proper work of the State, is no evidence that it does not belong to the Church; and to prove that it belongs of divine right to the Church, is no evidence that it does not belong, by the same solemn sanction, to the State. It belongs alike to both, and for the same reasons, and on the same grounds; that is, from the design of their institution, from the necessity of the case, and from divine command.

The State is a divine institution. All its legitimate powers and functions have the sanction of divine authority, for the powers that be are ordained of God. Neither the existence nor the powers of the State depend on any social compact as their ultimate foundation. The State is a body of men organized, under divine authority, as a political community, for the protection of human rights, the promotion of the common good, and enforcing of the moral law, *i. e.*, for the punishment of those who do evil, and the praise of those who do well. Such being the design of the State, it has of course the authority to do whatever is necessary to attain the end of its appointment. It can regulate commerce, make roads, administer justice, raise armies, construct navies, provide for the poor, the sick, and the young. It can educate soldiers and sailors for the public service, and why not the people, to fit them for the duties of citizens? There is no function of government which flows more immediately from the design of its institution, than that of providing for the education of the people, because education is the most essential means for accomplishing the end for which the State exists, viz., the prevention of

evil and the promotion of good. By the instinct of its being, therefore, revealing its nature, every enlightened state has its schools, academies, and colleges, as well as its poor-houses and hospitals, or its armies and navies.

This duty not only flows from the design for which civil governments exist, but also from the necessity of the case. It is a sound principle, that the State has the right to do whatever it is necessary it should do for the promotion of the general good. If the means for securing the public good can be more effectually and safely applied by individuals, by voluntary organizations, or by the Church, than by the State, then the latter is not bound to employ these means. But if there is no other adequate provision for the accomplishment of the desired end, it is clearly the right and duty of the State to interfere. It is the universal conviction that popular education is necessary for the public good; it is a no less general conviction that a work so vast as the education of the whole population cannot be accomplished effectually, except by the systematical exercise of the power of the State, and by the application of its resources. We know no one, therefore, who ventures to deny the right in question.

All this is confirmed by the Scriptures. God, in ordaining civil government for the protection of men and for the promotion of the public good, did thereby invest it with all the powers requisite for the attainment of its object. He holds magistrates responsible for the conduct and character of the people, which implies that they have by divine right the authority to teach, or cause them to be taught, whatever is necessary to their well-being. The numerous commands given in Scripture to have the people taught, are not addressed to individuals only, but to the community, *i. e.*, they are addressed to men not only in their separate but in their organized capacity. Nations as nations are addressed, commanded, encouraged, and threatened. Ignorance of God and of his law, is condemned and punished as a national sin. The Bible everywhere recognizes the principle that nations, as such, should be under the control of the law of God, and that they should not forget or allow the knowledge of that law to fail from among the people.

It may be said, and has often been assumed, however, that though the State has authority to provide for secular education, it has no right to interfere in teaching religion. This is the ground taken by many advocates of the exclusion of religion from our public schools. It is said the State has no religion; that it has no means of determining what the true religion is; that religious instruction in common schools is the first step towards ecclesiastical domination, or the union of the Church and the State.

If, however, the State is bound to educate at all, it is bound to impart that kind of education which is necessary to secure the ends of good government. The State does in a multitude of cases assume the whole work of education; it gives all the instruction which a

large portion of the young receive. But such education if merely secular, is conceded to be "irreligious and godless." No sane man will maintain, that the State is bound, or has the right, to train up the young in irreligion and atheism. If, therefore, the work of education is, by the providence and word of God, thrown upon the State, it must be an education in religion. The State is bound to see that the true religion is taught in all the schools under its control. This is the common sentiment of all our great men of the last generation, from Washington to a late period. All the early advocates of popular education, the authors of the common school system, as adopted in our several States, have insisted on the vital importance of training the young in the principles of piety and morality.* Those among ourselves who have arrayed themselves against "Denominational Education," have done so on the ground that our "common Christianity," our "common Protestantism," as Mr. Colwell calls it, or "religion"—"revealed religion," as the *Southern Presbyterian Review* expresses it, may be, and should be made a prominent subject of instruction in all our institutions, from the primary school to the university. It is a new, and a latitudinarian doctrine, that the State cannot teach, or cause to be taught, the great truths and duties of religion.

All the arguments which go to prove the right and duty of the State to provide for the education of the people, go to establish the right and duty of making that education religious. If the design of the State is the promotion of the public good; if religious education is necessary for the attainment of that object, and if such education cannot in a multitude of cases be secured otherwise than by State intervention, then we must either admit that the State is bound to provide for the religious education of its members, or assume the absurd position, that the State is not bound to answer the very end of its existence.

It may be objected to this argument, that since the preaching of the Gospel is essential to the public good, the State is under obligation to secure the preaching of the Gospel to the people. So it would be, were there not other agencies by which that end might be more safely and effectually accomplished. In every case in which other agencies cannot operate, the State is bound to provide its subjects with the ministrations of the Gospel. It is under the most sacred obligations to provide chaplains for the army and navy, for military schools, and penitentiaries, and on this principle all Christian States, our own among the number, have ever acted.

The two leading objections to the doctrine, that the State is bound to provide for the religious education of the young, are the following: the one theoretical, and the other practical. The former is, that the State has no religion, and has no means of determining what the true religion is; the latter, that in consequence of the diversity

* See abundant proof of this presented in Dr. Cheever's able and important book.

of opinion on religious subjects among the people, no system of religious instruction can be introduced into the public schools, which will not offend the feelings, or interfere with the rights of conscience of a portion of the people. In the *New Englander* for April, 1848, already quoted, it is said: "The principle, which has been so extensively adopted in the discussion of this subject, that in this country the State, or civil power, is Christian and Protestant, and therefore that schools sustained and directed in part thereby are Christian and Protestant, and that whoever attends them has no right to object to a rule requiring all to study Christian and Protestant books and doctrines, we wholly disbelieve and deny. The State, the civil power in whatever form, in this country, is no more Protestant or Christian, than it is Jewish or Mohammedan. It is of no religion whatever. It is simply political, interposing, or having the right to interpose, in matters of religion, only by protecting its citizens in the free exercise of their religion, whatever it be; of course excepting such violations of civil rights, or civil morality, as any may commit under a pretence, or a fanatical sense of religion." p. 242. Here, indeed, is a radical difference. We, on the contrary, maintain that the State in this country is Christian and Protestant, and is bound to see that the schools which it establishes are conducted on Christian and Protestant principles, and that the chaplains which it appoints are neither Jews nor Mohammedans. This country is a Christian and Protestant country, granting universal toleration; *i. e.* allowing men of all religions to live within our borders, to acquire property, to exercise the rights of citizens, and to conduct their religious services according to their own convictions of duty. Turkey is a Mohammedan state, granting a very large measure of toleration to men of other religions. Most of the governments in Europe are Roman Catholic states, granting little or no toleration to Protestants. Sweden is a Protestant state, allowing freedom of action only to the Lutheran Church. What is meant by all this? It means that in Turkey the religion of Mohammed is the common law of the land; that the Koran regulates and determines the legislative, judicial, and executive action of the government. Whenever men associate for any purpose whatever, they do, and must, associate under the control of their religion, whatever that religion may be. If a body of Christian men organize themselves as an insurance company, or as a railroad company, or as the trustees of a college, they are bound to act as Christians in their collective capacity. They can rightfully do nothing as an organization which Christianity forbids, and they are required to do everything which Christianity enjoins, in reference to the work in which as a corporation they are engaged. Thus if a number of Christians and Protestants organize themselves as a State or political community, they are obviously bound to regulate their legislative, judicial, and executive action by the principles of their religion. No law in this country which does violence to Christianity, can be rightfully enacted by Congress, or by any State

Legislature; nor would such a law, if enacted, bind the consciences of the people. No judicial decision, inconsistent with the Bible, can be, according to the supreme law of the land, or morally, obligatory. No State Legislature would pass a law authorizing polygamy. Such a law being inconsistent with Christianity, would be invalid *in foro conscientiæ*, and a flagrant violation of the common law of the land, which underlies all our State constitutions, and is paramount to all legislative enactments. If a court should divorce a man and his wife for mere incompatibility of temper, they would not thereby cease to be man and wife. Men cannot make void the law of God. They cannot free themselves from the obligation to obey his word. To say, therefore, that the State, in this country, is no more Christian and Protestant than it is Jewish or Mohammedan, is tantamount to saying, that the people of the country are destitute of all religion, of all faith, of all allegiance to God, and of all regard to the moral law. The utter absurdity, as well as infidelity of this sentiment, is betrayed by the concession that the State is bound to act in accordance with "civil morality." What modicum of moral obligation is intended by that expression, we do not know, but no matter how infinitesimal it may be, it establishes the principle. If the State is bound by any moral law, no matter how attenuated, it is of course bound by the law which its members recognize as divine. The heathen govern themselves by their convictions of moral and religious duty; so do Mohammedans, and so must Christians, unless they are recreant and reprobate. Christianity is the common and the supreme law of the land, from the necessity of the case, because it is the religion of those who constitute the country. Blessed be God, this fact is an historical and established one, which cannot be shaken by denial. It is a fact that Christianity is the religion of the people, that it does control our State action; that no Congress or Legislature, no court or convention has ever ventured to deny themselves bound by the Bible and the moral law. Our real statesmen, our highest judges, our chief magistrates, the founders of our government, and the ornaments of our country, have with one voice and in various forms acknowledged that Christianity is the law of the land. The Jewish religion allowed polygamy and arbitrary divorce. But no Jew in this country can be a polygamist, or put away his wife at pleasure. No man can legally pursue his ordinary avocations on the Christian Sabbath. No man can blaspheme God or Christ with impunity; and that not simply because these things might lead to a breach of the peace, but because they are wicked, and against the public conscience.

It is the principal object of the work of Mr. Stephen Colwell, to prove that Christianity has ever been recognized as part of the common law in this country. Among the authorities cited are the following. Judge Story, in his Commentaries on the Constitution, says: "It is impossible for those who believe in the truth of Christianity as a divine revelation, to doubt that it is the

special duty of government to foster and cherish it among all the citizens and subjects." "Every American colony, from its foundation down to the Revolution, with the exception of Rhode Island (if indeed that State be an exception) did openly, by the whole course of its laws and institutions, sustain in some form the Christian religion, and almost invariably gave a peculiar sanction to some of its fundamental doctrines." "In a republic there would seem to be a peculiar propriety in viewing the Christian religion as the great basis on which it must rest for its support and permanence, if it be what it has ever been deemed by its truest friends to be, the religion of liberty." At the time of the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, he says, "The attempt to level all religions, and to make it a matter of State policy to hold all in utter indifference, would have created universal disapprobation, if not universal indignation."*

In the Act for the better government of the Navy of the United States, is the following clause: "The commanders of all ships and vessels in the navy, having a chaplain on board, shall take care that divine service be performed in a solemn and reverent manner, twice a day, a sermon preached on Sunday, unless bad weather or other extraordinary accidents prevent it; and that they cause as many of the ship's company as can be spared from duty, to attend every performance of the worship of Almighty God."—*Colwell*, p. 29.

Judge Duncan, of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, in a judicial decision says, "Christianity is and always has been a part of the common law" of that State. "It is impossible," he adds, "to administer the laws without taking the religion which the defendant in error has scoffed at—that Scripture which he has reviled, as their basis."—*Ibid.* pp. 55 and 58.

Mr. Webster made the following noble declaration on this subject: "There is nothing we look for with more certainty than this principle, that Christianity is part of the law of the land. This was the case among the Puritans of New England, the Episcopalians of the Southern States, the Pennsylvania Quakers, the Baptists, the mass of the followers of Whitefield and Wesley, and the Presbyterians. All brought, and all have adopted this great truth, and all have sustained it. And where there is any religious sentiment among men at all, this sentiment incorporates itself with the law. Everything declares it.

"The generations which have gone before speak to it, and pronounce it from the tomb. We feel it. All, all proclaim that Christianity, general tolerant Christianity, Christianity independent of sects and parties, that Christianity to which the sword and fagot are unknown, general tolerant Christianity, is the law of the land."—*Ibid.* 61.

How exalted and noble are these words in contrast with the mise-

* Position of Christianity, pp. 24, 25.

rable and shallow sophism that the State is not more Christian than it is Jewish or Mohammedan! If then, it cannot but be, as our jurists and statesmen worthy of the name, declare it in fact is, that a Christian people of necessity constitute a Christian state—a state controlled in all its actions by the truths and laws of Christianity; just as by a like necessity a Mohammedan people constitute a Mohammedan state, controlled by the Koran, it of course follows, that in conducting the work of education, the State in this Christian country is bound to conduct it on Christian principles. It is, therefore, only by a violence to all just and ordinary principles of action, that the public schools in a Christian country, should be no more Christian, than Jewish or Mohammedan. The schools in China are instinct with the doctrines of Confucius; the schools in Turkey are imbued with the spirit of the Koran; and if the schools of America are not pervaded by the truths and principles of Christianity, it will be because we are the most irreligious or the most easily befooled people the world has yet produced. The objection to the introduction of religion into the public schools, founded on the assumption that the State in this country is of no religion, may, therefore, be dismissed as a mere infidel cavil.

The second great objection is, that such is the diversity of religious opinion in this country, that it is impossible to introduce any system of religious instruction into our educational establishments, which will not interfere with the rights of conscience. Mr. Benedict, as we have seen, asks: "Why should we compel the Jews, who are numerous in our cities, to listen to the New Testament, to repeat the Lord's Prayer, or the Apostle's creed, or be taught the mysteries of redemption, or leave the school?" There are about seventeen thousand Jews in this country, and for their accommodation twenty millions of Christians are required to bring down their system of education to the Jewish standard. There are doubtless some thousands of Atheists and Pantheists in the country, who deny not only the existence of God, but any distinction between right and wrong. By parity of reasoning, we are bound for their benefit to exclude from our schools all reference to God, or to the first principles of morals. Such is the style of argument by which our presidents of Boards of Education, our State superintendents, and even our State legislatures, would overthrow a system of education which has prevailed in all ages in every part of Christendom. If it is a plain principle, that the State has no right to force an individual or a minority to do what their conscience forbids, it is a principle no less plain, though often strangely overlooked, that the minority have no right to force the majority to violate their conscience. The public conscience in every Christian country, and in this country pre-eminently, demands that public education shall not be "irreligious and godless;" and for the State to declare it shall be, under pretence of not wounding the conscience of the minority, is as gross a violation of the rights of conscience, as high-handed an act of injustice, and as

gross an absurdity, as was ever perpetrated. Of all methods of solving the difficulty in question, this would appear to be the most preposterous. Suppose a few Christians were to settle in a Mohammedan country, and acquire the rights of citizenship, what would be thought of the demand, that for their accommodation the Koran should be banished from all the schools of the land, that all instruction in the religion of the country should be forbidden? Such a demand would be scouted by every reasonable man. Is not the proposal to banish Christianity from the schools of this Christian country, for the sake of a handful of infidels and atheists, worthy of still stronger indignation?

It may be said, however, that the minority are taxed for the support of the public schools, and, therefore, they have a right to require them to be conducted so as to suit their views. But are not the majority taxed too? Have they no rights in the premises? Besides, are not men taxed for educational purposes, who have no children to educate? Is not a man with two children often taxed five times as much as the man with ten? Are we not all taxed for railroads, canals, hospitals, and colleges, from which we derive no immediate personal advantage? We get our compensation in the promotion of the public welfare. And those who are taxed for public schools receive a thousand fold the worth of their money in the elevation and improvement of society, even though their children never enter a State institution.

It is evident that all that has been said in reference to the exclusion of Christianity from the public schools, for the sake of Jews or Infidels, applies to the exclusion of Protestantism for the sake of Romanists. If a few thousand Protestants should become citizens of Spain or Austria, and require the Romish religion to be banished from all the public institutions of those countries, the Romanists would see them all reduced to ashes at the stake, before they would even listen to the demand. What effrontery, then, is it for the Papists in this Protestant land, to require that our schools should, for their sake, cease to be Protestant? To what an abyss of degradation was the Empire State led down by her puny politicians, when she submitted her school-books to be expurgated by Bishop Hughes! With what ineffable scorn for Protestantism and Protestant institutions, must that astute prelate have drawn his effacing pen over the words of life and liberty which glow on every page of English and American literature! May this infamy remain forever without a parallel, and may those blackened books be soon committed to the flames, and replaced by others luminous with Protestant Christianity! Nothing short of this can ever efface the stigma which mars the lofty brow of that great State.

If the Romanists, however, are our fellow-citizens, entitled to the same political privileges, and to the same measure of religious liberty as other portions of our population, what is to be done? In answering this question it should be remembered that this is, in the sense

before explained, a Protestant country. The religious character of a State does not depend primarily on the opinions of a majority of its members. It is historically determined. Turkey is a Mohammedan State, though the Turks constitute a small minority of the people. Here, however, both the historical origin of our government, and the convictions of the vast majority of the people, concur in giving us a Protestant character. This is an undeniable fact, and therefore any solution of the difficulty in question which ignores that fact, must do violence to the public conscience. For a Protestant people to make their educational institutions acceptable to Romanists cannot be done without their ceasing to be Protestant. It would be just as reasonable for the Papists to require that our political institutions should be accommodated to their religious convictions. Every one who knows anything of the theory of the Romish Church, or who is capable of tracing the logical consequences of the doctrine of Church infallibility, sees and knows that the Romish conscience does and must require the subordination of the State to the Church. It does and must require the forcible suppression of what it regards as heresy. If the Romish conscience, therefore, is to be our rule of action, we must give up our republicanism as well as our religion; and if we are besotted enough to give up the latter, the sooner the former is taken from us the better.*

If then this country cannot, and ought not to, give up the Protestant character of its schools to satisfy Romanists, the question returns, what is to be done? The simplest answer to this question is, let Romanists do what Protestants do in Romish countries. Let them have schools of their own. The Christians in Turkey do not call upon the government to sustain their schools. Protestants in Spain and Italy make no such demand upon the Romish authorities. There is no real hardship or injustice, as we have shown, in Romanists being left to provide their own schools, even though they are taxed to sustain the schools of the State. The Quakers are justly taxed for the support of the army and navy, because they have the benefit of their protection, although they disapprove of the means by which security is obtained. If Romanists derive in various ways incalculable benefits from popular education, they may be justly taxed for its support, though they disapprove of its character.

This is one way, and as we think, one that is simple and just, of meeting the difficulty. If Romanists should neglect to establish schools of their own, the result would be, that a large part of their

* There is another consideration which shows the unspeakable folly of Protestants attempting to conciliate Romanists by excluding religion from our common schools. The immense sacrifice is unavailing. Schools without religion are not what Romanists want. They are no great friends of popular education at best; and they are decided enemies of all education which is not in the hands of the priesthood. The good people of Salem were simple enough to dispense "with all religious exercises" in their school, "in order," as they say, "that the children of Roman Catholic parents might be free to attend. This change," they add, "failed to produce the desired effect, our (Roman) Catholic brethren having provided instruction for their own children."

youth would resort to Protestant schools. If the plan suggested, though just, should be regarded as ungenerous, let Romanists be exempted in whole or in part from taxation, on condition that they should maintain a sufficient number of schools for the education of Catholic children, to be approved by the officers of the State.

Still a third method may be suggested. If the State thinks that it is far better that the children of the Roman Catholics should be educated in the Romish religion, than that they should be allowed to grow up in ignorance, let the State contribute to the support of their schools, not as to State institutions for which the State is responsible, but as to schools which do the public good service, though not belonging to the public as a Christian and Protestant body. Our conscience would not object to this. We might contribute to the support of a Turkish hospital, without approving of the religion practised within its walls. These are methods of meeting an acknowledged difficulty, any one of which we regard as incomparably better than the suicidal and futile attempt to banish from our Protestant institutions everything to which a Papist can object.

Besides the difficulty arising from the Romanists, it is further urged as a reason for excluding all religious instruction from the common schools, that Protestant denominations differ so much among themselves, that it is impossible to suit the views of all. On this we would remark. 1. That this difficulty is in a great measure imaginary. It did not originate with Protestants, but with infidels and Romanists. Our several colleges, such as Yale, Nassau Hall, Jefferson, &c., are frequented by students of all Protestant denominations, and yet religious instruction is freely given in them all. In Yale, Dr. Dwight was in the habit of delivering to the undergraduates those admirable lectures which have since been published under the title of "Dwight's Theology." Did any one ever object to this? Thirty or forty years ago, religion was taught in every school in New England, without objection from any source.

2. Our second remark is, that this harmony was attained not by limiting the instruction to what is called "general Christianity," but by allowing the people to do as they please. In the great majority of cases, there would be no objection to thorough religious training by the study of the Bible and of the Catechism. If any parent should object, let him have his child either exempted from attendance on the religious instruction, or permitted to study the catechism of the Church to which the parent belongs. What injustice, hardship, or difficulty is there in all this?

3. Let State officers and legislatures, instead of bending all their influence to make public instruction as little religious as possible, endeavour to render it as thoroughly Christian and Protestant as they can. Instead of vainly striving to make the schools acceptable to sceptics and Papists, let them strive to make them what they ought to be—and the people will rise up and call them blessed. Let thoroughly religious and Protestant books be provided for the

libraries; let the Bible be made an indispensable text-book in every school; let some approved catechism be taught to every child, and let every care be taken to have the teachers not only competent, but religious, and we venture to predict that where one man is offended a hundred will rejoice. This is only asking the State to return to what it was and did, before Scepticism and Popery scared it from its propriety, and made it a prey to the enemies of all religion.

IV. Having attempted to show that the State is entitled and bound to provide for the general education of the people; that in this country education should be Christian and Protestant; and that the objections against the introduction of religion into the common schools, made in behalf of Jews, Infidels, and Romanists, are unreasonable and fallacious, the next point to be considered is the true prerogative of the Church in the matter of education. That secular as well as religious education, the former as a necessary adjunct of the latter, falls legitimately within the power of the Church, we never heard questioned until of late. When under the preaching of the Apostles, multitudes of the Jews and Gentiles were converted to Christianity, they formed themselves into a distinct society. They had their own places of worship, their own schools, and they took charge of their own sick and poor. They acted not only as individuals, but in their collective capacity as a Church in reference to all these objects. They had their officers for the instruction of the young, as well as for the cure of souls, or care of the poor. The idea that they were to leave their children to go to schools conducted by the heathen, and imbued with heathen doctrines and usages, never seems to have entered a Christian mind. Nor does any Christian ever seem to have doubted that it was the right and duty of the Church to provide for the education of her own children. As Christianity advanced, and the necessity and resources of the Church increased, institutions designed for the promotion of learning and religion were established under her influence and control, in every part of Christendom. When the Reformation occurred, the instruction of the young under the care of the Church, was one of the earliest, and one of the principal objects of attention. Calvin in Geneva, Luther in Germany, the Protestants of Holland, France, and Scotland, had their systems of schools, academies, and colleges, under the direction and control of the Church. This was done, not only where the Church and State were intimately united, and because of that union, but also, as in France, where no such union existed. The Christians and Churches of America have always acted on the same principle. The clergy of Boston, and of the neighbouring towns, the representatives and organs of the Churches, had the official control of Harvard. Yale was under the real and effective authority of the Churches of Connecticut. Princeton owes its existence to the Synod of New York and New Jersey. Every denomination of Christians in the land have schools and colleges under their control.

It seems rather late in the day to discover that all this is wrong, that the Church has nothing to do with secular education, that denominational schools, academies, and colleges, under the control of Church courts, are anomalies and dangerous innovations; or that a State legislature is a safer body to which to intrust the great interests of education, than a court composed of ministers and elders, the representatives of the disciples of Christ. It is hard to argue this point. There seems to be but one side to the question. The ablest pens engaged in the attempt to vindicate an exclusive right in the State to control the education of the people, lose all their wonted power.

The design of the Church includes as one of its essential objects the instruction of the people. Christ said to her: "Go teach all nations." Her ministers are teachers; her great office is instruction. Of course what the Church is required to teach, is the religion of Jesus Christ. She is to do this in the most effective way. Everything necessary for the accomplishment of this object, comes within the scope of her commission, and assumes the nature of a divine command. If she takes the Gospel to a people who cannot read, she is bound to teach them letters. If she goes where the philosophy, the history, the science, and literature of the people are imbued with irreligious and antichristian principles, she is bound to establish institutions in which all these subjects may be taught in combination with the truth. To deny this right to the Church, is to deny her the power to fulfil her great commission. If she is to reap the harvest of truth, she must break up the fallow ground, and extirpate the briers and thorns, as well as sow the seed. You might as reasonably sow wheat in a jungle, as expect to get Christian knowledge and faith established in minds imbued with the doctrines of heathenism. Every missionary body, therefore, has felt that education, the education of the young, secular as well as religious, was indispensable for the propagation of the Gospel and the establishment of the church in heathen lands. Batticotta in Ceylon, Dr. Duff's Institution in Calcutta, Allahabad in Northern India, are all monuments and evidences of the necessity of secular education to the propagation of the Gospel. These are Church Institutions, and to deny the right of the Church to establish such schools, shocks the conscientious convictions of the religious community, and excites something bordering on indignation. Such denial never could have been ventured on by good men, except to serve a purpose. In their zeal to protect the public schools from injury, and to secure for them the co-operation of the religious community; and in their anxiety lest State colleges or those under the control of self-perpetuating boards of trustees, should lose caste or confidence, a few, and only a few of our leading men, have been led for a time into the apparent assumption that the Church and Church-courts have nothing to do with secular education. We believe, however, there has been no little misapprehension on both sides, on this subject; and that no party, and perhaps no indi-

vidual in our Church, is now prepared deliberately to question the right of the Church to have her own schools, academies, and colleges, whenever and wherever they are necessary for the attainment of the great end of a Christian and Protestant education. That Christians in the midst of heathens, that Protestants in the midst of Romanists, not only have the right to such establishments under their own ecclesiastical control, but are solemnly bound by the command of God, and the nature of their vocation as a Church, to have them, no man, we presume, will venture to deny. And that this right which thus inheres in the Church, in virtue of her commission and the design of her appointment, is to be exercised whenever the ends of a thorough religious education cannot otherwise be attained, we hold to be equally beyond dispute.

The arguments urged against the right of the Church in this matter, are such as these. 1. That if education belongs to the Church it cannot belong to the State. This, we have before remarked, is an obvious fallacy. The care of the sick and of the poor belong, by divine command, to the Church and to the State alike.

2. If education belongs to the Church, it is said, it must be of the nature of religious things, and the duty of superintending it must be in its nature spiritual.* This is another fallacy. All that is needed is, to show that education is necessary as a means for the promotion of religion. If the Church is bound to secure the end, she has the right to use the requisite means. The care of the sick and poor is not so much of the nature of religious things, as education is, and yet the care of the poor, by divine command, belongs to the Church. How easy would it be to retort the objection. If religion, we might say, is a necessary part of education, it cannot belong to the State, for the State is in its nature secular. But those whose arguments we are now considering, admit that the State is bound to secure a religious education for the people. A secular power, therefore, may be bound to do a religious work; then why may not the Church, a religious power, be bound to do a secular work? The fact is, both are bound to do what is necessary for the ends of their existence.

3d. Another form of the same argument is presented thus: "Education is an affair purely civil, purely temporal. It cannot be shown, that the processes of acquiring the art of reading and writing, have anything more to do with the spiritual operations of our being, than the processes of acquiring any other art; for these are merely arts —arts by means of one of which, when acquired, we may ourselves proceed indefinitely in the acquisition of knowledge; and by means of the other of which, we may act indefinitely in the communication of knowledge. Nor can it be shown, that the process by which any one part of knowledge, not purely moral, is acquired, is any more

* The Church, it is said, should have the control of things strictly religious, and of none other; for her Master has given this control, and no other; and right reason, as well as divine truth, limits her to this sphere as the one of her true and real power.—*Southern Presbyterian Review.*

religious, or has any more relation to religion, than any other part of knowledge; so that every means by which any mortal acquires any knowledge, is as much liable as the district school, to be engrossed by the Church; as indeed it has been in past ages. Nor can it be shown that a company of boys at school, is more liable to spiritual injury, than a company of boys at a tannery or a carpenter's shop; nor that unsanctified study, as they express it, more demands, upon principle, the supervision of the Church, than unsanctified play, or unsanctified work."*

Even if the premises of this argument were correct, the conclusion would not necessarily follow. We might admit that "education is an affair purely civil, purely temporal;" that what a boy is expected to learn in the district school, the academy, or college, has no more relation to religion, than what he learns in a tannery or carpenter's shop; and yet consistently assert the right of the Church, on due occasion, to supervise and control it. Architecture, and the building of houses, is a matter purely civil, and yet the Church has the right to build houses and to organize a system of Church extension. The truth is, that anything, no matter how purely it may be of a civil nature in itself considered, becomes a legitimate matter of Church direction whenever it is a necessary means for the promotion of religion. We, however, deny that education is in its nature a civil affair. On the contrary, the training of the young is of necessity of a moral and religious, as well as an intellectual operation. The Southern Reviewer himself says: Revealed religion "ought to be made a prominent part of education, from the primary school to the university." How, then, can it be "an affair purely civil?" How can the schools be sunk to a level with the tannery? Is "the revealed religion" an essential part of the art of tanning leather? It is only by degrading education to a level with a handicraft, that even a plausible pretext can be framed for withdrawing it from the province of the Church.

4th. It is urged that the Church has not perfectly secured the object aimed at, when she had the control of schools and colleges. Even in Scotland, "it has not availed much that the schoolmasters must be members of the Established Church, and in our own country memorable examples are not wanting to prove that we have achieved little in the way of giving education a safe moral direction, when we have placed it most completely under ecclesiastical control." We cannot see the force of this argument. Does the fact that the Church has not fully accomplished her mission, though she has ever been intrusted with the preaching of the Gospel, prove that she has no right to preach? or that she should be forbid to exercise that right? How then does the fact, that she has not accomplished her whole work, though she has had the control of education, prove either that she has no right to educate, or that the work should be taken out of

* Southern Presbyterian Review.

her hands and given to the State? Has nothing been done in Scotland by her parish schools? Lives there a Scotchman in the world, or a man in whose veins a drop of Scotch blood circulates, who has courage to say, it had been well for Scotland had her parochial schools never existed, or that the control of them had been in the hands of her Stuarts and Lauderdales?

5th. The work is represented as far too great for the Church to accomplish. This objection bears only against those, if any there be, who maintain that the Church has the exclusive right to educate. We know no one who takes this ground. It is expressly disclaimed by the Board of Education, and by their able and devoted Secretary. All admit that there is work enough for Church and State, for individuals and bodies corporate, to do. It should, however, be borne on the conscience of the Church, that should the State provide only a secular or irreligious education, the whole work would come on her. She would in that case be bound to declare off from all State schools, and assume the work of providing a proper education for the whole people. She has assumed the work of preaching the gospel for the whole population. The work of education is not greater, and will not prove to be beyond her strength. If God brings the occasion, he will give the grace. The objection, however, from the magnitude of the work, does not bear in the present posture of the controversy. No one wishes to drive the State from the field, so that the Church may have everything to do.

6th. Much the most plausible argument, not against the right of the Church, but against the expediency of the establishment of parochial schools, is, that if Christians of various denominations devote their energy to the establishment of Church schools, the public institutions will be left in the hands of irreligious men. More good, it is urged, can be accomplished, more power exerted in the promotion of religious knowledge by the Christian community giving a right direction to the public schools, than by the establishment of schools under Church control. If this were so, we should, on the grounds of expediency, be opposed to denominational education. It is to be remembered, however, that the establishment of parochial schools has been forced upon the Church, by the irreligious character of the education furnished by the State. No one heard of parochial schools until, under the instigation of Papists, the State authorities began to exclude the Bible and to expurgate the school books. We, however, do not believe that denominational education will seriously interfere with the interest taken in the schools of the State. Christians see that the public schools are exerting an immense influence on the public mind. They have every possible motive to labour to make those schools as good as possible. The establishment of parochial schools, by raising the standard of education, and by provoking emulation, will tend to improve the whole system of State education.

Neither, then, on the ground of right nor expediency, can the propriety of the Church assuming her position as "one of the parties"

in the work of education, be legitimately called in question. By her divine commission she is required to teach all nations. It is impossible that she should fulfil her commission without, in a multitude of cases, engaging in the work of secular education. And, therefore, wherever and whenever the proper religious and secular training of the young cannot be otherwise accomplished, it is the bounden official duty, as well as the prerogative, of the Church, to intervene for the attainment of that object.

V. Our fifth position is, that in the existing state of our country, our Church cannot properly give up the whole work of education to the State. Having seen that religion is an essential element in the education of the young, and that it is equally the right and duty of the Church and State to provide for them a Christian and Protestant training, it is obvious that the separate duty of these two parties to the work, is one to be determined by circumstances. If the State provides such an education for the people as the conscience of the Church demands, there is no necessity for separate Church action in the premises. And, on the other hand, if parents or the Church make such provision for this object as satisfies the necessities of the State, there is no need for State intervention. The position assumed by our Church and by a large part of the Christian community is, that the State does not in fact, in this country, and cannot rationally be expected to, furnish an education sufficiently religious to satisfy the just demands of a Christian people, and therefore, that it is the duty of the Church, while endeavouring to make the State education as good as possible, to provide at least for her own members a course of instruction more thoroughly according to her own views. The correctness of this position is fully sustained by the two following considerations. First, that the standard of religious education fixed by the most religious advocates of the State system, is too low. And, secondly, that there is no rational hope of seeing our public schools, as a general thing, elevated even to that defective standard.

In religious education there are two things obviously distinct and of almost equal importance. The first is, the communication of truth to the mind, so that it shall become part of the pupil's knowledge; the other is, the impression of it on the conscience and religious feelings, so as to render it practically operative in the formation of the character and government of the conduct. What, therefore, Christians are bound to require, and what the Church is bound to see as far as possible effected is, that a knowledge of Christianity as a system of divinely revealed truth, should be communicated to the minds of the young; and that that system should be, as far as human agency can go, suitably impressed on the heart, by sincerely religious as well as intelligent teachers. Religious education in this sense of the term, is of necessity a very protracted process. It requires constant and long-continued effort. It is only by years of

instruction that a child or youth can be brought to such an intelligent and comprehensive knowledge of the contents of the Bible, of its facts, institutions, doctrines, and precepts, as is necessary for his proper moral and religious development as a Christian man. It is not by the simple use of the New Testament as a reading book in the public schools, that this object has ever been accomplished. The Bible must be regularly studied; its doctrines clearly drawn out and inculcated, and the principles of duty exhibited and applied. It is by a course of instruction which renders the pupil an intelligent Christian, so far as knowledge is concerned, that Scotch schools have exerted the wonderful influence universally attributed to them. It is by a similar process of indoctrination, that the Prussian system has availed to preserve religious knowledge among the common people, in the midst of a general apostacy of the clergy into rationalism. It is evident that no such thorough religious teaching is now contemplated as desirable, or, at least, as possible, in our State institutions. The writer in the *Southern Presbyterian Review*, seems to make the introduction of the Bible as "a reading book," the maximum of religious instruction for common schools. "In Maryland," he says, "about the year 1838, by a simultaneous movement, the word of God was introduced as a reading book, first into the public schools in the city of Baltimore, and afterwards into far the greater part of the public and private schools of the State. Those who insist on going beyond this, and require, as a part of public education, that the peculiarities of their particular sect shall be publicly taught to all the pupils in all the schools, manifestly require what they would not themselves be willing to concede to others, and which it is therefore absurd for them to expect that others will concede to them."*

Mr. Colwell pleads for instruction in "general Christianity," that in which all denominations agree. He says, "There is a general Christianity in which men may be saved, who belong to no particular denomination, and are instructed in no peculiar tenets." p. 118. "The simple fact that Protestants admit that men may be saved in any Christian communion, in which the essential truths of Christianity are professed, proves that there is a common ground on which all might meet if they would." p. 119. "This common ground," he adds, "has not been defined, vindicated, and proclaimed, because Christians have spent their strength upon their differences, and not upon their agreement." p. 120. "It is this Christianity which is common to the prevailing denominations, which is to be communicated to, and impressed upon the children of the United States, in the public schools." p. 126.

The objection to this is, that it is indefinite. By common Chris-

* It need hardly be remarked, that there is a wide interval between simply making the Bible "a reading book," and requiring denominational peculiarities to be taught "to all the pupils in all the schools." The latter no one demands; more than the former every friend of religion is bound to require.

tianity, one man understands mere philanthropy; another makes it an ethical code, another a system of natural religion. The very fact that it is undefined, renders it unfit for a standard of religious instruction. It means little or much, just as every one pleases. If by common Christianity be meant the doctrines common to all who call themselves Christians, including Unitarians and Universalists, it is evident this would not, and ought not to, satisfy the conscience of the Church.

Dr. Cheever in his eloquent plea for the Bible in common schools, quotes Dr. Humphrey, as thus describing the religion to be taught in common schools. "There are certain great moral and religious principles, in which all denominations are agreed, such as the ten commandments, our Saviour's golden rule, everything in short which lies within the whole range of duty to God, and duty to our fellow men." *Cheever*, p. 160. But is this Christianity? Here is not one word of those great doctrines without which Christianity is a dead letter. On another page, he quotes Mr. Webster to much the same effect. "It is notorious that there are certain great truths which are admitted and believed by all Christians. All believe in the existence of a God. All believe in the immortality of the soul. All believe in the responsibility, in another world, for our conduct in this. All believe in the divine authority of the New Testament. And cannot all these great truths be taught to children, without their minds being perplexed with clashing doctrines and sectarian controversies? Most certainly they can."

It is evident that the standard here set up by the advocates of religious instruction in the common schools, is far below what the Church is bound to require. But even this modicum of religious teaching cannot in many cases be secured. The Bible has in many places been excluded by public authority. Everything sectarian, *i. e.*, everything to which Jew or Romanist could object, has been proscribed. The whole influence of government, and the general tendency of the public mind has been to the entire exclusion of religion from the public schools. This exclusion is advocated by politicians and by ministers of the Gospel, by influential religious, as well as secular journals. A very great change has occurred in this matter. Fifty years ago, the Westminster Catechism, as well as the Bible, was taught in all the schools in New England. Now the Bible can hardly be retained as "a reading book." The *New Englander* advocates the exclusion of all religion, and quotes with approbation, the language of Dr. Vaughan in the *British Quarterly Review*. "For our own part," says that gentleman, "we have always entertained a very low opinion of the religious instruction given in day schools, and of the religious impression produced by it. We have thought that a fuss has been made about it wonderfully greater than the thing itself would justify." Think of that, ye shades of Knox and Calvin! So low as that, have men of our day descended. Too much "fuss" is made about an agency which, next

to the ministry of the word, has done more to mould human character and to decide human destiny, than any other in the world. The *New Englander* not only endorses this, but says: "The plan of giving no direct religious instruction, has, in its essential features, been practised generally in New England for thirty years."

Is it not time, then, for the Church to move? If one party, and that the largest and most powerful, advocate the entire exclusion of religion from public institutions, colleges, as well as schools; if another pleads only for that amount of instruction which can offend neither the Unitarian nor the Romanist; if in point of fact, common schools, and colleges under State control, are, in many cases, conducted without the semblance of religious instruction, can the Church, or Christians, leave the whole work of education in the hands of the State? Are we not bound to have institutions of our own, in which the Gospel may be fully taught and faithfully inculcated? In so doing we take the most effectual method of elevating public sentiment, and of bringing back the State to a higher appreciation of its duties. If State schools and colleges are conducted without any religious instruction, and other institutions rise around them, in which Christianity is faithfully taught, the former must either become Christian or perish. We do not advocate any indiscriminate action, or the purpose to establish Church schools and colleges wherever they can be placed. If the State institutions are truly Christian, as we know is often the case, especially as it concerns common schools, it would be most unwise to set up rival institutions. What we contend for is, that the Church, as well as individual Christians, has a right by her divine charter to provide for the secular, as well as the religious training of the young; and that in the existing state of our country it is incumbent on her, in many places, to exercise that right. Wherever thorough religious instruction cannot be incorporated in the common school, the Church is bound to have a parochial school. Wherever there is a college under control of the State, which excludes Christianity from its course of instruction, the Church, or Christians, are bound to provide a Christian College.

V. The only other position which remains to be considered is, that the Church, in providing that religious education which our present exigencies demand, cannot rely upon the separate action of her members, but is bound to act in her organized capacity, and, therefore, that the principles on which our Board of Education have acted in aiding the establishment of schools, academies, and colleges, are sound, and ought to be approved.

If private Christians establish schools, or academies, or colleges, in which religion is adequately taught, then, in the places where this is done, there is, as before remarked, no call for the intervention of the Church in her organized capacity. But such individual and separate action is altogether inadequate. In the work of domestic and foreign missions, we can depend neither on individual effort, nor

on voluntary associations. The Church as such in her organized form, is bound to conduct these great enterprises. It is only by this combined action that the resources of the Church can be called out; that the strong can be brought systematically to aid the weak; and that the requisite security for orthodoxy and fidelity can ordinarily be attained. All these considerations apply with as much force to the work of education, as they do to the work of missions. How many parochial schools, or how many Christian colleges, in our Western States, would have been established without the co-operation of the Board of Education? The necessity of this organized assistance is felt and acknowledged universally. Our New England and New-school brethren have a voluntary society for assisting in the support of Western colleges. Are we to have resort to such a society? Must the battle between ecclesiastical boards, and voluntary irresponsible societies, be fought over again in our Church? The work cannot be left to individual enterprise. There must be concentrated and organized effort. Shall this be by the Church? or by one or more voluntary organizations? There can be but one answer given to these questions, and it has been given by the Church in a way not to be mistaken.

But if the Church is to raise the funds for the support of these schools and colleges, she must control their management. Our parochial schools must be under Church sessions, and our Church colleges under synodical supervision. This is not only right, but necessary for the obvious reasons: First, that the Church, in raising funds for a specific object, becomes responsible for their proper application. Secondly, because the very ground of Church intervention in the matter, is that State schools and colleges do not furnish security for that kind of education which the conscience of the Church demands. It would be easy to refer to a State college long under the control of one of the most notorious infidels in the land; to another where many of the professors were avowed sceptics; and to others where religious instruction is entirely excluded; and where the Sabbath is disregarded—the students being allowed to spend that day as they please. It is not right or reasonable to expect either the Church or Christian men to contribute for the support of institutions controlled by trustees appointed by State legislatures.

It may be said, however, that self-perpetuating corporations furnish all reasonable security. On this it may be remarked, that where such boards of trustees already exist, and have an established character, they ought to be confided in, and nothing should be done in any way to weaken their hands. But when the Church is called upon to aid in the founding a college—it is right she should herself retain the control. If it be known and agreed upon, that the trustees of a college in Wisconsin or Iowa, are to be appointed by a Presbyterian Synod, there is a ground of confidence for the present and the future, that no list of names of a self-perpetuating corporation could inspire. If any man doubts this, let him make the experiment.

Let him try to raise funds for a college in the far West, under a self-perpetuating board, and see if he will find it as easy as to secure aid for one under the care of a Synod. Such colleges as Princeton, Jefferson, Washington, Hampden Sydney, have the full confidence of the Church, and are entitled to it. But when the question is, how shall new colleges, especially in the thinly settled parts of the country, be organized, in order to give due security for their religious influence? the case is very different. Under such circumstances neither State control, nor self-perpetuating trustees, can furnish any such security, either for liberal education or sound religious influence, as ecclesiastical supervision.

It has, however, been said, "the working of systems of secular education, the virtual, if not formal appointment and removal of teachers, the determination of courses and methods of secular teaching, and in effect, the last appeal in questions of discipline," do not "fall properly within the divinely appointed jurisdiction of the spiritual courts of Christ's house, or constitute the proper themes of promoting the spirituality and peace of the Church." Do these subjects belong more legitimately to a State legislature? Suppose the course of instruction for our youth, the selection of teachers, and final administration of discipline must belong directly to a political legislature, Whig or Democrat, or to a Presbyterian Synod—no good man, we answer for it, would prefer the former. The objection, however, has no foundation. There is no necessity for any of these distracting details being brought before the Synod. They do not come before the legislature. The legislature retains the appointment of trustees, and thus has entire control over the State institutions; but it has nothing to do with these details of management. So the Synod of Kentucky appoints the trustees of Centre College, and leaves to them its management. We are not aware that the spiritual interests of that Synod are injuriously affected by its relation to the college; nor would any other Synod have much to fear from that source.

If the Church then as an organization, is called by its duty to the country and to its divine Master, to aid in securing the establishment of schools, academies, and colleges under her own control, wherever such institutions of a proper character do not exist, or cannot be secured, it is hardly open to question that the Board of Education is right in the course which it has hitherto pursued in relation to this subject. That Board is the organ of the Church for educational purposes, and whatever the Church does in that department is done through that Board. The question whether the field of labour has not so increased as to call for a separate organization, is one of expediency and not of principle. It is analogous to the question whether the work of Church extension should continue to be a branch of the work of missions, or be erected into a separate department. It is obvious, that no new organization ought to be adopted, so long as

the work to be done is adequately accomplished by those which now exist.

It is, indeed, said that "the work of inaugurating a scheme so vast, and so complex, and requiring gifts, knowledge, and experience in its founders, of so varied and comprehensive a character," cannot properly be coupled with the other objects of that Board. This supposes that the Board of Education is to stand in the place and perform the duties of trustees to all the schools, academies, and colleges which it may be called upon to aid. The Board, however, have no more to do with the management of these schools and colleges, than with the direction of Theological Seminaries in which its candidates study. They are the mere agents of the Church for the collection and distribution of money, and for stimulating the efforts of its members. If a pastor informs the Board that he needs aid for the establishment of a parochial school, or if a Synod call upon them for assistance in sustaining a college, such help may be afforded without any very extraordinary "gifts, knowledge, or experience" on the part of the officers of the Board.

We look back on the recent discussions on this whole subject with great satisfaction. It has no doubt done good. It has, on the one hand, led to a clearer view of the duty of the State in reference to the work of education, and to a deeper sense of the importance of Christians exerting themselves to give a truly religious character to the public schools; and, upon the other hand, it has served to produce a stronger conviction of the high part the Church is called to act in this matter, and of the importance of the Board of Education continuing and extending their efforts to establish schools, academies, and colleges, "on a definite religious basis, and under the Church's own care."

[N. B. This Article on the Education Question has been reprinted, by permission, from the Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review. The name of Dr. Hodge has been prefixed to the Article by the publisher, because its authorship is well known in the Church, and may assist in calling the attention of general readers to the opinions and doctrines herein expressed.]