

smallest, the least dangerous, and the best protected of the whole chain, there have been within a stretch of a dozen miles about Salmon Point, on the south shore of Prince Edward County, over twenty wrecks and over forty lives lost in less than twenty years. We cannot tell the horrible total on all the lakes in these years. On the shores to the south of us are thirty-seven life-saving stations in three districts. These stations have all the appliances and apparatus for saving life and property. On Lake Michigan alone they have saved in one year three hundred and nine lives out of three hundred and eleven imperilled. Our traffic is not less important to us, our sailor's lives are not less valuable, but our policy has not shown that we think so. Millions of dollars would not cover the value of the property that the surfmen of the United States' life-saving service save to the vessel owners in a single year; but it is not on that plea that a similar service is demanded for the Canadian shores of the lakes.

The prize that the life-boat brings
Isn't silver or gold—that's paid the debt of the enemy sea;
But the flesh and blood of a shipwrecked crew,
A richer reward, you'll all agree.

There is at present a pitiful apology for a life-saving service in the shape of a boat or two at or near Weller's Beach, one at Toronto, and another at Long Point, Lake Erie. They are bold and brave-hearted men who volunteer to make up the crews of these boats—bolder, indeed, than life-savers elsewhere, for they have not life-jackets, nor any of the apparatus so necessary for the achievement of that which they attempt. They have but boats, which in two cases are not fit for the purposes to which they are applied, and no one who knows what an onshore gale is needs to be told that the chances are against the safe launch of the boat. A great wrong exists so long as the Canadian shores are not as well manned with surfmen as the American shores. We want life-saving stations at the dangerous points, supplied with all the apparatus and appliances for saving life, with mortars, rockets, life-lines, and the Ottarson life-car, the inventor of which refused to have it patented, but made a free gift of it to all the maritime nations of the world whose Governments chose to use it. He was a sailor himself, and he knew the sailor's needs. We want regularly organized, paid and drilled crews whose business it shall be to save life, and who shall be provided with all that will assist them in their dangerous duty.

FRANK NELSON.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS.

THE outbursts of feeling that occasionally occur on the part of a section of the clergy against what they are pleased to call the godless character of our school system are not without benefit, for they serve the useful purpose of keeping before the public the distinctive aims of that system in training the young for citizenship. It is somewhat remarkable that while England has made a decided step towards the separation of Church and State in matters of education by the introduction of a secular School Board system of the pattern of our own, reactionary clamours should be heard amongst ourselves for the return to a condition of things which she is doing her best to cut adrift and steer away from. We might be induced to attach considerable importance to this fact, did we not know that the agitation is confined to a small portion of a body whose duties render them particularly prone to magnify their own aspect of the question. The latest utterance of the character we speak of was heard at the recent Convocation of the Church of England in Toronto. One gentleman, who read a paper on the subject, went so far as to urge the establishment of Separate Schools in which religious instruction should be a recognized feature. Now, for a considerable time Separate Schools have existed in connection with the Roman Catholic Church, in which a portion of the scholars' time is taken up with receiving religious instruction. These schools have been long enough in operation to enable us to estimate their influence upon the character of those trained in them, and we venture to assert that their most ardent admirer, be he priest or layman, will hesitate to claim for them higher results, in the way of preparing for citizenship, than those that follow from an education in our Public Schools. The various Protestant denominations in England have similar institutions under the name of Voluntary Schools; and we have never yet seen it proved that these schools turn out scholars who make better men and women than those educated at the Board Schools. The explanation of what is here implied is not far to seek. Training in morality is as much every teacher's duty as intellectual training, and any serious neglect of it is more likely to meet with the disapproval of both the parents and the general public than failure to instil the elements of secular knowledge.

While we deny that the existence of Separate Schools has had the effect of leavening our population with a better social and moral element, other results not so beneficial may be stated that have followed their establishment. The social barrier between the Protestant and Roman Catholic portions of our population has been strengthened and perpetuated. The Common School is the chief means we have to rely upon for giving to our mixed population common sympathies and common aspirations as members of the same community. Children educated at the same school, sitting at the same desks, playing together in the same play-grounds, under the

supervisions of the same teachers, have a fair opportunity for growing up with those feelings towards each other that are becoming and desirable in people of the same country. So long as Separate Schools last we cannot look for this community of feeling. Another result is the less thorough training in those subjects that are intended to fit the boy or girl for practical life, owing to the time and attention devoted to so-called religious instruction. If the men who are responsible for permitting the establishment of these schools foresaw these results, they were guilty of a serious political crime; if they were blind to them, then they committed a gigantic blunder.

When the godless character of our schools is held up to reprobation it may fairly be asked: Is the religious education of our children neglected at home, and does the Sunday School count for nothing? If the Bible were introduced into our schools as a means of imparting religious instruction, who is to use it? Will the already over-worked clergyman undertake the task, or shall that be thrown upon the teacher, who already has a tolerably heavy burden to bear? If the latter is to teach from it, what guarantee will there be that the work will be rightly done unless his opinions are as much circumscribed by a creed as the clergyman's? Further, if the Bible be put into the hands of scholars as a text-book, what precaution shall be taken to prevent those parts being read which contain language that should never be heard in a school-room, or those parts brought under their notice in which incidents are described that it is desirable that our boys and girls should be kept ignorant of.

It may be asked: "Would you exclude the Bible altogether from the schools?" We answer: No. On the contrary, it is most desirable in the training of the young to have the authority and sanction of the Sacred Book for the regulation of their conduct. If, for example, the teacher is inciting his scholars, as he should incite them, to aim high in life, and

To rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

how can he enforce his words better than by quoting those of our Saviour, "The life is more than meat, and the body than raiment?" St. Paul comes to his aid in urging to industry by the precept, "Be not weary in well doing;" and no better way can be adopted to show the evil effects of idleness than by quoting Solomon's rebuke to the sluggard, ending with words that cannot be too often quoted—"So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want like an armed man." The duty of Temperance receives its sanction in the Proverbs and elsewhere, and both Solomon and St. Paul come to the teacher's guidance and aid in the infliction of necessary punishment, which may benefit a whole class by exemplifying the truth of the former's words—"The way of transgressors is hard."

We know of no better plan of thus turning the Bible to account than that recommended by a committee of the Church of England Synod at its last meeting, of which Mr. Edward Blake was a member. Let certain portions of the Bible be selected that bear directly on conduct, such as the latter part of the Sermon on the Mount, the parables of most practical application, the twelfth chapter of Romans, which contains a compact summary of Christian duties, the chapter in First Corinthians treating of charity, extracts from the Proverbs, the Psalms, Job and Ecclesiastes, together with such historical portions as might serve for beacon lights to warn or to guide. Let these be bound together and prescribed by the Minister of Education as an authorized text-book. In this form the Bible would be invaluable in the hands of a conscientious teacher, and it would have a fair opportunity of accomplishing all that can be reasonably expected from it as a text-book in our schools.

CENSOR.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MINING IN CANADA.

To the Editor of *The Week*:

SIR,—In *THE WEEK* of the 6th instant an article headed "Science in Canada" said: "Not only, however, is Canada negligent in the cultivation of pure science; in the encouragement of investigations having direct practical results in view much remains to be done. Certain branches are fairly represented; thus, much encouragement is given to our mining interests through the maintaining of the Geographical Survey." The writer goes on to say he considers botanical survey, chemistry, and meteorology have received attention, but that agriculture, forestry, biology, and the fisheries should be the subject of more thorough scientific investigation.

This statement appears opposed to existing facts. We have Departments of Agriculture and Fisheries which are supposed to give these subjects their undivided attention, while mining receives practically no attention, and meteorology struggles along in face of great difficulties. If the writer of "Science in Canada" had lately read the *Montreal Gazette* he would have seen a number of editorials and communications bitterly complaining of the lack of statistics and information on mining. Mr. Thomas Devine, F.R.G.S., Mr. Robert N. Hall, M.P., Mr. W. Hamilton Merritt, F.G.S., Mr. Thomas McFarlane, and others wrote strongly on the subject. The *Globe* has recently urged "What is now wanted is a Mining Bureau. We have a Dominion Geological Survey, but their work has been principally in the direction of geography and geology." The *Mail* stated: "At the meeting of the British Association, in the course of a review of our numerous rich mineral indications, a serious defect was brought to light by one of the leading geologists and mining authorities in England—namely, that Canada, of all the colonies, is the most destitute of information concerning mineral reports and statistics available for reference." The *Canadian Mining Review* urges "Much is done for agriculture and forestry, and it is evident that in our country, so full of valuable mineral indications from Nova Scotia to British Columbia, more attention should be given to mining."

The above point indisputably to the fact that public opinion is in favour of some steps being taken to encourage mining industry. From the figures given by Mr.