

of the Bible and religious exercises, and the fundamental truths of the Christian religion from the schools in which the youth of this Province is to be taught. If Rome desires to see Protestantism weakened, as we may presume it does, it could wish nothing better than to see it take the twin systems of agnosticism and secularism for its ally in the matter of public school education. A purely secular system of education being open to these grave objections, it is only what we might expect, to find it condemned more or less strongly by the various Christian bodies. Our own Church has testified during recent years with increasing unanimity and force, to the importance of the religious element in the instruction given in the public school, and to the desirability of its being enlarged rather than reduced and far less eliminated. And in this respect it has only reflected the trend of opinion among thoughtful Christian people in general. Accordingly, corresponding action has been taken by the courts of the other churches. A voice may have been raised here and there in favour of a purely secular system, under the idea that it is demanded by the principle of the separation of Church and State, but the prevailing opinion has been and is unmistakeably against it or any approach to it. The truth is, it is not difficult to observe the existence throughout the country of a deepening conviction of the danger to the State and to public morals—without which the State can have no stability—of a system of education in which religion has no place. As it is in our country, so is it elsewhere. In some of the Australian colonies, where the system has been for some time established, it encounters only a fiercer opposition from the Christian bodies as its results became more apparent.

It is not easy to state with exactness what the results have been of the

purely secular system of education, where it has been introduced, how far it is responsible for the greater prevalence of certain forms of crime in our day. It is easy to state what, reasoning from general principles, we would expect the results to be; but it takes time, not one year but many, to develop fully the consequences of such an experiment. I could not help, however, being struck with a paragraph in the *Edinburgh Scotsman* for September 21st. In Scotland, if I mistake not, the question of religious instruction is left with the school board of each locality. At the time when the system was introduced great opposition was offered in a certain stirring and somewhat radical border-town of Scotland, to any form of religious instruction in the public school. Now, in the paragraph referred to, the provost of the town is reported as saying, "Matters were getting so bad that he thought the magistrates would have to meet and appoint a public whipper. They were reluctant to send boys of such tender years either to prison or the reformatory, and he thought the appointment of a public whipper was the only way of successfully coping with such misconduct. Not only parents, but teachers, were greatly to blame for the reprehensible conduct of the youth of the town, who did not seem to be getting the right kind of tuition at school." Is the alternative, then, the Bible in the school, or the whipping-post at the police court? And if so, who would hesitate which to choose?

With these words I pass from the consideration of the purely secular system of public education. I do not know for certain that it is the intention of the government, or any member of it, to propose its introduction into Manitoba. Hints, indeed something like assurances, to this effect, have found their way into the public press. Should this prove well-founded,