

sufficient substitute, I call upon John Ruskin—no mean authority—to reply, and this is his answer:—"The period of perfect art is the period of decline. At the moment when a perfect picture appeared in Venice, a perfect statue in Florence, a perfect fresco in Rome, from that hour forward probity, industry and courage were exiled from their walls." And if it be said that our schools and colleges should confine themselves strictly to secular topics, leaving religious truth to the church and the Sunday school, I cite Victor Cousin to the stand, and I hear him testify that "any system of school training which sharpens and strengthens the intellectual powers, without at the same time affording a source of restraint and counter-check to their tendency to evil, is a curse rather than a blessing."

2. An education which excludes the religious element is untrue. The primary object of all true education is to teach the individual mind to think; and this ability to think should be made to pervade universal society. If we have labourers, their pickaxes and shovels should think; if we have artisans, their spindles and shuttles should think; if we have mechanics, their saws and planes, their anvils and hammers, their mallets and chisels, should think; and, more important still, if we have voters their ballots should think. But while it is important that men should think, it is far more important that they should think true thoughts; and our schools and colleges must largely decide whether the thought of the future shall be false or true. Now, I maintain that no man can think truly on any important subject who has not learned to think as a Christian, because without this qualification he is as one who omits the chief facts from his data, and the major premiss of his argument. Does a man think truly in natural science who sees in all the

phenomena of matter only the play of natural forces, and in its combinations only a fortuitous concourse of atoms? Does he think truly in history who never sees God's finger in the destinies of nations, nor hears His footfall in the march of the centuries? Does he think truly in anatomy or physiology, who sees no evidence of Divine wisdom in the human frame, "so fearfully and wonderfully made?" I trow not. And as he does not think truly who excludes God from his thinking, so neither can he teach truly. He teaches only half truths at best, and a half truth is often as pernicious as a positive lie.

3. An education which excludes the religious element tends toward infidelity and atheism. This must be its tendency in the nature of things; this is its tendency as matter of fact. We must remember that education is carried on by a twofold process—the knowledge communicated and the impressions produced. The one largely determines what the student shall *know*; the other determines what he shall *become*. Now what are the impressions that will inevitably be left upon the mind of a youth by an education that is purely secular? As a rule, the impressions will be that religion is a very secondary matter; that it has no legitimate connection with mental development; that it is out of place in the spheres of philosophy and science, and is antagonistic to the advanced thought of the age. If, under these circumstances, a student retains his belief in the Bible, and his reverence for God and religion, it is not *because* of his education, but *in spite* of it.

Some, I am aware, maintain a contrary opinion; but they overlook most important facts. They seem to take for granted that a human mind is but like a glass vessel in which a certain quantity of something we call "know-