

legitimate opportunity should be taken advantage of to give the young a knowledge of the Scriptures. To have religious ideas instilled into the minds of the children, by the school-master, and a reverence for sacred things cherished, would be most desirable. The pity is, that religious instruction in the schools is becoming a superficial exercise, and in so many cases a mere form. But whether Church schools would be the proper and best remedy is more than doubtful, and although the uncertainties of politics are so proverbial that it would be unwise to prophecy what is contained in the alembic of the future for the Church of England in Ontario, still we believe the solution of the religious instruction problem must be sought for elsewhere than in Separate Church schools.

PHILIP MELANCHTHON.

Tuesday last, the 16th instant, was the four-hundredth anniversary of the famous reformer, Philip Melancthon, a date to be held in loving memory by the Protestant world. Inalienably associated with Luther's is his name, and Protestants derive their own general name from a document prepared by him. The champion of Luther's views, he prepared the Protest of the Evangelical Minority at the Diet of Spires in 1529 and from it arose the term Protestant. He was noted for his gentle spirit, his profound learning, his skill in dialectics and his gift of systematizing, which amounted to genius.

He was born at Bretten Feb. 16, 1497. His grandmother was a sister of the celebrated scholar, Reuchlin. He studied at the Universities of Heidelberg and Tubingen. In his 17th year he began to lecture at Tubingen, and published an edition of Terence and a Greek grammar. In 1518 he was elected professor of Greek at Wittenberg and held the position until his death. He lectured on rhetoric, philosophy, and classical literature, and soon was recognized as the foremost teacher of Germany.

His services to the cause of the Reformation were distinguished and although his position was bitterly attacked during the latter part of his life, by the strict Lutherans he was the successor to Luther in the leadership of the Reformed Church.

Throughout the Protestant world the 400th Anniversary was more or less observed as was most fitting, occasion being taken to place before the people the loving Christian character of the man, and the great work which it was his privilege to accomplish.

A DESPAIRING CRY.

We commend to the serious attention of the reader, who yearns for worldly success and distinction, this deplorably sad picture of Europe's "great man"—great from the world's stand-point—Prince Bismarck:

"I feel weak and languid, but not ill. My illness is want of the joys of life. My existence is no longer of any use; I have no official duties, and what I see as an onlooker gives me no pleasure. Should I live longer it will still be the case. I feel lonely. I have lost my wife, and as regards my sons, they have their business. With growing age I have also lost interest in agriculture and forestry. I rarely visit the fields and woods, since I can no longer ride and shoot and move about as I like. Little by little politics begin to tire me."

Truly does the *Independent* remark: "The faculty of retiring gracefully from active labor and responsibility when years become a burden and others can do the work better, is one Bismarck has not learned. He has no such resource as Gladstone has in other interests than statecraft. He finds nothing to do but

to meddle and complain. The knowledge that he created a strong empire gives him little comfort, for he has not faith that anybody but himself can keep it strong. When Milton was old, and had for "twice seven years" lost the sight of his eyes, he could say:

"What supports me, thou dost ask.
The conscience to have lost them overbilled
In Liberty's defence, my noble task."

But liberty is a better work than empire."

But what of the religious faith and comfort that should crown a useful life? Alas, too seldom does the world's great ones enjoy the sweet consolation, in the evening of life, for which life is alone worth living. How unlike Bismarck's cry was Melancthon's last words: "My illness does not disturb me; I have no anxiety or care but one—that the Churches may be at peace in Christ Jesus." He frequently before his death repeated the Saviour's prayer, 'That they may be one in us,' and the words of St. Paul, 'Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.'

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN'S DUTY.

The Prominence of Mr. Edward W. Bok as an adviser of youth invests his utterances with importance. Usually he is sound and sensible, and has wielded much influence over the young Christian readers of the United States and Canada. A much quoted article came lately from his pen which has met with praise and blame in the religious press. It concerns the popularity of a young man of religious convictions. "Are young men who cannot from convictions play cards, dance, or attend the theatre, apt to be popular with young women of refinement and education who do indulge in such amusements?" Such is the question, and the answer is "Why certainly: Why not?" Then Mr. Bok cites a case:—"One of the most popular and delightful fellows I know in New York has never been inside a theatre, although he is thirty-five years of age. Nor has he ever danced or played cards. He was a personal friend for ten years before I knew that his religious principles precluded his indulgence in these amusements. His secret is that he does not carry his conviction on his sleeve for everybody to rub against. And of his popularity with women, young and mature, I can assure you absolutely. He reads about the new plays and can, therefore, talk about them if they come up in conversation. If asked if he has seen a certain actor or play he merely replies in the negative. Never does he 'force his convictions' upon others. A young man's popularity with either sex rests upon something more than his forms of amusement: amiability of manner, kindness, a pleasant address, a manly outlook on life, honourable principles—all these go far toward insuring popularity." We have to join in the chorus of dissent with which this case has been received. To begin with, the effect of religious conviction upon one's popularity should not be studied at all. The applause of the world should not be allowed to weigh against religious duty. The man with religious convictions, that is, every converted man, must rise above the idea of popularity. Moreover he must carry his convictions openly—not offensively—but there must be no mistake where he stands. Christ must be confessed before men, and the scoff of the world whether it be of its young women or old men must not be allowed to blight the life within. Mr. Bok's position is exceedingly weak and young people ought to look to a higher and more heroic ideal than that furnished them in his paragraph.