

as to the value of religion. It is not too much to say, however, that a system of secular schools, which leaves the value of religion an open question, would meet with little favour. It will certainly not satisfy those who hold that religious motives are essential to moral training. The mere abolition of religious exercises does not prevent, and cannot prevent, the reference to religion that comes up in giving effective instruction in literature, in history, and in science. To exclude religion from the school is impossible. A neutral attitude on the value of religion is practically out of the question. The so-called neutral position would be a surrender and capitulation to an element in society certainly not the most praiseworthy.

There is a second class of persons who go towards the other extreme. They believe that morality cannot be taught effectively unless lessons in religion are given by the teacher. Some go so far as to urge that instruction in the Bible, in the catechism, or in the common dogmas of all the Churches, should have a place in the programme. Opinions of this kind give rise to separate or parochial schools, as well as denominational colleges. Unanimity on the question of religious instruction is not essential to national greatness, or to educational progress. Much may be said in favour of some variety, rather than uniformity, in social, political, and educational agencies. Persons who favour private schools, as well as those who believe in separate or denominational schools, should have some freedom respecting courses of study and management of these institutions. My arguments are for those who favour undenominational education.

The Public Schools of Ontario have been established with the understanding that they will meet

the requirements of the various religious denominations. Those who believe in the principles upon which they are conducted, generally hold that moral training in school requires religious sanctions, but not religious instruction. This view not only prevails in this country and in the United States, but it is steadily gaining ground in England. The growth of a spirit of union and tolerance has lessened the demand for dogmatic instruction in religion, while it has not lessened the importance that should be attached to Christianity. No denomination can claim exclusive possession of those principles that are essential to morality. Good citizens are found among both Roman Catholics and Protestants. Neither moral worth nor material prosperity is dependent on a belief in the special tenets of any one sect. Religious instruction, even when given in the schools, is no guarantee that young people will grow up free from sin and crime. Children have turned out bad through defective discipline that had every advantage from religious instruction in their homes, in the Church, and in the school. Apart from the question by whom religious instruction should be given, it can never make up for defects in the other factors that are essential to the development of character.

Intelligent people are fairly well agreed as to the leading principles of Christianity upon which morality is based. Every civilized nation has assumed in its legal enactments, and in its administration of justice, the omnipotence of God. The civil oath exacted in our courts shows the character of the national will. It recognizes that religion is a quickener of the individual conscience, and that the belief in moral responsibility is firmly established in the human heart. On these grounds, the use of religion, but not neces-