

Sunday morning at Jarvis Street Church, except on the first Sunday of the month when it is celebrated in the evening. It takes the simplest form. There is a table at the back of the organ key-board on which the bread and wine are placed and covered with a white linen cloth. The deacons carry the elements to the communicants as they sit in the pews; a goodly number of them. Hymn and prayer, a few words from the pastor, and a time for silence, have their part in this feast of remembrance of the Saviour of the world.

The service in the evening differed from that in the morning, only by the addition of two anthems. They were very beautifully sung. I have heard no more finished vocalism in Toronto. People held their breath and sighed when the last tone died away. It differed also from the fact that Dr. Thomas did not read his sermon from manuscript. He did this in the morning, but with such freedom that it could scarcely be told that it was not an extempore discourse. In the evening he preached what he characterized as a "simple gospel sermon, which he trusted he should make so plain that no child there need fail to understand it." He had been preaching that afternoon to a strange but attentive audience of 300 men at the Central Prison. He said that, in a manner, the gospel that was suited to those prisoners was just as suitable to his congregation at the church. His text was, "He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him." After the service, the ordinance of believer's baptism was administered to two young men. While a hymn was being sung the pastor retired, and in a short time appeared in the baptistery, clothed in a black gown. The candidates then came one after another from the concealed steps and were gently plunged backward beneath the water by Dr. Thomas, who said, "Upon a profession of thy faith in Christ, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; Amen." He also spoke to them before their baptism encouraging and hopeful words, and said that he prayed that "from that burial with Christ in baptism they would rise to newness of life." Then, speaking from the water, his hand on the marble edge of the baptistery, the pastor addressed a few words on the ordinance of baptism to the congregation. He said that Baptists did not attribute any sacramental efficacy to the water of baptism. They considered they were simply following the command of Christ as laid down in the New Testament. Let them examine that volume for themselves. A hymn and the benediction concluded the service, which was joined in with deep attention by the vast congregation from beginning to end. J. R. N.

Religious Education in Schools.—I.

IT is much to be regretted that the subject of the religious education of children in our national schools should hardly ever now be discussed without the introduction of side issues which tend to prejudice the whole question. The present writer desires, as far as possible, to consider the subject simply on its merits, and with reference to the circumstances of this country, comprehending, as it does, a population widely differing among themselves in religious opinions and practices.

Will it be conceded, first of all, that it is desirable that the young should be carefully and systematically instructed in the principles of the Christian Religion? This may surely be regarded as the conviction of the vast majority of the inhabitants of Canada. If some scoffers will maintain that children religiously educated grow up no better than others who have no such education, this will no more influence us than the similar statement that Christian nations are no better than Unchristian ones. We can only say simply, that we do not believe this; and that we have no right to allow masses of human beings around us to grow up in ignorance of the Gospel of Christ.

How, then, is this instruction in religion to be provided? A not uncommon answer is to the effect, that this is the business of the church and the family. Religious instruction should be given in the Sunday School and by parents. In the Sunday School? Very good, as far as it goes. But are a couple of hours in a week a sufficient amount of time to be appropriated to this purpose? And then great multitudes of children, many of them of the class which needs this teaching most, never enter a Sunday School.

But what shall we say of the family? As regards the fathers of families, even of those who are qualified and will-

ing to undertake such work, a very large proportion are so engaged as to make it practically impossible. As for the mothers, doubtless, many of them can and do teach their children the Christian faith by precept and example; and it is not quite easy to ascertain the extent to which this may be carried. But the state of religious knowledge among children in this country and in the United States would lead us to the conclusion that these means are inadequate.

We, therefore, turn to our schools and ask if anything, or anything more can be done there, than is now being done. Our able Minister of Education declared, not long ago, in a public speech, that our national system of education rested upon a Christian basis. It is difficult to understand how it should really be different, since it is the education provided by a Christian people for their children. But it is quite certain that the amount of religious instruction imparted in our schools is insufficient, and that children leave them with hardly any knowledge of Scripture history, leaving alone Christian doctrine. What more, then, can be done?

Generally speaking, the Separate School rests upon a right principle. In schools of this class definite religious instruction can be imparted to the children in accordance with the opinions of their parents; and this is clearly the right method as the parents are ultimately responsible for the education of their children and for the principles inculcated in their youth. As to the supposed injustice of separate schools, where they can conveniently be had, this quite passes human understanding, or, at least, the kind of human understanding possessed by the present writer. How it should be wrong for people to have schools of the kind which they approve of, when they pay for them out of their own pockets is beyond the power of conception. But, it is said, this is like establishing a religion. It is doing nothing of the kind. To establish a religion is to give it the character of a national religion. It is, on the contrary, a mere application of the voluntary principle, according to which each communion builds and supports its own churches or meeting-houses. In one respect, the State has a right to interfere, and perhaps is bound to interfere—namely, to see that the secular instruction given in Separate Schools is given efficiently and sufficiently. We are now acting upon the principle that the State is bound to educate its young at least in secular knowledge. While, therefore, the inspection and examination of the school in regard to religious subjects should be left to the clergy or to others appointed by the particular churches, it is the duty of the State, by its own inspectors, to see that the instruction given in the common subjects of education is adequate. We quite admit that there may be a danger, in connection with such schools, of substituting the teaching of the communion to which they belong, instead of adding it to the regular course of education; and the State has the right and the duty to see that this is not done. We are now dealing with principles. It is not, perhaps, likely that any other denominations would take advantage of the system if it were extended to them. If this could be done, it would solve the religious difficulty at once. It does not seem likely that it will be done. Besides, in small and scattered populations it is impracticable. In another paper we may consider what should be done in such circumstances.

WILLIAM CLARK.

The Ontario Educational System.

FROM THE TAX-PAYER'S POINT OF VIEW.—II.

MR. JOHN MILLAR, Deputy Minister of Education, in his pamphlet on the Educational System of the Province of Ontario, says: "All persons are taxed to support education because its general diffusion is for the public good." It seems to be necessary to explain the meaning of the word "public." Does it include the United States, or is it confined to the limits of Canada only? or are the prospects of the individual to be considered irrespective of the fact that, where we sow and tax ourselves for the sowing, our neighbours reap the harvest? To whom is left the task of ascertaining what is the public good? Is it left entirely to those who have charge of the Educational Department, whose minds we may naturally expect to be dominated by one idea, the perfection of their department? If so, upon what premises do they arrive at their conclusion?

It is true, to go one step further than Mr. Millar, that