

that the present arrangement has a history; that it was deemed essential to have a general school system which would be open to all classes and creeds and to those of no creed; that denominational differences barred the way to any arrangement for religious instruction; that therefore the religious exercises have been reduced to a minimum, and in many cases are dispensed with altogether.

It is urged that religious instruction is no part of the duty of the state; that in this respect the children's training can be better attended to at home or in the Church or Sabbath School; that if you attempt any religious instruction in the schools you must have separate schools for the children of Roman Catholics, because with them it is not so much a question of reading the Scriptures as of providing their own ecclesiastical teachers to give any such instruction; and then, if you give separate schools, why not give denominational schools?—and, in that case, the present excellent school system would be utterly destroyed. Presbyterians have wrought earnestly and have stood firmly for the public school system; it was in no small measure due to their influence that the system was established. Would it be well to imperil the system for the sake of trying to introduce Bible instruction, which might surely be given at home or in the Sabbath school?

But these are not the only alternatives. The school law of Nova-Scotia makes more liberal provision for this matter than, I think, is commonly understood. It practically allows local option, for it leaves it to the school trustees of any section to see that the wishes of the people are carried out by the teacher. The official explanation of the law is in these terms:—"While the law does not sanction the teaching in our public schools of the peculiar views which characterize the different denominations of Christians, it does instruct the teachers 'to inculcate by precept and example, a respect for religion and the principles of Christian morality.' To the trustees the people must look to see their desires in this respect, so far as is consonant with the spirit of the law, carried into effect by the teachers."—(*Manual of the Educational Statutes: Comments and Regulations*, pp. v. & vi.)

This would not only allow that portions of the Bible should be read in the schools, but also that the children should commit