

tion in its full sense and scope? High character and spiritual life are absolute and primal necessities for the development of national character, national greatness, national stability. If, as we profess to believe, man is an immortal being, then that which pertains to his soul is of a thousand times more consequence than everything which pertains to his body, his worldly fortunes, or his mortal career, and the system of education which develops his physical powers and capacities, which trains his mental endowments to the highest pitch of perfection, and which leaves his vast spiritual possibilities undeveloped and unregarded, is a system unworthy of a Christian country and unworthy of the boasted enlightenment which pertains to our age and country.

Mr. Longley then pointed out that the question of teaching religion in the schools has unfortunately always been associated with dogmas, creeds, and denominationalism, raising difficult problems, the practical solution of which has been regarded as so serious that refuge has been taken in the alternative of not teaching religion in the schools at all. The Roman Catholic is not willing that his children should be taught the Westminster confession, neither is the Presbyterian or Methodist willing that the doctrine of the immaculate conception be instilled into his children; the Baptist will protest against infant baptism, and the Episcopalian will object to church democracy. In Nova Scotia we have settled the problem by making our schools non-sectarian, secular, godless. In other provinces of the Dominion the problem has been settled by permitting one body of Christians to have their children set off by themselves and taught according to the beliefs of that religious body and the rest of the children taught a composite form of religion, which will, as far as possible, eliminate everything offensive to any one of co-ordinate religious bodies.

It has always seemed to me, vast and overpowering as the difficulties are, that, with a properly developed teaching body, religion in its full, broad, and beautiful sense could be taught in all schools and under conditions that would be, not only not offensive to any, but eminently satisfactory and uplifting to all.

The teacher who would fulfil the ideal of his profession will not be content to send forth from his institution, whatever it may be, a body of pupils who in test examinations in purely mental subjects can secure the highest marks or the highest proficiency, but he will regard it as the greatest function of his work to lead, hour by hour, day by day, and year by year, the young beings entrusted to his care into the higher regions of spiritual life. That is education that will produce the highest form of citizenship, that will secure a nation of men animated by higher aims and motives than sordid and selfish grasping after worldly rewards. It will produce a nation of heroes, of lovers of poets, of fully developed men.

After elaborating this view at some length Mr. Longley referred to the intense materialism of the present age. It is, he said, an age in which men are seeking for riches, for the conquest of the earth; when nations are striving for more territory and more power; when the things which pertain solely and entirely to this mortal life, are the things which are absorbing the attention of an overwhelming preponderance of the population.

"This cannot last. Spiritual things are more important, vastly more important, to mankind than temporal things. Poetry, sentiment, religion are essential to the development of the highest character. A nation which ignores either sentiment, poetry, or religion is a nation that, sooner or later, must fall by the corroding influence of its own sordid aims. This revival of