

furnished by the royal commission, not only about the German Empire, but even many other countries, and no doubt it is desirable to see its interesting reports within reach of the men who wish to speak and write about religious instruction and moral training in schools, partly or wholly, supported by the State.

The above analysis, short as it is, suffices to prove that, very likely, there are few among those who talk about education laws, who have taken so much trouble as the royal commission of England to satisfy themselves what direction ought to be given in order to secure the good of individuals, the happiness of families, and the welfare of nations.

I invite my countrymen, whosoever they may be, to weigh the conviction arrived at by the royal commissioners, after an investigation of such magnitude, that it could be considered as a waste of money, time and intelligence, were not the great cause of education at stake.

### 3. CONVICTION EXPRESSED.

The conscientious conviction of the royal commission is expressed in their final report is a volume of 500 pages, by itself a most valuable source of information and a kind of synopsis of the whole inquiry conducted with such zeal, patient labor, and wonderful results.

The final report is divided into seven parts.

Part I deals with the existing law.

Part II relates to the existing state of facts.

Part III treats of the machinery for carrying on elementary education.

Part IV. is confined to the education and instruction given in public elementary schools.

Part V. deals with government examination, the parliamentary grant, &c.

Part VI. treats of local educational authorities.

Part VII. consists of a summary of leading conclusions and recommendations.

Only two of the seven parts have a general character, the five others being of more local application. I will quote largely from Part IV., that is to say, from chapter first of that part, on religious and moral training; and which covers from page 112 to 127. The divisions with letters prefixed are mine, and the quotation is taken *passim*, but continues through the chapter.

(a) Paramount Importance of Religious and Moral Training in Schools—"Having been commissioned by Your Majesty to inquire into the working of the Elementary Education acts, we should fall in our duty did we not review the religious and moral effect of the present system, and of the provisions made by law for enabling and controlling religious as well as secular instruction. While the whole commission is animated by one and the same desire to secure for the children in the public elementary schools the best and most

thorough instruction in secular subjects, suitable to their years, and in harmony with the requirements of their future life, it is also unanimously of opinion that their religious and moral training is a matter of still higher importance alike to the children, the parents and the nation, though the views of its members differ as to the method whereby this object of supreme moment should be attained."

(b.) The parents insists Religious Instruction in schools—"Upon the importance of giving religious as well as moral instruction, as part of the teaching in day public elementary schools, much evidence was brought before us. \* \* \* All the evidence is practically unanimous as to the desire of the parents for the religious and moral training of their children."

(c.) Religious instruction given in English schools. "The answer we have received to circular A 3, testify that out of 385 school boards, 348 give daily religious instruction, and 123 have religious examinations; and out of 3,496 teachers of departments who have sent in replies to circular D, 3,161 say that they give daily religious instruction, and 2,372 say examinations in religious knowledge are held annually.

(d.) Sunday school and home religious instructions deficient.—"We must add that though we highly value the influence of Sunday schools, it is admitted that many scholars in elementary schools do not either attend them or any place of worship, and that their parents are often too ignorant or too indifferent to give their children any religious instruction. Such children, therefore, are entirely dependent upon instruction in the day schools for any knowledge of the scriptural truths which ought to be the common heritage of all the people in a Christian country. We hope that the religious and moral training in all board schools may be raised to the high standard which has been attained already in many of them, and that it will be made clear that the state, while scrupulously maintaining its provisions for safe-guarding the rights of conscience, does not wish to discourage any of the managers, teachers, and members of school boards, connected with any of the elementary schools of the country who are endeavoring to bring up their children in love and obedience to God."

(e.) Inspection of religious instruction recommended.—"The need for annual inspection of religious instruction in board schools corresponding to that made by the diocesan inspector in church schools, in presence, especially of the strong competition to which religious instruction is exposed by the restriction of the government examination to secular subjects, has been recognized in evidence before us by the representatives of many important school boards; and we gather that a movement is extending itself for securing that an annual examination should be held with a view to test the efficiency of the scriptural instruction."