

France and the Australasian colony of Victoria are cited as "frightful examples" of the result of "godless" education. But, with all due respect to the sincerity of the worthy men who think they see their conclusions justified by the conditions in these communities, it has to be stated that absolutely no evidence has yet been furnished which could be accepted as showing any evil results which are clearly and solely traceable to secular education in these countries. The most clamorous objectors to secular education are the clergy of certain denominations, and in this connection it is to be remembered that there is a strong and apparently ineradicable tendency in the ecclesiastical mind, to jump to the conclusion that what is new is of a necessity wrong. This is especially the case if the innovation is thought to have the tendency to in any way lead to a diminution of the ecclesiastical influence.

Enough has probably been said, to make a reasonably good case for the contention that schools in which articles of denominational creed are omitted, are not "godless schools," and that, conversely, there is no especially "godly" or desirable result to be attained by such instruction in the schools.

In the face of the comparative results of so called "religious instruction" and of education which is practically secular, it seems almost incredible that honest and intelligent men who are satisfied with the present system, can hold up their hands in horror when they contemplate the dire results which they picture in their minds, would ensue from the abolition of the present meagre and perfunctory religious exercises.

NO ARGUMENT FOR SEPARATE SCHOOLS ON THE MERITS.

It has not been our lot to encounter any sustained and completed argument for the contentions of the Roman Catholic Church in this matter, strictly on the ethical questions and principles involved. In most of the deliverances, technical points of law and questions of abstract justice, have been jumbled and confused in the most bewildering manner. When the ethical facts and circumstances, stop short of justifying an argument to the extent necessary to make it ef-

fective, an ex-parte statement of the legal rights of the separate school claimants is introduced to fill up the gap.

In arguing for the moral impregnability of the Catholic claims from a purely ethical standpoint, much virtuous indignation and pathos is employed, and not a little gratuitous sneering at the intolerance of the brute majority, is indulged in. The indignation and the sneers are evoked by the spectacle of the brute majority wrenching away the rights of the weaker section.

Now, it is to be remembered, that the Separate school advocates believe in the necessity of state superintended education. They know that no efficient system of state education can be instituted or operated, if all, or even any considerable number, of denominational groups, asked for Separate schools. They know that in the schools of the present system the most absolute equality, social and religious, is combined with a creditable educational efficiency. Yet they claim immunity from the taxation necessary to support the system. Because they are discriminated against? No. But because, they say, they are entitled to treatment which would practically operate as a discrimination in their favor. They cannot, of course, argue that they can claim such "rights and privileges" on purely ethical grounds. They revert, then, to their alleged "constitutional rights." But let us recollect that the indignation and contumely, have been based altogether on an assumed moral injustice, which was being inflicted by the majority on the minority. The legal is thus deftly welded on at the point at which the ethical falls short, and the combination is presented as an argument purely on the moral merits.

It is possible that many just-minded persons, who may not be over-acute in their examination of the arguments, may be misled by this confused, incoherent and disingenuous method of argument. It is not intended at present to deal with the legal aspect of the question. That will be done later. We are now simply examining the moral basis of the Roman Catholic claims.

Now if, for instance, the legislature of 1890 had enacted that the creed of the Church of England should be taught in the public schools and if it had made it compulsory that the Roman Catholics, or members of any of the other bodies which dissent from the Anglican views,

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