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THE BIBLE IN SCHOOLS.

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[For THE MONTHLY.]

"MEN would hardly fight about the best method of going up a ladder; but a hundred battles have been fought on the best method of training a child." So writes the author of *Ecce Deus*; and it is evident that the battles have not all been fought yet. We need not wonder that diversity of views should prevail regarding the matter of religious teaching in the Public Schools. I accept Mr. Le Sueur's "open letter" in the issue of the *Monthly* for December as the honest and candid expression of his convictions on this subject, and I shall endeavour to state my objections to his position in the "spirit of candour and equity" in which he desires that discussion should be carried on.

There are at least three distinct questions which need to be answered, and which are variously answered; in connection with this matter: (1) Shall there be a religious element in the education of our children in the Public Schools? (2) Shall the Bible be used in imparting religious instruction? (3) If so, under what

conditions or limitations shall it be used?

I am not quite sure what answer Mr. Le Sueur would give to the first question; but, if I have not misapprehended the drift of his letter, he would answer it in the negative. True, he speaks with approval of recognizing or being conscious of "a Cause behind all other causes," and of feeling "that the true word and righteous deed have a warrant higher than human society can vouchsafe"; but he does not admit that this belief about "the supernatural" should be inculcated on the children. Two passages in his letter seem to imply the contrary:

(1) "In this country we are supposed to enjoy religious liberty. By this I understand that all creeds, positive and negative, stand on an equality before the law—that, so far as the action of the State is concerned, no man either reaps any advantage or is placed at any disadvantage on account of his religious opinions."

(2) "Upon what will you chiefly depend to promote that object (*i.e.*,