

instruction in morals in the Public Schools. "It is universally conceded," he writes, "that secular knowledge is not sufficient for good citizenship. This is not the sentiment of Christianity only, but also of leading men wholly outside of the Christian fold." That eminent scientist and agnostic philosopher, Herbert Spencer, has lately spoken of "the universal delusion about education as a panacea for political evils," and declared that "the fitting of men for free institutions is essentially a question of character, and only in a secondary degree a question of knowledge"; and he adds that "not lack of information, but lack of certain moral sentiments, is the root of the evil." If Mr. Spencer is right—and who can doubt it?—the practical inquiry in relation to the Public Schools would seem to be, How shall they be made effective for the inspiration and culture of the "moral sentiment" in which character is confessedly rooted? A sound moral character is indispensable to good citizenship; the consciences and affections of children must be cultivated, or the quality of citizenship must so deteriorate as to endanger the republic. If the State is incapacitated for this work, then it has no excuse for engaging at all in the business of education, and should take itself out of the way, leaving a clear field for other and more appropriate agencies. So Mr. Johnson reasons, and correctly, that it is quite within the province of the State, through the Public Schools, to teach morality. It may do this, that it may itself be elevated through a higher standard of morality; it is forced to do so in self-protection.

Thus far all are agreed. The question of difficulty is, How are morals to be taught? The writer in *The Atlantic* does not profess to give an answer to this question; but he seeks to prepare the way for such answer by endeavouring to show that morality may be successfully cultivated without any reference whatever to religion; and that, therefore, all religious teaching should be rigidly excluded from the Public Schools, since the State, being entirely secular in its constitution and ends, cannot properly teach religion.

Now, it may be fully granted that there may be a "secular morality" without reli-

gion; a man may be truthful, and honest, and generous, may fulfil the duties he owes to his fellow-men, and yet ignore God, and what God's will is concerning those very duties. But, is it the best the school can do for its scholars to inculcate morality without reference at all to its religious sanctions? In answering this question, we are not embarrassed, as is our writer, who has in view only the Public Schools of the United States, by the fact that the State makes no recognition of God. God is recognized in all our public proceedings. We are distinctively a Christian people, and if morality can be more effectively taught as it stands connected with religion than alone, there is nothing in the construction of our civil government to forbid such teaching; and what reasonable ground is there for doubt here? There is something in man that answers to the voice of the Divine. Let that voice speak as it does in the Ten Commandments, "Thou shalt," "Thou shalt not." Let the heart be engaged with love to that Divine Being, let the actions of the present life be viewed in the light of the life beyond, let highest morality be exhibited in the life of the Perfect Man of Nazareth, and who shall say that we have not obtained high vantage ground for the inculcation of moral precepts? Even a child, consciously overshadowed with the presence of God, the God of truth alone, will find it thereby easier to think and speak and do what is right, which is the sum of morality.

There is no need that in this Province we should be content with such moral teaching as can be given without the Bible. We may have this; we can surely have something far higher. By common consent the Bible is allowed in our schools. We have heard of no demand for its exclusion. Its use is encouraged by the Education Department. As a matter of fact it is read in a large proportion of our schools, with acceptance and with profit.

To many it seems most desirable that a further step should be taken. The Bible is now permitted; why should its use not be authorized? The principle is granted that the Bible may be properly used in the schools.