

hours when instruction in religion may be given. They have, then, no other resource than to nominate delegates to give religious instruction, and it too often occurs that no fitting instructor is to be found. Sometimes, as at Brussels and Antwerp, the anti-religious communal authorities find means of so interpreting the law as to perpetually adjourn the consent that the nominees of the clergy may give religious instruction. More often the schoolmasters who are anti-religious consent to teach the catechism. "It is preferable," wrote an anti-clerical alderman, "that religious instruction should be ill given by an emancipated teacher than by the idiots designated by the clergy."¹

The annual cost of the schools subject to State inspection, and maintained by grants from the State and the communes, is £2,172,500; that of the Catholic schools which, because of the desire of their managers to be free to teach religion as they wish, receive no grants from State or commune is £1,000,000.² The Bill which M. Schollaert introduced in 1912 would have put an end, it was hoped, to the disastrous warfare of parties on the Education question. That Bill being withdrawn, the Cabinet of Baron de Broqueville, who succeeded M. Schollaert in the Premiership, introduced another, which may settle the most vexed and most important question in Belgium. This Bill, now passed, makes instruction obligatory and imposes fines on parents who persist in disregarding its provisions. It permits parents to send their children to whatever

¹ *Journal de Charleroi*, 18th of November, 1908.

² Verhaegen, *op. cit.*, p. 47.