

enable them to teach their limited views of religion, but they will probably supplicate in vain. The desire of the citizens is that we may advance, not recede, in this vital matter. In view of this manifest determination to improve our methods we again ask from such as object to secular schools a proposal which will do justice to all, and secure the best educational facilities. Here let me say what will in one sentence answer several objectors collectively. I do not affect to be able to propose a plan which will be an end of strife, but am endeavoring simply to present a method which will give the best education without doing an injustice to any. This I hold, purely secular schools would accomplish, and if any are so indolent or incompetent as to endeavor to obtain for their children the religious training they will not give let them pay for it as an extra, but receive no aid from the public chest to which all taxpayers, irrespective of their creed, contribute their proportion.

To still the unreasoning clamorings of bigoted sectarians who wish to draw money out of the taxpayers at large to pay teachers in separate schools for making the children as narrow as they themselves are, is to attempt the impossible. Deal justly with them and public sentiment will effectually silence them in the near future. Pardon me for saying that you prudently express what I will interpret as a fear in your first sentence in the editorial "The Secular School," in these words: "It is probable that in the long run the state will need to take its hands off education altogether, as it has had to do off religion," yet you add in the same article the wise suggestion in which you declare it probable that in the future the state will do no more than see to it that primary instruction is within the reach of all. This is one of the most important functions

of government, for when a state allows a man to grow up in ignorance it is guilty of a great political sin of leaving in its raw state the richest natural production to be found within its limits. The state should furnish educational facilities for all and compel all, with reasonable exceptions, to avail themselves of the opportunities afforded to transform the raw material of possible mental force into the manufactured article of an educated man.

A few words regarding the valuable article of Mr. MacMurchy, though it does not help to solve our problem as they who demand unconditionally that there shall be religious teaching in the public schools would desire:

1. The plea for the Bible which he presents is in favor of it as a text-book for teaching pure English. This is not the reason for which all the strife about religious teaching is forced upon us. It is the morality resultant that is the plea, not purely the value of the Bible from a literary point of view.

2. But do these extracts favor Bible teaching in public schools? Bunyan was not taught the Bible in public schools, and Ruskin, in this very quotation, uses these words: "My mother's list of chapters with which, learned every syllable accurately, she established my soul in life," etc. Here home-teaching is enthroned, and not a word about the value of the religion taught by the school-master.

3. The whole force of this able article by Mr. MacMurchy goes to prove that in the Ontario Protestant schools, where they have the Bible as a text-book, the pupils were more familiar with heathen mythology than with biblical knowledge. Mr. MacMurchy's words regarding his test of the knowledge of these pupils is a terrible indictment of the system of what is erroneously called teaching religion in public schools. He says: