

have not been fairly met upon this point. No one has ever told me by what authority, or by virtue of what illumination, the State in this Province is able to certify that the Bible which it prescribes for use in the Public Schools is the Word of God. One of my former opponents said he did not wish the State to certify or dogmatically assert any such thing. But if the State does not do it then we have this situation: Every teacher may present his own view of the Bible to his scholars, and may, if he likes, express the opinion that it is a purely human work and one abounding in errors. If a teacher who advanced these views would be liable to lose his place, then we have the flagrant injustice of a certain standard of opinion being tacitly set up which the authorities have not the courage openly to proclaim. If it be said that the people generally are of opinion that the Bible is the Word of God, I ask, as I have asked before, should the *vox populi* be decisive in a question of this nature? If the *vox populi* undertakes to decide questions of science and criticism, and not only to prescribe text books for the schools, but to prescribe the opinions that teachers are to hold in regard to those text books, our educational system will soon be in a queer shape. Seeing that the Rev. Mr. Macdonnell has apparently been following this discussion, as conducted elsewhere, with some interest, I am really sorry he has not done more to help me out of the difficulties under which he has seen me labouring as to the right and the ability of the State to certify that the Bible is the Word of God, so as to secure that it shall be consistently treated as such in the schools. I know that there are thousands who will see nothing in this, but I write not for people who are incapable of reflection, but for those who are accustomed to think, and who know

what it is to think candidly; and I do not believe that any man at once candid and intelligent will say that there is no difficulty whatever in the case as I present it.

My able opponent assumes that I object to all religious teaching in the schools, and he joins issue with me, therefore, upon that point. He says, in an eloquent passage, that "the best moral results cannot be attained without the distinct recognition of the living God, in Whom we live and move and have our being, without Whom not a sparrow shall fall to the ground, . . . Who so loved the world that He gave his only-begotten Son," etc. This language comes home to us, doubtless, with all the force of long familiarity and of many blended associations; but when we come to consider it calmly and dispassionately as the language in which teachers are to address their pupils in our Public Schools, does it seem altogether suitable? It is certainly the language of sentiment, of emotion, but is it language that represents demonstrable truth? What we *know* about sparrows and many other tribes of animals—not excluding man—is that, as a matter of fact, they die from time to time by thousands and tens of thousands of cold and starvation. It may have a soothing effect upon some minds to picture to themselves an Infinite Father quiescently surveying the horrors of an Irish, an Indian, or a Chinese famine; and, if so, I should be the last to wish to deprive them of such a satisfaction. I only think that, before we expatiate upon God's care for sparrows, the great facts and laws of animal life should be faithfully presented; otherwise there may be a shock to faith when, at a later period, those facts and laws become known. The study of nature reveals no special care for sparrows any more than for sparrow-hawks. It shows us that there is no cessation in the