

religious ignorance among the children of our schools; and it is much to be feared that their ignorance of the superficial aspects of biblical knowledge extends to the contents and meaning of the sacred books. The great mass of Canadians are believers in Christianity. Might they not agree upon some system of instruction, which, while respecting the rights of unbelievers, would yet secure to the children of Christians some elementary instruction in religious truth? How long must this question be asked and not answered?—*The Canadian Churchman*

THE MORAL ELEMENT IN EDUCATION.

Lately, the public has been favoured with many views on the improvement which seems to be necessary in the education of the young. The work of the Public schools and of the colleges has been criticised, and the need of more religious instruction has been stated with frequency and force by able educationists.

The Church has a special interest in the soundness of public instruction. We do not say that the Church rather than the State should control and regulate the common school studies, but the Church in doing its own special work is in a better position to know the real value of school training than any other body or institution, and the voice of the Church ought to be heard with respect by the State on that account. Further, the State or the civil authority ought to court the fair and reasonable co-operation of the Church in applying or administering the school laws. The civil authority in this latter instance is the people who have the power of electing representatives to the Boards of Trustees, and the people stand in their own light if they either ignore,

or object to the help clergymen are so well fitted to give in educational affairs. Church members should see to it that ministers who are by training and talent fitted for such positions are placed where they can serve the community in a sphere second in importance only to that of the pulpit.

This is not a question of theory. Clergymen have done more for education than any other class of people. They are doing so still in England and Scotland, and so far as private schools are concerned they are doing so still in Canada. We do not name Dr. Ryerson; but we find on the boards of the colleges for young ladies and for boys the names of leading ministers whose experience and whose character are of immense advantage to these institutions. Why should not the Public and High Schools of the country have the benefit of the same experience when it can be had for the asking? The answer would disclose a truth that would not be too complimentary to the public conscience, and it is just here that the churches should step in and assert themselves—assert themselves against the influences which sap our institutions and impoverish our public life. A Board of School Trustees should represent the very best elements of the community—not those who can by ward and party influences secure a doubtful place thereon. School Trustees should have better qualifications than personal popularity—they should have high character, a knowledge of educational requirements, as well as aptitude for public business. It does not take many years until the character of the board reflects itself in the teachers and through them in the pupils.

The question of moral culture and refinement is of the greatest impor-