

and the indifference of parents—the child. The child teaches the teacher. The very presence of these eager young innocent minds looking up to the teacher for guidance and example stirs him to noblest endeavor.

How could he deceive or injure these confiding little ones? His nature, if it has a spark of manliness or nobility, responds to this appeal, and thus it is that the teachers become

the most sensitive to moral demands. The teacher from day to day learns to realize more and more that his work is not to “keep school,” or prepare pupils for examinations, but to aid in that spiritual process whereby human souls are strengthened, developed, uplifted and ennobled.

That to perfection's sacred height
They nearer still may rise,
And all they think and all they do
Be pleasing in God's eyes.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN AMERICAN SCHOOLS.

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FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS.

I HAVE given, thus far, statements of opinion which, coming as they do from such eminent persons, are entitled to respect; yet they must be regarded somewhat as generalizations and theories. There are statistics at hand, however, which verify the positions taken by the majority, and which show a more alarming condition of things than even the most pessimistic fear. According to calculations based upon the last report of the Commissioner of Education, there were in 1896, 20,865,377 children in the United States between the ages of five and eighteen. Of these it is safe to say that about 1,600,000 are of Catholic parentage. Inasmuch as the report of the Sunday School Union does not include Catholic children, and as many of the Catholic children receive religious instruction in the parochial school and in the church, we may subtract this number from the total, which leaves 19,200,000 children. Now the total number of Sunday School scholars of all ages, according to the report of the Sunday School Union for

the United States in the year 1896, was 10,890,092. It is well known, however, that the statistics of Sunday School scholars include children under five and adults over eighteen. There are no statistics upon this point; but, suppose we allow twelve per cent. of the total number to be included in these two classes—a conservative estimate, I think. This number must be subtracted from the total number of Sunday School scholars in order to make a comparison with those included in Commissioner Harris's report, which refers only to children from five to eighteen. We shall have then about 9,500,000 children from five to eighteen years of age in the Sunday School, or a little less than fifty per cent. of all the children of our country. The meaning of these figures is simply overwhelming. More than one-half of the children in this Christian land who receive practically no religious instruction! For but few parents who fail to send their children to Sunday School are careful about the religious training of their children in