

Board directly responsible to the citizens that will give no more than their numbers and wealth entitle them to, and that will take advantage of the separation thus made to secure for the rest of our Schools as much of religious teaching and influence as common sense indicates to be necessary.

Let us consider the objections that may be urged to this proposal. (1). Some may say, we dislike to have the population, young and old, divided thus into Roman Catholic and Protestant, as if the same kind of teaching that is good for one were not good for the other. My answer is, that whether we like it or not, the division has been made and not by us; and that any attempt to ignore it, either in a small or large way, has always resulted in defeat. Thus a Reformatory School was started here eight years ago on the principle of receiving all bad boys, no matter what their creed. It excited opposition of the bitterest kind: and after two or three years trial, the Committee found that they were driven by necessity, as well as justice, to decide between having no religion taught in their institution, or making it avowedly Protestant. They chose the latter, and from that time it has prospered. So has it been in the schools of Great Britain, in the Army and Navy, even in the very jails and penitentiaries; and so will it be wherever the Roman Catholics are strong enough to secure such a division. And can we wonder at their policy? I for one do not. Were I a Roman Catholic, it would be mine; and now I would do unto my neighbour as I would that he should do unto me.

(2). Another class may say, there is no need for any religious instruction in our Common Schools. That cuts the knot of the whole difficulty, but as in similar cases not only is the knot but also the rope cut. For a country to call itself Christian, to acknowledge Christianity as the very basis of its existence, its strength, its glory, and yet to shut out from the attention of its youth all reference to the Christian religion in their daily studies, must be fatal to the morality and the very existence of the country. The effects would be worst in cities, because, for reasons I have already alluded to, there is more need that special provision should be made for re-

ligious influence in regard to city than in regard to country schools. But let me ask what Christian, what historic country, has ever established a system of purely secular schools? Great Britain has not, neither has any of the German States. France has again and again coquetted with such a scheme, but France is too unstable for any country to learn anything from. The New England Common Schools, it may be said, are secular. In their history they practically were not, and even now in great part they are not. They were established by religious men, men who feared God, who read the Bible and prayed to God morning and night in their families, and who would have scouted the idea of separating religion from work or school. But no positive provision being made for religious instruction, as the population became mixed the schools became more and more absolutely secular; and to this more than to any other cause do I attribute that absorbing secularism of spirit, that irreverence, and that superficiality of religious life, which the best friends of the Great Republic admit and deplore. To separate religious from ordinary instruction, to relegate the former to an hour on Sunday morning, what can more effectually induce the idea that religion is only a form for Sunday, and not a faith to permeate and mould the whole life?

(3). It may be asked, if you have religion in your schools, how can you ever expect to have a National University? I answer, they have both in Scotland, where there is more intellectual life according to population than in any other country in the world, and the one is not found to be inconsistent with the other. A University is for that small proportion of our young men, from sixteen to twenty-four years of age, who desire a liberal or professional education. Now even at sixteen, a youth is beyond mere task-work. He is old enough to read and begin to think for himself, to get the benefit of the regular services of the church, and unless he is studying for the ministry, in which case there is the Divinity Hall for him, anything more is out of place and becomes a barren form. But it is altogether different when we have to deal with the tender years, the susceptible natures, the undeveloped in-