

the religious training of the young lies beyond its province. The permission accorded to school boards is of the nature of a compromise with the Christian community, complaining that under existing arrangements sufficient opportunity is not afforded to them for attending to the religious wants of their children.

In the present exigency, the State, recognizing the importance of religion in education, allows the public schools and their machinery to be used for supplementing voluntary Christian effort. But a better order of things is anticipated, when the arrangements of Church and State, in regard to educational work, will be more finely adjusted. It will thus appear that the present school boards, in the use of the privilege accorded to them with respect to the Bible in the School, are to be regarded for the time being, not as Government officials, but as representatives of the Christian people who elected them to office; and that, as far as possible, the State, in this act, divests itself of responsibility for religious instruction, laying it on the shoulders of the people, to whom it rightly belongs.

Very different, however, from the spirit of this arrangement is that of the proposed amendment. The latter assumes that the State is responsible for the religious instruction of the children under its supervision, and justified in using the public funds for promoting this end. It asserts also the competency of the Department to determine the nature and amount of spiritual food that shall be served out to the children. It virtually says that, whereas, by weak submission to voluntary sentiment, the Legislature have heretofore allowed the children to suffer in respect to