

system of public, unsectarian, but not non-religious schools. It is admitted on all hands that the main work of the school ought to be instruction in the various secular branches. Its primary aim is to fit those in attendance for the active duties of life. But as not inconsistent with this aim, rather as in a high degree subservient to its attainment, it is desired that the religious element should have a definite place assigned to it in the life of the school; that it should be recognized to this extent at least, that the school should be opened and closed with prayer, that the Bible, or selections from it, should be read daily, either in the common, or in the Douay version, as the trustees may direct, that the morality inculcated should be Christian morality and that the teacher should be at liberty to enforce it, and should be encouraged to enforce it, by those considerations, at once solemn and tender, which are embraced in the common belief of Christendom. A system of public education of this kind, in which religion has a definite but at the same time strictly guarded place assigned to it, ought to be acceptable to the great majority of the people of this Province; it has certainly much to recommend it. It has no sectarian features and yet it is not godless. Religion is recognized in it in such form and degree as to make it possible to give a high tone to the life of the school, as to secure more or less familiarity with the contents of Scripture on the part of every child, and as to make available for the teacher those lofty and sacred sanctions which have in all ages been found the most effective instruments in the enforcement of morality.

I can understand it to be objectionable to agnostics and Jews, possibly also, though one would desire not, to the Roman Catholic Church. But with a conscience clause, such as

would be properly included, excusing attendance on the religious exercises where so desired by the parents, there would be no just complaint in the case of the former. The number of people in the Province, who do not accept the New Testament, even with the addition of those who accept neither the Old nor the New, who do not believe in God, is not large, it may be hoped, will never be large; it cannot be reasonably claimed that the Bible should on their account be excluded from the public school. It would be a travesty alike of justice and of popular government that a mere fraction of the community should virtually dictate the form which public education is to assume, contrary to the wishes of the great majority. The people of the Province as a whole abide by the Christian faith. The statistics of theseveral Christian bodies, the amount of money contributed within the Province for religious purposes, shows the keen and general interest which the inhabitants take in the matter. Well, the schools are theirs, are sustained by their money. Surely they have the uncontested right to give a place in them to their common Christian beliefs, especially where these are seen to be in a high degree helpful, if not indeed indispensable, to the ends for which the schools exist.

The system, while so far meeting the views of Roman Catholics, as it is distinctly religious, will possibly be objectionable to them as a body, though certainly not to all, as not going far enough. They would desire that the public schools should be free to teach, not only the great common beliefs of Christendom, though these surely embrace, if not all that is most vital, yet enough to enforce the highest morality, but also the distinctive doctrines and rites of the Roman Catholic church. The teacher, while sustained by public funds, must be