

an interesting theoretical truth, but with a practical intention. If our science is to be of any real value, it must guide our methods of education. If we are to be students of literature, we must consider well all the extent and bearings of literature. To be brief, we must ask why the Sacred Scriptures should be excluded from our system of education in Ontario. We may regard the subject from the point of view of Science or of Literature. Take the last first. Certainly the sacred writings are literature—of a very high class and of very wide influence. Many years ago an ingenious gentleman imagined a dream in which it was discovered that all the quotations and allusions borrowed from the Sacred Scriptures had vanished from the literature of the world. The chasm was vast, the loss was irreparable. The best parts of the greatest writers had disappeared. How is it, then, that every other literature, Greek and Roman, French, German and Italian, is allowed a place in our school and college curriculum, but not this? We may read the writings of Homer, and Virgil, and Dante, and Molière, and Goethe and Shakespeare; but we may not read or teach the writings of Moses, or David, or Isaiah, or Paul, or John. But this is not all. We need the ideal element in education. It is not enough to plod along, adding up rows of figures, criticizing sentences and paragraphs, cramming formulæ of all kinds in all sorts of sciences; it is necessary, if men are to be more than machines and “patent digesters,” that they should have set before them some high ideal of life and action to which they might be taught to aspire. How are we to bring this about? By the three R.’s? By reading, writing, and arithmetic, by gram-

mar, geography, chemistry, and all the other sciences? No one will venture to say so. We must bring it about, if it is to be brought about, by religion. And I know not, and nobody knows, where this religion is to be found so well set forth and illustrated as in the Collection of Books which we call the Bible.

It will be said, this is adequately done in the Separate Schools. Yes. All honor to the Roman Catholics of the Dominion; they have not been contented with mere secular education anywhere. But are they alone to be taught religious truths? The Protestants, it will be said, accomplish the same thing in their Sunday Schools. The Sunday Schools! Heaven forbid that any word of scorn should be spoken of these schools, or of the self-denying men and women by whom they are carried on. But two things may be said with perfect certainty. In the first place, multitudes of children do not go to our Sunday Schools; and, secondly, the instructor in many of these schools is pronounced by their best friends to be quite inadequate. We have warnings enough on this subject coming from the United States. In those rapidly growing districts, in which the churches can do little to overtake the needs of the masses, multitudes of children are said to be growing up without a sense of God, or duty, or morality. In our own more slowly growing population, the evil is not so rampant, but it is growing and extending. And even now there are multitudes of children educated in our Public Schools who scoff at any argument except that which may be derived from considerations of pleasure or profit.

I take no credit for bringing this subject before the present meeting. It is in the air. Wherever I turn I