

upon the rising generation—the body (God's temple) should be kept pure from the degrading thing; nine-tenths of the vice, sin, and shame are its offspring, etc., etc. All, beyond doubt, as well founded as are the arguments to support all the other isms of which you make so little; but, for the last time, I tell you that thousands of excellent people believe you to be a mere crabbed bigot, and would much rather have your children taught to think so than that theirs should be trained to think like you. There must be liberty.

And so I would have no isms in the schools at all? you ask—no Imperial Federation, no Militarism, no Pietism no Sabbatarianism, no Anti-Alcoholism? Quite the contrary, my friend; I would have all these, and every other ism, of such like, you can think of, in the schools; but upon this one condition, that the parents of all the children should be willing to have them there. In the name of liberty, I would say to the parents, certainly you have a right to teach, or have taught to your children anything you like, so long as you can agree about it. I would not ask that a whole province should be unanimous before Sabbatarianism should be taught in a single county; nor that a whole county should be made unanimous before militarism should be taught in one of its school districts; nor even that a whole school district should be unanimous before Imperialism should be taught in one of its schools. What does the principle of liberty require? This and nothing more, that parents should not be required to subscribe to the school rates, and at the same time have their children taught some ism that they abhor; and, on the other hand, that where the parents of all the children in any school desire that an ism should be taught, taught it ought to be. And I shall add, that when I speak of unanimity I mean practical unanimity, and not such as would make it necessary to include all

mere eccentric or isolated opinion of every ordinary or extraordinary sort. We can never expect to have theoretical perfection in the application of even undoubted doctrines to all possible conditions and contingencies.

Let me gather up some conclusions. Education can be conceived as something entirely apart from all isms. Nevertheless in the community are many people who desire to have particular isms taught in the schools. Liberty requires that children should not be taught isms to which their parents are opposed. But at the same time liberty does not require that children should be allowed to grow up entirely illiterate. Liberty further requires that where the parents of the children of any one school desire that a particular ism should be taught, taught it ought to be. And it further requires that in arranging the schools, reasonable facilities ought, if possible, to be given for the combination of such children in separate schools. It would be the antipode of liberty that such combination should be prevented in cases in which it did not materially interfere with the efficiency of other schools.

Let me put a concrete case. In the Province of Ontario there is a large number of Roman Catholics who believe that their children would be very improperly educated were they sent to secular schools, or even to schools which Protestants would approve of. In that case, what does the principle of liberty require? Merely this, that opportunities should be given for the combination of Roman Catholics in certain of the schools, if that can be done without disturbing unduly the efficiency of the other schools. They desire that an ism should be taught to their children. By all means let it be so, if it costs nothing, or very little, to other people. Liberty to them, and all others, should be accorded even at some expense to the community, for one of the objects of our institutions is to afford as much individual liberty