

popular opinion was so strong against him that he was compelled to quit the town a broken-hearted man.

It was not until twenty years after this that the last witch trial took place in England. Then solitary men, here and there, sprang up who began to preach, and write, and argue against such an unreasonable belief. The tide began to turn, and now the last vestige of witchcraft, as it existed two centuries ago, has disappeared. So it has been with all great reforms of whatever kind that have advanced with right and justice on their side. So it will ever be. "Truth is mighty and will prevail."

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RELIGION AND EDUCATION.

To the Editor of The Week:

Sir,—That the school question is ever with us and will not down, is a plain proof that we have not yet reached a solution of the problem regarding the relation in which the public schools should stand toward religion. In still further discussing that subject in the columns of a journal, with whose utterances on this question we do not agree, we desire to be understood as not antagonizing the editorial position, or as endeavouring to prolong a controversy. On two points we are thoroughly at one, in an endeavour to find a true basis of settlement, and in that endeavour to maintain a sympathetic regard for diversity of position. A sentence in the editorial paragraph of April 20th, appears moreover to furnish a still further point of agreement: "While we deem the teaching of religion in the public schools impracticable, we are far from thinking it undesirable. The difference is obvious."

If we do not read into these lines our own feelings, but take them for their face value, we have a real starting point; the desirability of religious teaching in the public schools. In this case our Roman Catholic friends are right in determining that this desirable course should be followed, our contention with them is, therefore, not in the insistence that religious instruction should be given, but in the determination that *their* religion should be taught. Is not this difference also obvious? But unfortunately that italicised word has force with all the denominations, and the impracticability of attaining to the desirable lies in the too manifest fact that unless *their* religion is taught, or at least that their sectarian lines be not undermined, they would rather have an irreligious system maintained. We do not desire to exaggerate or misconstrue, but the impracticability of having religious instruction in the schools is most surely to be found in *our* Christianity which endeavours to give glory to God by quietly enduring division rather than peace upon the earth among men of good will. Therefore, as a Christian man, striving to realize the Christlike Christianity, I am not content to leave the desirable as among the impracticables, or in *laissez faire* to await its evolution; what is truly desirable in the moral well-being of the rising race, Christianity, having the faith of its founder, cannot leave forever among the impossibilities of life.

It may be well at this stage to attempt a definition on which to build our further consideration of this important subject. What do we mean by religion? Many definitions have been given, all must be subject to the limitation of language, and

no language can exactly bound the practically infinite. Still some starting point must be made, and we propose as the best we have yet seen one taken from a writer in the Schaff Herodotus Encyclopedia: "Religion means the conscious relation between man and God, and the expression of that relation in human conduct." As that last expression, "human conduct," covers ritual as well as general conversation, for the purpose immediately before us we would limit these words to what are generally known as the moral relations of life. In this connection we may recall a position taken in a former communication, that elementary education is all that the public school can be called upon to give, and there is elementary religious instruction; and that elementary religion we would find not in such symbols as even the creed known as the Apostles, simple as that may appear in the sight of evangelical theology, but in the two commandments on which Jesus said hang all the law and the prophets; in such conscious relation to God as the Lord's Prayer expresses; and in the practical relation to human conduct, as we find it set forth in what is known as the Sermon on the Mount. The only possible danger to our isms in such instruction would be the implanting of the truth that "the love of God is broader than the measure of man's mind." THE WEEK disavows having "said anything to indicate that religion and true morality can be divorced," though it does "maintain that they can be and must be clearly distinguished," and it has instanced such cases as those of Mr. J. S. Mills and Mr. Herbert Spencer, who, agnostic in faith, maintain an exalted moral character. The relevancy of their example is utterly denied. Their morality grew in an atmosphere filled with the aroma of Christianity which their moral consciousness separated from the accretions that had been gathered. They accepted Christian morality, rejecting the dogma of the schools. I am not concerned in justifying their position, but in drawing attention to the obvious truth that the moral excellence they as agnostics in a Christian land manifested is one thing, the morality which sprang out from an agnostic soil is altogether another, and the result of their agnosticism if accepted by the present and incoming generation may well cause us to pause and reflect. Their morality grew in Christian soil, let it find an agnostic home and we should find, do find, another line of ethics, that of anarchy.

We would, in the sentence last quoted from these editorial columns, change the position of the adjective "true," and then make use of it in submitting a summary of what we may call either axiomatic or admitted propositions with what appears to us necessary deductions: The teaching of religion in our public schools is desirable inasmuch as it is not possible to divorce morality from true religion. As such teaching confessedly should be elementary, it is sufficient to define religion in this connection as the conscious relation of man to God, and the expression of that relation in our moral conduct towards our fellow-men. That in the ethical precepts of Jesus, and in the prayer which He has taught us, we have such teaching as will afford that which is confessedly desirable, and if, as we fear is at present the case, our denominationalism stands in the way of that desirable end, to that extent denominationalism is unfaithful to its Christian trust, and is bound in all honour to so amend its relations as to secure

in a confessedly Christian land to its youth the inculcation of such religious principles as will give morality a firm basis on which to rest.

In concluding these lines we would repeat what we formerly stated, that the man or woman who cannot express in moral conduct to his or her pupils the consciousness of relation to God, is not fit to be entrusted with the education of our youth. We do not establish public schools to evolve mere linguists, calculating machines, examination prigs, but manly men and womanly women, fitted to be more than ward politicians or parlour beauties, to be in truth the worthy heritors of as fair a heritage as God has to give on this earth of labour and beauty, our bright Canadian land.

JOHN BURTON.

MEMOIRS OF CHANCELLOR PASQUIER.—II.*

This is the second instalment of a work the first of which was noticed in these columns some months past. Its perusal only deepens our interest and our longing as we still look for more. There is a charming naivete in these Memoirs which reminds us somewhat of the essays of Montaigne, with something of the same dignified man-of-the-world honour. Like to the Vicar of Bray, our author maintained position through the violent political changes of Revolution, Consulate, Empire and Monarchy; unlike the Vicar, however, his policy appears as that of the patriot, true ever to his beloved France, which to him was more than dynasty. Our last review left him under the Empire, Prefect of the Seine. In this responsible position he faithfully served Napoleon, winning deservedly his confidence, till the straits to which the country had been reduced in presence of an exasperated and determined continent imperatively demanded the abdication of the commander who had led the army of France on from victory to victory, and in her name had dictated terms of peace to the proudest rulers of European empires. Pasquier's sympathies were undoubtedly with the Monarchy, but Napoleon receives full justice at his hands, and he takes, pardonably, a Frenchman's pride in viewing "this powerful sovereign in the toils of adversity, this glorious soldier bearing up against the buffets of fortune," as after the disastrous retreat from Russia with the feeble remnants of his army he still kept the field, and reduced the allied hosts "to such a state of hesitation that, repulsed ten times, they were on the point of beginning a retrograde movement and allowing victory to slip past them." The Chancellor does not "venture upon a narrative of that campaign" of 1814, but "can at least say that it will live in history as an admirable and precious monument of what resources military science and skill can present, in order to enable a handful of brave men to resist the combined efforts of the greatest masses. Impartial judges will ever see in it one of the finest claims to glory of the French army." The italics are ours, as indicative of the national spirit, and taken in connection with another statement made in these interesting reminiscences, calls to mind a sentence of F. W. Robertson's, of Brighton, wherein, describing the commencement of the Trafalgar battle, he speaks of the French cry of glory being met by the sterner Bri-

*Memoirs of Chancellor Pasquier. 1812-14. Vol. II. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Toronto: Wm. Briggs.