

forgiving, why ever cheerful, why never despairing, why courageous, why confident in knowing, why deferential to others, yet sincere to themselves; why should all natural good be trusted, yet all be seen renewed, revived by what is above nature, though not contrary to it, and all, thereby, be seen in real limitations and true proportions? Why is this, but that on the old darkness, as even Shelley said,

“Killing truth has glared”?

As that light is fiercer about a man, so much the more must he answer for his well-seen steps.

And shall we hide these facts from ourselves, and say they are hidden from God?

O my people, wherein have I offended you, how have I wearied you? Answer Me.

Popule meus, quid feci tibi? Aut in quo contristavi te? responde mihi.

To what are you leading us—your hearers? Only to ask yourselves, as teachers of other human beings, why “humility” is a virtue? It was not so before Christianity. Why is education not to foster intellectual pride? And Ruskin, of the text, would answer: because we are Christian, not Pagan.

How do you know that the Everlasting hath fixed His canon against self-slaughter? Because it became a law of His church. What else can you teach your pupils reading *Hamlet* and *Julius Cæsar*? And the question of suicide suggests the whole question of the value, meaning and responsibility of life. Why are wicked thoughts bad, just as are wicked deeds? The world says that is nonsense. The gospel says it is a truth. Are riches and power and worldly success not only the chief and even necessary aims, in a sense, but also the highest? Why should you deny yourself, often to bring yourself nothing but trouble in this world? Why should you be unselfish, and so, as the world says “fail”?

It is vain to treat education with such a text as ours, and yet not to face things as they are. This conspiracy of silence is not fit for adult minds; and even tender minds begin to reason. Do but remember this, in the words of that notable school inspector, Matthew Arnold: “Religion touches on everything.”

But you have not any religion in the schools. That is true, and it is not true. And be it said, religious teaching in schools does not mean *merely* dogmatic, intellectual teaching, whether of Pantheism, Deism, Protestantism, or Catholicism; or, to make two natural classes, of Atheism or of Theism. It means the law and rule of life, the standard, the influence, the example, the resultant. And this you must have. ‘Man can no more refuse to be in his acts an exponent of a certain

belief, principle and ideal of life, which, when reasoned on and expressed is a certain creed, a certain dogma, than he can cease to like and dislike, to distinguish, reject, and prefer about anything whatsoever that may make its appeal to him. Neutral schools are a human (because non-human) impossibility.

Now, please bear in mind that I am not saying anything with which everybody in this Institute does not agree. Everybody *must* agree with this, unless it be that we misunderstand one another as to our terms. For instance, I have here spoken, without offence, as if Christian had for us its meaning of a change of the whole world and of everything in it, necessarily involving the recognition of the fact that the moral and the material become absolutely incommensurate; that sin is the one evil; that the slightest sin—if such a term may be used—of the humblest child is of infinitely more moment than the material ruin of all this universe.

That is a standard, a judgment on life—the true one, if Christianity is from God.

For us, then, we assume Theism and Christianity for our schools. We are not neutral.

But pass to other countries; and in the public schools of Paris you must not have the name of God in any school book; so the non-sectarian school boards decide—boards called of the Christians there by the name “sectarian.” And who in his senses can call their spirit neutral? They, too, set their standard on acts, on vices and virtues; some of them agreeing with the Christian standard, some not. Theists of any sort, Protestants for instance, find something lacking in those schools, just as Catholics find something lacking in ours. It must be so. The standards of life fall short or are otherwise imperfect, or err, in the mind of this person or of that, according as he is bound by a law more or less strict or full. I carry everyone with me so far. We are not discussing here who is right. This is not the place to discuss that. What we are doing is simply this: We are facing facts; that education must, like other human things, touch on morals and religion; that standards of life are formed by beliefs; that these are most practical questions for teachers; and that we must recognize that our assumptions of Theism and of Christianity in some sense are merely accidents, local and temporary; that we have in principle given them up, and that the logic of the world on one side and on the other is against us. As Mr. Leslie Stephen, the eminent agnostic writer, says: If the Incarnation has occurred, nothing is the same in this world as if it had not occurred. Nor can he think that to be a rational being, who, believing it, does not make his chief business to learn as to its application to every single concern of our