

done all for him that they might, a richer harvest would have been reaped from his genius, and a happier life secured for himself. Oxford will rear no monument to Shelley, for it is her shame that with that fine genius given her to train in the critical years of early manhood, she had no better antidote for the speculative doubts of a young inquirer than expulsion. It is with me, from year to year, a thing of intense hopefulness to scan the array of youthful aspirants who matriculate at college. Who knows but there may be a Goldsmith or Shelley among them, for whose intellectual and moral training we shall yet be called to give an account?

I was originally asked to take as the subject of this address to you "The Bible in the Public Schools." I preferred the more comprehensive title of "Religion in the Schools." As to the daily reading of the Scriptures, and the opening and closing of the school with prayer, the recommendation of their use "with a view to secure the Divine blessing, and to impress on the pupils the importance of religious duties, and their entire dependence on their Maker," was embodied in a regulation of the late Council of Public Instruction, and is still in force. But a discretion is wisely left to the trustees or school board, to whom this is only presented in the form of a recommendation.

This question receives interesting illustration from a case appealed to the Minister of Education in 1877. The practice had been to open the school daily with the Lord's Prayer, and to close with the Benediction. Certain Roman Catholic children, acting under the direction of their parents, refused to stand up along with the other children during those brief and simple exercises; and, with the very limited accommodation of a rural school, there was no other room to

insisted on their standing up. The trustees sustained this action of the teacher; and the inspector on being appealed to evaded the difficulty by stating that "if any objected, the law provided that they might retire."—which in this case meant to turn out of doors daily, in all weathers.

I confess to a difficulty in believing that this was a case for appeal to the Minister, or to the letter of the law. I have had a great deal of intercourse with both clergymen and laymen of the Church of Rome, and have had students of that faith under my care. I can scarcely doubt that a wise, conciliatory course on the part of the teacher, if he took the trouble to appeal to the good feeling of the parents, would, in such a case, remove all difficulties. Members of the Roman Catholic Church have no objections to the Lord's Prayer, but both Roman Catholics and Protestants resent coercion; and in such a case as that referred to, no less evil would be done to the Protestant than to the Catholic pupils, either by enforced conformity, or by any demonstrative dissent. If the moral and religious influence aimed at by the teacher exhausted itself in that brief daily service, and all the interval was nothing more than a literal effort at the prescribed tasks in the authorized text-books, then it would on the whole be better that the Lord's Prayer be omitted altogether than it be made the occasion of strife and sectarian division. Few things are more to be deplored than that, either by Separate Schools or by denominational separation in our Public Schools, the elements of sectarian antagonism should be prematurely developed in the minds of the rising generation before they are able to form an intelligent judgment on the questions in dispute.

As to the use of the Bible in our Public Schools, I will only add that in any school section where the entire com-