

making them good citizens by making them first good Christians. Without religion we may possibly succeed in making them decorous, if not decent, pagans; we cannot certainly hope to make them good, much less exemplary, Christians. The teachings of revelation, the facts of history, the lessons conveyed by our own daily observation and experience, and the frightful increase of vice whenever and wherever a contrary system has been adopted, all combine to confirm this conclusion.

We would not exclude secular education—very far from it; but we would constantly blend with it the holy influences of religion. Christian and secular instruction should go hand in hand; they cannot be consistently or safely divorced, at least among Christians. Not that we would thrust Christian teaching on the youthful mind too frequently, or on unreasonable occasions, so as to produce a feeling of weariness or disgust. This is but too common a fault among our over-zealous, but—in this respect at least—not over-wise Bible and Sabbath Christians of the day, who, but too often, in the name of religion, repress the buoyant smile of childhood, cast a gloomy shadow over the spring-tide of life, thereby infusing into the child an early, and, therefore, very deeply seated disgust for religion, and, in the end, producing an abundant harvest of indifferentists and infidels. We every day see the sad effects of this overwrought zeal and mistaken system of instruction.

We would, on the contrary, seek to make religion amiable in the eyes and dear to the hearts of the little children whom Christ so dearly loved. It should gild with its light and warm with its rays every pursuit of the school-room, even as the sun enlightens and cheers the objects of nature. We would not intrude the religious influence on the mind and heart of childhood, but we would seek to distil it gently, even as God distils the dews of heaven on the tender plants of the morning. We would carefully exclude from the reading-lessons all the poison of noxious principles, and even all worldly and frivolous matter; and we would do this all the more rigidly whenever the poison would become the more dangerous, because latent, or gilded with the fascinations of style, or the gorgeous imagery of poetry. We would rigidly exclude Byron, in spite of his Syren Song. Thus in-