

science clause, which should be universally in force—it would be open for all parents to withdraw their children from any religious teaching of which they might disapprove. And the probability would be, that any parent having strong feelings on subjects, would be careful to have his child educated in the principles of which he approved.

It is obvious that such a method has its drawbacks; and there are some who believe that a frankly denominational method would be better. In this case the children would be divided into different classes, each taught by a minister or teacher of the same communion as the parents of the children. If at first sight this seems not quite easy, the best answer is, that the thing is done. There are places in Ontario where the clergymen of the various Churches come together and teach the children belonging to their flock.

Two provisions should be made in order to make such teaching efficacious. The half hour allowed for the purpose—or whatever length of time might be allotted—should be at the beginning of the day, when the children's minds were fresh. The reason for this is so obvious that we need not dwell upon it. The other is, that the time of religious instruction should be within the school hours. In other words, those children who, for any reason, were exempted from religious instruction should, at the time of this work, be put to some other employment. The children who were being taught religion should not feel that they were put to a disadvantage in respect to the time for recreation.

It is difficult to see how the most sensitive advocate of the separation of Church and State could have his susceptibilities offended by either of these methods of providing religious education in our public schools. Even if in certain schools it should be found necessary to appoint Christian teachers,

we really cannot see what the grievance would be. There would be plenty of posts for any unbelievers whom trustees might wish to appoint. Besides, it should be remembered that, if religious education is objected to by a considerable number of ratepayers, non-religious education is disliked by a still larger number. If it is objected that the sanction of the State is given to the teaching of religion, this is surely a very slight grievance to a very small number of people; whilst the repudiation or the ignoring of religion is offensive to many.

A very common way of meeting such arguments is to say that religious instruction is the duty of the Church and not of the schools. And how is the Church to perform this duty? How is the Church actually doing this work? What amount of positive instruction is possible in Sunday schools in one short period of time—an hour or two—during the week. All honour to Sunday school teachers! Their work is invaluable; but they will be the first to confess that it needs to be supplemented.

The article to which we have referred in the *Week* concludes with a truly wonderful sentence. Here it is: "Does the history of the teaching of religion by the State in England and on the continent of Europe show it to have been so beneficial and blessed in its result that we Canadians should hasten to put the yoke upon our own necks?" As soon as we are able to recover from the surprise aroused by such a question, we answer, Yes, a thousand times, Yes. All that is best in us Canadians comes from the religious principles which our ancestry acquired through the Christian instruction which they received in the old country. We would rather not pursue this subject, as we are sure the writer will look back with regret upon the words we have quoted.

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