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EDUCATION: NOT SECULAR NOR SECTARIAN, BUT
RELIGIOUS.

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NUMEROUS questions are raised when we direct our minds to the consideration of this subject. What form should public school education assume; education, that is, the details of which are determined and its cost met in part at least by the State? Should it be restricted to the elementary branches, or should it embrace the higher branches also? Should it be entirely free or only partially so? In particular should it be purely secular, or should it be at the same time religious, and if religious, in what form is the religious element to find place? What I have to say this evening will have reference to the last only of these questions, which, however, is also by far the most important. A purely secular system of education, one, that is, in which there should be no attempt to combine religious instruction or religious influence with the teaching of reading, grammar and other such branches, has some strong

and obvious recommendations, especially in the present divided state of religious opinion. First, it is in strict accord with what appears to be the modern view of the function of the State. According to this view, it is no part of this function to teach religious truth. That lies wholly within the domain of conscience, a domain which a power wielding the sword may not enter. Civil government, it is claimed, has been instituted for quite other purposes than that of propagating religious opinions, however true and however important. To use its resources for this end is to misuse them, and in doing so even to render a doubtful service to the truth which it has espoused. Again, the purely secular system of education escapes numberless difficulties which are apt to arise, when religious teaching is made to form an integral part of the system. There is no longer any question of what kind and amount of Christian instruction should be imparted. There is no more any room for the jealousies of rival denomina-

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