

favor which has been granted to only one other person. He prosecuted his studies for one year at the University of Berlin, and then upon the death of the distinguished Dr. Dillman he spent his second year at Leipsic where he took the degree of Ph. D. The thesis which he presented on that occasion is a defence of the unity of the Book of Zechariah and is, it is understood, to be printed. Dr. Robertson is said to be an excellent preacher, and when he graduated from the seminary was offered the pastorate of a prominent church in Georgetown, which is opposite to Washington on the Potomac River. He has but recently returned from Germany, and is at present minister of Roxburgh Presbyterian Church, Boston.

The Manitoba School Question.

The resolution brought before the General Assembly by two of its most respected leaders Drs. Cavan and King on the Manitoba School Question voices the opinion of the Church and of the most thoughtful element of the commonwealth. It is calm, dignified in its strength and such a deliverance as will carry weight in the ranks and in the country. It is strong in its moderation; so fair that no reasonable objection can be taken to a single clause, and so guarded in expression that the gauntlet of criticism is easily run, yet it has no uncertain sound, no hesitancy nor want of direct aim. It is opportune, and ought to tell in the present critical juncture.

The resolution is as follows:—"The General Assembly, while in common with former assemblies, attaching great importance to the religious character of public education, is strongly opposed to the restoration of Separate schools in Manitoba as involving the application of public funds to sectarian purposes, a thing deemed both inexpedient and wrong in principle; the assembly expresses disapproval of any legislation or Governmental action in the matter of education which is intended to confer privileges upon one section of the community that are not accorded to all; in particular, the Assembly disapproves of any attempt to remove alleged grievances connected with the establishment of National schools in Manitoba, by remedial action of the Dominion, and especially by remedial legislation, such as has been proposed. Legislation of this character, while competent according to the letter of the constitution, is not required and is almost certain to be followed by very hurtful consequences. The assembly cannot, indeed, regard the establishment of Separate schools, as in any case a satisfactory solution of the educational problem occasioned by diversity of religious belief. In the interest of civil and religious liberty the General Assembly deems it its duty at this time to lift up its testimony against all proceedings which confuses temporal and spiritual authority, thus inevitably impairing the functions of both. Whilst the fullest expression of opinion in educational and other public questions which involve moral elements is always competent to churches, and may become their distinct duty, the General Assembly would earnestly deprecate any attempt on the part of any Church to place itself above the State in the civil sphere or to dictate to its adherents (members) in their service of a public trust. The Assembly still hopes that the Conference between the commission and the Province of Manitoba may remove existing difficulties in the subject of public education by such adjustment as, while preserving the principal of National school, may satisfy any reasonable claims of the minority."

This is consistent with past deliverances with respect to the application of public funds to sectarian purposes, which is rightly contended is involved in the establishment of Separate School in Manitoba. It is on firm ground in

condemning the conferring of special privileges "upon one section of the community that are not accorded to all." An equally sound position, but deeper, is assumed in the clause which says: "The Assembly cannot, indeed, regard the establishment of Separate Schools as in any case a satisfactory solution of the educational problem occasioned by diversity of religious belief." In that sentence lies the kernel of the whole question. Separate Schools have proved unsatisfactory. They are wrong in principle and in results, and elsewhere must a solution of the religious difficulty be looked for.

It is interesting to notice how this problem has been regarded in other countries. We are familiar with the systems adopted in Britain, and with the proposals now waiting legislative enactment with respect to England. Dr Wilbur F. Crafts, a name not unknown in Canada has written a book entitled Practical Christian Sociology, which has at least the merit of being practical. A chapter is devoted to the question of education in which religious instruction is referred to. We invite attention to an interesting experiment which he cites. He says:—

The school question is, Can the common Christianity be taught in the common schools in an unsectarian manner as the necessary basis of common Christian morals? And the answer is: It can be, for it has been. . . . The case I am to cite, though not itself the solution of the school question, points straight to it. It is the case of the Pennsylvania Reform School at Morganza, where our "common Christianity," with special reference to Christian morals, has been taught daily to the whole school for many years by Protestant teachers from an unsectarian Christian text-book, written for this purpose by a Roman Catholic priest, Father Canevan of Pittsburg; a text-book which has been approved by his bishop, approved also by a Presbyterian editor on the board of management and by other Protestants, and which is used, under the priest's approval, in conjunction with the daily study of the International Sabbath-School Lessons, as expounded in the undenominational lesson leaves of The American Sunday School Union, and impressed by such hymns as "Rock of Ages." These lessons have been studied more than sixteen years, long enough to traverse the whole Bible, by selections, twice and more. These studies occupy fifteen minutes of each week-day evening, and a longer time in the Sabbath-school, in which last, also, the whole school unites. The work is largely memorizing the form of sound words. For denominational teaching a priest meets Roman Catholic children on Monday evenings. Extended conversations with Father Canevan and with the superintendent of the institution, Mr. J. A. Quay, show that the plan has been highly satisfactory to all concerned. The bishop's very suggestive letter of approval is as follows:

"ALLEGHENY CITY, December 30th, 1890.

"Mr. J. A. Quay:

"DEAR SIR. The book, Easy Lessons in Christian Doctrine, is the only book of religious instruction that has come under my notice, which claims to keep within the lines of belief common to all who profess faith in Jesus Christ. It is, therefore, well suited for a text-book in public institutions where Catholics and Protestants cannot, at all times receive separate religious instructions. Catholics can accept all that the book contains; and the important truths of the Catholic religion which it does not contain can readily be supplied by the priest who conducts the special services for the Catholic inmates of the institution in which your book is issued.

"Respectfully yours,

"R. PHELAN, Bishop of Pittsburg."

The fact that this harmonious co-operation of Protestants and Roman Catholics in teaching Christian morals is found in a reform school does not in any way affect the main argument of this topic. The school is also a public