

and robust health, that will carry him a conqueror through the battle of life, is to turn him adrift, after school hours, on the face of God's earth, to bathe in its waters, to climb its hills, to smell its flowers, to bask in its sunlight, to breathe its air. In after years the lad may be accompanied by a botanist, by a chemist, by a geologist, by an astronomer, to teach him the analysis and classification of plants, of minerals, of rocks, and of stars; but such instructions and instructors are not necessary as for the developement of agility, strength, and physical manhood is concerned. Bring the boy face to face, day after day, with the blue sky and the green earth, and without his knowing it or thinking of it he will become, if he is free from radical disease, a strong man. After a similar fashion, on similar principles, and of course with similar limitations, if we wish to educate the moral nature of the youth of a country, we must bring them, from their very infancy, at home and at school, day by day and week by week, into close, intelligent, honest intercourse with the Word of God. To read the Bible, although it be every day, carelessly, hastily, unheedingly, will no more build up a robust moral nature, than it will develop a robust physical frame to run across the country once a day in an express train. But if the same attention were given to the study of the Bible as is given to the study of the other school-books, then, without our children knowing it, would they, by intercourse with patriarchs, prophets, apostles—by seeing scenes "peopled by the majesties of the eternal"—by following the footsteps of Jesus from the cradle to the cross, be lifted up into a world a hundred-fold more elevating and ennobling than is found among abbreviated histories,

simplified sciences, and mathematical demonstrations. It is only in this atmosphere, indeed, that the moral nature of the scholar "can live, move, and have its being." As it requires light to develop and educate the eye of the body, so it is only in the light of Revelation the eye of the soul, the conscience, the moral nature, can be adequately trained to discern between good and evil.

"We always," says the late Rev. Henry Melville, "recur with delight to the testimony of the Deist, who after publicly labouring to disprove Christianity, and to bring Scripture into contempt as a forgery, was found instructing his child from the pages of the New Testament. When taxed with the flagrant inconsistency, his only reply was, that it was necessary to teach the child morality, and that nowhere was there to be found such morality as in the Bible."

The religion, then, to be taught in our public schools, is the religion that lies before the child on the face of his English Bible; just as the botany to be taught to the child, at first, is the botany that lies spread out before the child on face of field, and forest, and flood. Scientific knowledge of doctrines can be left to parents and pastors; it is with the Bible, as a *Book of morals*, that our public schools have to do. Alas! for the country that refuses a place in its public schools for the only book that unfolds the principles of right, and exhibits the prowess and majesty of truth: the only book that casts on the youthful heart the solemn shadow of an eternal world, wherein moves a personal God, a moral Governor, and a Divine Saviour, fear of whom, and love for whom, are the only spring and strength of right living and good citizenship.