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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—MORAL THEORIES AND PUBLIC MORALITY.

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THE renewal of the discussion of the necessity for moral and religious instruction in the public schools of this country will be quite generally regarded as timely. The *Andover Review* for October, in considering this subject, declares that "observation and reasoning" lead to the "unwelcome conclusion that for a generation, at least, the decadence of public morality in Massachusetts has been constant and positive." What is thus said of the State, in which so-called moral and religious improvements have so often originated, is doubtless measurably true of the whole country. The absence of the old-time Christian instruction in the public schools is certainly a very marked feature of the day, but it is only a part of the outcome of an extended tendency to dispense with God, Christianity, and the Scriptures. Christianity has been, as far as possible, expurgated from pretty much everything, from the State Constitutions to the text-books in the public schools. The moral backbone of society has thus been removed. Morality has no basis left on which to rest. But while too much can scarcely be said against the present methods in the public schools, which barely permit a teacher in the modern Athens to tell a boy mildly and politely that he should not steal, there seems to the writer to be a deeper source of moral and religious corruption to be found in the character of the moral theories held and taught by the accredited and ordained teachers of morality and religion in the pulpit and in the collegiate and theological schools. It does not seem to have occurred to the discussing public, and especially to the ministry as most deeply interested in the matter, that it is possible that a so-called "moral" teaching may be even more corrupting and destructive than the absence of all attempt to inculcate morality, or than even the instilling of the new agnosticism into the minds of the youth.