

1. Our Government found God in the schools. It banished Him therefrom. On what principle of philosophy and of pedagogy did it do so? By what right, and on what principle, does it seize upon the best and most impressionable part of the child's life and keep it utterly apart from the knowledge of God, the fear of God which is the beginning of wisdom, and the love of Him which is its end? In what precise way does all this promote the true end and purpose of the life of the child? Renan was no believer, but he realised the great moralising power of faith in God and love of the great Exemplar, the Saviour of the world. 'The peasant without religion,' said he, 'is the ugliest of brutes, devoid of the distinctive sign of humanity' (*L'Avenir de la Religion*, p. 487). I could fill whole issues of the *Otago Daily Times* with testimonies as to the need of religion in the school—testimonies written in half a dozen languages by the foremost authors, educationists, and leaders of men of the past 50 years and more. I limit myself, however, to the following striking pronouncement of so keen a judge of human nature as the first Napoleon. 'I want pupils,' said he, 'who know how to be men. Without God one is not a man. I saw the godless man in 1793. You don't govern that sort of man; you give him grape-shot' (translated from W. S. Lilly, 'On Shibboleths,' p. 143).

2. Our ideas of right and wrong are intimately bound up with the doctrines and principles of Christianity. Even agnostics and materialists acknowledge the powerful and sustaining moral influence that these principles have exercised upon mankind. Our Government found these doctrines and principles in the schools—and swept them out with the legislative besom. By what right, by what principle of philosophy and of pedagogy, did it do so? On what principle does it seize the best period of the child's life and arbitrarily cut it off from these ennobling moral influences, at the very time when the formative processes of education are being carried on? And how, precisely, does all this aid the child to attain the true end of its existence?

3. The divorce of religion from education is one of the means adopted ever since the eighteenth century by the various schools of anti-Christian philosophy to draw Christian children into scepticism or unbelief. A similar purpose (as stated in a previous article) was avowed by the father of the secular system in Victoria, of which ours is practically a copy. And in France to-day (as I can amply demonstrate) a secular and professedly 'neutral' system of public instruction is being utilised, of set and deliberate purpose, to cast discredit upon Christianity, to uproot religion from the hearts of the rising generation, and to replace it with scepticism or unbelief. (The general reader will find useful summaries of the evidence in point in *The Month* for December, 1908, and in *Moral Instruction and Training in Schools, Report of an International Inquiry*, London, 1903, Vol. II., pp. 51-69.) Will the supporters of our secular system explain in what particular way a method devised by philosophers to choke-damp Christianity in Europe, may be used to promote it in New Zealand by aiding Christian children in our schools to attain the glorious destiny known to them by faith?

4. According to the lessons of experience and the constant teaching of Christendom religion is needed as an active power in the child's early temptations, and 'it should, as far as possible, be handed over to him as a finished weapon.' Now, if the true purposes of life are furthered by the exclusion of religion from the school, how are they likewise furthered by including it in the home? If religion is good for the child at his mother's knee at 9 o'clock this morning, by what black magic of pedagogy does it become so poisonous to the same child in the school at 9.30, that the law must 'protect' him from it as it does from contact with a declared leper or a bubonic rat? And if, on pedagogical grounds, God and religion are to be barred out of the school part of our citizens' training, why retain them in any period or phase thereof? For we must not fall into the too common error of supposing that training is only for the young. The process lasts as long as man's probation lasts—in other words, it lasts till we pass out by one or other of the thousand doors of death.

5. The material on which both the religious and the secular systems of education must produce the results they aim at is of a very varied nature. In this Dominion an appreciable percentage of it is furnished by parents who keep more or less severely apart from Church life, and neglect in various degrees the religious and moral upbringing of their children. The Anglican Bishop of Auckland (Dr. Neligan) estimates at, I think, 50,000 the neglected white children in this Dominion who know not God or His Christ. Synods and assemblies have published disconcerting figures in point, and the experience of most clergymen probably goes to show that the number of children of neglected religious and moral training is considerable. The accuracy or inaccuracy of their estimates, however, in no way affects the radical evil of the system. Under the

system of religious education that long prevailed in this Dominion these evils of domestic neglect were to a greater or lesser extent remedied in the school. But in 1876 our legislators stopped the further operation of this great boon. They seize the best and most plastic part of these neglected children's lives and expose it to the influences of a system of instruction from which they have barred out God and a 'moral law whose sanction is of-God.' What can this counterfeit 'education' do for these hapless children but sharpen their wits, confirm them in their disregard of religion, and send them in turn to found homes which, in this respect, shall be the counterpart of the schools in which they received their one-sided and inharmonious training? How, on Christian principles, does all this accord with the tenets of true pedagogy (child-training) or promote the great end of the children's existence?

6. But that is not all. The incorrigible, grown-up slum-girl in the story, *No. 5, John Street*, makes this heart-riving appeal: 'It's too late for me; but give the kids a chance!' What chance does our secular system give 'the kids'? Let us see. (a) It dethrones God from His olden and prescriptive place in the school; it seizes and monopolises to itself the best and most impressionable part of the child's life and shuts out therefrom the highest, tenderest, most inspiring, and most exalting moral influences. (b) It treats the child as an intelligent, but not as a moral, being. Yet, in Tennyson's phrase, a youth or man may be 'gorged with knowledge' and yet really uneducated. For mere instruction is not ethical; it is not enough to form even the intellect, much less to mould the heart and will and form the character, which is the real end of education. (c) During the precious period of the child's life which the secular system monopolises, it concentrates the intellectual faculties exclusively on material interests and pursuits. It, in effect, makes the school a market and knowledge a machine for money-getting. True educational development of the faculties is simultaneous and harmonious; but the outstanding features of the training imparted by our secular system are these: Thrusting material interests into the forefront and supreme place in life, and throwing religion, and the things of the Spirit, and the ordered development of the moral and religious faculties, into the background or over the wall. It is the natural tendency of unused powers and faculties to become feeble or degenerate. What is to prevent this ill-balanced development, this neglect of the spiritual side of the child, from following the path of its normal tendency to moral and religious atrophy—to indifferentism, scepticism, or unbelief? A good home life, and other factors to be mentioned in another article, may check to some extent the normal operation of such tendencies, and hold the youth to the faith in God that has transformed the world. But by what jugglery of causation can a secular system of public instruction, of itself, tend towards making him much more than a materialist? And how does all this material absorption, all this exclusion of the highest moralising influences, all this lop-sided development of faculties, promote the true purpose of the child's being, and accord with the true principles of pedagogy?

These are mere samples of the riddles that have to be read by Christian apologists who advocate the exclusion of God and His law from the school life of children, on philosophical and pedagogical grounds—the only grounds upon which a valid defence of our secular system of public instruction can be raised.

IV.—THE ARGUMENT FROM RESULTS: SECULAR SCHOOLS AND CRIME STATISTICS.

Our secular system of public instruction assumes as a dogma that, in effect, religion is more or less of a speculative philosophy, or that at least it is something separable from the real business of life. In the three previous articles of this series I have dwelt exclusively on the principles of philosophy and of pedagogy (the science of teaching); for upon these, in its last resort, the only real defence of our secular system must be based. These considerations dominate the whole position.

'The rest is all but leather or prunello'—all other pleas in favor of the system are at best subsidiary or of conditional relevancy. The same statement holds true as regards the results which have been or may be claimed for the system in actual operation. The argument from results supposes two things: (1) That the results have been sufficiently ascertained, and (2) that they are good. But, obviously, results are good or bad according to the criteria by which they are judged. And, in the present connection, these criteria resolve themselves ultimately into a philosophy of life—into doctrines as to the origin and destiny of the child that is taught—and, closely connected with this, into the principles and processes of the art of teaching. So that we get back ever to the fundamental considerations which I have so strongly emphasised in previous articles.

What are the fruits by which our secular system of

'I wish ye weel!' A box of Hondai Lanka makes a splendid Christmas greeting. A substantial gift!

'Begin the New Year right!' Commence using 'Hondai Lanka' Pure Ceylon Tea—delicious and most economical.