

professed to quote. The calumny was refuted by the present editor of the *New Zealand Tablet*, on the authority of a personal letter from Judge Bakewell, in the columns of the *Maryborough and Dunolly Advertiser* (Victoria) in 1894; it had already had its timbers shivered by the *Philadelphia Catholic Standard* nearly twenty-five years ago, yet it bobs up serenely in the December issue of the *Lutheran* as if it had never once been even contradicted! Fortunately this sort of inartistic falsehood almost invariably overleaps itself, and produces an effect directly opposite from that intended. A non-Catholic of any refinement instinctively recoils from those who are thus regardless of the first principles of Christian moderation and ordinary veracity. And this is the explanation of the well-known fact that the Littledales and Chiniquys, and the whole tribe of anti-Catholic calumniators have been the means, under God, of bringing a hundred into the Church for every timid or prejudiced soul they have frightened away.

THE SECULAR*PHASE OF OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM

A DISCUSSION

(By the Editor of the *New Zealand Tablet*.)

The following article on the above subject—the seventh of the series—appeared in the *Otago Daily Times* of February 20:—

VII.—SOLUTIONS AND ATTEMPTED SOLUTIONS OF THE RELIGIOUS DIFFICULTY.

Difficulties only challenge the wit of the true statesman, as of the skilled inventor. The religious difficulty in education presents itself in more or less acute forms in countries in which the population is divided up into considerable groups of adherents of different faiths, living in incessant contact. The points to which compromise in this matter may be extended by various creeds will be referred to in another article. Here let it suffice to state the general rule laid down by Lecky in this connection, that 'the object of the legislators should be to satisfy as far as possible the various phases of national opinion and wishes' (*Democracy and Liberty*, new ed., vol. II., p. 76). There are two broad classes of solutions, or attempted solutions, of the religious difficulty—(1) Those that include religion in some or other shape in the school curriculum, and (2) the so-called 'secular solution,' which banishes religion from its immemorial place in the school lives of the children. (1) Some countries adopt (a) a denominational system only; (b) some a mixed denominational and secular system; (c) others provide for the mis-called 'unsectarian' religious instruction or exercises within school hours. (2) And, finally, we have the purely secular system, which excludes from the school hours religious teaching and all moral teaching founded on religion. This system is almost confined to France and its colonies, New Zealand, four of the States of the Australian Commonwealth, and a number of States of the American Union.

1. Although not itself a teacher of religion, the State is deeply concerned in the temporal advantages arising from the training of children in religion and morality. As this is a discussion between the secular and the religious ideas in education, I propose to bracket together those countries that admit, in any degree, the union of religion with the systems of education which they, in whole or in part, maintain. And, for lack of space, the briefest and most summary descriptions must suffice.

In no other country in Europe, Sweden possibly excepted, is education so scientific as in Germany. So writes the Rev. E. F. Williams, D.D. (Protestant), in his *Christian Life of Germany* (Edinburgh, 1897, p. 40). 'In towns, cities, or villages, where there are twenty-five pupils belonging either to Lutheran, Roman Catholic, or Jewish families, a separate parish school may be opened, in which the pastor, priest, or rabbi gives a prescribed course of instruction. These schools, although often established by the churches or the synagogues, are yet under State inspection and control, and receive State aid, though not always enough for their support. That is, the parish school may be treated as a Volksschule, or, if of a certain grade, may be regarded as a pro-gymnasial, or a burgher school' (op. cit., p. 43; compare *Statesman's Year Book*, 1908, pp. 1017-8, 1116, etc.). And 'the religious lesson is regarded as the most important, and a religious atmosphere is expected to pervade the school' (*Moral Instruction and Training in Schools: Report of an International Inquiry*, 1908, vol. II., p. 218; see also pp. 213-242). A somewhat similar system prevails in Austria and Hungary.

In Sweden and Norway the elementary and secondary public schools are Lutheran, 'the affairs of both being finally administered by the Church and the Education Department,' and 'religion is placed as the first subject on the curriculum' (op. cit., vol. II., pp. 180, 182-3, 186). In Denmark 'the law requires dogmatic religious instruction in all the schools for children, both elementary and secondary.' Holland has a system of 'public secular and neutral schools,' together with denominational schools (Evangelical and Catholic) supported from public funds 'on a system much like that which exists in England, and which has been very generally accepted' (Lecky, *Democracy and Liberty*, new ed., vol. II., p. 72; compare *Statesman's Year Book*, 1908, pp. 1270-1). In Belgium moral instruction and religious observances are 'obligatory as part of the programme of State-aided institutions for primary and secondary education'; teachers may decline to give such instruction and pupils to attend; voluntary denominational schools 'are eligible for subsidies from the State, the province, and the municipality or commune, one or more of them. The Church is empowered to supervise and arrange for or provide religious instruction in the schools. If the communal school teachers do not give it the clergy may, either by themselves or their lay nominees' (*Moral Instruction and Training in School*, 1908, vol. II., pp. 119-120).

The British system has already been referred to (for details see *Moral Instruction and Training in Schools*, pp. 256-342, 402-464). In Scotland some Catholic schools receive subsidies. The (Presbyterian) Short Catechism forms part of the curriculum of the Scottish Board Schools. In the starved National Schools of Ireland religion and religious emblems are permitted only in a school hour set apart therefor. In Newfoundland, and in the provinces of Quebec and Ontario, denominational schools (Catholic and Protestant) are maintained out of the public funds. And in every provincial system an effort is made to secure the work of the schools being carried out in a religious spirit' (Lecky, *Democracy and Liberty*, new ed., vol. II., p. 67; *Moral Instruction and Training in Schools*, vol. II., pp. 282-298). The last remarks hold good for South Africa generally.

In the United States the Protestant Authorised Version of the Bible was long and widely used as 'a book of devotion and instruction' in the public schools. But (as the *Biblical World*, a Protestant magazine, said in an editorial article in its issue of October, 1902) 'Protestant teachers taught the Bible in a way which antagonised the Roman Catholics; and teachers of the several Protestant denominations interpreted the Bible to the children from their own point of view' (quoted by Schwickerath, *Jesuit Education*, p. 585). This (says the *Biblical World*) led to the Bible being 'generally excluded from the public schools of the United States.' In many places, however, the Protestant hymns and forms of prayer are still used at the opening of the public schools there. In New South Wales and Western Australia, non-Catholic religious instruction or exercise form part of the State curriculum. Aid was given to denominational schools in South Australia (with a break) till the fifties; in Queensland till 1860; in New South Wales till 1862, and again (with an interruption) till 1880; in Tasmania and Victoria till 1875; in New Zealand till the Act of 1877 came into force; and in Western Australia till 1895. At the present stage I do not propose to comment on the merits or demerits of the systems of religious instruction or devotion referred to in this article.

2. 'The secular solution,' as its admirers call it, 'solves' the religious difficulty in education by giving legal force, under penalties already indicated, to the implied State dogmas of religion described in the last preceding article. The exclusion of religion and religious training from the schools began in the French Revolution. This policy arose naturally and logically out of the anti-religious philosophy with which Voltaire and Rousseau and their school sought to blot out Christianity. Religious training was revived in France in a tentative way after the Concordat in 1801, with State aid in 1816, after Waterloo. The French public school system is at present entirely secular, 'professedly neutral,' and to a deplorable extent, aggressively atheistic. It is frankly based upon the principles of the Revolution. The rationalist historian Lecky describes it in part in the second volume of his *Democracy and Liberty* (new edition). Lecky's hostile feeling towards Catholicism is, by the way, sufficiently manifested by his references to it as 'priestcraft' and 'superstition' (e.g., pp. 83, 84). The law of 1882 (he says) 'severely excluded religious teaching from the public schools' (p. 78). 'Paul Bert, who represented the most active and proselytising type of atheism, was for some time Minister of Instruction' (pp. 79-80); 'he chiefly organised the new schools,' and even went so far as to carry on a personal propaganda to school children against belief in the existence of God (his words are quoted by Lecky, p. 80). The new

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