

declarations to the contrary, and of my reiterated conviction that numbers of well-meaning Christian people are misled into support of the secular system because they do not realise what it implies, and whither it is drifting, as it has drifted in France. But in terms as express I have pressed, and still press, for a statement of the Christian principles and views of life, on which Christians support a system which was devised by anti-Christians on Continental Europe for the destruction of all religious faith in the rising generation. *To this there has been no answer.* (3) The *Evening Post* makes out Gladstone, Temple, and Parker to be supporters of the utter exclusion of religion (as in New Zealand) from the working-hours of State-supported schools. This is a cruel misrepresentation of the plain, set terms, in which these three noted English Protestants stood for the inclusion (not the legalised exclusion) of religion from State-aided systems of public instruction. (a) Gladstone's real views have been sufficiently stated on pp. 32-33, and further reference to them will be found in Section III. of this Part. (b) The *Evening Post's* grievous misrepresentation of Archbishop Temple will be made abundantly clear in Section III. (c) Dr. Parker's name has been amply vindicated (to this there has been no reply). The injustice done to this friend of religious education by the *Post* will be made still more manifest in Section III., by an appeal to the context of his remarks. (d) But even if Gladstone, Temple, and Parker were as bitter enemies (as they were friends) of religious education, this circumstance would not alter, by so much as a pin-point, the content and implications of the secular system, or relieve, by so much as the weight of a speck of fluff on a moth's wing, the heavy burden of proof and justification which rests upon the shoulders of the *Evening Post* and of its fellow-Christian supporters of the policy of driving religion, by Act of Parliament, from its ages-old and prescriptive place in education.

VI.—The 'Big Stick' Fallacy.

The *Evening Post* avers that 'an overwhelming majority of the people of New Zealand' favor the legalised exclusion of religion from the schools. This is the argument of the physical force of mere numbers—which I have designated the fallacy of the 'big stick.'

Reply: (1) We have yet to learn that 'an overwhelming majority'—or any majority—of 'the people of New Zealand' were afforded any direct opportunity of expressing an opinion upon the subject either before or after the expulsion of religion from the schools. (2) No evidence has been adduced—nothing but the bare assertion of the *Evening Post*—that 'an overwhelming majority of the people of New Zealand' stoutly maintain the exclusion of religion, by Act of Parliament, from the schools. We do not know that, as a matter of fact, a very large body of public feeling in New Zealand desires some measure of religion in the working-hours of the public schools; that it has agitated ever since 1877 to have this effected by legislation; that having (owing chiefly to internal dissensions) failed in this, it has set itself to smuggle in religion somehow; and that religious exercises have, all along, been (illegally) part and parcel of the daily routine of the State secondary schools. (3) Nobody pretends that that mere 'popular' feeling is qualified to pass an expert verdict on (say) the deep questions of pedagogy (the art of teaching) involved in the rigid legalised exclusion of religion from the school-time 'preparation for life' and for 'complete living.' The *Evening Post* supplies us, in 'charmin' variety,' with the argumentative crudities and irrelevancies by which so much of 'popular' feeling as exists on this question is aroused and nourished. The 'plain man' lies under the delusion that intellectual and moral values count—or ought to count—for a good deal in determining public policy in regard to education. But even such an accredited champion and expert as the *Evening Post* cannot give an account of its scholastic faith; and it makes a count of noses, and an uninstructed, or misinstructed, or ill-instructed local feeling one of the arbiters (if not the final arbiter) in the matter of the most tremendous import to the individual, to the family, and to the nation. Is it not high time that such vital matters

as the underlying principles and methods of education should be as far removed, as is the administration of justice, from inept meddling and from the sordid turmoil and clamor of party politics? (4) The *Evening Post* calls upon the friends of religion to accept, in this matter, the doctrine of 'accomplished facts.' But (a) why should we sit calmly down and resign ourselves to the wrongs inflicted by this new-fangled and localised scheme of secularised public instruction, which has so suspicious an origin and history, and which, after a fair trial, two of the most prosperous and progressive nations in Europe flung indignantly aside? (b) Have not some, at least, of us read sufficient of history to know how people are given, at times, to dancing and singing around their golden calves to-day, and crushing them beneath their heels to-morrow? Besides, (c) when did the *Evening Post* itself begin to accept the doctrine of 'accomplished facts' in matters purely political? Do not the 'accomplished facts' of the Liberal Party's continued successes in New Zealand serve rather to nerve it to stronger efforts to educate public opinion in a sense favorable to its own Conservative views? In the still more vital and sacred matter of the school-training of our young citizens for the duties and destiny of life, why should we, the friends of the only true and full education, abdicate our role as teachers and guides, and become, instead, the mere gramophone records of an uninstructed local feeling?

Moreover (5) this Big Stick argument assumes the moral right of a majority to drive religion out of the schools and force the State-creed (already detailed) on the consciences and purses of dissidents. But this moral right we absolutely deny. It is for the *Post* to prove it—if it can. (6) Yet, again: the Big Stick argument assumes that, in this matter, minorities must, perforce, suffer. Here, however, are the words of a noted English educationist in point: "'Minorities must suffer' is the old, discarded cry of utilitarianism. It is hopelessly out of date. Democracy, and especially Liberalism, raises the counter-cry: 'Minorities must be safeguarded!'" Politics is fast learning from commerce and from science the human, necessary art of specialisation. There are now several hundred processes in the making of a shoe. Secularists would decree that there shall be one way—the way of suppression—for building up the kingdom of politics.' Lord Acton (the historian of political democracy) said at Cambridge University, in June, 1895: 'But what do people mean who proclaim that liberty is the palm, and the prize, and the crown, seeing that it is an idea of which there are two hundred definitions? You will know it by outward signs. Representation, the extinction of slavery, the reign of opinion and the like; better still by less apparent evidences: the security of the weaker groups, and the liberty of conscience which, effectually secured, secures the rest.' The view of the historian of political democracy on minority right found eloquent expression in an address delivered thirteen years later by Mr. Sidney Webb, the historian of industrial democracy. 'My first proposition,' said he, 'is, therefore, the paradoxical one that, whilst it may have been the most pressing business of nineteenth century Governments to deal with the whole people, or, at any rate, with majorities, by far the most important business of twentieth century Governments must be to provide not only for minorities, but even for quite small minorities, and actually for individuals.' The regimental boots and uniforms have got to be made to fit each individual soldier. This, when you come to think of it, is just as 'democratic,' in any sense whatever, as the merely wholesale method.' But (7) even if an 'overwhelming majority' of noses were, in this matter, ranged beside the *Evening Post*, that circumstance would not in the least explain the Great Riddle: On what particular view of life, and of its duties and destiny, do believing Christians justify a school-preparation for life, which atheists, and unbelievers generally, defend on an atheistic and anti-Christian view of life, and of its duties and its destiny? 'All roads lead to Rome'; and, between Christians, all arguments on the secular system lead, ever and evermore, to this forbidding Riddle, which the *Post* has avoided as it would the Seven Plagues of Egypt.

(To be continued.)