

The *Post's* Interpretation.

'Why not adopt frankly the principle that the State or the local community should provide the secular teaching, and either leave the option to the ratepayers to go beyond this *sine qua non*, if they think fit, within the limits of the conscience clause, or else simply leave the parties themselves to find Bible and other religious education from voluntary sources?'—*but on no account should the 'Bible and other religious education from voluntary sources' be imparted during school hours!*

(a) In its previous quotation from Gladstone, the *Post* perpetrated the serious literary misdemeanor of garbling by suppression. In the quotation here under consideration, it fell into a hardly less grievous folly—suggestive of equivalent interpolation—namely, by adding, in its own words, an interpretation which is in no sense warranted by the text of Gladstone's letter. (1) It is sufficiently obvious, even at the first glance, that Gladstone is, throughout this extract, dealing with a scheme of education of which religion shall form a part. (2) In the very chapter from which the *Evening Post* professed to quote, so strong a friend of religious education as Cardinal (then Archbishop) Manning urged upon Gladstone this 'second alternative'—to leave the parties themselves to find Bible and other religious education from voluntary sources. So, in effect, did Nonconformist friends of religious education. (3) And, surely, so wide-awake and leading a daily paper as the *Wellington Post* might be reasonably expected to be acquainted with the notorious fact that Catholics in Australia and New Zealand have been for over thirty years advocating State-aid for the secular instruction given in their schools, coupled in every case with this proviso: Catholics themselves 'to find Bible and other religious education from voluntary sources.' Moreover, (3) a journal which sets up as an expert in matters educational ought to know that in Ireland, Holland, and various other countries, the State 'leaves the parties to find Bible and other religious education from voluntary sources.' There is, therefore, nothing whatever in Gladstone's quoted words—either in themselves or in their circumstances—to justify the *Post* in declaring that the great Liberal leader advocated 'exactly' that policy of rigid exclusion of religion from the schools which was adopted by the New Zealand Parliament in 1877. Despite his proneness to risky and sweeping assertion, Professor Mackenzie did not go so far as to claim directly that any of these words of Gladstone (which he quotes on p. 7) 'square exactly with the policy which New Zealand adopted in the Education Act of 1877.'

(b) Moreover: The utter exclusion of religion from the schools was not, at the time, a live issue, or within the bounds of practical politics. The tentative suggestion—the 'second alternative'—in Gladstone's letter to Lord de Grey was not embodied or accepted by him as a part of his Education Bill. That Bill, in all its stages and phases, provided for religion as a regular part of the school curriculum. The strongest opponents of the Bill (the Nonconformists) did not, as a body, oppose some measure at least of religion in the schools.

(c) Gladstone's close absorption in his Irish Land measure, and his other Ministerial occupations, left him but a 'small share in the frame of the Education Bill' here under discussion. There are, nevertheless, ample indications of his general views, at that time, of the place of religion in education. (1) The first draft of the Bill (which he approved) contained provision for definite religious instruction in the schools, with a conscience clause. (2) Herbert Paul, in his *History of Modern England* (London, 1905, vol. III., p. 218) says: 'Mr. Forster was in favor of unsectarian teaching. . . . In this respect he was at variance with the Prime Minister' (Mr. Gladstone), 'a strict denominationalist, who held that religion without dogma was a contradiction in terms.' Under strong parliamentary pressure he was forced to accept the Cowper-Temple clause, which directed that, in rate-supported schools, 'no catechism or religious formulary distinctive of any particular denomination shall be taught.' In a letter to Lord Lyttelton (October 25, 1870) he declared that

the final settlement of the question of religious instruction in the schools 'was in no sense my choice or that of the Government. Our first proposition was by far the best.' Owing, however, to opposition and apathy (said he in the same letter, p. 940) 'the very utmost that could be done was to arrange the matter as it now stands, where the exclusion is limited to the formulary, and to get rid of the popular imposture of undenominational instruction.' Furthermore, in the *Times Weekly Edition* of August 3, 1894, we find Lord Selborne quoting as follows from a speech delivered by Mr. Gladstone in 1870:—'It is our wish that the exposition of the Bible-in-Schools should take its natural course, that it should be confined to the simple and devout method of handling which is adapted to the understanding and character of children. But we do not admit that that simple and devout method of teaching can be secured by an attempt to exclude all reference to tenets and doctrines. That is an exclusion which cannot be effected, and, if it could, it ought not to be.' So strongly, indeed, did Gladstone favor definite religious instruction that, in a letter to Forster (October 17, 1870), he argued for the introduction of such dogmatic formularies as the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, the Thirty-nine Articles, and the Apostles' Creed into rate-supported schools that were subject to the Cowper-Temple clause. (3) Another evidence of Gladstone's old and pronounced leaning for denominational religious instruction is furnished by his biographer, Lord Morley: 'The old parliamentary grant to the denominational schools was to be doubled. This last provision was Mr. Gladstone's own.'

(4) The same eminent writer states that Gladstone's 'private interest in public education' (although it 'did not amount to zeal') was at this time (1869-1870) 'at bottom that of a churchman.' The English Education Act of 1870 'was admittedly a compromise.' 'In arranging this compromise the members of the Cabinet were, no doubt, influenced by their own predilections. The Prime Minister' (Mr. Gladstone) 'was himself an ardent adherent of the Church of England, and a Vice-President of the Council was strongly opposed to the separation of education from religion. These two men were, in consequence, able to carry a Bill which was much more acceptable to their Conservative opponents and to the Church, than to their own supporters and Nonconformist England. In their defence, however, it is right to add that the compromise which they adopted was one which commended itself to the great masses of the people.' The same writer tells how 'the Opposition rallied in support of the Minister. (Mr. Gladstone), 'who was doing so much to preserve denominational education; and the Nonconformists were defeated by a majority of seven votes to one (421 to 60). Finally (not to multiply quotations any further), the authoritative *Dictionary of National Biography* says of the Education Act of 1870: 'Gladstone had little to do with the great Education Bill of this year. . . . He left it almost entirely to William Edward Forster, though he occasionally made concessions to the Church which seriously offended dissenters. He was, in truth, a denominationalist, and had no sympathy with the unsectarian teaching of religion in Board schools.'

Yet, without so much as a scrap of evidence, the *Evening Post* asserts, in the most positive manner that, at that very period, Gladstone—the strict 'denominationalist'—stood stoutly for a 'policy' of ejection of religion from the schools, 'exactly' as it is now ejected by law in New Zealand.

But, even if Gladstone were proved to be as great a foe, as he ever was a warm friend, of denominational religious education, such a circumstance would not in the smallest degree affect the real issues of this discussion.

## II.—ARCHBISHOP TEMPLE MISQUOTED.

Archbishop Temple was the second of the three noted Englishmen who were quoted by the *Evening Post* as 'authorities' who took their stand with that *Wellington* daily for the utter exclusion of religion from the school-processes of education. 'Archbishop Temple,' said the *Post*, 'was not an atheist, yet he