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# HOLIDAY PAPERS

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BY

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*Commissioner of Education*

THE EDUCATION THAT CONCERNS NEW YORK  
INHERENT ELEMENTS OF POWER IN A SYSTEM OF SCHOOLS  
RELIGION, MORALS, ETHICS, AND THE SCHOOLS

STATE OF NEW YORK  
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
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THE EDUCATION THAT CONCERNS  
NEW YORK





## THE EDUCATION THAT CONCERNS NEW YORK

Ordinarily we discuss schools. There is reason enough for it. The Constitution requires the maintenance of a State system of schools. The Education Law alone covers three hundred pages in our consolidated laws. The people of the State have \$345,009,101 invested in school property. In the last school year we raised by public tax \$44,421,231.08 for school purposes, and the total expenditure of the people of the State for education mounted up to \$74,423,825.14. No other money for public uses is paid so cheerfully. It must be a very deep concern, a universal enthusiasm, that is so nobly expressed. Eagerness and idealism must be bent upon some great end. For once, at least, let us discuss that.

It is a large mass of people that is at work at this thing. The federal census figures for 1910, just announced, show that we have 9,113,614 people. That is just about one-tenth of all the people in the forty-eight states and territories and the District of Columbia. It equals the population of nineteen of these states and territories taken together. It exceeds the population of every one of thirty-two independent sovereignties of the world. The mass of people is not only large, but it is rapidly growing larger. Since the year 1900 there have been 1,844,720 people added to our numbers. The number added is about equal to the entire population of Maine and Connecticut together, and it exceeds by 85,000 the entire population of Delaware, Maine, Nevada, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Wyoming, all taken together. The increase is greater than the population of any one of twenty-nine states in 1900, or of any one of twenty-six now. It was an increase of more than 25 per cent in the ten years. The increase in the whole country is less than 21 per cent. New York is growing even more rapidly than the central western states. It is a steady growth. We have more than doubled our numbers in the last forty years. So we did in the forty years before that. Doubtless we will do so again in the next forty years. Great numbers from other states and other countries are continually casting their lot with us. We have more Jerseyites

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Address before the New York State Teachers Association at Rochester, Wednesday evening, December 28, 1910.

than there are in Trenton, and more of the sons and daughters of Connecticut than there are in Hartford. More Massachusetts people than there are in Springfield and Worcester together, have climbed the fences and trudged the trails towards the lights that they have seen over the Berkshires. We have more Irishmen than there are in Dublin, more Germans than there are in Hamburg, more Scandinavians than there are in Stockholm, and more from beyond the Baltic and the Adriatic than there are in St Petersburg. New York has about as many people as all Canada and Cuba together. Great nations are troubled about the numbers of their people going to America. Every nation under the sun is making its contribution. More than a million people cross the sea every year to find a home in this land of opportunity, and millions upon millions more are dreaming of the possibility of doing so. New York has had, and will continue to have, the brunt, the benefit, and the burden of it.

All this we must have whether we will or no. So far we have been able to turn it to our advantage. The mixing of blood, and the mingling of brains, and the bringing together of the noblest accomplishments and the highest hopes of all the peoples of the earth have warmed, and quickened, and uplifted us. First of all, our State has many and great churches; and they work together in fine contrast with the conditions, of which Champlain tells us, when Catholic and Calvinist "fell to with their fists on questions of faith," and when they buried a priest and minister in the same grave "to see if they could be quiet together there." With early and constant insistence upon religious toleration and peace, we have kept in the lead of American commerce and manufactures. New York has twice as many corporations as any other state. In the first year of the federal corporation tax, New York paid one-fifth of all the corporation taxes of the country and twice as much as any other state. She is very close to the heart of the monetary world, and sometimes has reason to suspect that she *is* the heart. She has built up the greatest publishing business in the world; she is doing and writing enough to publish; she is turning out artists who put attractive faces upon her affairs, poets who sing her praises, and scholars who are letting her rivals see that she no longer concedes to them the exclusive privilege of writing her history and fixing her status. She is at least contributing quite as much as any other state to the scientific research and the professional progress which, associated

with moral character, is the vital basis of improved living. She has no serious rival in the magnitude of her public works and utilities, in the extent of her organized benefactions, in the scientific discrimination with which she cares for her criminal and dependent classes. No other society in America has so many dead weights; no other political organization has such strains upon its disposition to do and its power to resist. But New York is carrying her burden in a brave and sane way, and fighting the subtle enemies of her moral life with a heroism that gives her new strength and confidence day by day. And, quite as important as all the rest, the greater number is coming to have a better appreciation of the toleration, industry, sense, and heroism which have made our history; a surer understanding of the basis of our culture; a keener sense of the value of our opportunities; and a fuller realization of the obligations which each owes to all the others in our present society, and to all who may come after.

With all these factors in the compelling cause; with full knowledge that a great free state has legal competency to do whatsoever it sees fit to do for the uplifting of its people; and in the light of the always enlarging necessities, resources, and political independence, we may interpret without difficulty the concern about education which the people of the State have somewhat expressed in their Constitution and their laws.

*Foremost of all it is the solemn decree of the people of the State of New York that every normal child in the State, without any exception whatever, shall have an elementary education.* The purpose of the people of the State of New York in this behalf has steadily grown more and yet more determined. It has repeatedly been thwarted and the common schools have many times been menaced. The effort to found them upon the Constitution had been made more than once before 1894, and had failed. When the first Constitution was made, popular education had made little headway in America, and in New York the English government had persistently blocked all efforts in its behalf. Nevertheless, and notwithstanding the fact that the convention finished its work in great haste because of the advance of the British army, it is probable that there would have been some recognition of its importance in the first Constitution had not John Jay been called from the convention by the sudden death of his mother. He was the principal author of the instrument, and nine days after the Sunday upon which it was adopted he wrote to Gouv-

erneur Morris and Robert R. Livingston, expressing his regret that he could not have remained to insert a clause "for the support and encouragement of literature." It is worth noting that the omission of all reference to education in the original Constitution left the Legislature free to set up the dual system of educational administration which continued till 1904. The constitutional convention of 1801 had but limited powers and they were wholly apart from education. The convention of 1821 was fully occupied by politics and the canals, and satisfied such educational enthusiasm as it had with a provision that the common school fund already established "shall be inviolably appropriated and applied to the support of common schools throughout this State." Of course the State, like all the states, had got no further than the encouragement of the people to sustain common schools. The convention of 1846 had education thrust upon it, and met the subject in a muddled way. Rejecting many propositions for putting education in the Constitution, it finally adopted these two sections:

The Legislature shall provide for the free education and instruction of every child of the State in the common schools now established or which shall hereafter be established therein.

The Legislature shall, at the same time, provide for raising the necessary taxes in each school district to carry into effect the provisions contained in the preceding section.

This was rather weak. It left popular education to school districts and only empowered the Legislature to authorize such taxation for education as the people of the districts should think well to impose upon themselves. Weak as it was, the convention, for some reason which is not now known, just before adjournment reconsidered and struck out even so much.

The convention of 1867 considered the whole subject seriously, for Mr George William Curtis, afterward a Regent and Chancellor of the University of the State of New York, was chairman of the committee on education. The committee recommended three propositions: the first related to educational funds and Cornell University, and was adopted; the second abolished the Board of Regents and unified the educational activities under the Superintendent of Public Instruction and a State Board of Education, and was defeated; the third provided that "instruction in the common schools and union schools of this State shall

be free under such regulations as the Legislature shall provide," which was stricken out; but later the convention adopted a section in these words: "The Legislature shall provide for the free instruction in the common schools of the State, of all persons between seven and twenty years of age." It was proposed to include a provision for the compulsory attendance, for at least three months each year, of every child between seven and thirteen years of age, but the convention refused. However, only so much of the work of the convention as related to the judiciary was adopted by the people.

So we see how laboriously the State traveled a rugged and uphill road before coming to the common school section of the Constitution of 1894. That had come to be a vital step in the outworking of our democracy. Nothing but anxiety about the rights of each person, and solicitude about the strength and durability of our free institutions, could have sustained such persistent pursuit of the principle, and the words chosen to bolt down popular education to the bedrock of the Constitution must be deemed to express the very deliberate intentions of the people of the State.

Those words form a new section and are as follows:

Art. 9. Sec. 1. Common Schools. The Legislature shall provide for the maintenance and support of a system of free common schools wherein all the children of the State may be educated.

This section brought the constitutional sanction to the legal and educational theory already evolved concerning common schools. It not only encourages and aids free schools, but obliges the Legislature to provide for them; and not only to provide for some schools, but for enough schools so situated as to accommodate all the children of the State; and not merely for enough schools, but for schools related together in a *system of free common schools*. It leaves the matter to no uncertainties of local situation or feeling. It imposes upon the lawmaking power of the State responsibility for a State system of education which shall be sufficient and suitable for all the children of the people; and it places no limitations upon the grade of education which may be provided in common schools.

It does more. This section has been aptly called the "Children's Bill of Rights." It confers a definite, fundamental *right* to a common school education upon every child in the State. It sep-

arates popular education wholly from the domain of privilege, or benevolence, or magnanimity; by inevitable implication it forbids any mingling together of these things; it places the child's right to an education upon a level with his right to life and security and liberty and happiness, and makes it as far above charity as his right to breathe the air is above the privilege of being sent to the poorhouse.

The child can not enforce this right for himself, and so the law undertakes to do it for him. It assumes that in most cases his parents will gladly see that he has his rights, but it knows that sometimes there are no parents, and that some parents are not worth having. It specifies what, at least, he must have as his right, and it calls upon all good citizens, and it charges all public magistrates and all officers of the schools, to see that he gets it.

It requires that he shall be in a school where *reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, English language, and geography, are taught in English* during every day that the school is in session, from his seventh year, if he lives in a city or in a village of more than five thousand people, and from his eighth year if he lives elsewhere in the State, and that this shall continue until his fourteenth year is reached, in any event, and until his sixteenth year is reached unless he is regularly engaged in some useful employment. The schools have to be in session at least 160 days each year, and must be taught by certificated teachers. If not in a public school, then he must have instruction which is equivalent to that provided in the public schools.

It is pitiable to see how many dissolute parents there are who are wholly indifferent to the training of their children, and how many shiftless ones there are who will keep their children from school for trivial work. It is disheartening to learn how many merchants and manufacturers will employ children, so far as they dare, in violation of law, because the labor is cheap and they may thereby enlarge their gains. And it is nauseating to see how many officers of the law will barter the rights of children for the favor of the unthinking or the corrupt.

There is no concern of the Empire State that is more imperative, no direction that is more mandatory, than this. If with our great and mixed population and our economic and political situations we are to take an indifferent attitude concerning attendance at school, there will be small hope. The Education

Department offers no apology in any quarter for its insistence upon the absolute universality of elementary education. It is the injunction of the State. The Commissioner of Education is charged by the people and the law with the duty of gathering the waifs of the State into the schools, and he will have it done so far as he can. It is our business to go into the stores and mills and factories, and upon the farms, and into the kitchens and cellars and garrets and sweatshops, to find children whose bodies and minds and souls are being starved, and give them the hand of the law to lead them out of the darkness and into the light. The hard circumstances of unfortunate or unnatural parents will not dismay us. If there is need of benevolence, let the fact be known and charity will do its perfect work. We will punish, so far as we can, all employers who, for gain, starve the souls of children and menace the stability of the State. We will drive from his place, if we can, any superintendent or other officer of police, or any committing magistrate, who for any reason dares to put himself above the law. We need more help and better help; interest in the subject ought to be broader and keener than it is; dependents and hangers-on will not do for attendance officers; all good citizens are asked to cooperate and all officers and teachers of the schools are charged to exert every effort to enforce the right of every child of the State, without any exception, to the simple elements which will give him the open chance to live and succeed in our civilization.

Children will have to take their own chances beyond the "three Rs," but so much is not to be left to any chance. Without so many grades and so many books and such slow progress as we now have; without so much mixing in of incidental and subordinate matters; without such an atmosphere of theory and mystery; these elements of knowledge are to be drilled into every child in the State until he has a grip upon them which will never let go. When that work is completed, but only then, he may be left to his chances.

There is no avoidance of the fact that, beyond the elementary schools, our education has lacked balance. It has been over-literary and bookish. It has led overwhelmingly to the professions. That has responded to our prevailing ambitions. The greater number of rather capable and aggressive spirits have sought work that they could do with their heads. What have been left of the more aggressive ones have become business

leaders; the others have become hired men. All are fighting for chances and profits with hitherto unknown implements of warfare. A good many professionals are learning that they might have fared better as foremen, and probably would have had a yet happier time as capable workmen. The business leaders are insisting that our education is very resultless because it does not square with the ways they have invented; and the workmen are looking for the education which will relieve their children from hand labor, the only thing which they recognize as work, and give them more ease and greater rewards.

Both the good of the State and the right of the child demand as much opportunity for training in commercial knowledge and in the mechanical and agricultural industries, as in the scientific and philosophic branches which lead into the professions; the fundamental principle of our democratic system demands that the State shall neither assert nor imply that one employment is better than another, because that is a question of individual gifts and adaptability; and so long as men and women live, they will have to make their elections, stand or fall upon their own inherent qualities, and take the consequences. The only plan is equality of opportunity, and the only hope is that by reason of this the inherent qualities of the people may unfold in the equilibrium which gives society the stability that alone can still further enlarge the opportunities of all.

There has been a very decided movement throughout this country in recent years in the direction of industrial education. New York has led in this movement. The progress has been sufficient to stir some criticism. There are some precious souls who fear that we are in danger of becoming too materialistic; that Latin and Greek and poetry and music will fall into disuse, and that the people of the State of New York will forget about the kinds of learning which relate exclusively to the mind and bear upon the things of the spirit. They apprehend, I suppose, that there may be shoe shops on Wall street and sawmills on Broadway. They see the time when they may need a doctor and not find one, and when their sons may hunger for a church and there be none to go to. Let there be no prolongation of distress on this account. There is no danger. Our democracy is to be worked out both educationally and industrially just as much as it is politically and religiously. New York will never relax her grasp upon the things which culture the minds and souls of men, but



it is to be hoped that she will realize better than she has that the finest and the deepest culture comes through work; that work by the hand and work by the head are yokefellows in our free civilization; and that both the rights and the prosperity of her people hinge upon the professional and industrial equilibrium of her tax-supported education.

The educational road in New York, it is hoped, will be a trunk line, which all the children will be obliged to travel until they have the elementary instruments of knowledge and are within the possibilities of a self-sustaining vocation; from that point it will separate into several branches to which the State attaches equal importance and concerning which it affords to every one his own free choice. One of these branches will lead to the literary, another to the commercial, and another to the industrial high school. These branches will in time lead respectively into the colleges and the professional schools, into business, and into craftsmanship. And about all of the branch lines and all of the stations, the State has concern.

We have been speaking of the rights of the individual in the educational opportunities which the State provides. *It is fundamental that they shall be equal.* If the political power of the plain people were not to prevail, the State might proceed upon lines and set up institutions that would be without interest, or wholly inaccessible, to millions of people. If the State must not grant special favors to individuals, it must not allow an influential class to shape public education to its exclusive or particular advantage. It must have not only the rights, but the interests, of all in mind when projecting its educational policies. It must not only provide storehouses of learning, but it must make proper roads so that the diligent can get to them. There are great nations which excel in special knowledge and have many noble schools, and yet have things arranged so that only a few favored people can have any share in that knowledge or access to those schools. Their scholars and statesmen would often deny that, and they would deny it with undoubted sincerity. They would say that really earnest persons could break their way into the upper schools. We do not agree with that: all boys and girls who have the latent qualities of great men and women are not breaking their way through such walls; often they need to be encouraged by bright lights, by open roads, and by a kindly face; and very often such encouragement brings out the sanest

and strongest characters in a civilization. The open opportunity and the encouragement have quite as much to do with it as ability and ambition. We not only assert the equal rights of all, but we must make arrangements which will get results.

The results depend not only upon the advanced schools but also upon the roads leading to them. The quality and extent of all the education of our State is vitally dependent upon what we are doing in the advanced schools, and upon the connections between the advanced and the middle and lower schools. It is not only dependent upon what the advanced school is doing within itself, but even more upon its feeling towards the lower schools and all the rest of the world. There can be no warmth of feeling on the part of the teachers and children in the elementary and secondary schools, or on the part of the masses of people, towards the advanced schools, unless there is warmth of feeling moving in the other direction. If there is a college in America that is educationally and socially exclusive, it ought to pull up stakes and take its fastidious admirers and go to a country that is socially and politically and educationally more exclusive than our country ever will be. It is out of its latitude in America. And while a college might do good work upon a somewhat exclusive basis, a "university" is no university at all except upon the basis of freedom of all knowledge, and unless it has wide gateways and gives cordial welcome to all sincere students. Happily there are few very exclusive colleges and universities in America and probably none in the State of New York.

But New York has never done much for her colleges in any general way, and while they have done a great deal for the people of the State, it is clear enough that the State ought to be much more concerned about their doing a great deal more. Unless the colleges and universities are made freer to the most deserving youth of the State, and unless the higher learning permeates all the schools on more rational lines than it has yet done, the State will find itself at a decided educational disadvantage with states whose people have proved themselves wiser than we are. And colleges and universities must have more help before they can do more than they are doing. They not only need to have more money, but they must be made to know what they are wanted to do. If a whole people wants something done, the way will be found for doing it. To put it in another way, no young man should be kept from a school of any grade

merely because he dare not assume responsibility for the tuition fees. This is far from saying that all who might apply should be accepted in every school. Doubtless too many who can pay fees are accepted now. Serious purpose and ability to do the work, rather than length of the pocketbook, should be the requirements for admission. Right there is where the state university has an advantage over the endowed university. In the state university no one is kept out because his wallet is short, and no one has to be kept in because the university is unwilling to affront a donor, to humiliate a social circle, or to lose tuition fees. Nor is it wholly a matter of individual right or opportunity. The strength of the universities and the very vital interests of society are dependent upon poor and eager students with ability to do the work, being brought into the universities. The fact that they are short of money may be a real advantage to them, and the qualities which they bring from homes close to the soil are more than likely to be of real advantage to learning and to society.

The State itself, as well as some of the people of the State, is concerned about the matter. All of the people and all of the educational activities of a State are bound together. Learning not only needs the stimulus which new blood and outside ambition may give it, but the State will find its strongest support in the distribution throughout every town of men and women who have been educated in institutions of the higher learning as a part of the policy of the State. This is as desirable in an old state as in a new one; in thickly settled as in thinly settled territory; in New York as in Michigan, or Nebraska, or Colorado. And there is no older state in the Union which might not well modify a rather common impression about what real education is and about the pressing need of it in the more economical and efficient management of the businesses it is carrying on. Accepted educational policies, with settled traditions and millions of money behind them, mightily affect the lives of states. It is vital that the influence be a sane and salutary one. To be sane and salutary, it must come from, and react upon, the whole people rather than an exclusive part of the people.

*Our public education must be balanced; must apply to life and promote work, and this must include public life and public works as well as the rest.* Our life is complex and our work multifarious. We can not train for every situation in life and for everything that

is to be done. But we can carry pupils so far on differentiated lines, from which they may select, that they may catch sight of real opportunity and catch hold of the things that are to be done. To have it so is even more important to the state than to the individual. The management of our railroads is a great business which bears often and heavily upon all of us. The railroads have been managed by "practical" men, frequently in uneducated, extravagant, and too often in dishonest ways. The roads need to be managed by men who are either thoroughly educated in the physical sciences and the philosophy of finance that are inseparable from practical experience in the operations of any such great business, or who will call to their aid, and defer to the judgment of, men who are so educated. And it is to be hoped that it is gradually penetrating their minds that railroading is as dependent as any other great business upon the common moralities. It was said the other day by an experienced man, speaking from a responsible place, that he could tell the railroads of the country how they might save a million dollars a day. Generalizations are dangerous. But scientific knowledge, associated with practical experience, and undoubted honesty, and a real concern about individual rights and the best public service, might not only save a half million a day, but gain the roads a new share in the appreciation and support of the people, which would more than make up the other half million. And as these things enter into railroading, so craftsmanship enters into manufacturing, and the training of both hand and mind enters into craftsmanship. So it is with banking and mining and road-making and agriculture, and with every large business interest of our marvelous State. The western states are calling scholarship to the help of their business activities more than we are. We will very likely do it more and more, and it is well to remind ourselves that the way to hasten and enlarge this is to lose no time in training an abundance of "practical," industrial, and business scholarship which will create the needs and have an ear open to all the calls.

The education that is needed in personal and corporate business is preeminently needed in the doings of the cities and villages and in the business of the State itself. For example, think of the appalling waste in putting up buildings, in putting down pavements, and in laying out sewage and water systems, through bungling methods and the use of improper materials and defective

specifications. I am not thinking of any lack of honesty about it, for it seems to me that the average of honesty in official life is as high as, and probably higher than, out of it. Nor do I overlook the fact that public business is often and necessarily subject to hindrances and increased cost to which private affairs do not have to submit. I am thinking only of the fact that the carrying out of such public works is the exclusive business of thoroughly educated and experienced architects and engineers, and that the control is too often in the hands of men who know little about such matters and make the sorry mistake of thinking that they appear to be stronger men when they refuse to admit it. The same thing is as true in infinite ways of the business of the State, as of the pavements and sewage systems of the cities and villages; probably it is not so much so of the public buildings, the barge-canal and the highways, because these works are so very great that they have of necessity passed into the hands of professional experts; but it is no overstating of what every one knows to say that very much of the business of the State would be better and more economically done if it could have the service of more thoroughly educated men. It mitigates but little to say that the situation has improved; it has improved just enough to show that it needs to improve a great deal more, and the only way to improve it more is to educate the men who will condemn the plans which they know to be defective and the practices which they know to be bad. The great need of the business of the State, as of the subdivisions thereof, is the aid of more educated men, and the only hope of the State is in the fact that we already have so many of them. If all the people of the State could be trained in the knowledge that work which can be well done by none but experts must be committed to experts alone, and that this applies to the work of administrative officers and to that of legislators, as well as to that of architects and engineers, the State would advance by leaps and bounds and immediately become a model for every other state in the Union.

*And there is occasion enough for the State to be much concerned about its professional life generally.* There are other professions than architecture and engineering, and there are at least two — medicine and law — upon which the happiness of our people and the stability of our civilization are even more dependent. It is wholly within the facts to say that New York has done more than any other state to assure preliminary education and expert train-

ing in these professions. She is doing more, and doing it more decisively, all the time. But she is not going half far enough. At least, the conditions are more than twice as bad as she can afford to permit them to be. There is a philosophic basis for law; it rests upon conscience and it has been shaped by human experience; and yet it has become so perverted and beclouded by incompetent or vicious lawyers, and legal procedure has become so cumbersome, that the ordinary man will submit to wrong because he dare not intrust his just rights to attorneys and courts, for he knows that the result, no matter what it may be, will not warrant the cost in time, money, and humiliation.

The situation in medicine is even worse than in law. There is a scientific basis for medicine. It has been found in recent years and has come to be very exact. Many of the older physicians have made studious application of it to their experience, and scientific study coupled with experience becomes doubly reliable and useful. Thousands of younger men have been and are being fundamentally and thoroughly trained in it. Yet there are thousands of men in this State who are certified to be professionally competent to have the issues of human life and death in their hands, when they have no grasp whatever upon what the scientific world knows about the cause of disease and the means of cure, and they go blundering and bluffing along, with hideous results that make intelligent laymen shudder. What must intelligent physicians think, and why don't they speak more emphatically? Is there any relief? Yes, qualifiedly, but only in a long time in any event. It does not need large imagination to believe that there would be some trouble about requiring all lawyers and physicians who are more than thirty years of age to take the Regents preliminary examinations, and then the professional examinations, and abide the result. It is easier to head off youngsters than to reform veterans. All men and women have the right to aspire, but society must protect itself. It seems to be moving in the right directions, but not fast enough or hard enough. The growth of the State and the changes in conditions outstrip our efforts. There are two or three times too many lawyers and physicians of one grade or another, for their own or the public good. The examinations should exclude twice or thrice as many as they do. Frauds upon the professional examinations might well be punished by imprisonment; certainly by permanent exclusion from a profession. All schools of law and medicine oper-

ating for personal gain ought to be suppressed. There are schools enough which are operating or which may operate for educational ends alone; they should be upheld and the rest put down.

The concern of the State about this large educational matter demands that the fine characters, the educated and honorable men with whom the legal and medical professions are abundantly supplied, shall be the first and go the farthest to bring their great professions out of the prejudicial situations into which modern scientific knowledge and new economic conditions have forced them. With that help, the duties of the State Education Department in this behalf will be relatively easy; without it, it will be very hard to attain measurable relief and reform.

*Erroneous standards menace education.* With so many to express opinions and so many propositions to deal with, it is hard to come to conclusions and sometimes difficult to distinguish between true and false valuations. Of course, the universal human ambition has abundant opportunity in America. There are evangelists, agitators, speculators, even "plungers," in education. New York knows very well that we have a complex civilization, and that the slender education available to the masses two or three generations ago will not suffice now. The fundamentals of education have changed but little; the mind and its processes are much the same. The change is in the enlargement of educational opportunity to more people. If the opportunity is to avail much to them they will have to be trained in a few things at a time; in the few things that will give them the power to do for themselves; and it will have to be done in an exact and not a confused way. The great drawback to the education of our day is confusion of mind, of theories, of values, and of processes. There is a political menace to education; there are men and women who seek to attract a following in order to advance themselves. There is a business menace to education; men and women invent educational schemes to make money. There is a benevolent menace to education; people often weaken educational instrumentalities in mistaken efforts to do good. There is a social menace to education; there are people who insist that gabble and jewels and audacity and straining the King's English shall be taken for learning. But there is no menace to nineteen-twentieths of our education, to all that is done in the primary and secondary schools, so serious as the demand that almost everything shall be taught at once to children of all ages; and this is particularly so

when what is attempted is supported by pedagogical and psychological theories that many common people feel obliged to take seriously through fear of being thought unlearned. Surely enough there is need to return to the "simple life" in education as in many other ways. The State of New York is disposed to open all manner of educational roads to all people; but she is justified in insisting that the roads shall have some reasonable purpose, shall have good grades and go somewhere, shall not be laid out in circles for the hilarity of pleasure-seekers, shall not be endangered by pitfalls and precipices, and shall not run into squirrel tracks and end in the tops of the trees. Of all things, we need in the lower schools fewer branches, taught more systematically and until there is a definite result. Research and experimentation are very necessary; a life given to investigation is not a dear price to pay for a grain of new truth; but let the work be done by men of scientific training, and let it be carried on in the classrooms and laboratories of the universities where the subjects will be guinea pigs, or where the seasoned humans who are being experimented upon will not take it overseriously and so will not be harmed by it.

*Of course the main educational concern of New York is that her people shall be trained in common honesty.* Where that is accomplished, much of the other training takes care of itself; if it is not assured, the other training is of little avail. There has in recent years been much discussion of the means and methods of moral education. It has been widely assumed that there has been special need of it because people have become particularly dishonest. I suspect that this impression is due to a moral quickening that has become quite apparent in most parts of the world, quite as much as to more dishonesty and crime. Opportunity and publicity have had something to do with producing this impression. Probably the quest for gain or the purpose to get even has had more to do with it. The man who shoes my horses uses iron tempered to wear only ten days when it should go twenty days; he does it to make me buy shoes twice as often as I used to do. That is not because he intends to be dishonest, but because he is trying to recoup against the iron men and the transportation companies, or he is trying to get even with the butcher and the grocer. He copies the methods of others. It is useless for me to go to another shop, because all horseshoers have bound themselves together to do the same thing. And they have copied the



methods of the ironmasters and railroad men and all the rest. not only in the enlargement of profits, but also in the avoidance of competition. Nor is that all: if I were to find a way to get horseshoes that were better tempered and would last longer, the blacksmiths' union would doubtless appeal to the Legislature for some sort of a law that would stop me from doing so, because they would reason that that would be the method of the corporations. In that they would not be far from the fact. It is collectivity against individualism, too much aided by the laws of the country. It is not because the blacksmith is dishonest; it is because he thinks it is his only way to get on, and doubtless he fears that tomorrow a great corporation will be organized to cut prices until it gets control of all the horseshoeing in the city. He is going on the principle of the college freshman who "swipes" a sophomore hat to get square for the slight offense of having his diminutive mustache removed. Whatever the theory, there is danger in it. It is not so bad among college boys. It is not so horribly bad for me: I can subsist. It is bad for the blacksmith to deceive one who gives him work. To do less for me than he pretends to do for the money I pay him tends to make him a dishonest man. The same is of course true of the ironmaster and the railroad manager and the packer and the butcher. It is not true of them alone. Men with many of the finest qualities often resort to questionable methods, and the masses imitate their methods in order to have some part in their success or in order to prevent being altogether destroyed by their overreaching and ingenuity.

We have been passing through an era of studied attempt by the seller to mislead the buyer through subtle and sneaking methods, in order to make inordinate gains. It has entered into our commercial affairs until the thing is pretty nearly universal. Associated with the propensity for organization, it is warping the thinking and menacing the moral character of the great and small, high and low, rich and poor, alike. It is not admitted to be dishonest, but the separating wall is not a very high one. It is certainly degrading. It is true that there are offsets. Independence, benevolence, public spirit, all the means of both intellectual and moral culture, are abundant. But no system of debits and credits will justify compromises in moral matters. The State which goes before all others in merchandise and commerce and banking is more concerned about the moral tone of her

business life than about literature and science and music and charities and public works, all taken together. Culture is always associated with native honesty because integrity engages in works which make for culture, but literature and music and all of the external accomplishments may be made the attractive cover of meanness and the efficient instruments of evil.

Then let us summarize for the concluding word. It is the concern of New York that every child in the State who is fourteen years old shall be able to read and write; that the industrial pursuits shall have equality of educational opportunity with the professional; that all the people of the State shall have the equal chance, and therefore free education and liberty of selection to the limits of their needs, their merits, and their attainments; that in the lower schools, at least, no more shall be attempted than can be completely done, and that there shall be less experimenting, less confusion, and more exact results; that all of the desirable factors in our complex civilization and our common life shall have equitable support from our collective efforts; that whatever is done shall accord with the scientific knowledge and the balanced thinking of the world without obligation to use or to prove all of it in all grades of schools; that the ignorance and incompetence and dishonesty in professions certified by the State to be learned shall be materially reduced; that the standards of learning shall be true and high; and that cheerful and tolerant moral character shall go before all else.

Education that has life and enters into life; education that makes a living and makes life worth living; education that can use English to express itself; education that does not assume that a doctor must be an educated man, while a mechanic or a farmer can not be; education that trains children in cleanness, obedience, respect, exactness, proficiency, that requires every one to think for himself and yet tolerate adverse opinions, that holds out to every one a fair chance but makes him know that he must earn by hard work all the success he is likely to have, and that drills into every one the vital fact that there is no success worth having except on the basis of truth and justice; education that appeals to the masses, and makes better citizens and a nobler State; education that supports the imperial position of the State, inspires rational education in all of the states, and exalts democracy in all the world; *that* is the education that concerns New York.

INHERENT ELEMENTS OF POWER IN A  
SYSTEM OF SCHOOLS



## INHERENT ELEMENTS OF POWER IN A SYSTEM OF SCHOOLS

It is true in a peculiar sense that the State of New York has a "system of schools." The Constitution provides not merely for schools, but for a "system of free common schools." The term *common schools* does not mean elementary schools alone, but high schools as well; schools of whatever grade, to which all the people have relations that are alike or common. A university may easily be, and in America often is, a common school, the capstone of a system of common schools. But our system of common schools did not grow out of the Constitution. It grew up out of the history of the State, indeed, out of history that was made before there was a State; it entered into the policy and progress of the State until it forced itself into the Constitution. Above all and before all the states, and in advance of any constitutional sanction, New York bound her schools together into a state system. In 1784 she passed the initial legislation for binding colleges and academies together in the "University of the State of New York"; in 1795 she made the initial appropriation for binding the common schools together in a system; in 1812 she created the office of State Superintendent of Common Schools. No other state had then thought of such epoch-making steps as these. And these steps were only the first in the process of concentration. There have been many others. The course of the Regents as to the advanced schools; the supervisory and directory and judicial powers of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; the creation of the State school funds, both elementary and academic; the always enlarging State appropriations to schools that complied with the requirements of *the system*; the academic examinations; the central control over the certification of teachers; the teachers uniform examinations; the examinations for admission to the professions; the State courses and syllabuses of study; the steadily enlarging activities of the two State educational departments; then their compulsory unification; and now the new Education Law and the new State Education Building, are only the more important links that have bound the

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Address before the Associated Academic Principals of New York State at Syracuse, Thursday evening, December 29, 1910.

schools of the State into a system more highly concentrated than obtains in any other state.

In this system almost two millions of young people are now being taught by more than fifty thousand teachers. The cost is enormous, but the people pay it cheerfully. The ends in view are of the very highest importance to the happiness of the people and the prosperity of the State. What are the inherent elements which such a great system must have to accomplish these ends? We are officers and teachers of this system of schools. We have much to do with making its character and shaping its course. Many of us have been associated with it for a long time. It is only fair to assume that there is not one of us who would not make reasonable sacrifices for it. Let us put the question to ourselves. Let us try to answer it with all honesty and as intelligently as we can. I wish you might frame the answers. I will have to do it, but if my answers are not correct, you may mark me down on them. In some way let us get at the answers that will stand the tests among nine millions of people, and that may be distinctly self-assertive before the educational opinion of the world.

Of course it is fundamental that a system of schools must have public confidence. The people who support it must believe in what it is doing. It must appeal to their interests, and in ways that they will understand. This does not mean that every one, everywhere, must understand and believe in it. It does not even mean that every hamlet or district must intelligently sympathize with it. That would be too much to expect. Right there is the strength of a system of schools, over a school. But the prevailing public opinion and the common feeling of the state must sustain it strongly, and local feeling must ordinarily do so. A school system can do nothing without that, and can have it only by deserving it.

A school system must have the self-respect and the assertiveness which are in part dependent upon being decently housed and suitably provided for. In a prosperous state its accommodations must steadily improve. They must keep up with the advancing standards of living. The schoolhouses must steadily advance in dignity and healthfulness and attractiveness. We have unique central powers to compel this, but they are exercised conservatively and with regret, for it is much better that the city or district which must bear the expense, shall upon its own motion build or improve a schoolhouse. Ordinarily it does so. If not, a suggestion is generally enough. We are doing very well in this behalf.

Last year the cities, villages and districts of the State expended \$5,816,828.42 for enlarging and improving school accommodations. But the building itself is not all. Cleanliness and attractiveness, outside and inside, are quite as important. Teachers will have to fight for this, and it is worth fighting for. A good schoolhouse, and above all, a clean one, stirs the pride of the people and quickens all the good impulses of the school. But the school must have the qualities which command respect and make it seem at home in such a house.

No system of schools can have power without *scholarship* that is steadily growing stronger. Of course the aggregate of scholarship does grow stronger in our system. But does it relatively, commensurately? Has the scholarship of our school system kept pace with the growth of the State and the enlargement in the expense? Has it kept in the front rank of the scholarship of the country? Has scholarship of the first rank been diffused through all grades of schools in New York as it might have been and is bound to be? Have we gone before other states in deepening it, extending it, and in diffusing it through all the schools?

These questions are both hard and delicate. I make no implications against the great body of teachers. As a class, they are the most conscientious people in the world. The sacrifices which they very commonly make for self-improvement force one to inquire whether their eagerness for knowledge might not be better satisfied in some other way, and whether the kind of training which the leaders of education are giving them is of the most worth.

The fact is, and it may as well be stated bluntly, that it has come to be very difficult to get the needed men and women of really first-rate scholarship in either the State Education Department or in the schools. It is saying nothing against the State Education Department to say that it needs more men and women of good strong scholarship. There are nearly three hundred of us there. The minor vacancies are filled well enough under the civil service laws by boys and girls freshly from the high schools. In the course of time they become proficient in routine and their compensation reaches somewhere from six to nine hundred dollars per year. Only the exceptional few ever come to carry responsibility independently. The greater number never gain either general or special scholarship, or reliable and independent scholarship. They have to be content with humble work and small pay. Vacancies in most of the important positions have to be filled under the civil service laws, and it is going none too far to say that this gen-

erally hinders and often prevents us from securing new men and women of really first-class training and ability, for they are occupied, are not often looking for places, and if they are willing to think of making a change in situation they will not sign applications and enter examinations because they do not want their present employers to know that they are willing to make a change in employment, nor do they wish to accept the chances and the consequences of not getting first place in a competition.

The Civil Service Commissioners try to be helpful to us, but, for obvious reasons, hesitate to assume the responsibility which I think the law expects them to take in connection with high grade positions in the education service. They are trying to prove that practically all positions, no matter how high or expert, may be best filled by competition. That is not always true. It is never true unless there are enough candidates of first-class ability whose eagerness for appointment is sufficient to dispose them to watch for announcements of civil service examinations and enter the competitions. There is always a lack of such candidates for really expert service. If the higher positions in the State education service are not expert, there are none that are. If that is not established by reason, it is established by the fact that we have to search for candidates, urge them to enter the competition, and in the end often fail to get a civil service eligible list which meets our needs. Scholarship and expertness are above announcing themselves as seeking an opportunity to work, and they refuse the humiliation that is involved in competition. Reputation has been earned by things accomplished, is not expressed in examinations, and is not willing to submit to the determinations of commissions that may not be expert at all or, at least, not in the subject to be passed upon. Therefore, when the high places are subjected to competition, the result is bad. Some think that this must necessarily be suffered in order to keep the rabble out of lower grade places. I do not think so.

Civil service laws and the methods of their application must not only keep the unworthy from all places, but they must provide ways for filling the high places with the most capable appointees. It seems to me that the way to do this is to afford the appointing officer perfect freedom to search out desirable appointees for expert places; to negotiate with them and to tender positions subject to subsequent approval, if that is thought necessary, by the Civil Service Commission. There is little reason in forcing the Commissioner of Education, whose appointments have to be confirmed



by the Board of Regents, to take anything less than the best he can get. A university could not be operated upon that plan; neither can the State Education Department. In the meantime, our service is being leveled down rather than leveled up, while the Commission is trying to prove what will probably never be proved at all. With only a few rare exceptions, the best scholarship of the Department is found in the small number of places which are exempt from competition or in places filled by promotion examination within the Department, and not in competition with place-seekers from the outside. Often we need new blood from the outside. So we must seek relief through amendment to the civil service law or through strengthening our own scholarship. Possibly we may do both. The latter course is upon the line of least resistance and it is also in the line of our business. All seem disposed to go about it. We have the implements to do it with, and in the new Education Building we shall have the accommodations, the conveniences, and the influences through which to do it. We intend to be worthy of that new building, and, although the ambition is a high one, we intend to have the attributes which will be up to the plane of it and appear at home in it. But we can wait no longer than we must, and we are bound to seek every means from every quarter that will avail us. And the need of other means is much broader than the necessities of the Education Department because it extends to all the schools. In the schools, however, the civil service laws do not prevail.

It is saying nothing severe upon the teaching body to say that it is altogether impossible to get enough new men and women of good strong scholarship to meet the needs of the schools. It is, for well-known reasons, more difficult to get such men than such women, and it is quite as important that the teaching of the State shall not be given over to women, as it would be, if there were any danger, that it should not be given over to men. And I am not going to pretend that the whole difficulty is about getting new men of first rank as teachers; there is trouble enough with some men long in the service. Men who have been long in the schools may fairly be classified in three sections. There are too many who merely stay with the organization, and are respectable enough to keep from being shaken off by any gentle means. We all dislike harsh means. They read and write and cipher a little, but never get into the rich things of life, and never mix much with people who do things. They are able to maintain routine, and they make themselves believe, and sometimes make some other people

believe, that routine is scholarship. When they are not resenting the small pay of teachers they are thinking about pensions, and there is occasion enough for it. Of course, when the schools must depend upon such, the schools are in a sorry plight. Then there are men who are able to capitalize absurdities. They can interest conventions in novelties and get into the prints by freakishness. They discuss such things as whether kittens kill mice through inherited instinct or by reason of maternal training; and whether male kittens develop feline ferocity earlier than female kittens, and which have the more of it at adolescence; and they have scientific reasons to explain why cats run towards mice and women run away from them. Ordinary people can not avoid the suspicion that some of these gentlemen are not very profoundly trained in the physiological or psychological sciences and that they feel called upon to make up in solemnity what they lack in profundity. And, worst of all, scientific investigation and deduction are not left to scientific men in the laboratories of the universities, but unoffending teachers and helpless pupils in the lower schools have little protection against the more superficial of the "scientists"; there is no one there to confute them and they are very free to experiment and confuse without accomplishing any good. Of course, if the school had to depend upon mere agitators, the situation would be a hapless one.

But happily there are others. They carry routine steadily and gather knowledge which applies to life. Without pedantry and presumption, they mingle with people and associate in affairs. Along with the routine and along with their social relations, they gain interest in a particular thing and pursue it rather systematically. That makes scholarship. A college training is an admirable thing, but there may be scholarship without it. No teacher need be long in the schools without becoming a scholar, if the term is to be defined rationally. There is no better definition of education than that it is knowing something about a great many things and knowing a great deal about something. To say nothing of the training which went before the examinations and the certificate, service in the schools is the ready means of general culture; and systematic reading or study may surely equip a teacher to say the final word upon something that is worth knowing and that not many will know very well. The pleasure of that is exceeded only by the power which the commonness of it must give to a system of schools. And the hope of educational progress is to be realized through upholding the arms and enlarging the number of teachers who do it.

But the teaching in our system can not be sufficiently quickened from within. It needs to be reinforced from the colleges much more than it is. The existing situation is in the way of it. Teachers are not paid enough to entitle the schools to the first grade of scholarship, and, even if that were not so, the colleges will have to be more united and interested, will have to be less given to merely upbuilding themselves and more given to public service, and will have to appeal to and train more men and women who are attracted to teaching, before the situation will be materially improved.

Our New York colleges and universities are mostly endowed. Such as are not endowed are municipal and have only a local constituency. Endowed colleges are not very closely related to the common schools. It is not because they do not want to be, but because in the nature of things they can not be. They are naturally, and perhaps necessarily, very independent of taxpayers. State colleges are part and parcel of the common school system. They express the democratic advance in education. In 1888 the attendance at fifteen of the prominent endowed colleges of the country was 9980, and in 1908 it was 26,893. In 1888 the attendance at fifteen of the State colleges was 7952, and in 1908 it was 42,859. In 1898 the attendance at forty-six endowed colleges or universities was 36,907, and in 1908 it was 53,532. In 1898 the attendance at forty-six state colleges was 34,653, and in 1908 it was 70,013. Now remember that each of the state universities had accredited all of the good high schools of the state after it had brought them into articulating relations with itself, that students passed back and forth, between high school and college, with nothing to hinder, and that in each state university there was a free school of education and summer terms for teachers; and you will begin to see how the college influence is made to permeate the high schools of some other states more freely than it is able, or is likely, to do here, without some radical change in our plans.

This marvelous development of democratic universities is a movement of the very first importance in world education. It is decidedly influencing, and in a measure determining, the type of university which will be accepted here and abroad as the *American university*, because it is the natural product of our political, our religious, and our industrial democracy. While this great movement is profoundly influencing popular education in all the newer states by reason of the fact that it is both a product of our civilization and a part of the civilization's school system, the older states have both opposed its plan and refused to do anything which might do for themselves what it is doing for the newer states.

It is more than doubtful if any of the older states will ever develop great free universities on the same lines and with the same relations as in the newer states. There is a sufficient reason why it is even more doubtful in the case of New York than of the other older states. That reason appears in the existence of the University of the State of New York. It is a reason which is not as well understood as it ought to be. That is mainly because the term *university* now carries to the popular mind a different manner of institution from that of the University of the State of New York. But the Legislature used the term advisedly and properly before it was used in any other sense in this country and before there was any other university of any kind in America. There has been no need for changing the legitimate use of the term because it has since been used to describe something else. The University of the State of New York is a real university. It exercises the power of the State in chartering and supervising higher institutions of learning. It gets its strength from them when they have any strength to spare. It regulates them if they go wrong, and it administers what little is left of their estates when they die. In a word, it is the conservator of the higher learning and the bond of union between the advanced schools. It seeks to make that bond stronger. This University is here to stay. One hundred and ten years after it was created by the Legislature it was established in the Constitution. It has to do with more than the higher learning and the advanced schools. It is a part of the State Education Department. Its Board of Regents now projects and directs the educational policies of the State. They are trying to bind the higher and the middle and the lower schools in a more mutually helpful union. They are making the most of the fact that the schools of different grades in a system are interdependent; they are applying the principle that, in education, he who gives most gets most, and that meanness defeats itself. It would seem as though one very natural way in which to have the New York colleges and universities do more for the New York primary and secondary schools, in some such way as the state universities are doing for the schools below them, is to create a good number of New York State University scholarships in all the State colleges and universities, the expense of which shall be met by the State, and to provide definite methods which will encourage benefactors to enlarge the number. This has already been well considered by the higher institutions and a plan has been formulated and is ready for introduction in the Legislature.

Now I have the right to ask that this and any similar proposition shall not be obscured by the fact that I was for ten years associated with a state university. It is to be hoped that my experiences have led me to see some things more clearly than I otherwise would have done. But it would be absurd to imagine that this proposition arises out of personal experience and nothing more. That would be putting the cart ahead of the horse. I was, to my surprise, called to the University of Illinois, first by the faculty and then by a board of trustees politically opposed to me, because I was a democrat and not an aristocrat in education. My association with a state university is not a matter of as much significance as a fly on the great wheel that is grinding out a new manner and a new measure of education in the mammoth mill of American democracy. Moreover, I have not proposed to establish a state university on western lines in New York. It would not be difficult to get support for that proposition. But I have definitely proposed not to do it. On the other hand, my proposition is to use the State organization which we have, to conserve the universities and colleges of the State, and to bind all together upon a plan which in the end may work out larger results than a state university of the western type would ever be likely to do in this State.

But let our vision not be clouded. There is something of much moment, educationally, going on among the American people. That something is sending many thousands of students that average neither very rich nor very poor, just ordinary American boys and girls, to state universities which cost millions upon millions of dollars of taxpayers' money, and without any opposition from any quarter. That something is not only moving the people, but it is entering into the policies and practices of states. That something will in some way create a large opportunity and have a large outlet in New York. Scholarship in this State is not only going to be much uplifted, but much more widely diffused. None should oppose it; all should help it; the scholarship of the State should not leave the free democracy of the people to break its way through barriers at a hazard. On the contrary, scholarship should exact scholarship in the State Education Department and in all positions of influence in the system of schools. Scholarship should divest itself of irrational notions of what scholarship is. And then scholarship should lay out the roads over which democracy may advance more easily to the greater happiness of many more of the people, and to absolute equality of educational opportunity for all.

I am not unconscious of my personal relations, as well as of my official responsibility about this matter, nor am I unmindful of the qualifications required for meeting that responsibility in a complete and perfect manner. I have never posed as a scholar. I have little patience with men who do. The scientific study of fish is scholarly work and highly important but no more so than the study of the progress of civilizations. Engineering is as scholarly as bug-hunting. One acquires scholarship through learning to read ancient languages, even though the ability to do so be lost for lack of use; but does no scholarship result from studying the history and the intendments of the constitutions of one's country? And if studiousness be acquired, does it matter *when* and *where* it be acquired? Without the largest opportunities, and possibly without the strongest purposes in the beginning, and yet with some opportunities and some purpose, I taught school four years and practised law for fifteen; and in my maturer years have not been without the advantages of opportunity, experience, and position. I have had active relations with important affairs and with large enterprises; have pursued special reading rather persistently; and have studied continuously for twenty-five years the needs, the organization, and the processes of schools. Study, associated with affairs; study, incited and influenced by occupation, is more profitable than either study or vocation when not associated together. In the meantime, I have been chosen Commissioner of Education of the first State in the Union during good behavior or for as long a time as I meet the responsibilities of the place in a satisfactory way. That calls for the turning over of a new leaf. Out of it all, I am conscious of strength enough to meet the new opportunity to turn over a new leaf and write a new declaration for the guide of my official conduct. That declaration is that hereafter in a still larger measure than heretofore, preference and precedence in the Education Department, and in the schools, so far as my influence goes, shall go to those who, in addition to having the strongest character and the best balanced intelligence, are continuous, persistent, and diligent students of some subject which is of weight in giving further uplift to our system of schools. The highest peaks in learning are difficult of attainment. Mediocrity and indifference never reach them. But we have got to the point now where we must have many more people who have the strength and the ambition to gain those heights, and thereby acquire the right to say pretty nearly the last word upon something that is of real

importance to the intellectual progress of a vast population and an imperial State. Preference, in the Education Department and out, will be given to those who do this; and, if necessary, the way will be found to create the openings which will give them the opportunity.

No system of schools can have much power without a great deal of *freedom*. The general plan of a tax-supported system of schools must necessarily be somewhat arbitrary, but the men and women who carry out that plan must, within their fields, *be free*. Administrative officers must be able to plan in their own way so long as their plans work well, and teachers must be able to teach in their own way so long as there is good result. But so much is only commonplace. Opportunity must be open and spontaneity must be encouraged. Because New York has a centralized system of school administration, we are charged in some quarters with having a hard and fast system, an overorganized system, a mechanical system. I am anxious to discuss that and hope to be understood about it. Above all, I hope New York school people may have a complete understanding among themselves about it. That will help the people of other states to understand it.

I should be discouraged if I did not believe that our centralized administration enlarges local opportunity and spontaneity as to all wholesome educational impulses. What is freedom in education? It surely is not the right to do wrong. There is no such right. Educational freedom is the right to promote only a good educational end, but in one's own way. Centralized educational administration, unless it is weak or debased, protects this right. Of course, if it is vicious there is little hope, but viciousness is less likely in a large than in a small organization, and in a state-wide than in a localized administration; and, in any event, viciousness in education can not last. If there is a question between right and wrong in education, it is much more likely to be wisely determined when millions of people are concerned than when only a few hundreds or a few families are interested. A concentrated system prevents abuses without impeding progress. It is able to stop abuses and settle issues this side of eternity. It carries the experience and the strength of the whole state to every corner of the state, to uplift every resident and vitalize every school, without stopping any sincere and rational man from doing what he will to induce his neighbors to carry his thought into their schools, without stopping any neighborhood or city from doing whatever it thinks best for

the good of its own schools, and without keeping any teacher from teaching with all freedom.

State educational administration ought to do for schools what the state law does for the order of every town and every hamlet; namely, afford educational security and enlarge educational opportunity over every rod of the territory of the state. Essentially, that is what the State Education Department does. It never goes beyond that in any legal or authoritative way. Probably its officers and agents discuss pedagogy and psychology, as all teachers have to do; and they may exhort and evangelize a little for education; but they do not undertake to run politics, they are not looking for votes, they do not interfere with the churches, they do not extort gifts, they do not say who shall build the schoolhouses, or who shall be employed to do the teaching. The Department wants the support of rational people for good ends; it does not have to court any other support. It is dependent upon the right-minded; over-reaching would and ought to destroy it. The Department comes in authoritatively when the law which the people have made directs it to do so. When a schoolhouse is positively unsanitary, and the people will not exercise their freedom to build another, the Department tells them they must. When a building is filthy and the people neglect their right to clean it, the Department — only once, when it ought to fifty times — reminds them of their freedom and tries to supply them with the resolution which is required to exercise it. When an officer is caught stealing, or a teacher has been too hilarious, the law and the Department point the way and provide the means for getting rid of him.

The State certainly has a great deal to do with shaping the work in the schools. The State essays to do things upon its own motion; but the success of what it does, beyond what the law commands, depends upon the worth of it. It sends syllabuses to, and it holds examinations in, the schools. I have never heard any one entitled to express an opinion say that the syllabuses are not better than any subdivision of the State seems able to make. No one is obliged to use them, but they are generally used. The pedagogical value of examinations will probably be asserted and disputed so long as instruction continues. There are uses and abuses in examinations. The severest critics of examinations in general are those who disbelieve in definite work in the schools and do not like to submit themselves or their work to any exact standards of measurement. The main critics of our examinations are those who know least



about them. No one can fairly dispute the pedagogical value of examinations; and knowing better than formerly the abuses which are very liable to be associated with examinations, the Education Department has been doing, and will continue to do, what it may to keep them out.

Probably no one will dispute that since April 1, 1904, the steady policy of the State has been to relax the rigors of the academic examinations and make them of the surest educational value. If they have not been brought into close touch with the teaching, no general system of examinations is likely to be. They are being made absolutely responsive to the progress of the school system which they stimulate. The Department has taken the following definite steps in the last six years:

1 In 1904 it reduced the number of examinations for any one pupil, in any one year, from three to two.

2 In 1906 it began to accept local ratings in all preacademic subjects.

3 In 1906 it ceased to require examinations in the first and second year of the high school, and declared that passing the State examinations was not necessary for promotion in or graduation from secondary schools. In other words, the schools might make their own standards. The examinations were to test schools rather than pupils.

4 In 1906 it arranged that pupils might have credit in twenty special subjects by passing an examination in a general subject logically subsequent thereto.

5 In 1906 it discontinued a large number of half-year subjects and the examinations incident thereto.

6 In 1906 it created the State Examinations Board composed of equal representation from the Department, the colleges, the secondary schools, and the superintendencies, to relate the examinations still more closely to the best teaching and the real progress in the schools.

7 In 1909 it began to accept the school ratings in twelve different academic subjects.

8 In the syllabus of 1910 it has introduced a number of industrial subjects for which credit is given without examination.

This is surely enough to show the disposition to assure and enlarge the freedom of the local school. No child in a secondary school need be menaced in the slightest degree by the academic examinations. Principals are continually urged to see that they

are not. And apart from the secondary schools, I may say that I have never believed in written examinations, beyond what the teachers may arrange, in the elementary schools; and I shall not be much troubled about the severity of the examinations for lawyers, and doctors, and dentists, and pharmacists, and optometrists, and accountants, and nurses, and all the rest, so long as the unoffending Regents are not disturbed by the clamor of the disappointed.

The fact is that the educational advantages of examinations are fundamental and far-reaching, and the disadvantages are incidental and transitory. Our examinations system is peculiar and invaluable to New York. Its main purpose is to *test schools* which enjoy the largess of the State, rather than to test pupils, but it incites pupils as well as teachers; it guards the gateways to the colleges and to all the professions, not excepting that of teaching; it contributes to the solidarity of the educational system, and it is doing more than anything else to fix standards in American secondary and professional education. There is nothing about it that is unreasonable, arbitrary, or mechanical; there is much about it that inspires, quickens, and guides. It keeps a great school system moving along in the middle of a broad highway, while it encourages teachers to gather all the flowers they may find along the sides of the road—or even to get over the fences and indulge in wild flowers, so long as they do not get altogether separated from the procession and go into the woods so far that they may never get back.

There is reason for saying that New York presents the extreme of educational freedom and order—freedom from the decentralization, divergence of plan and policy, and the general disorder which are apparent enough in states without a strong bond of educational union. If the state universities had not been developed in other states to do, in effect, what our State University and Department of Public Instruction have for generations been trying to do in this State, a very great field in American education outside of this State would have been, long before this time, in the undefined realm of chaos. Now, if to our system we can graft on those features of the state universities which enlarge the opportunities of poor and ambitious youth, and bring the practical aid of the scientific laboratories of our universities to the business of the State and its subdivisions, and also to the support of the manufacturing and commercial industries of the people, we shall have a school system which will overtop them all.

There is no complaint in New York about state limitations upon educational freedom. Indeed, evidences are not altogether lacking of a disposition to lean against the State for educational support. It might be well if all cities and towns and districts had nothing more to learn and needed no further outside help, but that is hardly likely to be. And leaning on New York is not like kissing the hand of the Sultan of Turkey or of an Indian maharajah. There is no submission or subjugation about it. Indeed, the State of New York is bound to impose upon all the cities and districts, and upon all the officers and teachers of the schools, just as much freedom in the execution of the educational plans which all have adopted as they can, without license and disorder, be induced to use.

If a system of schools is to have power, it must find it in educational unity which has some respect for simple and sincere life. It must have theories that are rational and plans that are workable. It must, of course, be tolerant of all opinion that intends to be true, and of all schools that have a modicum of real educational spirit. But it must have an organization to be proud of, one under whose banners intelligent people may be glad to be seen. It must accomplish what it undertakes. It will have power, even though it undertakes but little, if it finishes what it assumes to do. It will be a weak affair, no matter how ambitious its pretences, if it transmits no real power and if its product is of no real strength.

It must have no more to do than it can do without floundering. The most serious drawback upon our school system is the confusion of work; the multiplicity of grades and branches and books and appliances; the extreme courtesy to mere theorists; the indifference to the value of the time of children; and the jauntiness with which we seem willing to muddle the intellectual processes of boys and girls. The remedy is in an educational unity that resents it and that is strong enough to reform the existing situation. The conservation of national resources is a favorite and fashionable theme for statesmen and publicists. It is of no account whatever in comparison with the conservation of the lives of children through a training that refuses to waste time and that transmits the power to do definite things. Nothing can go before that, and what is very needful will follow it.

It is only putting it in another way or suggesting another phase of the matter, to say that a system of schools will have to be able to resist if it is going to have power. It will have to keep out all the intruders that are obnoxious to its work, no matter how

respectable they are. Partisanship is ordinarily praiseworthy, but it may easily become a menace to education. Politics is the arch enemy of schools, and a system of schools is strong only as it is able to be wholly above it. All manner of people and organizations want to use the schools for their own purposes. The list would be interesting if not so long. In a recent week the organized officers of the Army, and then of the Navy, of the United States applied to me for leave to exploit the schools in the interest of more recruits and more battleships, and the professional peacemakers asked to use the schools to make sure of universal peace at almost any price. There is only one safe course. That lies in not allowing any one to use the schools to promote any theory or interest of his own or of a relatively small part of the people. A system of schools that is able to keep out obtruders possesses one of the most vital elements of educational power.

The training of new teachers and the universal supervision of the teaching by experts are twin elements of powers, of the first practical importance, in a system of schools. It is generally idle to criticize without proposing a remedy, but I shall not refrain from saying that I can not feel satisfied with our system of training teachers. All the circumstances of the teaching service have changed marvelously in a generation, but our plans for training teachers have not changed much. We have made it easy for college graduates to teach, but we get relatively few of them. The men and many of the stronger women are in danger of disappearing from the normal schools. The normal schools have not been supported or managed in a way to enable them to respond to the demands of the new conditions, and the more aggressive spirits prefer to go to the multiplying colleges. Many high schools have grown up to do as broad work as the State normal schools. The training classes serve to brace up some high schools that are none too strong, and do a little something towards training teachers for the country schools. Teachers earn certificates in the academic examinations. We are actually getting the largest number of our best young teachers from the colleges and high schools after we have catechised them a little about pedagogy. Is there not room for the suspicion that we have been emphasizing pedagogical theory and methods over a real knowledge of the thing being taught and over real intellectual companionship between teacher and student, a little more than the facts will stand? And if that is so it might have something to do with a trouble that is apparent in the schools.

The subject is so large and involves changes in instrumentalities of so much moment, that none of us can deal with it alone, but I shall welcome a thorough consideration of the question as to how we can more completely and surely reinforce the teaching in our system of schools.

To have efficiency and power, a system of schools must have capable and universal *supervision* by scholarly and successful teachers, who, on the one hand, have the gift of just criticism, of systematic organization, and of inspirational leadership, and, on the other hand, are anxious to serve all the people, are above bigotry, know better than to attempt politics to protect their places, and are able to bear an independent and aggressive part in the intellectual affairs of the community they serve. We brought a long contest to a successful issue when we amended the Education Law last winter by providing for this in all of the rural parts of the State. It is a great advance step. There are suggestions of repeal, but there will be none. The old system is doomed. There will not only be no pardon; there will be no reprieve. "The law will be allowed to take its course." The teaching in the country schools of New York is to come under the direction of real superintendents, with real educational powers, who will be required to give their entire time to their work.

But there are *cities* in the State that need better schools which are likely to come only through the capacity and the courage of superintendents. There are quite a number of cities where the political organizations in power, aided by provisions in the charters, use the schools for political or personal ends and take away the independence and effectiveness of the superintendents of schools. And it must be said that there are superintendents who, without realizing it, make the people believe that they have very excellent schools when they have very indifferent ones. Let me remind you that I do not look at the matter from the viewpoint of theory alone. I have had sufficient actual experience in the difficulties and the dangers of a city superintendent of schools. But I know well the fundamental educational purpose of the free democracy in which we live. When a sincere superintendent attends strictly to the business of the schools, dislikes a fight but will not run away from one, goes over the heads of the mere politicians if need be, and appeals directly to the people for support, he will either get it in overwhelming measure, or the clock has struck the hour for him to stamp the thick dust of the town from his feet.

I shall have to be content with naming one more of the inherent elements of power necessary to a potential school system. I select the power to expand and progress itself. We find that power in large measure in the legal organization of our New York system. The Education Law invests a centralized school organization with ample power to strengthen and uplift itself. The states have sovereign power in educational matters, and New York has delegated that power to the Board of Regents and other officers all along the line, until between them they can do any educational thing whatever that needs to be done, unless perhaps to prevent the encroachment of partisanship and compel the raising of the necessary money. There is an occasional disadvantage in free government; generally it is more imaginary than real; and there are many more advantages than disadvantages. Of course, everything depends upon the educational organization moving wisely. If we exercise power foolishly it will be withdrawn. But so long as we show capacity for management and construction, we have ample power within our own organization to do anything, from chartering a university to cleaning up a country schoolhouse. The money that is needed comes along with all the rest. The people tax themselves very freely for schools. We need not feel sorry for the State itself. With the hundred millions that are being dumped in a rather haphazard way into the barge canal; with the other hundred millions that are building highways; and with still other millions that are going into charities and prisons and every need of a vast and wealthy State, there is small danger that the schools will not be given what they can use in a sane and honest way for the intellectual progress which concerns every citizen and every interest of the State. Our democracy is working in our education. It may have to move slowly for lack of wisdom, but its rational advance will not be halted for lack of money.

Then let us gather our reflections and say the concluding word. A system of schools that applies to and uplifts the life of the people so that they believe in it; that calls out and gathers to itself the support and the strength which the plain people have to give; that builds better and better schoolhouses and steadily improves its housekeeping; that makes for rational living and develops real scholarship all along the line; that carries its advantages to the very doors of all the people; that tolerates freedom, and insists upon it for itself, and yet attends to its own business; that has clear purposes and makes plans that will work; that is above pedantry and

pretence; that resist interference and resents the superficial; that seeks the point of equipoise between general leadership and local initiative, between professional and industrial pursuits, and between profligacy and parsimony; that has power to settle its own controversies and contains the seeds of its own strength and progress; *that* is the system of schools which has the inherent elements of educational power.

I am not unaware that I have ventured to make and to imply some criticisms of our educational system. I strive for the organization that employs and honors me. My criticisms are not intended to be disagreeably personal. It is difficult to work a distinct reform in a single school. It is more difficult to work general reforms in a great system of schools. It is doubly difficult when those reforms relate to new policies and to advance steps which are necessarily matters of opinion. But an educational system waves aside its largest element of power and usefulness, unless it both anticipates and creates new situations, unless it continually unfolds new policies, unless it is unceasingly taking advance steps, unless it maintains living relations with the progress of the world. If, with enough confidence, but without too much conceit, we can—as I am sure we can—unitedly lay hold of the elements of power which the New York educational system possesses, to make a better system, and keep marching ahead, we will afford every one his equal chance, we will elevate the intellectual and moral planes of a mighty and a very active people, and we will bring added prosperity and new honor to the foremost of American commonwealths.





RELIGION, MORALS, ETHICS, AND  
THE SCHOOLS



## RELIGION, MORALS, ETHICS AND THE SCHOOLS

It is quite evident that in recent years there has been unusual interest in moral questions and a very considerable quickening and broadening of religious feeling. This is not peculiar to the United States; it is apparent in all of the more progressive nations of the world. People who think and feel most deeply about such matters see something significant in the appearance of this fact among widely different and far distant nations at the same time. Whatever the cause or significance of it, the immediate results are apparent enough. One of those results is the most thorough and widespread discussion, in the last decade, of the relations of organized government to the instruction of the people, and particularly of the young, that the world has ever had. The moving cause of this discussion has naturally centered it upon the teaching of morals, with special reference to the responsibility and the logical attitudes of the nations concerning the formation of individual character and the enlargement of national respectability and power.

As the people of the State of New York are specially concerned about this important matter, a general and necessarily condensed statement of what has been going on in this connection in other nations than our own, a discussion of the relations of our own state and national governments to the subject, with some expression of my personal views as to what New York may and ought to do beyond what she has done in this connection, seems appropriate at this time.

In the world discussion of the matter, "religion," "morals" and "ethics" are being used with appropriate discrimination. Perhaps "religion" may be said to mean one's belief deduced from his feelings, even more than from his thinking, concerning his relations to a Being superior to himself. "Morals" may be taken to express both an intellectual distinction and an impulsive feeling between right and wrong, and to indicate a course of conduct which, judged by the standards of physical and social life that have resulted from the experiences and the good impulses of the world, is as near correct as good intentions may be expected to reach.

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Special theme, written for the Seventh Annual Report of the State Education Department (1911).

“ Ethics ” concerns the more rational or philosophical side of morals. It is more a matter of the mind than of the spirit and relates to cause somewhat, but to expression much more; to motive somewhat, but to form a great deal more. It reasons out a correct procedure on the basis of *policy* quite as much as of *right*. It takes all of the conditions and laws into account and reasons out the course which it is *expedient* to take.

Of course, critics and philosophers and wonderers and wanderers, according to their different viewpoints, may find flaws in these definitions, but they will perhaps suffice for laymen, for ordinary people of affairs, and for treating the relations of the feelings, the beliefs, and the virtues, to the public schools from the nontheological standpoint of the average officer charged with school administration.

All the nations recognize, and have always recognized, the need of education; and all have long borne witness, through their acts, to the claims of the moral as well as the physical and mental factors in the evolution of the human being making any approach to perfection. But in all the years of human history taken together there has been no such earnest and widespread discussion of the influences of secular government and the training of the mind upon moral character and the social good, as in the last ten years. The more thoughtful people in all the nations, and in some cases a great many of the less thoughtful people, have been discussing the subject with earnestness, sometimes amounting to acrimony. Some nations have separated into opposing camps over the matter; government administrations, and parliaments, and political parties, have been agitated by the possibility of overthrow because of it. It has led to conferences, commissions, and leagues; has been attended by inquiries and investigations that have often been searching and far-reaching; and has resulted in a literature that is luminous enough but so voluminous that one mind can hardly hope to get all of the luminosity out of it.

It is extremely interesting to see how the subject is approached from diametrically opposite sides by the people of different lands. In all lands and in all the generations of modern history religion has quickened education, and churches have been the first promoters of schools. But it must be said that faiths of different qualities and textures have fixed the plane of education low as well as high, and churches have often used schools to promote ends that were quite as self-seeking as religious. As freedom has expanded, re-

ligion has become less rigid in its intellectual processes and more generous in its judgments, and education has become more tolerant of opinion and correspondingly more independent and aggressive in its operations. Where nearly or quite all of the people have been of one religious faith and sect; where religion has been a part of the curriculum of the schools and taught by the ministers of a dominant church, the state and church have been one and the business of training the intelligence and the emotions of the young have gone along together, rather peaceably but rather slowly, until advancing intelligence and enlarged opportunity have raised up a protesting party to demand that there shall be no ecclesiastical limitations upon learning.

Such protesting parties and such demands have arisen in every part of the world where learning has had anything like a free chance. Faith and light have opened opportunities for protesting parties in all lands. In every country it is being urged by a more or less organized party that a dominant church is inimical not only to learning but to the growth of the soundest morality, and to the purity and strength and universality of religious feeling as well. And in every one of them it is being insisted that the mere self-seeking of a church shall not be allowed in the schools of the people; that the children shall be taught in an atmosphere that is morally and even religiously clear and stimulating, but free from sectarian bias; and that mere theological opinion must rely, for its propagation, upon the homes, the churches, and other social and voluntary organizations quite independent of the political interests and the military power of government. And when we see how vehement this demand is, what deep bitterness attends it, and what far-reaching moral and political results flow from it, we are bound to think that the fathers of the American Republic were wise beyond their day and generation when they determined upon making the complete separation of state and church a basic principle in our political system. We have had and probably are yet to have our difficulties, but there is satisfaction in knowing that the difficulties have been greater under the political systems which we left behind, and that if we had not done it at the beginning we would ultimately have been obliged to do precisely what we have been doing for more than a hundred years. Nor is there trouble in believing that the uparalleled unfolding of a nation of very first rank in the western world has grown out of the fact that, at the very beginning, we conscientiously made this fundamental principle a corner stone of our constitutional and political structure.

*England*, the mother country, has in recent years been greatly stirred over this subject. The partisan advantage which the Church of England has had from her very decisive, if not controlling, influence over the plans and policies of English schools, as well as the impeding effects of that influence upon the freedom of all grades of education for all people, and the many plans for lessening or annulling this, have been seriously discussed pro and con in all of the innumerable ways and places which afford opportunity for the expression of the always virile English opinion. The press has been stirred and the church shaken by it. The Parliament house itself is very familiar with the discussion of the subject, and, in consequence of it, more than once in the last decade the administration in power has been threatened with dissolution.

Although the English have approached the subject from the other side than our own, the questions involved are much the same as those in the United States, which will be considered later. It is impossible to treat the occurrences in detail here, but surely enough has occurred to exemplify the definite purpose of the steadily enlarging political power of the common people to have larger and more evenly distributed educational opportunity. The overwhelming trend is in the direction of schools of every grade where all the people may be trained in secular studies, in the moral virtues, and even in religious feeling, as far as that may be without incurring the disadvantages which all experience has shown popular education suffers when dominated by religious sectarianism. Happily, notwithstanding the fierce discussion, the movement goes forward in England in a slow and sure and steady fashion, in an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary way. If it is slow, it is contending with conditions that have been a thousand years in the growing, and it is among a people who are accustomed to move as deliberately as they do unmistakably. Its outcome is as certain as the proverbial progress of the Anglo-Saxon race.

There have been religious and educational doings in *France*, as well as in England. Doubtless France teaches morals, as distinguished from religion, in a formal way, in her schools of all grades, more systematically than any other nation in the world. All of her public school education shows the extreme of organization and system. From the bottom to the top, it is all laid out and directed from a central office of the government and it is both efficient and mechanical. The teaching of morals, like all the rest of the teaching, is carried on by means of a uniform and most

elaborate course of study which brings all of the moral virtues to the regular and frequent attention of every child so long as he is in the schools. This course also contains frequent references to God, but only of such respect for Him as should forbid taking His name in vain, and other virtues of a similar kind. Aside from this, the law provides that one day in the week, besides Sunday, shall be set apart to enable parents who so desire to arrange for religious instruction for their children outside of the school buildings. The Roman Catholic Church maintains many schools of its own through which the tenets of that church are distinctly taught. The same is true of the Jews. Through it all it is easy to discern a great deal of French history. The predominant feeling of the nation has conscientiously rebelled against the overwhelming ecclesiasticism of the Empire, and under the Republic has sought refuge in formal training in morals and ethics. It could not be expected to solve so difficult a problem at one step. It is quite apparent that it has not done so. But France challenges the sympathy of, and gives a lesson to, moralists in all parts of the world.

By this it is not intended to imply that the formal moral instruction has resulted in failure. On the contrary it seems to be gaining, slowly but appreciably, in respect and in power. But the trouble is that France seems in danger of losing its moral unity: in moral matters the nation seems pretty nearly cleft in twain. The people are taught to oppose, even to hate, the church in which they were baptized, or married, or from which they will be buried. And formal moral instruction by or to people who do not both respect and regard a church seems hardly less weak an instrument for building the moral character of a nation than does religious preaching through a priesthood that may be left very largely to its own self-seeking. Political and religious freedom have been enlarging their opportunities under the French Republic. In doing so they have been seeking education that is not limited by the dogmatic teaching of a church. And thus they have been pulling down a church without reforming it or putting another in its place. It is to be feared that this has been destroying faith altogether. Instruction about the moral virtues without faith and feeling may result in the superficial politeness which is perhaps a little better than savagery, more than in the sound character which is infinitely better than either.

In *Germany* the Protestant religion, according to the dogmatic theology of Martin Luther and his associates and followers, has been generally taught in the schools. The Bible has been expounded by the

ministers of the Lutheran Church who have come into the schools at four or five fixed hours of the week for the purpose. In later years, but in relatively few sections, the Roman Catholics and other denominations of Christians, and also the Jews, have exercised the same privilege. With some slight variations as between the different kingdoms or states of the Empire, there has been general uniformity of plan. In recent years there has been considerable protest. Many societies of a freer faith than either of the classes mentioned have grown up. Here too, as in Britain and France, democracy has been making headway, and freer religious and political opinions have been associated with it. So the protests against dogmatic religious instruction in the schools have become both very general and very strong.

In 1905 the teachers of the city of Bremen, by addressing a memorial to the municipal senate, initiated a movement looking to the substitution of moral for religious instruction in the schools. While the senate did not accede to the suggestion of the teachers, this proposition has so extended to other and even more significant centers of the German Empire that the movement claims attention. The memorial of these teachers to their superior authority asserts that a free state can not properly permit the schools to be used to impose any particular confession of faith on the people; refers to the advantages which have come from the separation of church and state in other countries; and urges that the religious instruction given by clergymen in the schools of Germany is out of harmony with the progressive science and philosophy of our times. They propose and outline a course in morals and ethics to be taught pedagogically, at stated periods, just as other subjects are taught, in place of the religious teaching by clergymen of the near-by churches. This Bremen movement, or something very like it, took a strong hold in other great cities. In the great city of Hamburg the discussion became so warm that the movement came to be called the Hamburg movement.

To show what these teachers ask for and how those who are discussing the subject distinguish between *religious* and *moral* instruction, it may be well to quote the following from their formal petition:

I The giving of *religious* instruction, as far as it is desired by the parents of the children, should be left to the different religious bodies.

II *Moral* instruction should be given as heretofore, but not in conjunction with religious instruction, as has been hitherto done.



III The Moral instruction is conceived in the broad spirit of a knowledge of human nature and the Universe, which is already done, to some extent, in the treatment given to the so-called sample pieces in the reading lessons.

IV The Moral instruction in the lower and middle grades is chiefly imparted through the medium of selections from the whole literature of the world, from which literature is to be abstracted material which offers intellectual, moral, and literary food of a high quality suitable to the different grades.

While it seems quite true that the drift among German teachers in general is in the direction of what is now known as the Hamburg movement, and that the movement has a very considerable following from many other people who may be more influential than the teachers in creating public opinion, it also seems true that the power of the state which has so long sustained religious instruction in the schools will, for a time at least and perhaps permanently, prevent much departure from the established plan. This seems more surely so when we remember the serious concern of the Germans about their schools, and the unyielding grasp which they have upon every detail.

It is interesting to note that the criticisms upon the religious instruction in the German schools are by no means confined to teachers. While the teachers say it is unpedagogical, too emotional, narrow, and hidebound, the leaders of religious thought, who are most concerned about it, say that it is too pedantic, formal, and inefficient. Sometimes they even go so far as to say that without encouraging morality it really destroys real reverence and religious spirit. Of course the whole matter is associated with the fact that an overwhelming number of the teachers are men, with the very exact if not severe discipline in the schools, and with the influence of militarism upon the life of the people. When we remember that Germany is educationally both a very tenacious and powerful and a very free and democratic country, we can not fail to watch with absorbing interest any breaking away from the religious traditions and usages which have come down from the Protestant Reformation of three hundred years ago. And that there is some such breaking away in nearly all parts of the German Empire is apparent enough. How far it will go and to just what it will lead is uncertain, but we may feel assured that it will neither go backward nor become unscientific.

Whatever the outcome, the movement is strong enough and general enough to command the attention of educationists in other countries. It is a protest against rule-of-thumb instruction in religious dogma, and unpedagogical teaching by churchmen; and it comes

from Germany with special significance. It is pronounced and rational enough to be regarded wherever people are trying to train both moral character and intellectual freedom into the men and women of a nation.

*Norway* and *Sweden* (may I be forgiven for coupling them) have peoples who are quite uniformly in moderate circumstances, but as uniformly industrious, honest, and intelligent. They live a simple, well-ordered, and attractive life. Every child goes to school as a matter of course, and in the few towns of any size there are excellent schools of every grade and for every purpose. There is really no illiteracy. Probably more than ninety per cent of the people are Lutherans. This fact and the simple and delightful life of a homogeneous people combine to sustain not only moral but denominational and dogmatic teaching in both the primary and secondary schools.

In *Italy* the educational system has grown rapidly in form and substance, and in freedom as well, since the adoption of the Education Code of 1905. This code provides for the very exact teaching of morals, ethics, and civics in all the grades of the schools. It presents with great care and minuteness, and always with most commendable outlook and spirit, the long category of moral virtues which have to be trained into children if, when they are grown, they are to be much governed by them. In the middle and higher schools, which are purely state institutions, there is no definite religious or dogmatic teaching. The state law makes religious instruction optional in the "communes," or districts, which manage and support their own primary schools. As a result, in a commune where the people are all of one church, the priests or ministers of that church instruct the schools in religious matters. In many communes all or nearly all the people are Roman Catholics, and thus that denomination is as prevailing and influential in the schools as the Lutherans are in Norway. But, if any other church were universal in a community it would apparently, have the same privilege. In communities that are religiously mixed, strictly religious or theological instruction is abolished altogether, or children must, at the request of the parents, be excused from it. And this shows not only that Italy has been making striking religious and intellectual progress, but it also indicates that the course of educational events is likely to be much the same in all countries without regard to early religious conditions, no matter whether one sect or another has been dominant.

Among all the peoples of whom we have spoken, *Christianity* prevails overwhelmingly. That is not true of *Japan*, where the teachers

of a constitutional monarchy, with reasonable emphasis on *constitutional* and perhaps especial stress on *monarchy*, are required to exemplify and teach the moral virtues systematically in all the grades of a comprehensive school system. It is claimed that the schools are religiously free, and doubtless they are as free as they can be where a single religious belief is so general. The plan of the Japanese school system was laid by American teachers who, with government cooperation, adapted the American model to Japanese conditions. It has reduced illiteracy to the vanishing point, which is more than we have done, and it has effected the general recognition of the external moral and civic virtues.

The imperial ordinance defines the object of elementary education well enough to justify copying:

Elementary schools are designed to give children the rudiments of moral education and civic education, together with such general knowledge and skill as are necessary for life, while due attention is paid to their bodily development.

It is within the fact to say that no nation goes farther in requiring all children to attend common schools, or trains all children in "moral education and civic education" more persistently and systematically than does Japan. The syllabus of the subject and the directions to the teachers are more comprehensive, minute, and exact, and they are also more informing and attractive, than anything that has been laid down by the supreme authority of any other nation. Of course this teaching is associated with a religion in the feelings of the people if not in the plan of the schools. It is a religion which seems strange to us. What the ultimate result upon the character of the nation will be is perhaps more a matter of religion than of education. It is not for us to dogmatize about that. It must be admitted that there is much to signify that an exact, comprehensive, and compulsory system of education which includes definite instruction in the moral virtues and avoids dogmatic religion, has, in forty years, gone far to bring a nation out of barbarism and start it swiftly along the road of intellectual and moral progress. About the ultimate result it is not for us to form harsh or premature judgments. But the subject will not soon cease to be of interest to both educationists and religionists.

It is worth mentioning that only the other day the Kingdom of *Portugal* was overthrown by a popular revolt which is certainly substantial and seems likely to have permanent results, and which was unquestionably provoked by evils that are found to be ordinarily

attendant upon an alliance between church and state. It is not necessary to inquire whether it is because of the fault of the state or of the church, or indeed whether it is because of the fault of anybody. It makes no difference whether it is in consequence of political corruption or of ecclesiastical limitations upon education. It is enough to know that this latest revolution is only cumulative evidence that such an alliance limits and corrupts both of the parties concerned, and that, as intelligence advances and political opportunity enlarges, revolution is the natural result. The differing aspects and measures of violence attendant upon such revolutions are exceedingly significant of the political, religious, and educational conditions which previously prevailed, and of the differing temperaments of the peoples who are bent upon changing them. In all countries where the diffusion of knowledge is making any headway among the people, the church which depends upon political or military power is being worsted, and the state which uses ecclesiasticism falsely in the name of religion to augment its strength and prolong its life is bound to confront serious troubles and, unless it is wise enough to learn the great lessons which are taught by the political and religious progress of the world, it is doomed to humiliation and overthrow.

We have now gone as far as we ought in showing world interest in our subject and something of the trend of opinion among other nations of widely different religious and educational circumstances. Wherever we might go we should find much the same thing. Everywhere morality is recognized as an imperative factor in education. No objection is heard in any quarter against the inculcation of the moral virtues in the schools. Wherever substantially all the people are of one religious sect, objection is of course not made to the propagation of the peculiar tenets of that sect through the schools. Where new and considerable factors have entered into the population and brought different religious beliefs with them, strong objection has been offered to the promotion of sectarian religion in the schools. This has been equally true where a people has enjoyed marked intellectual development which has brought out and differentiated their theological opinions.

Various devices, such as dismissing the children to the churches, or separating them into groups at fixed hours for religious instruction by clergymen of the churches of which their parents are adherents, have been resorted to to get around the objection, but these have not resulted satisfactorily where the ground of the objection continued. It is difficult to see how one can study the history of the

subject without becoming more and more convinced of the vital need of common schools and without coming to the conclusion that among a people with a mixture of sectarian opinions, the only basis of common schools is to commit matters of doctrine to the churches and see that the recognized moral virtues are exemplified and taught in the schools. Conceding so much, there may be no reason for excluding religion from the schools beyond the exactions of opposing groups of religionists. The degree of exclusion may depend upon the wisdom, the devotion, the toleration, and the fraternal concord of religionists themselves. But the representative assemblies and the executive authorities of governments which have to deal with the subject must have peace upon some basis, and they will be likely to keep far enough away from sectarian differences to be upon ground where peace is possible.

The *United States* occupies a situation upon this subject different from any other nation. Of all the nations we now have a mixed population. Christianity is the overwhelming religion of this country, but the Christian sects are innumerable, with a clergy sharply separated upon matters of abstruse theology, and with many adherents who have much pride in the church organizations and deep interest in the church activities. When it comes to the policies of common schools, these Christian denominations are in some instances as obdurate and opposed as Christians and Mohammedans or Buddhists could be. From the beginnings of our history as an independent nation we have stood resolutely against any alliances of church and state. We were the first to take the definite attitude. We were the first to embed it in written constitutions. If anything, we have bent over backward when any issue was raised about it because we were bound to be upon the safe side of the question. As a result we have been the only nation to hear it said at one and the same time by its own people, that its common schools had both too much and too little religion in them.

More than that is being said. It is being said that we are passing through a period of unprecedented disregard of law and morals, and that the absence of religious and moral teaching from the schools is the reason for it. That we are as near Sodom as the Egyptians were, or as the peoples between them and us have been, as some assume, is absurd. All generations have had to contend with immorality. In doing so all generations have indulged, as we do, in sweeping generalities. The literature of all peoples and times is full of them. Even the writings of the Puritan forefathers of America are filled with

them. As a speaker in a recent educational convention was saying things in this direction, President Lowell of Harvard leaned over and remarked to me, "I found, last week, that my great-grandfather said the same thing in a letter he wrote more than a hundred years ago."

There is more to stir greed and quicken the universal human desire for self-advancement in America in this generation than in any other land or in any other generation. There are many more people, too, who are within the possibilities of unworthy success and therefore within the temptation that is pretty nearly overwhelming. As there are more things to entice, and more people to be tempted, so there are more laws to break. So, too, in my view, there are more people who observe the law and the commandments in the face of manifold temptation than ever before in human history. There are more who have an active part in making laws, in establishing order, in advancing and defending the moral outposts against enlarging opportunities of evil, than in any other human generation. As there are more prizes and more contests and more rivals, and as the hopes and longings are deeper, and as the possibilities of fraud are multiplied, the publicity is increased. More light has been turned on both sides of the proposition. This is more emphatically true of this country than of any other country. An integrity worth commendation is one that resists the allurements of evil rather than one that has little opportunity to do a wrong when others will hear about it, or that is too insipid to see or to engage in the rivalries and contentions of life. Recalling all this, and stopping to think of all the unparalleled moral activities of our generation and our country, does it not seem as though integrity has more than kept abreast of opportunity and intelligence in the mass of people of whom we know? And is not the integrity of a finer and stronger texture?

But even if we were to assume that this generation has more shortcomings than other generations, what reasons are there for laying them at the doors of the schools? Are the modern schools less moral than the earlier ones? On the contrary, they are more so. The buildings are more attractive, more substantial, more sanitary and hygienic. They are much cleaner and there is far less vulgarity and obscenity in and about them. They are supplied with conveniences of which our fathers never heard. The teachers are generally far better educated and much better trained for their special work than the teachers of earlier days. There is no more moral and religious class of people than the teachers in American

schools. For any immoral conduct they lose their places. They are not only more earnest but more conscientious than any other class of workers of whom I know. The schools are much better organized, the work much more systematized, and the pupils very much better classified, than they used to be. The higher learning percolates into the lower schools as never before; the books are the best any schools ever had. They excel in subject matter, in the progressive and pedagogical presentation of the subject, in literary and artistic embellishment, and in all that can interest both children and adults. The discipline is not brutal and senseless as was too often the case a generation ago. The entire scheme and practice of the schools is arranged not only to quicken the intelligence of the child but also to draw out the finer and nobler qualities of human nature. Everything about the schools is sharply and affirmatively moral. As a necessary consequence the religious tendencies are strong, quite as strong as and doubtless stronger than they ever were. The Bible is read about as much as the opposing attitudes of Christians will permit. The songs develop spirituality and patriotism alike. The environment, the teachers, the books, the work, the discipline, the sports, the suggestions and admonitions, all the influences, direct and indirect, make not only for correct living but also for the evolution of religious sentiment and feeling almost to the limits of possibilities, in the common schools of a people who require so many different kinds of churches to accommodate the unfathomable philosophies of spirituality which they have either inherited or invented.

But while I believe that the world, and that part which is in America quite as much as any other part, grows better and stronger under the spell of modern education and through the fact that the good purposes of the human family outweigh the evil ones anyway, and that we know enough to enable our purposes to have their way; and while I must resent the suggestion that there is something about the schools that is causing an undue amount of devilry in our American life just now, I should be a very unworthy officer of the schools if I did not offer hospitality to every proposition which, without doing them harm, contains some possibility of making them more positive and potential for good. Then let us ask in particular what is proposed and what suggestions may be carried out without conflicting with the fundamental principle that in our government there must be no interdependence between church and state, and no control or selfish influence whatever by the one over the other.

It is urged that religious exercises should be more general in the schools. Such exercises comprise the reading of the Bible, the singing of hymns, a prayer, or the repetition of the Lord's Prayer. The propriety of this in tax-supported schools has long been questioned by some and the matter has been much discussed, but nevertheless the laws or principles bearing upon it are not as commonly understood as may well be desired.

Religious exercises, dissociated from sectarianism, are and have always been very common in our schools. There is nothing in any American constitution to prohibit them. The first amendment to the Federal Constitution provides merely that Congress shall not make any law "respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." This is the only mention of anything related to the subject in the instrument, except the provision that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." In a day when it was found both necessary and well to leave some matters to the states, this was among the matters that were so left. The state constitutions, in nearly or quite every case, have dealt with the subject. It would be interesting to assemble here all of these provisions of the state constitutions and the decisions of the state courts construing them. Of course that is not possible: the student of the subject can easily find them. The provisions in and the decisions under the New York Constitution are the only ones that are binding upon New York. A general statement as to the other states and a particular statement as to New York will have to suffice and doubtless will be enough.

A government without an official religion was almost unknown when independence thrust upon the thirteen original states the responsibility of making constitutions. Indeed, written constitutions were then almost unknown. Magna Charta guaranteed the freedom not of all churches but of one church — the English State Church. That gave artificial aid to a great church but granted so little religious freedom that our Pilgrim forefathers had to leave the realm to worship God as *they* saw fit. To their credit be it said that they observed and extended this liberty when others came into their righteous and pathetic life at Plymouth. The great Puritan migration to America which succeeded the coming of the Pilgrims was actuated by political quite as much as religious motive and worked but slowly an appreciable enlargement of religious freedom in this country. And as the Pilgrim colony was unhappily small and weak, freedom of religious thinking and of wor-



ship had to wait in the eastern and in some of the southern colonies for generations and until the coming of a mixed population should teach the noble and unbending spirit of Puritanism what it owed to others as well as what it had the right to claim for itself. The other freedoms granted by Magna Charta were very great for the time. The "Petition of Right" (1628) passed over freedom of worship, but the Cromwellian revolution, which overturned the throne and struck off the head of the king, sought, among other liberties, the enlargement of religious liberty, and made headway. With the harsh passions of a mob which meant well, it humiliated a church which had become aristocratic and autocratic. The "Agreement of the People" (1649) first lighted the candle which has become an electric light in American constitutions. Another revolution, the expulsion of another king, and the "Bill of Rights" (1689) added a second or perhaps a third candle to the rather flickering illumination. Of this Macaulay said, "This revolution, of all revolutions the least violent, has been of all revolutions the most beneficent." In these serious and often bloody contentions, English liberty had its birth. And of all the liberties of the British realm the liberty of worship came with the most deliberateness and difficulty. It was this for which the Pilgrims, and in some measure the Puritans, of America were groping, just before the daybreak after a dark night, and that they were forced to come to America to attain. In a new and remote land it was beyond their ken and their power for a hundred and fifty years. But the germs that had been planted in the great charters did struggle to the surface through the unbroken sod of new world politics, and began to bloom in some of the constitutions of the American colonies as soon as they became independent states.

Doubtless because of the Dutch history that was behind it, as well as because of its mixed and commercial population, New York was the first to clearly declare the principle in a written constitution. On a Sunday in 1777, at Kingston, on the very firing line of the Revolution, the State wrote in its first Constitution these splendid sentences:

(After continuing the Common and Statute Law of England) That all such parts of the said Common Law, and all such of the said Statutes and Acts aforesaid, or parts thereof, as may be construed to establish or maintain any particular denomination of Christians or their Ministers . . . be and they are hereby abrogated and rejected.

This Convention doth further in the name and by the authority of the Good People of this State, ordain, determine, and declare that the free Exercise and Enjoyment of Religious Profession and Worship, without discrimination or preference, shall forever hereafter be allowed within this State to all mankind.

Vermont, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Virginia from the beginning, and a little later Maine and Rhode Island, lined up with New York. But the distances were too great, the communications too difficult, the old traditions and attachments too strong, and the departure too drastic, for all to do so. The constitution of South Carolina declared that the "Christian Protestant religion" was the "established religion" of that state. The constitution of North Carolina excluded from office all "nonbelievers in the Protestant religion"; and that of Delaware made all officials subscribe to a "confession of faith." At first the constitutions of Maryland, Massachusetts and New Hampshire, and later that of Connecticut, provided by taxation or otherwise for the support of the Protestant Christian religion, with more or less toleration of other religions.

The nation as a whole, if there was a nation, had never dealt with the subject. The early conventions or conferences looking to cooperation or federation had been engrossed by demands for safety which were immediate and imperative, rather than by theories of freedom which obviously had to wait upon security against foes from without. The Declaration of Independence did not mention it and the Articles of Confederation passed it by. But by the time the patriots had won bloody battles for independence, had weathered the "critical period" and come to the making of the Federal Constitution, the atmosphere had much cleared in all the states. It was assumed all around that primarily the question was one for the states. The assumption accommodated the differences of religious opinion, but it was well, anyway. Many constitutions that are nearly uniform and near to the people are stronger than one that is farther away. The convention passed the matter over, but with the understanding that the first Congress would initiate an amendment to the Constitution prohibiting Congress from making any law respecting an establishment of religion or impeding the free exercise thereof. This Congress did, the states ratified, and the result was the first amendment to the organic law of the nation. The very limited treatment of the subject by the Federal Constitution has of course restricted the number, though not the importance, of the related decisions in the Federal courts. Beyond

the affirmance and elucidation of the principle that the state and the church are to be wholly independent of each other in America, the Federal courts have necessarily had little to say. But that has been quite enough.

The states, with but one or two exceptions, have not only set forth the principle in their constitutions, but they have enlarged and applied it with continually increasing emphasis. The older New England and southern states have moved slowly, and history tells the reason why. As the original states have amended their constitutions they have asserted the doctrine with more and more explicitness. The newer states, in making their first constitutions, have gone far beyond the older states in specifying details. The laws have followed the constitutions, and the decisions of the courts have followed the laws. The states have enacted laws to accomplish the intent of the constitutions, and the courts have had to interpret these constitutional provisions and laws; so the statutes and the decisions are more abundant, detailed, and exact in the newer than in the older states. With all of this lawmaking there are, of course, some minor differences in the legislation and in the reasoning of judges, but there is no discordant note about the main principle, and the trend as to details is strongly in one direction.

It is not difficult to see why the outworking of the fundamental principle has borne more sharply and oftener upon the school system than upon any other activity of the people. So the resulting statutes and decisions largely relate to schools. This was not foreseen, but if it had been there would have been more rather than less support for the main proposition. It was not much of a matter so far as education was concerned when the people were reasonably homogeneous, when there was none to object to whatever was done in the schools, because it affronted no one, and when little general authority and no public money were given to the support of the schools. But there has been a great change since the day sixty years ago when Herbert Spencer declared that the taxation of one man's property to educate another man's children was robbery. One must be indifferent about American history and institutions who does not see that our universal passion for universal education and the splendid system of common schools of every grade that serves every square mile of our territory, are not only the products and the constant beneficiaries of governments which are not limited by sectarian differences, but that they have been blessed very often by the benedictions of churches which refused to be cursed by political manipulations.

The application of the principle to the different situations and incidents of administration is often involved in uncertainty, as the diverse laws and decisions show very abundantly. The practical question, so far as the schools are concerned with this matter, has been and will be, whether this, that, or the other thing in the schools is violative of the fundamental principle that the state and the church shall be completely independent and that the conscience and the worship of every one shall be absolutely free. Coming to the specific question whether Bible reading, hymn singing, and prayer in the schools constitute a sectarian influence, are *worship*, impinge upon freedom of conscience, use public property, money, or authority for the promotion of sectarian ends, or otherwise violate the basic principle, it must be said that the decisions of the courts of last resort in the different states seem in point of numbers to be not very unequally divided, but it must be added that the more thoroughly considered cases and the weight and trend of authority are to the effect that the course of the sects determines what is sectarian and that what they make sectarian is within the prohibition.

The State of New York has never been disposed to carry details into her Constitution, and for this and for another reason the courts of this State have not often been called upon to determine issues growing out of the operations of the schools. The other reason is that for seventy-five years the law of the State has required the Superintendent of Public Instruction, now the Commissioner of Education, to determine such issues, and has provided that his determinations thereof should not "be called in question in any court or in any other place." The decisions, from the incumbency of General John A. Dix, in 1838, to the present, have been that there could be no religious exercises of a sectarian character in the schools during school hours, when objections were offered, and it has been assumed that reading the Bible, singing religious hymns, and prayers are sectarian. There has been no impediment where those directly interested in the school raised no objection, and such exercises have been sustained, perhaps illogically, when held in the schoolhouse but outside of school hours, even though objection was offered. In 1889 the writer, as Superintendent, held that the distinguishing garb of an order of religious and sectarian workers could not be worn by teachers in the common schools because of its sectarian church influence. In view of the importance of the matter and the persistence of feeling and comment about it, the writer as Commissioner of Education has, in recent years, cooperated with those who differed with him to secure the decision

of the Court of Appeals upon the question, with the result that the decision of the Superintendent has been upheld by the court of last resort (184 N. Y. 421).

The amended Constitution of 1894 provides (art. 9, sec. 1) that "The Legislature shall provide for the maintenance and support of a system of free common schools wherein all the children of the State may be educated," and section 4 of the same article provides that "Neither the State nor any subdivision thereof, shall use its property or credit or any public money, or authorize or permit either to be used, directly or indirectly, in aid or maintenance, other than for examination or inspection, of any school or institution of learning wholly or in part under the control or direction of any religious denomination, or in which any denominational tenet or doctrine is taught."

The committee on education which reported this section to the Constitutional Convention of 1894 accompanied it with a report in which they said, in part, "The arguments in favor of such a provision are, in our opinion, conclusive; and the objection that it will result in making the schools 'godless,' or that such a constitutional prohibition would imply on the part of the people enacting it hostility, or even indifference, to religion, seems to us to be both groundless and absurd." The committee met the question as to whether this provision, prohibiting the allotment of State moneys to schools "in which any denominational tenet or doctrine is taught," would interfere with the reading of the Bible in the public schools, by saying, "the words proposed by us can not by any reasonable interpretation or construction be taken to prohibit the reading of the Bible in the public schools."

In other words, the State does not object to Bible reading and religious exercises not of a distinctly sectarian character in the schools, although sectarian objections to parts of the Bible and to definite exercises might force public authority to hold that the parts objected to were not permissible, on the ground that sectarian protests had made them sectarian. The Constitutional Convention definitely refused to impair, or in any way limit, the broad principle that there shall be no dependence whatever between the state and the church. In approving the proposition of its committee it expressed the desire of the State to encourage religion, and adopted the view that it was doing so by refusing to permit church organizations to be corrupted by what they might do to get the financial aid of the State; and practically left it to sectarianists, as it seemed obliged to do, to limit

religious influences in the schools by urging that specific religious exercises are sectarian in character. Happily there are not many churches which are much given to embracing the opportunity. And still more happily, perhaps, there are very few school officers or teachers who are at all disposed to offer provocation which will arouse objections.

The charter of the city of New York contains the following section:

No school shall be entitled to receive any portion of the school moneys in which the religious doctrines or tenets of any particular Christian or other religious sect shall be taught, inculcated or practised, or in which any book or books, containing compositions favorable or prejudicial to the particular doctrines or tenets of any particular Christian or other religious sect shall be used, or which shall teach the doctrines or tenets of any other religious sect, or which shall refuse to permit the visits and examinations provided for in this chapter. But nothing herein contained shall authorize the Board of Education or the school board of any borough to exclude the whole Scriptures, without note or comment, or any selections therefrom, from any of the schools provided for by this chapter; but it shall not be competent for the said Board of Education to decide what version, if any, of the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment, shall be used in any of the schools; provided that nothing herein contained shall be so construed as to violate the rights of conscience, as secured by the Constitution of this State and of the United States.

This reaches back to an interesting history of a long period when the "Free School Society," an organization of public-spirited citizens devoted to religious and moral ends, controlled the schools of the city, and it is the legal expression of an agreement which marked the culmination of a heated controversy over religious exercises in the schools that agitated the city seventy years ago. It has held a place in the city charter ever since. It was carried into the revised school law of 1851, the consolidation act of 1882, the Greater New York charter of 1897, and the revised charter of 1901. So the people of the city and the Legislature have held to it very tenaciously. It forbids the doctrines or tenets of any sect in the schools, but declares that this shall not be construed to authorize the Board of Education to exclude the Scriptures. It does not affirmatively authorize the reading of the Scriptures. It was not necessary that it should call attention to its good purpose not to override the Constitution. It ante-

dates amendments to the State Constitution which bear very directly upon the matter. It seems to have been acquiesced in, for the Scriptures are read very generally in the schools of the city and there has been relatively little controversy over it. It will be quite as well if the schools of the second city of the world are allowed to proceed in a spirit of toleration and conciliation, and are permitted to appeal to the spiritual side of the lives of the millions of their children without being allowed to use any sectarian doctrines to make a proselyte of any child; and it will be quite as well, also, if this may go on without too much legal and official exploitation of the meaning of each clause and word of the statute.

So it seems that in the State of New York at large the Scriptures, hymns, and prayer may have a place in the schools where no objection is made by a party in interest; that objections to Bible reading, or Christian hymns, or the Lord's Prayer are regarded; but that in the charter of the city of New York there is a section designed to encourage such exercises after a sincere effort to remove any sectarian features therefrom.

As already observed, the other states uphold the separation of church and state, the freedom of conscience, the right of resistance to taxation for any denominational end, and the nonsectarian character of the schools, with complete emphasis and accord; but they differ in their attitudes as to what sectarianism is, and, therefore, as to what violates the principle. The briefest statement as to their differing attitudes will have to suffice. In Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan and Texas, religious exercises have been upheld or winked at by the courts dodging the main issue. The Iowa case leaves the matter largely to teachers, provided "the burden of taxation is not increased and children are not required to attend the exercises." The Kansas case sustained a teacher in reading the twenty-third Psalm and repeating the Lord's Prayer "to quiet the pupils" without requiring them to participate. In Kentucky the court found relief in the fact that the exercise was only a simple prayer composed by the teacher, and that the pupils were not required to attend. The Texas case seems to turn upon the fact that attendance was not required. The Michigan case relates not to the use of the Bible at first hand, but to a textbook composed of extracts therefrom, which the teacher was upheld in using, but upon condition that she refrained from comments and, upon request, excused attendance. These cases tacitly admit that if attendance were compulsory there would be an infraction of the constitutional principle. It is admissible for me to say that I do not believe in either the advisability

or the validity of any school exercises which can be upheld only upon the ground that children who are conscientiously opposed to them may go out in the hall when they are held.

The Ohio case treats a troublesome matter laboriously, and the decision, by a divided court, leaves the matter to the discretion of the city board of education, and clearly avoids the real issue.

The Pennsylvania courts have held that the boards charged with the management of the schools may say what exercises may be held. The school law of the state now provides that "No teacher in any public school of this commonwealth shall wear in said school or whilst engaged in the performance of his or her duty as such teacher, any dress, mark, emblem or insignia indicating the fact that such teacher is a member or adherent of any religious order, sect or denomination." This was held unconstitutional in Lancaster county, but the superior court of the state has since reversed the lower court and sustained the statute.

In Illinois, Nebraska, and Wisconsin, in cases that are quite recent and that are more thoroughly considered than any others that are in point, it was held that such exercises as we are considering are sectarian and are excluded by the constitutions of those states. It must be remembered, of course, that the constitutions of Illinois, Nebraska, and Wisconsin go further than those of Maine, Massachusetts, and Michigan in specifying the practices that are unallowable; but it may also be said that the natural progress of constitution making in this connection in the United States is altogether in the direction of the more drastic exclusion of any cause of complaint; and that the recent settlement of absolutely heterogeneous peoples, combined with the more plastic conditions of the laws and the latitude of the courts in the newer states, have in general led their judges to reason the whole matter out more freely, logically and exhaustively than the conditions in the older states have ordinarily forced their judges to do. In any event, the questions at issue have had no such painstaking judicial treatment and, as it seems to me, no such logical reasoning and inevitable result as by the highest courts of Illinois, Nebraska, and Wisconsin.

The grounds upon which these courts reach their conclusions are that in this country there is absolute separation between church and state; that the state is not to intervene between man and his God; that the state is to do nothing which binds conscience or regulates worship; that even Christians differ as to what is the true Bible and what is the true form of the Lord's Prayer, and that versions and



passages which stir the devotion of one, stir the wrath of another; that Jews disbelieve in the Testament which is most precious to Christians, and that they are entitled to hospitality and oneness with all the rest in our citizenship; that those who are neither Christians nor Jews are, under our laws, entitled to the same equality as all others; that the law knows no religious distinctions and affords identical protection to men and women of all denominations or of no denomination; and that the fact that tax-supported common schools are the most ordinary expression of the beneficence of the state, and withal so vital, makes it particularly important that there shall be nothing about them that can offend the faith of any one, whether the thing that offends one seems reasonable or unreasonable to another.

The facts of the matter are not likely to be much changed; the logic of the matter is not likely to be overthrown; the law which has resulted seems likely to be yet more drastic in its details and destined to be yet more universal in its applications. Under conscientious objections by any party in interest, dogmatic religious instruction, that is, instruction which is peculiar to one class and obnoxious to another class, will not be permitted in the American public schools.

Excellent people have proposed many devices to avoid this result. This is particularly so since there has been such a falling off of religious exercises in the homes, and since the churches have ceased to be the only exponents of the intellectual and moral activities of the people. It has been proposed to leave all education to the churches and to subsidize the churches in proportion to the quantity of secular instruction they may give. From the standpoint of the state, of the church, and of education, the suggestion is untenable. Education can not be limited by sectarianism; churches can not struggle with one another for public funds, without inviting the curse of it; the state can not encourage religious separateness rather than unity without inviting its own overthrow. It has been supposed by some that religious exercises might be held in the schools if objectors were not required to be present or to participate. But the school claims unity as much as does the state. The objecting parent is not to see his child ostracized or put at any disadvantage, by what the majority hold to be his own singularity, his narrowness, or his stubbornness. Each child has not only the same right in all the general exercises of the school, but also the same right not to be separated from his fellows for any conscientious reason. The school may do nothing to which one may object upon strictly religious grounds. There have been efforts to get around the principle by holding exercises before or after school hours. This has been done at times in New York for an hundred

years. While it generally quiets objections, it is doubtful if it could proceed against a tenacious objection. The schoolhouse is public property: this property can hardly be used for any purpose to which the conscience of a patron would compel him to object. The teacher is an employee of the public and must confine himself to activities which are not repugnant to the conscientious thinking of the parents and the pupils.

It has been proposed to separate the pupils into sectarian groups and invite the churches to send in their clergymen to instruct their affiliated groups in dogmatic religion, and it has also been proposed to excuse from the schools, on given hours each week, the pupils who wish to go to the churches for religious instruction. Neither of these propositions is permissible in the United States. A procedure which is common to all is imperative in the schools; more, rather than less, time is required for the secular work of the schools; and no church can be allowed to use any part of the machinery of the schools, and therefore of the state, to secure attendance upon its ministrations. The complete separateness of the church from the state, as represented in the tax-supported schools, is fundamental, and all of its consequences must be accepted.

Yet it must be admitted that these consequences are often unfortunate. Even though religion be a matter of feeling more than of teaching, it would be a pity if a teacher who feels so disposed should be barred from ministering to the spiritual needs of children under his care, and perhaps more of a pity if, through any mistaken conceptions of the principle or its application, the schools should fail to do what they may easily do in the way of exercises that would make for a religious culture which may be independent of and above all sectarianism. Whether the Bible is a book of divine revelation and inspiration, as most Americans believe, or whether it is, as some think, only the finest, the deepest, the wisest, and the most sacred selection of historical facts, and illustrative allegory, and lofty idealism, and sublime injunction, which all the literature of the world contains, it is deplorable if children who will not hear it in any other way, do not hear something of it in the schools; and it is no less deplorable when children who know of it through other channels find that for some reason which they do not understand it is not allowed in the affairs of the schools.

There is another view of the matter which is entitled to consideration. There is on the part of a great Christian people a distinct sacrifice of Christian teaching to political equality, civic order, and religious freedom, which ought to be more universally appreciated than it

is. Who can say that in feeling and in expression the people of the United States are not a Christian people? It was the energy and the irresistible expansiveness of Christianity that discovered the new world. The first old-world banner that was planted upon its shores bore the cross, which is the world-wide symbol of Christianity. The Pilgrims of the Mayflower, and the Puritans from whatever land, not excepting the Jesuits of the Mother Church of Rome, who broke out new roads of all kinds in America, got their courage and their direction from the Bible and from Christianity. Christianity has raised the structure and fought the battles of the Republic. It enters into all our state papers and it runs through all our laws. It is avowed in Washington's farewell address and in Lincoln's emancipation proclamation. None can enter upon a public office without thinking of it. It is upon our coinage. We recognize it upon all public occasions. It is as much the basis of our home life and of our social system as it is of our public life and our legal systems. We invoke its praise at the christening, its sanction at the wedding, its hope at death, and its consolation at the funeral. Its churches are on almost every block. Its spirit has given rise to about all of our poetry, and its teachings are the governing motive in nine-tenths of our prose literature. The distinct debt of American education to Christianity can never be fully estimated, much less described. Our early elementary schools were from the beginning associated with Christian churches, and nine-tenths of our colleges and universities had their rise and found their trend in the activities of Christianity. When a mighty people, with all this in the intellectual and moral history which they cherish, hold it in abeyance only that their government may rise above all bias and their schools give offense to none, the least that can be said is that all who are not of the Christian faith are bound to have a well-filled measure of appreciation of the generosity and patriotism of those who are. Doubtless it is but just to say that they do have it.

Of course the Jews do differentiate themselves from the Christians. In recent years they have come to be an influential factor in American life. They are not contentious. They would live in concord. The Hebrew Bible is half the Bible of the Christians, and, while they do not accept the historic facts of the other half, they are above all criticism of the spirit and influence of it. They are appreciative of educational opportunity and make the most of it. It is seldom that a Jew has made himself an irritating factor in the operations of the schools, and the Jewish people, individually and collectively, have been magnanimous supporters of the schools.

The American state reasons that, by refusing to become the bone of contention between religious sects, it will promote the freedom of religious feeling and the expansion of worship, and it desires to do that because it knows that its own structure and stability depend upon the moral character and the religious attributes of its people. It refuses special favor to, and repels the slightest dictation by, any one church, because it would vitalize all churches and gather to itself the advantage which comes from the moral or religious work of all. The state would have religious peace that it may have more and better religious work. Therefore the state does not object to religious, as distinguished from sectarian, influences in the schools. Indeed, by all that the state does in its own affairs, it encourages such exercises. It only steps in, in the interest of religious peace, to stop exercises which accord with the beliefs of one sect when they are protested by another sect. The exercises are as common and go about as far as the religious unity or magnanimity of the patrons of the schools will permit. When that limit is reached, so much of religious instruction or ceremony as is sectarian has to stop. But, happily, in most places the limit is never reached.

It might be arranged that for all practical purposes the limit never would be reached in any place. If the Protestant and Roman Catholic and Jewish churches would agree upon a collection of Bible selections and hymns and prayers which might be drawn upon for use in the schools, the cases where there would be any one to object would be very rare. Where but one of these churches is represented in the schools there is none to object. In innumerable cases, where two or all of them are represented, the teachers are sane enough to do nothing to offend and the patrons are broad enough to see the advantage of acquiescence, or they are sufficiently uninformed about theology to be indifferent about it. Disagreement about the matter is, on the whole, not common, and such as there is would ordinarily be removed if the leaders of religious sects could harmonize their differences about so much of religion as may be desirable in the operations of the schools.

It seems to laymen that they should do at least so much. There are versions of the Bible which have minor differences. It would seem as though historical and religious scholarship ought to harmonize these differences; and if that is not possible, it is to be remembered that we have more in common than in difference, and that there are parts of Scripture enough which are identical in all versions, to meet the needs of the schools. The same as to songs and prayers. These

things are large factors in the life of the schools. There is no need of there being anything about them to prejudice any sect, and it is to be hoped that the spirituality and the patriotism of the churches will lead to that complete religious cooperation in the training of the young which will continue to enlarge the moral accomplishments of the land where they are already greater than in any other country in the world.

While this seems very desirable, it may still be said that, even if it is not to be, the situation is by no means as hopeless as some are disposed to think. It will take more objections than the ultrasectarianists or the few who pretend to think that they are opposed to all religion, can ever offer, and more power than any government in America will ever have, to keep all religion out of the schools. With exceptions that are so rare that they do not count, the teachers are men and women who recognize and reverence a Supreme Being, and of course that fact is continually expressed in the life of the school. The work of the school itself can not be carried on without constant recognition of the relations between the created world and the Creator, which are accepted and felt by practically all the people of the country, and which in one way or another enter into most of the activities of the country. The organization and discipline, and the consequent feeling and spirit of the American schools, go deeper than mere toleration or only formal politeness, and enter the domain of reason and result, of cause and effect, whether we wish it so or not. People in the schools, as out, will not divest themselves of their religion. The state will never ask them to do so. The prohibition of theological sectarianism does not and can not run against a religion that does not seek worldly power and is as broad in its impulses and sympathies as the universe itself. The history, the political policies, and the common thinking and practice of the country, have made it wholly impossible that the schools shall be godless. How far from sectarian narrowness the schools shall go may depend upon the state, but how godly they shall be depends not upon the state but upon the people themselves. Things settle that which no state can control if it would, and which no American state would if it could.

But there is a great field outside of, and close by that of, sectarian religion. People who browse in it sometimes get over the rather indistinct line between the two without realizing much change in the herbage. This field embraces "good morals," the "common moralities," conduct which one must observe if he expects to prosper, if he is to make the most of himself, if he is to gain the regard of his fel-

lows in school, or in business, or in any other relation of life. It includes "common honesty," truth, industry, frugality, generosity, patriotism, and all of the virtues which contribute to and are necessary to "decent living." These virtues are approved so universally that there is no room for conscience to discriminate between them or theology to contend about them. They are observed in all good homes and upheld in all civilized life. They have always been taught by precept and example in all schools. They have not been taught by formal courses, and at stated hours, and with pedagogical methods, as other subjects have been taught. But they have been taught no less, and ordinarily much more, effectively than the other matters. A teacher can tolerate a failure in mathematics, but not a failure in respect for his office or in conduct which is necessary to the good order of the school. So good morals, or at least good behavior, are taught in everything that is done and through every hour of the day. No one objects. Indeed, if any criticism is heard it is that good morals are not taught sufficiently and good conduct not enforced severely enough.

It must be said that children are not treated with as much severity as they used to be, either at home or in school. Parents do less to exact the respect and obedience of children than parents formerly did, and teachers have evolved theories which come a little too near letting the children manage the school. The evils of it all have begun to show themselves. The result is a demand that more morals, if not more religion, be taught in the schools. And it is proposed to do this formally, at definite periods, by a graded course of instruction suited to all ages and running through the life at the school, and by textbooks and lessons, in the same way that other studies are pursued. This movement has sprung up and made headway in all of the good school countries. We have not led in it, but we have not held aloof from it. It has found favor in the eyes of those who think there has been too much religion taught in the schools of Germany, as well as of those who think there has been too little in the schools of America. In 1909 the National Education Association created a committee of leading members to consider the subject, and the committee a year later presented a well considered report. Setting forth the pros and cons of the matter, the committee recommended a course of graded instruction in morals and presented a suggestive course.

I should be very glad to present this course of study in its entirety in order to show clearly what is contemplated by leading and representative teachers of America who have given this subject careful con-

sideration. But the length of the proposed course, covering as it does more than fifty pages of typewritten matter, makes it impracticable to insert it here. The course covers every grade of school work from the kindergarten through the high school. In the kindergarten it treats of such subjects as obedience, cooperation, helpfulness, attention, kindness, cheerfulness, sociability and manners. In the first primary grade it adds such subjects as cleanliness, self-control, love of parents; in the second grade it adds such as truthfulness, love of home, patriotism; in the third grade it adds honesty, respect for parents, teachers, officials, strangers, responsibility, and some phases of civics; in the fourth grade it adds self-reliance, the rights of children, and more civics; in the fifth grade it adds industry, patience, usefulness; in the sixth grade it adds courage, perseverance, self-control, contentment, and more civic rights and duties; in the seventh grade it adds comradeship, fidelity, temperance and other habits; in the eighth grade the course extends to determination, ambition, courtesy, purity, consecration to duty, heroism, etc.

In the first year in the high school the course treats of the different relations of individuals to one another as well as of the relations of individuals to society as a whole, and to the institutions of society. It lays stress upon the reciprocal obligations of individuals in society and in business and professional life. In the second year in the high school, it goes into such matters as the duties of parents to children, of children to parents, and of children to one another. It treats of the family and discusses the economics of the home as well as the great value of the home to society and the state. In the third year it treats of the choice of vocation and of the relations of work to individual habits, as well as to intellectual and moral progress. In the fourth year of the high school, the course goes deeper into social and industrial economics, and into the obligations and rights which individuals owe to the state and are entitled to enjoy therefrom. It goes so far as to treat of the state as a promoter of character and a protector of health.

This elaborate course of study contemplates progressive lessons, covering specific moral virtues, at stated times, during all the years that the child is in the public elementary or secondary schools. With the greatest respect for the leading and capable members of the teachers' guild who have prepared it, and with the warmest appreciation of their assiduity in doing so, I can not help thinking that about all that they propose ought to be impressed upon the pupils of the lower schools without so much analytical discussion of the reasons

for it, and that such discussion ought to find its place in the colleges, universities, and training schools for teachers.

Such propositions as this have not been without decided opposition. It has been said that to be effective, moral training must be by practice rather than by preachment; that a difficulty will arise as to what may be brought in under the name of morals; that teachers will not care to accept the rôle of arbiters and exemplars in determining differences over moral questions; that if moral instruction is to be pre-arranged and exact, the preparation of the teachers must not only be so but must accord with it; that, if teachers are to be forced into such teaching, they will more and more reflect their denominationalism; that teachers will be discussing how much truth, or obedience, or generosity, shall be put into the course to result in suitably balanced moral character, just as they now discuss how much English, or mathematics, or chemistry, may be allowed or must be had to assure a suitably cultured intellectual one; that in assigning the lesson for the next day teachers will say, "tomorrow we are going to learn to be generous," etc.; and that the spontaneity and universality of moral culture will be lessened by a procedure that will be as much less resultful as it is more formal and exact than at present.

While there is some exaggeration in these objections, they are not wholly without reason. Indeed, the opposition to the proposition is not without substantial reason. There should be no formal courses added to the routine of the schools without the most imperative need. The exact training of teachers for analytical treatment of the subject is a large matter, and without it, and very likely with it, new issues will crop out of the undertaking. It is at least uncertain about there being any good result from the teachers teaching or the children learning morals in a formal way until the pupil is old enough to discuss the details freely and on a basis of reasonable equality with the teacher, if there is to be any discussion at all. In other words, formal morals seems to me hardly a proper subject for the elementary school age, and not surely one for the secondary schools. It would seem suited to the colleges and particularly to the teachers training schools. Children dislike preachments even more than do grown people, and grown people are sufficiently opposed to them. Children are to be subject to wholesome direction and régime. They need the concrete more than the abstract, the practical more than the theoretical, when it comes to conduct. And it is well for us to recall that it looks as though the nations which have been the most exact in training their young in specific forms of conduct, have been the



most backward in civilization, if not in the moral culture which makes balanced and efficient men and women.

With the quite apparent disposition of parents to transfer a good share of their own moral responsibility concerning their children to the teachers, there is a somewhat surprising willingness of teachers to accept the burden. Probably it would be more exact to say that the *educationists* are accepting it for the teachers without consulting them. At the best, the burden of the teachers in the day schools is heavy enough without giving them the load which the father and mother, and the family physician, and the sanitary engineer, and the minister, and the Sunday School teacher, ought to shoulder. It may be well to suggest, also, that there are some things about the physiological and moral evolution of the child, and in the relations of the sexes, to which teachers are not adapted; which the schools ought to refuse; and which, if the teachers are disposed to assume, the parents ought to say are none of their business. If every responsibility concerning the child is to be placed upon, and assumed by, the teachers, as the pedagogical experts, bundled together, are urging upon us, then the schools ought to have the children all the time, night and day, and until they are grown; ought to wash and comb and dress and feed them; ought to have a department store and divers kinds of physicians and trained nurses to meet their physical needs; ought to keep them from the worldly pleasure of thumping their fellows and being thumped; ought to maintain a complete corps of ecclesiastics to provide them with discriminating theological prescriptions, and ought to anticipate and determine for them everything that there is any probability of their having to settle in all their lives. Of course, in the end, there would be a lot of weaklings without physical, intellectual, or moral substance enough to hold their own, much less without strength to add anything to American life.

What is imperatively needed in the elementary schools is the closest possible approach to simplicity and directness in an environment that is healthy and attractive. No philosophy of morality can profitably be discussed there. Attractive surroundings, a clean building, a systematic procedure, a firm and just management, unhesitating obedience, a cheerful spirit, an interest in sport, and persistent drill in the fundamentals of definite knowledge, to the end that the child may gain a real grasp upon the implements which will enable him to gain more knowledge and do for himself, are the factors which are required in every elementary school. If the teaching is to make any deep or enduring impression, certainly if it

is to germinate energy and power, *the teacher* must be the living embodiment of the intellectual and moral qualities that are to be desired.

There is not much more room for debating the moralities in the secondary than in the primary schools. If the primary schools are helpless about preachments, the secondary schools are resentful, flip-pant, and scornful about them. The pupils have just learned that they know a little something, without having learned how little it is. The blood has grown warm and the spirit very free. It may be well to explain the reasons for some things so that the pupil who wants to think otherwise will have difficulty in doing so, but it will be well to expect opposition and rebellion against a good many of the principles of the moral code. There will certainly be little appetite for the philosophy of it. In the absence of systematic organization and a measure of control and direction which provides a sufficient motive for wholesome respect, and for some diligence in work, there will be indifference, rebellion, and ridicule behind the teacher's back, if there is not before his face. But if the exactions are severe but not unreasonable; if the atmosphere of the place is serious without being somber; if the teacher is one who likes boys and girls and has the judgment to know what they need both in work and play, they will not only grow steadily in rounded and efficient character, but their appreciation of what the teacher actually does for them will continue to enlarge as long as they may live. There is plenty of room for the practical and forceful application of moral principles; there is some room for explaining them; but it seems difficult to find much room for questioning and answering about them, even in the secondary schools.

Not all primary pupils go to the secondary schools, and not many pupils of the secondary schools go to college. It is the burden of the lower schools to cooperate with the homes, the churches, and the other institutions of society, to fix good habits so firmly that one can not depart from them without self-consciousness of wrong. This is to be accomplished by practice more than by precept; not by practice without precept, but by practice *more* than by precept. If the practice is firm and exact and persistent enough, habits will probably become fixed and they will be likely to endure, whether pupils go to college or not. If they do go to college, they may very well study the history of mankind and inquire about the structure of society, and philosophize about deep hidden springs of moral conduct. If they do this and nothing more, it will not avail much, but if they

associate it with practical plans for earning a living, it will result in characters whose self-satisfactions and contributions to mankind will average a little larger and a little nobler than those of others who have had to get on without the larger opportunities.

There seems some reason for suspecting that those who would profit most from definite courses of morals in the schools of all grades would be the teachers. Not because they stand so much in need of more exact training in morals, but because they have the maturity and the rather natural proclivities which would appreciate and profit by them. Of course this is only equivalent to saying in another way that the profitable and potential places for this work are in the colleges and in the schools for training teachers. That is equally true of religion that is not limited by sectarianism. Of course the place for theological study is in the churches, so far as the people like it, and more particularly in the church schools. But whether the preaching of morals to immature minds, in schools where obedience to régime is imperative, is wise or not, it has been made clear enough by human experience that the enforcement of sound principles and good practices is resultful.

If it is difficult to differentiate morals from religion, it is dangerous to separate *ethics* from morals. Ethics refers to form or behavior without very much reference to the impulses which impel conduct, the motives which shape it, or the requirements which exact it. The thing is often expressed, and very likely erroneously expressed, in the word *culture*. It springs more from our thinking than from our feeling. It relates to appearances and seeks to delight. It studies orderly procedure and agreeable associations. It conciliates rivalries, obviates conflicts, and in a thousand ways tempers and enriches the life of a people who cultivate it; but all the same, it is subject to the peril of intellectual and moral insipidity. Therefore it is of very considerable concern to the schools.

Obedience, respect, good behavior, ordinary politeness, are very desirable and not any too common among American children. Doubtless they are less common than they used to be. Doubtless, too, they are less common among the children of America than of Europe or Asia. The easily discernible reason is found in their training, particularly in the lessening measure of control and compulsion. But there may be a more fundamental reason. The American spirit is independent, but frank and honest. It believes in very considerable freedom for the children, as for their elders,

and it looks upon form, when separated from morals, as a superficial and unsatisfactory thing. Most of us are unwilling to submit to a tyranny of mere form, and very generally we are independent enough to be governed by the reasons which lie below the surface of things.

Civility, politeness, ceremony, are very desirable, but they are attractive only when they honestly express the attributes of the life that is beneath them. When ostentatious worship does not spring from piety, when social platitudes are made to screen meanness, when the cover only hides false linings, it is doubtful how much of them there had better be. Even though harmless among experienced old sinners who see right through them, they have little right in the operations of schools that are trying to develop in boys and girls moral sense as well as mental acuteness. The American people, in overwhelming numbers, and to their great credit, will say "train the children to be more respectful and polite, if you can, but train them in blunt honesty in any event." Force them to work, and that will give them strength of body and of mind. Put them into competition and contests, and they will grow in their appreciation of others. Make them efficient in something, and they will not lack in their respect for efficiency in other things. Magnify generosity, and there need be no worry about the ways it will find to show itself. Of course, the forms of society often aid the thinking; they steady things. They give rise and direction to impulses that may fall in with a very desirable social order. But the main value of formal expression must come from its association with feelings that are too generous and sincere to tolerate misrepresentation. Substance will have to go in advance of any display that is worthy of imitation. This is deep in the consciousness of the people of the United States and it will have to give backbone to the policies of their schools. Then morals and ethics will have to keep company with each other and the schools will not put formalism above, or apart from, the causes that must give it the only value it can have.

It is high time now to gather up our thoughts, and perhaps it may be done in the following brief and general statements:

In recent years nearly all nations have enjoyed unprecedented intellectual and commercial progress. That has put an unaccustomed strain upon the moral sense of nearly all peoples and also has worked a very appreciable quickening of the moral sense and the

religious feelings of the world. Associated with this, and perhaps as one result of it, there has been a noticeable democratic advance in all parts of the world; with enlarged industrial and commercial activity, there has come very considerable mental quickening and a new realization of political power; and there has appeared an unwonted and widespread disposition to direct popular education toward the popular advantage, as against the advantage of a class, and particularly to recognize the vital need of a training in morals which should be less under the direction of political authority and, also, freer from the control of religious sectarianism.

In the United States the specific expression of this has appeared in demands for more, and more definite, moral instruction in the public schools, at a time when it is assumed that such training is less common in the homes than it formerly was and when the compelling power of the churches is not accepted as it used to be. While refusing to believe that there is any lessening of religious feeling, indeed, while believing that it is more general and unrestrained, and while denying that the home may properly cast the burden of moral training upon the schools, it is agreed that the schools are bound to recognize the vital need of associating moral and religious with intellectual training and of going as far in this as may be without violating the fundamental American principle that there shall be no dependence between church and state and without giving just cause for complaint by any sect.

But while the state and the church are legally and organically independent in America, they are at the same time morally and actually interdependent. Experience proves that political freedom, and therefore educational and commercial opportunity, on the one hand, and religious activity on the other, are enlarged by the assured freedom of the church and the state from any meddling by either in the affairs of the other. But religion requires the protection of the state, and no state can exist without religion. People are naturally religious. They reason differently about religion. Different experiences and differing philosophies about religion have produced sects. In this country the state refuses to aid one sect as against another. It keeps the religious peace. But, consistently with this, it does all that it may do to encourage religion. It does not limit religious teaching. It does not, on its own motion, interdict the reading of the Bible or other religious exercises in its own schools. As a fact, these exercises are very common, and, where this goes on without objection, the state is glad. It only "stands fair" between the sects.

The schools need the influences which cultivate the spirit. Superintendents and teachers will not draw fine distinctions between religion and morals and ethics. The people care little about theological differences which none but experts can understand and about which even they do not seem very clear. The ecclesiastical leaders, or others upon their initiative, are practically the only ones who raise objections to religious exercises in the schools. The exercises are so unobjectionable, the differences are so generally composed, and objections are so rare, that the unsectarian religious influence flows very freely in the schools. It seems to a layman that these exercises and influences ought to extend, that the schools should be very careful to offend no sect, and that upon that basis no factitious sectarian objections ought to be offered. There is no version of the Bible or of the Lord's Prayer that can do any harm, or will not do great good, to the children in the schools; the sects have more in common than in difference, and there could be no difficulty in arranging Bible selections which are common to all; and all the sects and churches may well feel assured that their conciliatory spirit and their helpfulness to this great American purpose and this splendid educational aim will be keenly appreciated by the overwhelming number of the people of the United States.

In any event, there is in the schools a great field for moral activity to which there can be no sectarian objection, and all schools may well cultivate it most assiduously. It is a large and vital factor in the object and purpose of the schools. The environment must be attractive. Sanitary conditions and artistic embellishment will not do everything, but they will do much to cultivate the spirits of children; without them the school must at least partly fail; they are now doing a great deal to make it succeed. The textbooks are the best the world has ever seen, and they are doing much more. The régime and discipline and pastimes are doing still more; and the spirit of the teacher doubtless counts for more than all the rest. The training schools for teachers have this in mind, and well they may. Every operation of the school and everything said or done, no matter whether it relates to magnanimity or to mathematics, is bound to the culture of spirit as well as to the culture of mind of the pupils.

All this is more potent than formal courses in morals. It is not likely that such formal study of the moral virtues could at all supplant the universal moral influences that pervade the schools or lessen the moral vitality of the homes and churches. If that were the result we would pay dear for the innovation. Very likely the experience

will be that nothing will result from the movement in the direction of formal courses in morals so far as the elementary schools are concerned; that something will come of it in high schools and more in colleges, and that the largest and best outcome of it will be through the influence which the agitation of the subject will have upon the professional schools for training teachers, and upon the teachers themselves. In this view of it, the movement is to be encouraged.

[This matter is closely related to the political life and the moral character of the American people. It has been much considered and often discussed by all who are interested in healthful moral progress and in the strong and steady advance of democracy. Views have differed about it. Historical events have been seen from different points of view and through different eyes, and, therefore, they have been interpreted in dissimilar ways. And as these historical events have related to things held sacred, faith has often been involved. On each side it has seemed that principles were at stake which patriotic and religious people could not yield. In other countries there have been wars over kindred matters and it is not at all impossible that there might be bloodshed over this very matter in other countries now. Yet we have uniformly treated it with as much forbearance as sincerity. We have not permitted ourselves to get overexcited in discussing it. We know that religious wars are over among people who are sane. We realize that any real progress toward conclusions that will be widely accepted will have to come through amiable discussion by intelligent people who are lacking neither in spirituality, nor patriotism, nor candor. Evidences that we are nearing such conclusions, through such processes, are not altogether wanting. And it looks as though sincere and patriotic Protestants, and Roman Catholics, and Jews, and others, have gained and are continuing to gain respect for one another through the discussion.

Yet even our amiability should not deceive us. The matter is vital because it penetrates to the very bone and sinew of the moral character of the nation. The millions of children who are steadily in the public schools of the country need something more than secular training plus the moral discipline and influence of the school, which are so dependent upon the character of the teacher. They need to hear something that is sacred as well as sound; something that moves their inmost feelings, as well as something that attracts their fancy. That something is in the Bible and the hymn and the Lord's Prayer. The teachers need this; and the atmosphere, the indefinable spirit of the school, needs it. There is danger that, in a system of schools

from which these things are rigidly excluded, the moral sense may lose something of its strength and flavor; that in schools that are absolutely secular, even the teachers may become less and less vital factors in building moral character. The contention that, while ethical considerations will move the cultured few, nothing but religious feeling will stir the mass, of course has weight. Even so, it is the settled conclusion of the American people that religious and political freedom and the independence of church and state are of yet more weight. And the vital need of common schools in such a democracy as ours is also of more weight. The religious training *may* be given in the homes and churches. If it is not given there to all children, or given as well as may be desirable, then ecclesiastical and sectarian leaders ought to come to an accommodation which will permit moral and even religious teaching in all practicable ways, and so much, at least, as is accepted by all, ought to be enforced in the common schools.

It is a great pity that good men who, for many years, have studied and preached theology, that is, a system of human reasoning about God and religion, can not realize how little the people care about the differing philosophies of the thing and how much they are stirred by the thing itself. The clergymen of earlier days emphasized their philosophy of religion more than religion itself. To some extent, though to a much less extent, that is still so. Church rivalries, pride in organization, in history, in theory, are often at the bottom of this difficulty in common schools. The fear that one sect may overreach or proselyte the children of another sect is the main obstacle to spiritual culture in the schools of the people. That will be removed only by the increasing generosity and confidence which must come through a conscientious care to avoid offense. And in all that, the men of God might be even larger factors than the teachers of the schools.

It is too bad that the Bible has become so much involved in theological and sectarian dispute. The Ten Commandments are the vital basis of society. There is no more complete code of morals in any literature than in the New Testament. The historical and literary value of large parts of the Bible is very great. There is no disagreement among most of the sects about any moral virtue and there is small difference between them concerning religion. The differences are not so much over things that are in the Bible as over doctrinal theology that will never either save or damn anybody of whom it can not be said either that "much learning hath made him mad," or that he lacks the strength to rise above a philosophy that can



neither be established nor disproved. There is little sectarianism in the Bible. The differences are outside of the Bible, and are not material: the things that are fundamental are cherished by all.

The story of religious, moral, and educational progress in all lands, so far as I can understand it, seems to show, *first*, that the enlightened feeling of the people who sustain churches and give substance to society, holds that the dominance of literary and scientific studies by the ecclesiastically sectarian point of view is limiting to an extent which can not be acquiesced in, and that theology will have to square with modern knowledge and feeling rather than with ancient history and dogma; *second*, that there is no irrepressible conflict between science and religion, and that the spiritual feeling of men and women is not only to aid and influence the search for scientific truth, but is to be itself acted upon by definite scientific knowledge; *third*, that science and religion, so harmonized, are necessary yokefellows in the evolution of individual character and of governments that can best serve the great interests of the human race; *fourth*, that the substitution of formal courses in morals for religious training or for the religious influence in the schools will not settle the difficulties and meet the needs of the situation; and *fifth*, that so long, at least as contention over religious theory and resulting sects persists, what needs to be done will be best done and, as far as it may be, by the church being wholly independent of the state, and the state and its schools being wholly independent of the church; by the churches seeking intellectual light as well as spiritual impulse, and by the schools having, at all hours of the day, the advantage of yet more strict moral discipline and of all the religious influence that the sects can agree that they may have.

I can not move to the conclusion of my discussion without a definite word to avoid the possibility of misapprehension. It must not be assumed that I intend any criticism, at least beyond so much of the excess of their zeal as may be unchristian or unreligious, upon religious philosophies or the consequent sectarianism. On the contrary, I feel sure that Christianity has been the greatest light of the world, and that conscientious and freer religious thinking and the resulting religious denominations have produced the marvelous advances in world knowledge, activity, and feeling of the recent centuries. Doubtless, it has all been in the plan of the Almighty, and very likely, too, it is in the plan of the Almighty that religious philosophy and sectarianism having done a very excellent work shall yet come into the more harmonious and fraternal relations which will do a still more excellent one. It is not at all inconsistent with entire respect for

all sects, and all churches, and all ecclesiastics, to urge that, in the United States and in the twentieth century, all who are really concerned about a more vital religion and can appreciate the support which it may give to the advance of democracy and the stability of the social order, shall at least avoid an excess of confidence in mere human reasoning and an excess of zeal in mere sectarianism, sufficiently to enable all of the children in the public schools to hear something of so much of the Bible as is common to all, and have some share in simple exercises which stir the religious feelings, which, in the absence of theological interpretation, are practically the same among all people of every faith.

One of the greatest developments in human history has come in our day and very particularly in our country. It is the realization of the equality of human right and opportunity and of the imperative subjection of all to the human interpretations of divine law. We have the inalienable right to be equal parts of a great whole, the state, the nation, the world, the universe. But the rights we have are waived unless we conform to the social, the constitutional, the scientific, the moral, the divine order. Fulness of study and freedom of action are dependent upon the protection and aid of the established order; and the forms, the spirit, the energy, and the possibilities of the social order are what men and women make them. They are dependent upon human generosity, conciliation, and cooperation, and none can deny that these result in larger measure from free schools that are common to all, than from any other institution of the Republic.

The good of these schools may well have become a passion in America. They have been at once the notable expression and the vital need of our democracy. Immigration, the national expansion, the intensification and steadily increasing intricacy of the Nation's life, have put a great strain upon them but they have stood all the hard tests. There is nothing in our history or in any other history to turn us back. Experience, which is even better than logic, or which gives logic its inevitable trend and brings it to irresistible conclusions, tells us to go forward. We are to go forward by making the teaching as good as we can, and by making the power of religion as potent as we can agree to make it in the schools. We will read the Bible and sing a hymn and repeat a prayer, until objections are interposed. We will avoid offense and conciliate objectors. When the principle of religious freedom is conscientiously invoked we will meet it with conscientious respect. Thus we will leave nothing undone which we may do to enlarge the moral power of the schools.

And we will remember that the subject we have been discussing is not an academic or pedagogical, so much as a public and practical, matter. To be sure, it has been a sensitive and rather troublesome matter; and it has loomed up everywhere. All progress has encountered it. Constitutional liberty and stability have had to deal with it. It was a menace to the American colonies when they became independent states. The menace would have become greater with delay. The leading statesmen of the time met it at once, with clean-cut decision, and in the only rational way. The foundations they laid have grown to a sacred and beneficent temple which has sheltered a marvelous growth in the Republic. The people understand the matter. They will protect their temple. And the great tower above it will continue to send its lights to the four corners of the earth.



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