

—excellences they may be so far as any particular habitat is concerned—of a national system, and by patchworking, irrespective of climatic, religious, monetary, political, or geographical conditions, to produce a model system. “But the objector who tells us that the educational experience and opinions of foreign countries are valueless to us because of the divergence between their civilization and ours, betrays his ignorance, and reveals his incompetence for educational direction. Modern civilization is rapidly tending to uniformity and unity. Each nation is hastening more and more to adopt the innovations and improvements of all the others. The educational element of civilization forms no exception to the general drift of things. Methods of teaching have nothing to do with national boundaries. The best is the best everywhere. The essential elements of a good school system are the same in every country.”¹

In aiming, however, at perfection, it is inferred that the special conditions must be considered. Even then, the result of an innovation either by the omission or addition of a feature may not, of course, necessarily be satisfactory; however well tried such an innovation may have been elsewhere: inasmuch as we can only weigh the probabilities for or against success in deciding on any proposition, if hitherto untried where a trial is proposed. We know the defects, if any, of the *status quo*, but the possible effects in practice of a proposition as yet untested in a new field can, of course, only be estimated by probabilities.

The religious and financial aspects of national education have especially engaged my attention; because they must, it would seem, always involve the most serious issues in any State system: and, certainly, in the case of the Colony—which is my immediate concern—they are the features which admit of the greatest discussion.

It is most seriously questioned whether the British—a *de facto* religious—system tends to diminish crime, and whether a secular one is not distinctly dangerous.³

It is not for me to enter here, however, into the questions² as to—

- (1.) Whether religion is the foundation of morality, or conducive to it, or whether morality can be taught without it?³ or

¹ “Dr. Philbrick,” p. 8.

² For recent authorities, see—

- (a) “Nineteenth Century Review” (hereafter termed N.C.), Oct. and Dec., 1882, and vol. Jan.-July, 1883; arts. by the Abbé Martin, Cardinal Manning, Canon Gregory, and Rev. Dr. Dale.
 (b) Addresses by Lord Norton, Sir R. A. Cross, Bishop of Lincoln, Dean of Bangor, Archdeacon Darby, and Bishop of Melbourne; “Times,” 3 Oct., 1884, 18 Sept., 1884, 8 Oct., 1883, 17 Oct., 1883; Official Year Book of Church of England, 1885, p. 154; and “Anglo-New Zealander,” 7 Nov., 1884.
 (c) Canon McColl’s paper at Intl. Educ. Conf. and discussion, Health Exhib. Literature, London, 1884, repts. (hereafter termed I.E.C.) Wm. Clowes and Sons (Limited), London, vol. xv., p. 66.
 (d) “Education and Religion, their mutual connection and relative bearings, with a way out of the religious difficulty.” Elliott Stock, London; espec. pp. 200-6.
 (e) Prof. Laurent’s (a freethinker’s) advocacy that the morality of Christianity, of Christ, be taught; I.E.C., vol. xiv., p. 617.
 (f) “Injustice in the working of the Act of 1870,” by the Rev. H. Temple. Rivingtons, London, 1883.
 (g) “Defects of the Law upon Public Education, and how to cure them,” by F. Calvert, Q.C. Ridgeways, London, 1879.
 (h) “University Education as represented by the Irish Universities.”—W. H. S. Monck, Transactions Nat. Soc. Scien. Assoc., Dublin, 1881, p. 443.

See also notes 3 and 1, p. 3.

Note Lord Macaulay’s remarks on proposition “that propagation of religious truth is one of the principal ends of government, as government.”—Essays, &c., 1855, p. 466, and *seq.*, and especially pp. 483 and 492-494.

- ³ (a) The absence of the teaching of *morale* in New Zealand is noteworthy in view of the secular systems of Europe—in France and Belgium.
 (b) “The development of the moral nature is a primary requisite in any system of education. . . . Religion is the inspiration of all highest morality.”—Manitoba report, as above, p. 27.
 (c) “A heartless law proscribed the teaching of religion in the State schools, and the name of Christ was tabooed.” “The State which undertook the education of its citizens was bound to aim at creating in them a sense of duty, and the necessary means

to that end was a religious education.” Lecture by the ex-Bishop of Melbourne “On Bible-teaching in State schools,” 26 Nov., 1885.—“Aust. Times and Anglo-New Zealander,” 15 Jan., 1886.

- (d) As an instance of late writing on the subject see N.C., Jan., 1886, art. on “Irish Education,” by Visct. Powerscourt, p. 130: “It is absolutely necessary that the teaching of religion should be retained in intimate connection with the training of the young, as the only means by which virtue and morality can be upheld in a nation.”
 (e) The “Melbourne Age,” which for a long time advocated a secular system, now declares “that for the safety of the nation there must be a change.”
 (f) “The Inspectors of Schools have reported that education was becoming dangerous unless morality were introduced into the State-school curriculum; and the Inspector-General of Penal Establishments has declared that the neglect of careful moral instruction was one of the greatest causes of multiplicity of crimes, and that education without this kind of religious instruction was a dangerous possession.”—“Aust. Times and Anglo-New Zealander,” in respect of Victoria, 26 Feb., 1886, p. 26. And it seems significant that in Victoria “the Minister of Education in reply to a deputation from the Council of School Boards of Advice has promised to advise the Cabinet to ask Parliament that the passages relating to Christian teaching which were expunged from school reading-books when Mr. Ramsay was in office might be reinstated.”—“Aust. Times,” 23 April, 1886. Return to denominational system advocated in “The Victoria Review,” 1 Dec., 1882. “The Education Question,” by T. Harrison. See also “Ethical Teaching in Schools,” same Review, June, 1883, by J. G. Stewart.
 (g) “The undenominational system was barren and unproductive, it would cut out culture in this country.”—C. Dawson, M.P., “University Ed. in Ireland,” Transactions Nat. Soc. Sc. Assoc., Dublin, 1881, p. 465.
 (h) “Education as a Factor in Prison Reform,” by C. D. Warner, “Harper’s Monthly Mag.,” Feb., 1886, p. 444: “The key-note of the system, let me repeat, is the discipline of the body, the mind, and the moral nature, applied simultaneously and continued by means of the indeterminate sentence long enough to form a habit of orderly working,” &c., p. 448.

Prominence given to religious and financial features.

Religious feature.