

THE PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY.

No. 66.—APRIL, 1904.

I.

THE REVISED CONFESSION.

THE Northern Presbyterians have published their Revised Confession of Faith, and it is proper for other Presbyterians, not of that communion, to review the changes which have been made, with a view to ascertaining whether they are alterations in the mere superficialities or in the substantive body of the Calvinistic system. The hilarity with which the revision has been received by such diluted Calvinists as the Cumberland Presbyterians, together with the promptness and enthusiasm with which they offered organic union on the basis of these changes, awakens apprehension, and calls for cautious examination.

An inventory of the changes which have been made will show that the Northern Presbyterians have, (1) explained their former doctrine of Predestination, (2) interpreted their doctrine of the salvation of Dead Infants, (3) restated their doctrine of works done by unregenerate persons, (4) amended their doctrine of Oaths, (5) withdrawn their charge that the Pope of Rome was Antichrist, (6) added a new chapter on the Holy Spirit, (7) and added a new chapter on the Love of God, and Missions.

We are not going to take up these points in detail, but elect, for animadversion, the changes which seem to affect the integrity of the Calvinistic system.

We quote now the new language which is the basis of our fault-finding:

V.

THE PLACE AND USE OF THE BIBLE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF THE UNITED STATES.¹

THE subject upon which we are asked to make a report is alike difficult and important. It is difficult, partly because it is by no means an easy task to obtain accurate information from all parts of the country, in regard to the laws and the customs, touching the place the Bible actually has in our public schools. This practical difficulty is increased by the fact that various interpretations prevail among us, as to the bearing of the doctrine of the separation between church and state in this country, upon the use of the Bible in our public schools.

But we are inclined to believe that the subject is as important as it is difficult. The great majority of our people are no doubt agreed that sound morality is essential to the best welfare and true prosperity of any people. And all Christians, and not a few who do not profess to be Christians will agree that the Bible is the very best book to teach sound morality.

But when the questions of where, how and by whom the morality of the Bible is to be taught are raised, differences of opinion at once emerge. Some say that the public school is not the place, nor the school teacher the proper person, to teach the morality of the Bible to the youth of our land. The further problem, as to whether the Bible can be used to teach morality without at the same time inculcating religion, also arises to in-

¹ This article is the substance of a report presented at and adopted by the Executive Commission of the Presbyterian and Reformed Alliance at its meeting in Toronto, in January of this year. It was drawn up by a committee consisting of Francis R. Beattie, D. D., Louisville, Ky., John McNaugher, D. D., Alleghany, Pa., and William H. Black, D. D., Marshall, Mo. It was heartily approved by the Executive Commission, and ordered to be sent to the Liverpool Council.—*F. R. B.*

crease the perplexity of the whole situation among us. And, in addition, the still deeper question, as to whether morality can be successfully imparted when divorced from the sanctions of religion, has also to be considered.

But this is not all. The fact that there are so many forms of religious beliefs in this country makes the problem all the more serious. If we were all of one faith the case would be comparatively simple. But here we have, among the people whose children are in our public schools, infidels and secularists, Jews and Gentiles, Roman Catholics and Protestants; and Protestantism itself is broken up into a great many different branches. Under these conditions the problem of the Bible in the public schools certainly becomes exceedingly complex. The infidel and secularist claim that religion should have no place in education, and they rule the Bible out of the schools on this account. The Jew objects to the use of the New Testament, as not in any proper sense part of the Bible, so that it has to go. The Roman Catholic steadfastly maintains that religion and morality are essential factors in education, and that the church alone is the proper agent to teach the youth. Hence the demand made by Roman Catholics for separate schools, where religion and morality are to be taught by the proper representatives of the church.

But Protestantism is not free from difficulty in dealing with the problem of the Bible in the public schools. It is true that, in general, the Protestant churches agree in holding that there should be no actual alliance between church and state, by which either is to control the other. Yet there are certain questions, such as marriage, Sabbath observance and education, wherein there are civil and religious factors to be adjusted. In addition, the church holds her title to her property, and is protected in all her property rights, by virtue of the authority of the state.

In regard to these complex questions, especially that of moral and religious instruction in the public schools, Protestants are not in agreement among themselves. Some take the ground that the instruction given in the public schools should be entirely secular, and that all religious and moral teaching should be supplied by the churches, in such ways as they may deem best. Others main-

tain that there should be definite ethical teaching, without reference to religion, imparted by means of the public schools, on the ground that such teaching is necessary for good citizenship, and that moral instruction may be given apart from the inculcation of any definite religious tenets. And still others maintain that the Bible should have more or less prominence given to it in the public schools, either as the means of sound moral instruction, or on the ground that morality and religion ought not to be separated in education.

It is proper to observe that Protestants are generally agreed that religion should control the members of the community in all their public and private relations of life, in order to the production of the best type of citizenship; but they may differ widely among themselves as to the functions of the church and state, respectively, in the inculcation of this religion, with its legitimate ethical results. Still, in spite of differences and difficulty, it is just here that the Protestant seeks to hold a safe middle ground between the secularist and the Romanist. The former sometimes attacks our public schools because there is too much religion in them, especially if the Bible is used in any way; and the latter criticises our public school system because it is largely secular, and has too little religion in it, as they suppose.

Against both of these positions the Protestant usually takes his stand. In doing this he holds fast to two positions. First, he stands for the preservation of our public school system in this country. He believes that it is one of the most potent agencies in unifying the various races and tongues that come to our shores from foreign lands. He feels confident that, when children of various nationalities and different creeds are gathered together in our public schools, there to come under similar educative influences for several years of their early life, a mighty unifying agency is brought into play. We are satisfied that this Alliance, which represents a considerable section of Protestantism in this country, will ever stand for the integrity of our public school system. And, secondly, Protestantism has also stood for the production of a highly intelligent, a definitely moral and a positively religious citizenship, as the type most to be desired. From

this position this Alliance is not likely to recede. In the light of the problem before us in this report, the question is, Whether the Bible can be properly used in the production of such a citizenship in connection with our public school system. The definite subject, therefore, upon which we are now to make report is, "The Place and Proper Use of the Bible in our Public Schools."

As we enter upon the subject-matter of this report, it may be well to keep in mind what a host of children and what a band of teachers are in the public schools of our country. According to the latest statistics there are about twenty-two millions of children of school age—that is, between six and sixteen years—in this country, and the number actually enrolled is upward of sixteen millions. This means that about one-sixth of our population, together with a great army of teachers, is gathered together, for several hours a day, through a number of years, in the school-room. It is surely almost impossible to over-estimate what this means in relation to the influence of the public schools upon the future welfare of our country.

In this report we shall attempt to do two things. In the first place, we shall seek to find out what the precise laws and regulations are in the different States in regard to the place and use of the Bible in our public schools. And in the second place, we shall venture to make some inferences and recommendations for the consideration of the Section.

I. LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

This opens up a very large subject, and we shall seek to compact the materials upon it as much as possible. The laws and regulations are of several distinct sorts. In some cases, only very few, there is allusion to the Bible in the public schools in the constitution of the State. In other cases, a larger number, there are statute regulations bearing upon this particular subject. In still other cases the regulations spring from the boards of education in the State, and in perhaps a majority of the States this is the status of affairs with reference to this matter. In several cases decisions of the courts have had considerable influence in

shaping the practice as to the use of the Bible in the public schools of certain States.

In order to secure information of recent date, we issued a circular letter to about one hundred and thirty persons in every section of our country. Every State superintendent of education, the presidents of many State and other colleges, and the superintendents of the public schools in many large cities were communicated with. The replies were very general, and the result is a vast mass of information, upon which this report is largely based. In addition, the work of others who have travelled over this field has been utilized; but in every case it has been verified by the later information received. And it may be added, that we have consulted the findings of the courts upon several of the more important cases wherein the question of the use of the Bible in the public school was passed upon.

We shall, from all these sources of information, first, indicate the laws upon this subject in each State; and secondly, we shall point out the significance of the decisions of the courts upon the matter now under review.

1. *The Laws in the Several States.*

(1) ALABAMA: The constitution says, "That no money raised for the public schools of the State shall be appropriated to or used for the support of any sectarian or denominational school" (13:8). But the school statute is silent in regard to the use of the Bible in the public schools of the State. Superintendents report that "the Bible is very generally read in the public schools of the State."

(2) ARIZONA: The constitution is silent, but the school statute has the following provisions: "It is the duty of the school board to exclude from schools and school libraries all books, publications or papers of a sectarian, partisan or denominational character" (6:50:13); also, "It shall be the duty of all teachers to endeavor to impress on the minds of the pupils the principles of morality, truth, justice and patriotism" (6:13). Superintendents report that the first of these quotations is usually understood to prohibit

the use of the Bible in the public schools, and consequently the Bible is not read in these schools.

(3) ARKANSAS: The constitution provides, "That religion, morality and knowledge are essential to good government" (2: 25); also, "That intelligence and virtue being the safeguards of government, . . . the State shall ever maintain a general, suitable and efficient system of free schools" (14: 1). The school statute says that "No teacher employed in any public school shall permit sectarian books to be used as reading or text-books in the schools under their care" (7074). The superintendent of public instruction takes the position that "The law leaves the discretion of reading or not reading the Bible with the school board, and the courts have uniformly refused to restrain, coerce or interfere with this discretion." The result is that there is no uniformity of practice in the schools of the State in regard to the use of the Bible therein.

(4) CALIFORNIA: The constitution provides that "No public money shall ever be appropriated for the support of any sectarian or denominational school, . . . nor shall any sectarian or denominational doctrine be taught . . . in any of the common schools of the State" (9: 1). The attorney-general of the State, in reply to an inquiry made by the superintendent of public instruction, gave his opinion (March 20, 1903) that "The reading of King James' Version of the Bible, as a religious exercise or its use as a text-book in the public schools, is prohibited by the constitution and laws of this State." The State superintendent reports "that the Bible is not read in the schools of California."

(5) COLORADO: The constitution forbids the use of any public school funds for any religious or sectarian purposes (9: 8). The school statute gives the power to school boards "To exclude from schools and school libraries all books, tracts, papers and other publications of an immoral tendency" (51: 11). The superintendent of public instruction for the State reports that "Moral instruction forms an important part of the course in the public schools of Colorado. In some schools the Bible is read, but not if any objections are made. In some schools the Lord's Prayer is repeated, if there is no objection offered to such exercises."

(6) CONNECTICUT: Both the constitution and the school statute are silent in regard to the reading of the Bible or the giving of religious instruction in the schools of the State. But the State superintendent reports that "In most schools the Bible is used without comment, as a part of the opening exercises in the morning." He adds that "In most schools the Lord's Prayer is repeated," and "In many schools religious songs are sung."

(7) DELAWARE: The constitution has the usual provisions forbidding school funds to be used for religious or sectarian purposes. Superintendents report that "The reading of the Bible, at the opening of the school, is well-nigh universal in Delaware schools," and that in Wilmington "The Bible is read daily, without note or comment, in all the schools of this city," and that "In all of the schools hymns and sacred songs are sung, and in most of them the Lord's Prayer is repeated." This much seems to be done, although the school statute is silent upon the subject, public opinion sustaining the practice.

(8) DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: The District, not being a State, but administered by three commissioners, the conditions are somewhat different. There is a board of education, and a rule of this body provides that "The opening exercises in every school shall consist of reading by the teacher, without note or comment, a portion of the Bible, repeating the Lord's Prayer at the option of the teacher, and appropriate singing by the pupils." This regulation secures the Bible a place in all the public schools of this District.

(9) FLORIDA: The constitution forbids the diversion of any part of the school funds to sectarian purposes. The school statute is silent concerning the reading of the Bible, but it requires the teaching of elementary physiology, especially as it relates to the effects of alcoholic stimulants and narcotics (11). The State superintendent reports that "Most principals read a short passage from the Bible, and open the school with prayer. The patrons favor it, at least a large majority of them, and no one says nay."

(10) GEORGIA: The constitution is silent, but the school statute declares that "The county board of education shall prescribe, from time to time, what text-books and books of reference

shall be used in the common schools of the county; *provided*, that the Bible shall not be excluded from the common or public schools of the State; and *provided further*, that the county boards shall not be permitted to introduce into the schools any text . . . of a sectarian or sectional character" (21). This gives the Bible a legal place in the public schools of this State, and it is very generally used.

(11) **IDAHO**: The constitution forbids the use of any school funds for religious or sectarian purposes (9:5). It also forbids any religious text of any kind for either teachers or pupils (9:6). Nor shall any "Sectarian or religious tenets or doctrines" ever be taught in the public schools (9:6). The school statute enjoins teachers to "Endeavor to impress upon the minds of the pupils the principles of morality, truth, justice and patriotism, and to teach them to avoid idleness, profanity and falsehood" (89). The statute also enjoins school boards "To exclude from the schools and school libraries . . . all books, tracts, papers and catechisms of a sectarian nature" (134). These provisions of the constitution and statutes have been differently interpreted. Not a few have taken them to exclude the Bible from the public schools. At one time the State superintendent ruled that "Our school law prohibits any reading of the Bible, or at least that is the recognized construction." But recently this has been modified as follows: "In regard to reading the Bible in the schools, the ruling of this office is that it may be." Concerning the repeating of the Lord's Prayer, he further says that "There is no law against it."

(12) **ILLINOIS**: The constitution neither forbids nor requires the reading of the Bible, or prayer, or any form of religious or devotional exercises in the public schools. And the school statutes are also entirely silent upon the subject (Sup. of Ed.). The superintendent of education reports, "It is a very general custom for the principals and teachers to open school by reading, without comment, a portion of the Scriptures, a repetition of the Lord's Prayer, or music. Frequently all these exercises are used in the opening of the schools. The reading of the Scriptures, without comment, is a practice usually followed in our State schools."

This practice is based upon the school statute, which gives to the school board authority to prescribe "text-books and apparatus" for the schools. In the year 1880 the validity of this was tested by a case, and the rule of a school board introducing the Bible into the school was pronounced "certainly a reasonable one." One statement is that "Out of seventy-one reports from city and county superintendents only twelve say that the Bible is not read, while in all of the others it is read to a greater or less extent."

(13) INDIAN TERRITORY: There are no laws upon the question of reading the Bible in the schools of this Territory, says the superintendent of education. He also reports that "Many teachers open school by reading the Bible, and repeating the Lord's Prayer in concert." "Have heard of no objection to Bible reading in any of the schools."

(14) INDIANA: The constitution secures to every one the right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. But the school statute says expressly that "The Bible shall not be excluded from the public schools of the State" (221:167). "The Bible, without note or comment, is installed in the common schools of Indiana," and "The whole matter of Bible reading and prayers is left with the good judgment of the teachers." The State superintendent reports concerning the general practice that "The Bible is read often, but not regularly, in most places." Another report says that "There is no general usage. Where a majority of the parents object, the Bible is not read."

(15) IOWA: The constitution prescribes that "The General Assembly shall encourage, by all suitable means, the promotion of . . . the moral improvement of the people" (9:3). The school statute declares that "The Bible shall not be excluded from any public school or institution in the State, nor shall any child be required to read it contrary to the wishes of his parent or guardian" (2805). In 1884 a case came before the courts by a patron, who prayed for an injunction to prevent the reading of the Bible in the schools. The court refused to grant the injunction; and, on an appeal, the Supreme Court sustained this decision. It left the matter with "the individual option of the teachers." The State superintendent reports that "The general

custom among superintendents, principals and teachers in this State is to read selections at the opening exercises of the school, making no note or comment."

(16) KANSAS: The constitution says that "The Legislature shall encourage the promotion of intellectual and moral . . . improvement" (6:2). The school statute declares that "No sectarian or religious doctrine shall be taught or inculcated in the public schools of the city, but nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the reading of the Holy Scriptures." This is the law for cities of the first class (125). For cities of the second class the law is that "No sectarian doctrine shall be taught or inculcated in any of the public schools of the city, but the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment, may be used therein." The State superintendent says, "In my judgment a majority of the teachers in the State conduct religious exercises every day. Moral instruction is given generally. The reading of the Scriptures would also permit the repeating of the Lord's Prayer." Another, and a later, statement is that "Many teachers have Scripture reading in their schools."

(17) KENTUCKY: The constitution has the usual prohibition of the use of school funds for church or sectarian purposes (189). The school statute provides that "No books . . . of a sectarian, infidel or immoral character shall be used or distributed in any public school" (6). The superintendent of education reports that, "As we construe the law, the teacher is left free to choose his literature from which to give lessons in morals." Under this exposition the Bible is used in many of the schools of the State. The superintendent of the schools in the city of Louisville reports that "The rules of the board require that the schools shall be opened daily by reading a portion of the Bible, without note or comment, and may be closed with singing, without prayer." This practice prevails generally throughout the State.

(18) LOUISIANA: The constitution declares that "No funds raised for the support of the public schools of the State shall be appropriated to, or used for, the support of any private or sectarian schools." This and other somewhat similar provisions have usually been taken, in the peculiar conditions which exist in

this State, to exclude the Bible from the public schools. The superintendent of education reports that "It is not read in any of the public schools."

(19) MAINE: The constitution declares that "It is made the duty of all instructors of youth . . . to take diligent care . . . to impress on the minds of children and youth . . . the principles of morality and justice, and a sacred regard to truth, love to their country, humanity and universal benevolence, sobriety, industry, frugality, chastity, moderation and temperance, and all other virtues." This has been construed to allow, if not really require, the use of the Bible in the schools. A test case, where an effort was made to exclude King James' Version in favor of the Douay Version, established the right of the former to a place in the public schools. The State superintendent reports that "I am very happy to be able to report that the opening exercises in most of the schools of this State consist of reading a passage of Scripture by the teacher, and repeating the Lord's Prayer by the teacher and pupils. This custom is so general that it is unnecessary, I think, to attempt to collect any statistics upon the matter in this State."

(20) MARYLAND: The constitution is entirely silent upon this subject, but the school statute says that "School books shall contain nothing of a sectarian or partisan character." The Bible is pretty generally read in the schools of this State. The city superintendent for Baltimore sends a copy of the rules of the board of that city, which contains this, "Each school, either collectively or in classes, shall be opened by the reading, without comment, of a chapter in the Holy Bible, and the use of the Lord's Prayer. The Douay Version may be used by those people who prefer it" (19). On this basis the superintendent reports that "When a building has an assembly hall, the schools in that building are assembled for opening exercises; otherwise they are held in the class-rooms." He also says that "The Bible is read daily in our schools. The Lord's Prayer is also recited."

(21) MASSACHUSETTS: The constitution asserts that "Wisdom and knowledge, as well as virtue, diffused generally among the people, is necessary for the preservation of their rights and

liberties" (5:2). The school statute prescribes that "The school committee shall require the daily reading in the public schools of some portion of the Bible, without note or oral comment, but they shall not require a pupil whose parent or guardian informs the teacher in writing that he has conscientious scruples against it to read from any particular version, or to take any part in the reading" (44:32). The Supreme Court in an important decision upholds this law in a case in which the authority of the school committee to make a rule requiring the reading of the Bible and prayer at the opening of the school each morning was called in question. In 1855 it was announced in the public statutes that "It is the settled policy of the State to require the use of the Bible in the public schools." The superintendent of the city schools of Boston reports that the regulation under which they act is as follows: "The morning exercises of all the schools shall begin with the reading in each class-room, by the teacher, of a portion of Scripture, without note or comment; and no other religious exercise shall be allowed in the public schools." There is reason to believe that the Bible is pretty generally used in the schools of this State. One report says that "Many teachers ask their pupils to repeat together the Lord's Prayer after the reading of the Bible" (Pres. Eliot).

(22) MICHIGAN: The constitution is absolutely silent on this subject. The words "Bible, sectarian instruction," do not appear anywhere (39, 40, 41). The usual clauses about liberty of worship and the support of any religious sect by public money are found. The superintendents report that "Some form of religious worship is practically universal in our schools. It takes the form of Bible readings, prayer, reciting the Lord's Prayer, etc. In grades below the high school many Psalms are committed and recited" (Pres. Angell). In December, 1898, an important decision of the Supreme Court of Michigan was favorable to the reading of the Bible in the public schools, and the practice is now quite general. Another report says that "The usage varies. Some teachers always and in all their schools read the Scriptures, and make extempore prayer; others use simply the Lord's Prayer. In some cases the Bible is not used at all."

(23) MINNESOTA: The constitution says that "The stability of a republican form of government depending mainly upon the intelligence of the people, it shall be the duty of the Legislature to establish a general and uniform system of public schools" (8:1). It also says that none of the school funds shall be devoted to sectarian purposes, but is silent concerning the use of the Bible in the schools, as also is the school statute. The State superintendent prior to 1901 said that "Moral instruction is given by precept and example, that the Bible is not generally read, nor the Lord's Prayer repeated, because such exercises are contrary to the State constitution." The attorney-general of the State ruled that the decision of the Supreme Court of Wisconsin, which excluded the Bible from the public schools, applies to Minnesota. But a later report states that a book, known as *Readings from the Bible*, is very generally used throughout the State, while the Bible itself is read in a portion of the schools. It would appear that the practice in this State varies a good deal.

(24) MISSISSIPPI: The constitution provides that "No religious test as a qualification for office shall be required," and also that "The free enjoyment of all religious sentiments and the different modes of worship shall be held sacred." It also adds that "The rights hereby secured shall not be construed to justify acts of licentiousness injurious to morals, or dangerous to the peace and safety of the State, or to exclude the holy Bible from use in any public school of this State" (3:8). Here we find in the constitution itself what is in the school statute in some other States. Under such a provision, we would expect the Bible to be very generally read in this State, as is really the case.

(25) MISSOURI: There is nothing either in the constitution or in the school statute of this State concerning the use of the Bible in the public schools. The matter is left in the hands of the school boards in the different districts to settle as they deem best. The State superintendent reports that "The Bible is generally read without comment." Another report states that "Moral instruction is given in the schools of Missouri." One report says that the attorney-general has interpreted the constitution and law "to prohibit any religious ceremonies in the public

schools," and that he has expressed the opinion that "The reading of the Bible . . . for religious instruction can be enjoined and prohibited in the public schools of this State." But in spite of this opinion the reports show that many teachers continue to use the Bible, and to draw from its literature in their teachings. The city superintendent of St. Louis says that "The Bible is not used in the schools of that city, but that the readers contain extracts from the Bible."

(26) MONTANA: The constitution provides that no religious test shall be required of any teacher (11:9); that teachers shall impress the principles of morality and good citizenship upon the minds of their pupils is enjoined in the school statute (1845). One report says that "The superintendent of education announces that the law forbids the reading of the Bible." As the use of the Bible is thus left to the local authorities, the practice concerning it may be expected to vary. Reports would indicate that "In some schools the Bible is read regularly, in others occasionally, and in others not at all."

(27) NEBRASKA: Neither the constitution nor the school statute makes any specific mention of the Bible in the public schools. There is a clause in the constitution forbidding sectarian instruction in the public schools (8:2). The superintendent of education says that "Moral instruction is given in the schools of Nebraska, that religious songs are sung, and that in many schools the Bible is read, the Lord's Prayer repeated, and the Ten Commandments recited." A later report states that "The general custom is to read a selection without comment." Several cases have come before the courts in this State for decision. It has usually been held that the law does not exclude the Bible from the public schools, and that the Bible is not a sectarian book. In one recent case the court decided that the way a teacher in a certain school used the Bible was sectarian, but this decision applied only to that particular case, and was not general in its scope.

(28) NEVADA: There is nothing in the constitution or school statute upon the use of the Bible in the public schools. The constitution forbids sectarian teaching in the public schools (11:9). The school statute says that "No books which are of a sectarian

or a denominational nature are to be introduced into any school" (13:5). The State superintendent says that "The Bible is not generally read in the schools of this State, and there is an obscure decision of the Supreme Court which has been quoted against using the Bible in the schools."

(29) NEW HAMPSHIRE: The constitution contains the usual provision concerning sectarian or denominational teaching in the schools, and concerning the teaching of sound morality (82). The school statute forbids the use of any book in the school "Which favors any particular religious sect or party" (8:92). The State superintendent says that "It is a common custom with our teachers to open the daily session with Bible reading, followed by repeating the Lord's Prayer by the pupils."

(30) NEW JERSEY: The constitution is silent upon the subject, but the school statute prescribes as follows: "It shall not be lawful for any teacher, trustee or trustees to introduce into, or have performed in, any school receiving its proportion of public moneys any religious service, ceremony or forms whatsoever, except reading the Bible and repeating the Lord's Prayer." This is a limitative regulation. The State superintendent reports that "It is the custom of teachers and principals to read a selection or chapter from the Bible responsively with the school, and for the teacher and the school to repeat the Lord's Prayer in concert."

(31) NEW MEXICO: The constitution and statute are silent upon the subject. Sectarian instruction in the schools is forbidden, and the superintendent of education says that "No religious instruction whatever is given in the common schools of this state." The information we have is very meagre.

(32) NEW YORK: There is no specific provision in either the constitution or school statute in regard to the use of the Bible in the public schools. An effort was made in 1838 to have the Bible excluded, but the bill received only one vote in the Legislature. In 1851, in 1882, and 1901, action was taken by the Legislature refusing to allow school boards to exclude the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment, from the public schools. In this way the Bible has had its place made secure in the schools of this State. The school board of the City of New York has the fol-

lowing by-law: "All the schools under the jurisdiction of the board shall be opened with reading a portion of the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment." It thus appears that in New York State and City the Bible is very generally read in the public schools.

(33) NORTH CAROLINA: The constitution has this provision, "Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools . . . shall be forever encouraged" (9:1). The school statute authorizes school boards "To adopt text-books," and forbids "sectarian teaching." Teachers are also by this statute enjoined "to encourage morality." The State superintendent reports that "The Bible is generally read as a part of the morning devotional exercises."

(34) NORTH DAKOTA: The constitution is silent upon the Bible in the schools, but the school statute has definite provisions as follows: "The Bible shall not be deemed a sectarian book. It shall not be excluded from any public school. It may, at the option of the teacher, be used in school, without sectarian comment, not to exceed ten minutes daily. No pupil shall be required to read it, nor to be present in the school-room during the reading thereof, contrary to the wishes of his parents or guardian" (12:734). The State superintendent reports that in the schools of this State "the Bible is usually used daily."

(35) OHIO: The constitution declares that "Religion, morality and knowledge being essential to our government, it shall be the duty of the General Assembly to pass suitable laws to protect every religious denomination, . . . and to encourage schools and every means of public instruction" (1:7). It adds that "No religious or other sect or sects shall ever have any exclusive right to, or control of, any part of the school funds of this State" (6:2). The school statute leaves the management of the public schools in the hands of the school boards. The school board of Cincinnati, as far back as 1869, passed regulations prohibiting religious instruction, including the use of the Bible, in the public schools. The superintendents report that the Bible is not read in the schools of Cincinnati and Cleveland, but that its use is quite general in the schools in smaller towns and throughout the State.

(36) OKLAHOMA: We have not been able to learn what the law is in this new region, but the superintendent of schools reports that "In the schools moral instruction is given, the Bible is read, the Lord's Prayer is repeated, and religious songs are sung."

(37) OREGON: Neither in the constitution nor in the statutes are there any direct provisions concerning religious instruction or the use of the Bible in the public schools. The State board of education has this provision, "Teachers in the public schools shall, to the uttermost of their ability, inculcate in the minds of their pupils correct principles of morality." The school boards have authority to permit or prohibit the use of the Bible in the public schools of this State.

(38) PENNSYLVANIA: The constitution has the usual prohibition in regard to sectarian instruction and the use of public funds for sectarian schools. The school law gives the Bible a place in the schools of the State in the following terms: "The Scriptures come under the head of text-books, and they should not be omitted from the list in use in public schools." The State superintendent reports that "The school boards are vested with power to decide whether the Bible shall be read in the public schools." There is also a law forbidding the teacher wearing any distinctive religious garb while in discharge of duty in the public schools. The superintendents report that "The Bible is read in nearly every school in the State." One report says (1897) that of the 18,565 schools in the State, the Bible was read in 15,980.

(39) RHODE ISLAND: Both the constitution and the school statute are silent upon the subject of the Bible in the schools; but the school law contains the following provision for moral instruction: "Every teacher shall aim to implant and cultivate in the minds of all the children . . . the principles of morality and virtue" (61:7). On this basis the school authorities are careful to impart thorough moral instruction, and the commissioner of public schools says that "Of the means used to secure moral and virtuous development, we naturally consider the Bible first." The result is that the Bible is very generally read in the schools. One report says that "In all but twelve of the thirty-eight towns

and cities in the State the reading of the Bible is required or permitted, and that the Lord's Prayer is also used."

(40) **SOUTH CAROLINA:** The constitution is silent upon the subject; but the statute requires that "Morality and good manners be taught." The State superintendent reports that "As a rule the Bible is read in the schools of South Carolina, though not required by law." "The practice in Charleston for more than thirty-five years has been to have the Bible read daily in the public schools." The superintendent of the schools of Columbia says, "Our morning devotionals consist of Scripture readings, the Lord's Prayer, and a hymn. Selected Bible stories are taught in each grade. Our teachers frequently require their pupils to memorize Bible verses." In this State the schools are usually opened with the reading of the Bible.

(41) **SOUTH DAKOTA:** The constitution has nothing upon the subject, but it has a clause laying stress upon morality in order to good government (8:1). The school statute gives great emphasis to this, and enjoins every teacher to impress upon the minds of their pupils the importance of cultivating the cardinal virtues (6:6). The statute further prescribes that "No sectarian doctrine shall be taught or inculcated in any of the schools of the corporations; but the Bible, without sectarian comment, may be used therein." Reports show that the Bible is read in many of the schools of this State.

(42) **TENNESSEE:** Both the constitution and the school statute are without provisions for reading the Bible in the public schools. Moral teaching is to be given, but the use of the Bible is left with the teachers. The school authorities encourage the practice, and the State superintendent reports that "The reading of the Bible is generally practiced in all the schools of the State."

(43) **TEXAS:** The constitution prohibits sectarian teaching in the schools (7:5). The school statute states the branches which may be taught in the schools, but is silent regarding moral instruction. "But neither the constitution nor the statute prohibit the reading of the Bible." Hence in practice there is no uniformity in the use of the Bible in the schools of this State. In not a few cases "The Bible is read, prayer offered, and religious

songs are sung." "The Bible is read in all the schools of Houston."

(44) UTAH: The constitution provides for a uniform school system free from sectarian control (10:1). The statute prescribes that "No atheistic, infidel, sectarian, religious or denominational tenets shall be taught in any of the district schools of the State." As to the practice, our report says that "While morality is taught and inculcated in all the public schools of this State, the Bible is not read in any of them." A later report says that in some cases "The Bible, without comment, is read." The impression is prevalent in this State that to introduce the Bible into the public schools is to incur the danger of bringing in sectarian teaching, and on this account it is not much read.

(45) VERMONT: The constitution says that "Laws for the encouragement of virtue . . . ought to be constantly kept in force and duly executed; and a competent system of schools ought to be maintained in each town for the convenient instruction of youth" (2:41). The school statute does not require the reading of the Bible in the public schools, but the State superintendent says that "We encourage Bible reading in all public schools." He also says that "The Bible is read in devotional exercises." Another report says, "The Bible is read in nearly every school. The Lord's Prayer and Bible verses are quite frequently recited." Sound morality is also emphasized.

(46) VIRGINIA: There is no law, either in the constitution or in the statute, concerning moral instruction and the reading of the Bible in the public schools. The school statute provides that "Nothing of a partisan or sectarian character shall be taught in the schools." As to the practice, the superintendent reports that as a general rule "Brief selections from the Bible constitute part of the opening exercises of the schools of this State." The superintendent of the city schools of Richmond says that "Where the patrons are united in their estimation of the Bible it is usually read. If our patrons are not at one in this, those parts are read which are of a general character."

(47) WASHINGTON: The constitution has the usual provisions concerning sectarian instruction. The school statute requires

moral instruction. The attorney-general of the State has written an opinion, and ruled that "The stated reading of the Bible in the public schools of this State is a religious service within the meaning of the constitution, and as such is hereby prohibited in Sec. 11, Art. I., of that document," which relates to sectarian instruction. The result is that the reading of the Bible does not widely prevail in the schools of this State. The superintendent of the Tacoma schools, however, reports that "The Bible is used quite freely for reference in the interpretation of the allusions found in literature."

(48) WEST VIRGINIA: The constitution requires the Legislature "To foster and encourage, by a system of free schools, moral . . . improvement" (13:12). In 1898, the Supreme Court, in deciding a case which prayed that the King James' Version should be excluded from the schools, ruled that "The reading of the Bible in King James' Version cannot be prohibited." The court held, also, that it could neither compel nor prohibit the reading of the Bible. From reports, it appears that the Bible is read in a good many schools of this State.

(49) WISCONSIN: The constitution has provisions about freedom of worship and sectarian instruction in the public schools (1:18). It also requires the founding of free public schools in which "No text-books shall be permitted which have a tendency to inculcate sectarian ideas" (514). An important decision of the Supreme Court of the State ruled that the Bible was a sectarian book, and that its use should be prohibited, in accordance with the constitutional provisions upon the sectarian instruction in the public schools. The State superintendent reports that "Conformity to the Supreme Court decision is the rule in this State." This means that the Bible is not usually read in the schools.

(50) WYOMING: Both the constitution and the statute are without provisions upon this subject. But when an attempt was made to pass a law against the use of the Bible in the public schools in the Legislature, it failed. Hence the Bible holds its place in the schools of Wyoming, and is read not infrequently in them, though it cannot be said that its use is general.

2. *The Decisions of the Courts.*

(1) First of all, it is worth noting that every attempt made in any State Legislature to pass a bill excluding the Bible from the public schools has utterly failed. This indicates that when the people by their representatives face the general proposition of excluding the Bible, they have pronounced against any such legislation. This is true of New York and other States.

(2) In a number of cases when the question of excluding the Bible from the schools came before the courts or school boards, the decision has been in favor of retaining it. This is the case in Arkansas, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Maine, Michigan, West Virginia and Wyoming. By reason of these decisions the Bible has its place more fully secured in the schools of these States. In many of the States where the Bible is generally read in the schools the question has never come before the courts. Public custom or law has decided for its use.

(3) Then there are a number of States where court decisions or the interpretation of the law by the school authorities have been adverse to the use of the Bible in the schools. Sometimes it has been excluded on the ground that its teaching is sectarian, and hence to use it conflicted with the constitution. In a few cases the objection has been to the King James' Version of the Bible.

In Arizona there seems to be a general impression that the use of the Bible is really inconsistent with the prohibition about sectarian teaching, though no formal decision has been given.

In California the State superintendent and attorney-general ruled that the use of King James' Version was unconstitutional, and this did much to exclude the Bible from the schools of this State.

In Idaho there have been different rulings by the school authorities. This has led to confusion, so that the Bible is little read in the schools of this State.

In Louisiana it is excluded, chiefly on account of the large Roman Catholic population, who object to the use of King James'

Version. In Nevada there is an obscure decision of the court which is quoted against the use of the Bible in the schools there.

In Minnesota, Missouri and Washington the interpretation by the attorney-general of the laws bearing upon the subject has been adverse to the use of the Bible in the public schools. This explains why the Bible is not much read in the schools of these States.

In Nebraska and Wisconsin there have been decisions of some importance, bearing upon these subjects, made by the Supreme Court in these States. In Nebraska the case was that of a teacher who, it was shown, was really making a sectarian use of the Bible in a certain school. The court held that in this particular case there was sectarian teaching, and that such teaching should cease. But the court in its finding was also careful to say that "The law does not forbid the use of the Bible in the public schools; it is not proscribed either by the constitution or statute, and the courts have no right to declare its use unlawful." . . . "The point where the courts may rightfully interfere to prevent the use of the Bible in a public school is where legitimate use has degenerated into abuse." It is evident that this decision affected only this particular case, but did not exclude the Bible from all the schools of the State (1903).

In the case of Wisconsin, the decision of the Supreme Court was much more sweeping. The case was brought by certain Roman Catholics, whose main objection was against reading King James' Version. They asked for a writ of mandamus of the court to cause the school board to discontinue the reading of the Bible in the public school where their children attended. The Circuit Court denied the petition, and the parties appealed to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court reversed the action of the lower court, and directed it to issue a peremptory writ of mandamus as prayed for in their petition (1900). This decision, so far as we know, stands, and the State superintendent for this year reports that "The schools act in accordance with this decision." These are two cases of recent interest and importance, and only one of them rules the Bible out of all schools in the State.

II. SOME INFERENCES AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

This report also presents some inferences from the foregoing exposition, and some recommendations for the consideration of the section.

1. *Some Inferences.*

(1) Speaking generally, it may be concluded that the Bible is widely read in the public schools of this country. Of the fifty States and Territories noted in the former part of this report, eleven, either in the constitution or the statutes or the rules of the school authorities, have provisions requiring that the Bible be read in the public schools. In at least thirty-six of these States and Territories the Bible is very generally read in the schools. In about four others it is read to some considerable extent. In ten it can scarcely be said to be read at all, owing to decisions of the courts and public opinion. In only two have we definite declarations of the courts that the reading of the Bible in the public schools is prohibited by the constitution. These are Wisconsin and Nebraska; but only that of Wisconsin plainly declares this, as that of Nebraska only held that the sectarian use of the Bible was unconstitutional. So far, therefore, as the action of the courts is concerned we have no need to be discouraged.

(2) It is evident from the exposition, also, that stress is laid by our school system upon the importance of sound and positive moral teaching for good citizenship and secure government. The law of almost every State has in some form provisions to this effect. No particulars need be given here; for the whole school system, if true to itself, must be permeated by sound ethics, and every school-room ought to be a nursery of all the virtues. The importance of this is emphasized by the reports which came to the committee in response to its circular letter. The almost uniform testimony is twofold: First, that morality is absolutely necessary to good citizenship and government; and secondly, that the public schools should make a large contribution to the production of this morality.

(3) Our school system evidently makes a distinction between morality and religion, in the stress it lays upon moral instruction

in the public schools, on the one hand, and the equal stress it puts upon the exclusion of sectarian religious teaching on the other. These two features are found in the laws of very many of the States side by side. We do not here undertake to pronounce upon the soundness of this distinction, or how far it can be carried into actual practice. We simply call attention to this fact as one to be reckoned with in all serious discussions of the problem now in hand.

(4) From the exposition just given it also appears that there is difference of opinion as to how far the Bible is necessary in order to teach virtue or morality, and as to whether the Bible can be used to teach morality without any reference to its religious tenets. These are both very difficult problems, and neither our school laws nor the public schools seem clear upon them. It is not clear, for example, whether reading the Bible at the opening of the school is a religious act, or a means for moral teaching, or partly both. We do no more than point out this confusion all through our school system, both in its law and practice. We may also gather from the exposition already made that there are serious difficulties in the way of securing the Bible a larger place in the school-room than it now has. On the one hand, we have the legal prohibitions in regard to sectarian teaching, and on the other separation between church and State as it is in this land. Then the question as to whether the Bible itself is a sectarian book is raised from time to time. And, in addition, the still deeper question of the right of the State, through its public schools, to teach morality and religion, and of the right of the church alone to teach these things. Are we to face the issue that the schools should be entirely secular, and that all instruction in morality and religion should be given by the churches? Or are we, as hinted already, to divorce morality and religion in the schools, and say to them, "You may teach the former, but not the latter?"

2. *Some Recommendations.*

The committee ventures to submit some recommendations to the section for its consideration and adoption. These are made

mainly with the view of giving this report some practical effect in connection with this vital question.

(1) We recommend that copies of this report be sent to all the State superintendents of education, and also to the heads of the leading colleges and universities of the United States.

(2) We recommend that copies of this report be sent to the more influential religious journals of the country; and that they be asked to make use of it in their columns, as they may deem best.

(3) We also recommend that copies of this report be sent to the supreme judicatories of the various branches of the Alliance in this country, with the request that they give this matter consideration.

(4) We further recommend that this Section consider the propriety of having this subject given a place for discussion on the programme of the next General Council at Liverpool; or, if it be too late to secure this, to have copies of this report sent to the general secretary of the Alliance before this council convenes.

(5) We still further recommend that this Section express its sincere gratification that so much stress is laid upon sound moral training by our school system, and that the Bible is so largely read in the public schools of this country; and it also expresses the earnest hope that this desirable condition may continue through all the days to come.

(6) We, in addition, recommend that this Section express its regret that confusion should have been introduced into the practice regarding the use of the Bible in our public schools, by reason of the inconsistent decisions by the courts and the varying interpretations given by school authorities in different places of practically the same constitutional and statutory provisions, and that the Section advises the officers and people of the churches of the Alliance in this country that they should seek to exert a prudent Christian influence upon public sentiment in their respective localities upon this subject.

(7) We finally recommend that this Section express its judgment that moral instruction and ethical training are necessary

for good citizenship, and should have a place in our public school system, and that this is possible without inculcating any denominational tenets; and further, that this Section expresses its judgment that the Bible is the very best instrument to impart this moral instruction and training, in connection with our public schools.

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