

THE POLICY OF  
SECULAR EDUCATION

BY

HALLEY STEWART

*President of the Secular Education League*

**Secular  
Education League,  
12 PALMER ST. S. W. 1:**

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## THE POLICY OF SECULAR EDUCATION

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THE last Education Bill worthy of the name was that which was introduced by Mr. Balfour and passed into law in 1902. Whatever its merits and demerits, it was a measure vitally affecting the organisation of elementary education in England. It did what the Conservative party had long aimed at. By placing practically the whole cost of elementary education upon the rates and taxes it gave the Church of England schools a fresh lease of life. But it did something more than that: it abolished the old School Boards, and placed education under the authority of the Urban and District Councils. This was a change of the first importance, whether for good or ill as various sections of the religious world regarded it; a point with which the present article has no special concern. Mr. Balfour's Act profoundly affected the educational system of the country besides providing large additional funds to meet the necessities of the Church of England schools, which were being out-rivalled by the better-equipped Board schools. Nothing of the kind, however, can be said of the three Educational Bills of the Liberal Government introduced by Mr. Birrell, Mr. McKenna, and Mr. Runciman. Those Bills were simply readjustments of ecclesiastical control over national education. They might be called redistributions of religious privilege amongst the principal Christian Churches. The stubborn attitude of the Catholic Church had secured all that it required, and it was allowed virtually to stand outside the general system of education and enjoy a contract of its own with the State. Jews, Agnostics, Secularists, and Ethicists were not thought important (that is, powerful) enough to trouble about. For them there was the Conscience Clause. There remained, broadly speaking, the two great antagonists, the Established Church and the non-established Churches, which for this purpose counted as one. It was substantially their battle. The effect of all three Bills would have been (1) to make it more difficult for the Established Church to maintain its elementary schools, and (2) to set up a system of

religious teaching agreeable to the Free Churches in all the Council schools throughout the land as a civic religion.

This view of the matter is strenuously and even indignantly denied by the spokesmen of the Free Churches. They are perfectly satisfied that the Church of England seeks its own advantage and nothing else in regard to national education, but they treat it as a kind of blasphemy to suggest that the Free Churches are tarred with the same brush. Gladstone saw clearly enough what the plain issue was in 1870. For his own part he rather favoured secular education, and in private he was loud in denouncing "the popular imposture of undenominational instruction." Lord Morley, in dealing with the whole controversy over the first Education Act, does not hesitate to say that "at bottom the battle of the schools was not religious, but ecclesiastical." "Quarrels about education and catechism and conscience," he adds, "masked the standing jealousy between Church and Chapel." "The parent and the child," he notes, "in whose name the struggle raged, stood indifferent."<sup>1</sup> They stand indifferent still. The war over religious teaching in elementary schools is a clerical war. Even when School Board elections were heated sectarian quarrels, the great mass of the ratepayers did not go to the poll. They take less, rather than more, interest in the quarrel nowadays, for the people are recognising clericalism as the enemy in every civilised country. The parents and children are never heard of, except by proxy, in this dispute, which is carried on exclusively by the representatives of other interests than theirs. Lord Morley's quick phrase sums up the whole matter. The quarrel over education is a quarrel between Church and Chapel. The choice between the policies of these rivals is the only one presented to the people in a country where religious congresses never tire of lamenting that four-fifths of the adult population seldom or never enter church or chapel.

Politicians are slow to learn, but it should be easy for them to see that the incubus on education all along has been the assumption put forward on behalf of the Churches that it is their right, in the very nature of things, to have special consideration shown to them. All the controversy and strife has sprung from this cause. And the mischief will continue until statesmen learn—and are bold enough to act on their knowledge—that members of Churches, however powerful and distinguished, should be treated only as citizens in regard to all political and social questions. The interests

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Gladstone*, Vol. II., pp. 306, 307.

of their special religious organisations should be nothing to the State. Fortunately, this view is finding ever wider and wider support both without and within the Churches. A strenuous effort is being made to prevent the perpetuation and extension of the odious injustice which is inflicted by those who secure the propagation of their own religion in the nation's schools at the expense of the entire community. It was for the object of uniting the supporters of this view in an effective organisation, irrespective of their views on other matters, that the Secular Education League came into being. The League neither professes nor entertains any hostility to religion. It simply regards religion as a personal and private matter, which all should be free to promote in voluntary associations, but which should never come under the patronage or control of the State. The League takes its stand on the principle of citizenship, with freedom and equality for all in matters that lie beyond. Ministers of religion sit on the General Council and also on the Executive Committee with well-known non-Christians. Without the invidiousness of citing names it may be mentioned that one of the earliest members of the General Council was the late Mr. George Meredith, and the first President of the League was Lord Weardale.

The Secular Education League has been boycotted by most of the newspapers, who have taken sides for Church or Chapel in the education struggle, and follow the English plan of ignoring, even as news, what is against their own policy. But no boycott can prevent the inevitable. The separation of the temporal and spiritual powers is surely, if slowly, prevailing in every civilised country. It has dealt with one department of public life after another, and it will finally settle the question of national education. This has already happened in France, and we are on the way to it in England. We are nearer to it, perhaps, than is usually believed. In the article by the Rev. Professor Inge in the September number of this Review, it was admitted that "the potential strength of the secularist vote is far greater than most friends of religious education at all realise." "The danger of complete secularisation," he said again, "is far greater than most religious persons imagine." The same confession was made by two other members of the Education Settlement Committee, writing elsewhere<sup>1</sup> in behalf of the programme called *Towards Educational Peace*. Dr. M. E. Sadler said that "strong forces are pushing English education into secularism." This was his opening sentence and the reason of his article. Further on he

<sup>1</sup> *Contemporary Review*, September, 1909.

referred to what might soon be the fate of religious teaching "if public opinion once turned decisively towards secular education," and added, what to him is evidently the alarming announcement, that "there are many signs that such a change may quickly show itself." This statement was even more strongly expressed on a later page. Dr. Sadler remarked that "most cool-headed observers who have travelled in the United States and in the British Colonies would be inclined to predict that the secular solution is most likely to be adopted in England as the next step." "I am bound to admit this likelihood," he said, "though I deplore it." The Rev. J. H. Shakespeare used words very much to the same effect. After declaring that religious education must and would be preserved; that ethics divorced from religion were not only of no value, but positively dangerous; and that the people were dead against secular education; to give gravity to his warning of his fellow religionists, and to justify his own anxiety, he almost involuntarily disclosed the actual truth. "I do not agree with the *Guardian*," he said, "that it [secular education] is a bogey of which we need not be seriously alarmed. It has drawn perceptibly nearer. More and more men say to each other: 'We do not wish it or like it, but it is better than this endless and bitter strife!'"

Not one of these advocates who so dread secular education definitely assigns any reason against it, but simply expresses his own preference for religious teaching. The champions of religious teaching generally evade the question of principle. They treat possession as more than nine points of the law. But the question of principle cannot be evaded in that free-and-easy manner at the bar of public opinion. The religious educationists will find that they must give a better reason against secular education than the high value they themselves set upon their own religion, which, by the way, they generally assume for the purposes of this controversy is homogeneous—as if there were no serious differences in doctrine, and even in ethics, between the various Churches.

What right have they to impose their religious preferences upon the rest of the community? On that point the Secular Education League issues a clear challenge. "There can be no final solution of the religious difficulty in national education," it says in its manifesto, "until the Education Act is amended, so that there shall be no teaching of religion in State-supported elementary schools in school hours, or at the public expense." This is the pivot on which the whole struggle practically turns. And the religious educationists

will have to face the free and full discussion of the questions (1) why the schools maintained by all the citizens should be made the homes of sectarian teaching? and (2) why religious teaching of any kind should be supported at the nation's expense—that is to say, at the cost of citizens who are irreconcilably opposed to it as false and harmful, or who, believing in religious teaching, are unalterably opposed to its compulsory propagation at the national expense?

But, although the discussion of principle is evaded by all sections of religious educationists, they have their own peculiar way of repelling the claims of secular education. That way is twofold, negative and positive; the former consists in declaring that secular education is impossible, the latter in declaring that it is mischievous. Let us see whether it is either.

Mr. Shakespeare represents the politician as "well aware that the great mass of the people are dead against what is known as secular education." Dr. Inge, however, is of opinion that "the working-class parent is not interested in the religious education controversy." One would like to know on what basis Mr. Shakespeare makes his assertion. They have never had an opportunity of accepting or rejecting the policy of secular education. How does Mr. Shakespeare know what they would do if they had to decide the question? He does not point to a single fact in support of his view. But a striking fact may be pointed to which is dead against his theory that the mass of the people are dead against secular education. "The mass of the people" is rather an elastic phrase, but it must surely include the working classes. Now the organised working classes, assembled in their annual Trade Union Congress, have repeatedly declared in favour of secular education, and each time by an overwhelming majority. The majority vote has only once been less than a million; the minority has never reached a hundred thousand. Even at the last Congress, when the Catholic delegates made a pathetic appeal for fair play, and urged that Trade Unions had nothing to do with religion, and therefore ought not to pass resolutions against religious education in elementary schools, the minority vote was only eighty thousand. And that is probably the high-water mark of this intensely clerical agitation. For it will certainly be pointed out at the next Congress that this pathetic appeal of the Catholics for what they call fair play is founded on a misconception. That the State should have nothing to do with religion, precisely as Trade Unionism should have nothing to do with it, is the very ground on which the Congress votes for the

exclusion of religious teaching from the State schools. Up to the present, at any rate, the organised working classes are decisively in favour of secular education; and this fact plays havoc with Mr. Shakespeare's bold assertion. He takes his cue from the opportunism of the hour. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Lord Rosebery, Lord Morley, the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and other political leaders, frequently expressed their adherence to the principle of secular education, although they never did anything for it in Parliament. As there seems to be a general ignorance of this fact, a few brief quotations may be permitted. Mr. Chamberlain, addressing the Liberal Unionists at Birmingham in October, 1902, declared his adherence to the educational policy that he had propounded there in 1872 :—

I endeavoured to persuade my countrymen that the only logically just solution of the great difficulty was that the national schools should confine themselves entirely to secular instruction, and should have nothing whatever to do with religious teaching. I should be delighted if I thought that this were acceptable to the majority of the people.

Lord Rosebery, in his speech at the City Liberal Club in October, 1902, said :—

I suppose the ideal—logical and philosophical—view of education is that the State should be solely responsible for secular education, and that the Churches should be responsible for religious education.

Lord Morley, in his speech at Queen's Hall on the 20th of March, 1905, said :—

In regard to education, years ago he was in favour of secular, compulsory, and free education.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, in his very important speech at the Alexandra Palace banquet on the 1st of November, 1902, said :—

If we had our way, there would be no religious difficulty at all. We should confine ourselves (I believe nine-tenths of Liberals would confine themselves) to secular education, and to such moral precepts as would be common to all, and would not be obnoxious to people who do not come within the range of Christianity.

It is well known, in spite of the carefully doctored reports in the newspapers, that favourable references to secular education in the Liberal speeches at that time were greeted with enthusiastic applause. The rank and file of the party appeared to be fairly ripe for the "secular solution." But the party leaders determined otherwise. They had political reasons for placating the Free Churches, and the result was Mr. Birrell's Education Bill. The excuse of the Liberal leaders was that, although secular education was the wise and just



policy, the people would not have it. That pretence has done duty ever since, and consequently we must not be too severe on Mr. Shakespeare, whose rash statement has no claim to originality.

So much for the negative objection to secular education; the positive objection is equally false and far more sinister, and on this side of their controversial policy the clerical educationists are in perfect agreement. They rarely make definite statements which can be challenged and confuted; but they assert, more or less in the language of innuendo, that secular education, wherever it has been adopted, has proved itself morally mischievous. This is probably but a form of the ancient clerical assumption that all persons who differ from the guardians of the orthodox faith are extremely wicked. An assumption of that kind has to be more delicately worked now than it was in former times, when differing from the established form was too dangerous to be popular. Accordingly we find that Dr. Inge discreetly drops it altogether. Dr. Sadler handles it very gingerly. He refers to the "secular solution" as having been adopted in other parts of the English-speaking world "not with auspicious results." Mr. Shakespeare dogmatizes on this matter out of a full heart, but with a sad lack of knowledge. "We know," he says, "that in other lands where secular education prevails the results are deplorable." *What* lands? He does not state. He rather suggests Australia. "Australian writers," he says, "tell us of populations growing up without any sense of moral responsibility." *What* writers? Again he does not state. He is apparently under the impression that secular education obtains throughout the Australian continent. Secular education does exist in Victoria; denominational religious instruction exists in New South Wales, and undenominational religious instruction in Western Australia; yet Victoria, according to the official statistics, has far less crime than New South Wales or Western Australia. Secular education exists also in New Zealand, and what is the result there? Sir Robert Stout, Chief Justice of New Zealand, being in England in 1909 and interviewed by a *Daily News* representative on the matter of the charges made against the morals of his people because of the absence of religious instruction in the schools, indignantly declared that such charges were "false, absolutely false." General education of a purely secular character has obtained in New Zealand for thirty-three years; it has worked well, and no serious attempt has been made to undo it. "Our teachers inculcate order, obedience, respect for others," Sir Robert Stout said, "and the best proof of their success

is seen (1) in the diminishing of serious crime, and (2) in the fact that those trained free from sectarian bias produce only half as many criminals in proportion to their number as those trained in the denominational schools." Sir Robert Stout was unkind enough to express an unwelcome truth to his interviewer. "I see more practical heathendom in London in one day," he said, "than I should in a New Zealand back block in a year." So much for the British Colonies at the Antipodes. Japan and France not being openly referred to, there is no call to challenge Mr. Shakespeare's slander on their behalf. Too much attention, perhaps, has already been paid to the unsupported assertion of one who sneers at the idea of "a foundation for morality on rational grounds," and goes to the length of saying that "ethics divorced from religion are of no value, and may even be a public danger." He evidently thinks that there are many moralities and only one religion. Not so do philosophers reason. Ruskin taught (in the splendid second chapter of *Lectures on Art*) that "there are many religions, but there is only one morality"—and that this morality which is natural to all civilised men, so far from being *founded* on religion, receives from it "neither law nor peace, but only hope and felicity." Moreover, if Mr. Shakespeare will take the trouble to think it out, he will probably see that the policy of secular education does not "divorce ethics from religion," but simply separates them in the national schools, leaving them united in their own sphere—that of the churches, Sunday-schools, and homes. The very best things may be unwelcome when they are out of place, and what can be more out of place than one man's religion in a school against the wishes of another man who is equally compelled to contribute to its maintenance?

Having disposed of the two clerical objections to secular education, we pause to observe two things which the clerical objectors usually overlook. In the first place, the working-class leaders, who really value education as the best friend of their order, are anxious to see the religious quarrel in the schoolroom ended. They know that it stands in the way of the educational improvement they desire. It is quite beyond question that the religious quarrel has been a serious hindrance to the development of national education. England will never take her proper place in the van of educational progress until the State leaves religion in the hands of those who care for it, and organises education on a scientific and civic basis. The labour leaders see this quite clearly; they are prompted by

interest as well as by principle in their support of secular education. In the second place, the triumph of secular education is certain, apart altogether from its justice. No other solution of the religious difficulty is possible. Ecclesiastical quarrels end when public interest in them ceases, or when there is only one side left in consequence of the most powerful sect having destroyed or swallowed its rivals. Such a conclusion is inconceivable in England. There is no one Church powerful enough to end this controversy. The rivalry has continued ever since the Education Act of 1870; it has grown more bitter every year, and the relative strength of the Churches remains practically unchanged. It was that rivalry, even more than the formal vote of the House of Lords, that killed Mr. Birrell's Education Bill; and it was owing to that rivalry that the Bills of Mr. McKenna and Mr. Runciman were still-born. And as the bitter rivalry shows no signs of ceasing or even abating, and as the Government has learnt already, through three futile Education Bills, what this really means in practice—and the English public have learnt it too—it is hardly probable that any fresh effort will be made by the Government to carry a Religious Education Bill in the midst of sectarian contentions, with the certainty of gaining more hatred from those it displeases than gratitude from those it only half satisfies. Some day or other—and sooner, as Dr. Inge and Dr. Sadler perceive, rather than later—the Government will be driven into introducing a Secular Education Bill (though probably not under that name) as the only way out of an intolerable situation.

Hope, however, springs eternal in the human breast. A few ladies and a number of gentlemen, a majority of them ministers of religion, and drawn mainly from two sections of the English Protestant community, have constituted themselves a self-appointed and non-representative body under the name of "The Educational Settlement Committee," and have published their proposals in a shilling pamphlet entitled *Towards Educational Peace*. They go to work with great seriousness, but in the light of the three educational fiascos of the Liberal Government their effort is quite comical. They propose everything that has already failed, and add a few reactionary or impossible suggestions of their own. It was this plan of salvation that the Rev. Professor Inge advocated in his article in this Review.<sup>1</sup>

Under this precious plan peace is to be secured by one party

<sup>1</sup> *Nineteenth Century and After*, September, 1910.

lying quietly down with the other party inside. The chief recommendation of the Committee is the perpetuation and extension of the endowment of religious teaching under the Cowper-Temple Clause. Religion is to be paid for out of public funds, taught by public servants, and organised by public machinery. Cowper-Templeism, however, is opposed to the convictions of millions of Englishmen, who will not submit either to pay for it or to have it forced upon their children. The effect of this proposal, if adopted, would be to intensify the present bitterness and strife, especially as the provision of religious instruction is left in effect in the hands of every local education authority. The battle would be transferred from the school to the county and borough council chambers, and civic administration and reform would suffer in the strife and confusion that would inevitably arise. A new establishment of religion under county and municipal control would be created, and the religious opinions of candidates, rather than their fitness as administrators of local affairs, would be the point upon which elections would be fought.

The Committee for Educational Peace propose to leave the Jews and Catholics with their present privileges untouched. They know what it would cost the Liberal party to attempt to force the Catholics into a common general plan of religious education, and they quietly let discretion stand, in this instance, as the better part of valour. But all the rest of the nation is to be included.

There is to be "respect for all forms of conscientious belief," but this new development of Cowper-Templeism is to rule the roost. It is, indeed, to become the official religion of the nation. And the teaching of it is to become compulsory. At the present time the school authorities may confine themselves to secular teaching, as some of the old School Boards actually did, but this option would be abolished. The only choice given them under the Committee's plan is the provision of Cowper-Temple teaching, or the opening of their doors to the expert teacher from officially approved denominations. Moreover, the Committee would seek to impose upon the children an injustice, against which Mr. Birrell expressly provided in allowing those who took advantage of the Conscience Clause to absent themselves from school during the time of religious teaching. This right the Committee would deny. They insist that the child shall either be present at some religious lessons given by an expert or be placed in an invidious position before his schoolfellows. The practical effect of this proposal is to nullify the Conscience Clause.

Every injustice under which the teacher at present suffers the

Committee would continue, if not actually increase. Unless he can satisfy a sectarian committee that he has definite religious convictions of the exact colour desired, he is to be denied the right to earn his living in a large number of State-supported schools. On the other hand, while a head teacher is to be forbidden to give denominational teaching in which he may possibly believe, he is even encouraged to give Cowper-Temple teaching, in which he may not believe. Professor Inge asserts that "there are many Agnostics among otherwise well-qualified elementary teachers." In both cases the Committee's conditions place a premium upon insincerity, which, to say the least, is an unfortunate outcome of the latest device for religious teaching. The concession that, on request, a teacher may be excused from giving religious teaching is futile. No teacher could make such a request without jeopardising his professional career. He would be pointed at by the children, ostracised by his colleagues, and marked by the authorities. He would practically be compelled either to give religious teaching or sacrifice his career in the profession he had chosen, and for which he had been specially trained.

The Committee treat the parents with as little consideration as they show to the teachers and the children. To exercise the choice of school which is, under certain circumstances, given to them would, in hundreds of villages, endanger their very livelihood.

It would have been very interesting if the Committee had prepared a specimen syllabus of the religious teaching they propose. They were wise enough to avoid this pitfall. They know the advantage of indefiniteness. Consequently they use vague language about "instruction in the Bible and in the principles of the Christian religion." Professor Inge puts it as "instruction in the *suitable parts* of the Bible." Dr. Sadler overlooked that important qualification. Mr. Shakespeare's view of the Bible as "the book of humanity"—the treasure of the race, the birthright of every English child, the safeguard and condition of both civil and religious liberty—is entirely beside the point. Mr. Shakespeare is not a discreet controversialist. It is not about the children of religious parents who go to church and Sunday-school that he and his colleagues are troubled. "It is with the children of the irreligious," he says, "that we are chiefly concerned." The object is to snatch them from parental influence and proselytise them into Cowper-Templeists. But how foolish to avow it in this incautious manner.

What do the Committee mean by the principles of the Christian religion? Have they ever been stated? Can they ever be stated in

a way to command the endorsement even of the Christian Churches themselves. What is it but the principles (or dogmas) of the Christian religion that all the Christian Churches are divided over? Is it not a poor compliment to suggest that they are divided over anything else? And while they are thus divided is it not an impertinence for one section of Christians, or a combination of sections probably not a half in point of numbers, to pose, not only before the populace but before the State, as custodians of the only true religion? And is it not farcical when everyone knows that they dare not formulate their conviction of what is a common Christianity for fear of falling into irretrievable disunion?

The same criticism applies to the Bible. The religious, ethical, or literary value of the Book is not the point at issue. However high the position assigned to it, in its entirety it is not a proper textbook for elementary schools. Children are curious, and ask inconvenient questions. Moreover, when one asks what *is* the Bible, as one asked what *are* the principles of the Christian religion, it is easy enough to point to the Book, but that is not an answer to the question. The late Rev. Dr. Parker, in a letter to the *Times* of October 11, 1894, advocating secular education, uttered a grave warning to his fellow Nonconformists on this matter:—

The present condition of Biblical criticism brings its own difficulties into this controversy. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that there is no Bible upon which all Christian parties are agreed. One party says that surely the historical parts of the Bible might be read, to which another party replies that the historical parts of the Bible are especially to be avoided, because they are critically incorrect, and in many instances glaringly contradictory. One party says, "Read the Bible because of its Divine revelations to the human soul"; to which another party replies, "The one thing that is to be distrusted is the claim on behalf of the supernatural or the ultra-historical." Some say "Read the life of Jesus"; and others say that there is no trustworthy life of Jesus to be obtained. To some the Bible is historical; to others it is ideal. Which Bible, then, or which view of the Bible, is to be recognised in schools sustained by the compulsory contributions of all classes of the community?

Dr. Parker's warning in the name of Biblical criticism is certainly not less valid than it was seventeen years ago. He was not answered at the time, he has not been answered since. The supporters of State-propagated religion still speak of "simple Bible teaching" as if it were really a simple plan of religious instruction. Widely different views and valuations of the Bible are now entertained by scholars and preachers within the Churches themselves; and all sorts of religious ideas, from orthodoxy to complete scepticism, are held by thousands of elementary school teachers. The Book itself is the subject of fierce controversy even among

Christians, and its interpretation by the teachers is bound to be as various as their own religious convictions. Undogmatic teaching of the Bible is, therefore, an utter impossibility. While school teachers are human beings affected by the mental, moral, and religious agitations of the age in which they live, with the Bible in their hand as an authoritative text-book they must impart to their scholars the colour of their own faith. There are not a few ministers of religion connected with the Secular Education League who recognise that, in relation to national education, Christianity itself is necessarily sectarianism. They do not wish it to be dealt out to the children in State doses, and they revolt at the idea of its being dispensed in that way at the cost of citizens who may be strongly opposed to it. They hold that it is a mean thing and derogatory to true religion to drive children to the public schools and endeavour to make them Christians by the force of authority. As Christian leaders they want no more than fair play. They have written two tracts for the Secular Education League—*An Appeal by Churchmen to Churchmen* and *An Appeal by Nonconformists to Nonconformists*—which are marked by ability and candour.

Somehow or other, and yet it is not altogether strange, it is to the non-established Churches that we must always turn at the end of this discussion. Sir Robert Stout uttered memorable words to his interviewer when he said: "The attitude of your Nonconformists and Liberals in England amazes me. They seek to disestablish a Church, and yet seek to maintain the State school as the Children's Church." It is not unnatural that a State Church should endeavour to carry its religious teaching into the State schools. Professor Inge hails the Anglican schools as "little citadels of the Established Church." But where is the justice or the consistency of those who are opposed on principle to all Established Churches who seek to turn all the Council schools of England into State-established citadels of their religion? That is what they are doing. They deny that it is specific Nonconformist religious teaching that is given in the Council schools, but they cannot deny that it is the religious teaching that is acceptable to and supported by the non-established Churches—which, in the circumstances, is practically the same thing. The fact is that the bulk of the Free Churches went wrong in 1870. Leading ministers like Drs. Dale and Guinness Rogers, and leading laymen like Mr. Henry Richard and Mr. Illingworth, with a substantial following, tried to keep them in the right path, and failed. The essential principle for which they stood was

betrayed. Those who cried for "a Free Church in a Free State" did not realise that the same principle demanded a Free School in a Free State. Happily many of them have learned the lesson of forty years' strife; they see the mistake that was made, and desire to undo it. Happily, too, they are a growing number. And the return of the non-established Churches to their foundation principle and their old traditions would achieve a speedy victory for secular education.

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### THE SECULAR EDUCATION LEAGUE.

PRESIDENT: HALLEY STEWART, ESQ., J.P.

SECRETARY: H. SNELL, 19 Buckingham Street, London, W.C.

The SECULAR EDUCATION LEAGUE aims at binding together in one effective organisation all who favour the "Secular Solution" of the Education problem, without reference to any other convictions—political, social, or religious—that they may entertain.

Those who desire to see the religious difficulty in national education settled in the only just and satisfactory way are invited to join the League. The minimum subscription is One Shilling.

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