

of its greatest statesmen or its own practice. Even Jefferson confessed so much when he spoke of trembling for his country, when, contemplating the institution of slavery, he remembered that God is just. Modern secularists have undertaken to set aside the traditions of the nation in this respect, and they will have more hearty support from no one than from those ecclesiastics who desire to elevate the church by depressing the state. In this very case it is at the instance of the party among the Roman Catholics who wish to see the state deprived of the management of the school system by provoking a general revolt of all religious people against the secularized and 'atheistic' public schools, that this decision has been rendered. We say 'the party among the Roman Catholics,' for there are a great many American Catholics who have no sympathy with such aims and methods of procedure."

The *Detroit Tribune* argues thus against the idea that the Bible is a sectarian book:

"As a practical question, the matter of thus reading the Bible is not specially important, because, we apprehend, there is comparatively little of it done. But the assertions and reasonings in the written opinions of these judges are somewhat extraordinary and are likely to be challenged in many quarters as wholly insufficient and unsatisfactory. Their foundation position is that the Bible is a sectarian book. Is that a fact? Will that be conceded or alleged among the various religious denominations? Sectarian is defined by Webster to be 'peculiar to a sect.' But the Bible is peculiar to no sect. It is the one common book of them all. From its sacred pages they teach. To its declarations they refer as the end of all controversy. To it they go for comfort and consolation in time of deepest sorrow and derive great store of relief. From it they gather courage and hope when disheartened by the slow oncoming of that kingdom for which they pray and wait. It is the solace and stay of the dying hour among the multitudes of every shade and form of religious belief. It is the one common blessed word of God for them all. How can it then be 'peculiar to a sect?'"

The *New York Times*, the leading "mugwump" organ of the country, and a journal of great ability and influence argues on the other side as follows:

"The spirit of the constitution of Wisconsin with regard to public instruction and to the absolute separation of church and State is the spirit of all American constitutions and of all American legislation. The forcing upon the children of unwilling parents what those parents regard as sectarian instruction is distinctly hostile to that spirit. If the public schools inculcate the sectarian instruction favored by the majority, the minority have a right to demand a share of the school fund for the inculcation of the sectarian instruction favored by themselves. The only means in which this demand can logically be resisted is by omitting all religious instruction in communities in which there is a division of opinion as to what religious instruction is proper to be given. In most communities this would mean that public instruction must be absolutely secular. The supreme court of Wisconsin has laid down the doctrine by which alone the common

school system can be maintained in its integrity, and it is a doctrine that will commend itself to all Americans who do not permit their sectarian zeal to interfere with the duties of good citizenship."

The *New York Independent*, a religious journal, non-sectarian in character, also upholds the decision, thus:

"The ground taken by the court is, that the reading of King James' version of the Bible in the public schools, whether as a means of instruction or as an act of worship, is, as it respects Catholics who do not accept this version as correct, to introduce a sectarian book into these schools, as really as if the Douay version of the Bible, which the Catholics do accept, were thus used. This is the pith of the principle laid down in this decision, and we think it to be entirely correct, and, as a principle, just as applicable in this State as it is in Wisconsin. The simple truth is, that our public school system, sustained by general taxation, and regulated by State authority, should confine itself exclusively to the secular sphere of instruction, and leave all questions relating to religious instruction and religious worship absolutely untouched. There is no other ground that is consistent with our political system or with equity as between different religious sects. Protestants make a grave mistake in dealing with this question, when they claim for themselves what they deny to Catholics. Let the State have a public school system for secular purposes, and stop there. Let religious instruction be otherwise provided for."

The *Chicago Inter-Ocean* treats the subject in the following strain:

"It seems as unjust and illiberal to exclude the oration of Paul upon Mar's Hill from the text-books of the free schools as to exclude a description of the death of Socrates or an extract from Cicero against Catiline. Religion apart, it is needful that a child should learn something about the history of Rome or Greece. It is as needful that he should know who Christ was and what he said as it is that he should know who Columbus was and what he did. For if Christ had not been, Columbus never would have sailed in quest of regions to convert to Christianity. Nor does the fact of teaching the history of Christ necessitate the teaching of his divinity. We tell the scholar what the motive of Columbus was; we leave him to judge of the wisdom of the motive. We place an extract from the *Phædo* in the hands of a youth; we direct his attention to the eloquence of its tone; we leave him to judge in after years as to the soundness of its philosophy. To exclude the Bible as a whole, in each and all of its parts; to prohibit alike the sublime poetry of Job, the pastoral poetry of the Book of Ruth, the elegant narrative of Esther, the severe oratory of the address to the Areopagites, the simple beauty of the Sermon on the Mount to the youth of this republic seems to us to be a crime against the liberalism of the age."

The *Evening Wisconsin* gives the following partly by way of explanation:

"The only ground upon which the friends of the schools can object to the intrusion of sectarians is the ground that the schools are non-sectarian. As the Supreme Court points out, the doctrinal passages in the Bible are sectarian, and the use of the Bible as

a whole as a text book in the schools is therefore inadmissible. The opinion of Justice Lyon contains the following distinction:

"This conclusion does not banish from the district schools such text books as are founded upon the fundamental teachings of the Bible, or which contain extracts therefrom. There is much in the Bible which can not justly be characterized as sectarian, and there can be no valid objection to the use of such matter in the secular instruction of the pupils. Much of it has great historical and literary value, which may be thus utilized without violating the constitutional prohibition. It may also be utilized to inculcate good morals—that is, our duties to each other—which may and ought to be inculcated by the district schools."

The clause in the Wisconsin constitution under which the decision was given, provides that "No sectarian instruction shall be allowed" in the public schools of the State. Practically all the Protestant denominations favored the reading of King James' version of the Bible in the schools, but opposed the reading of the Douay (Catholic) version. Hence the question is mainly one between Protestantism and Catholicism, and is likely to become a vital issue in American politics.

ANOTHER ANTI-"MORMON" BREEZE

A BREEZE has arisen in the Canadian Parliament over the "Mormon" settlers in Northwest Territory. Hon. Edward Blake seems to have been specially exercised on the subject, and expressed himself, we should judge somewhat vehemently, regarding the alleged "abominable practices" of the "Mormons." It appears that some of the honorable gentlemen of that august body are inclined to believe the numerous falsehoods that are told about the Latter-day Saints. It is to be hoped that in time they will become more enlightened on the subject and get to understand that the "Mormons" as a body who are within the borders of Canada are among the most thrifty, peaceable, industrious and law-abiding citizens of the entire Dominion.

The raising of the penalty for polygamy from three to five years will not affect the Latter-day Saints in the northwest, as the statements made regarding their practices are not true.

It looks as if there was an anti-"Mormon" epidemic just now, and it is astonishing that there is only one here and there who has the manliness to make a declaration of their merits; to descant upon their fancied lawlessness being a popular pastime.

MADRID, April 15.—All efforts to extinguish the fire at the gas works proved unavailing. The city was without gas light last night, and will be so tonight.