

Bible Reading In Schools.

A Woman's Christian Association in Chicago is trying to induce the school board to accept a collection of extracts from the Bible for a reading book in the public schools of the city. The attempt meets with considerable opposition from a few Freethinkers and many liberal Christians. Says Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch, "for many reasons, both pedagogical and other, the very ends of moral education require the exclusion of the Bible and a Biblical manual, hodgepodge of quotations as it is, from the schools supported by public taxation and intended for the training of all children alike, regardless of the religious or social status of their homes."

The pious women in their zeal to secure the prestige of distinguished names in favor of this "hodgepodge of quotations from the Bible" for reading in schools have adopted methods which, says Rabbi Hirsch, are an illustration of the fact that "some women need, and that most sorely, instruction in morals." The women give a long list of endorsements among which figure the names of men who are not in favor of any such reading books for schools. Rabbi Hirsch in his paper, the Reform Advocate, says that he was asked "to serve on the committee formed to clothe with respectability this rag-baby of quilted Biblical selections," and he refused to act in that capacity. He wrote the women stating his reason for opposing the scheme, though he added, "in our love for the book we yield to none." This sentence is quoted. Rabbi Hirsch says, "If this is not a case of 'suppressio veri' and suggestio falsi, i. e., one of the many varieties of methodical lying, what is? and yet these women appear as the champions of better morals."

The Bible as ancient literature will always be valued; but while it continues to be accepted by millions as a divinely inspired revelation and as an authority in religion and morals, and is regarded by other millions as merely a collection of ancient writings, all human and some of them very fallible, our public schools are no place for the book, nor for any such biblical manual as these fanatical christian women are trying to introduce. Extracts carefully selected from the Bible might be given in a volume with extracts from the Rig Veda, the Zendavesta, the Koran etc., and with passages from Shakespeare, Goethe, Emerson and other great geniuses in literature; but a manual thus liberally compiled is not what is wanted by these people who desire perfunctory reading of the Bible as one of the school exercises.

Our schools should be kept secular. Parents who wish to do so will always be at liberty to instruct

their children in the Bible and in their interpretation of it, at home. The public schools are for all children those of Pagans, Jews, Freethinkers as well as for those of Christians and any religious book of religious teachings introduced into them can only be an element of discord.

B. F. UNDERWOOD.

Six Days Shalt Thou Labor.

Extracts from the Story of the Samoan Disaster told by an eyewitness in the Cosmopolitan:

A novel and very unwelcome surprise awaited us here. According to our reckoning the day was Sunday, March 10th, but on entering the harbor we found the rest of the squadron, which had already arrived, engaged in painting, etc. * * * When in answer to a signal from the admiral demanding an explanation * * * we were informed that this was not Sunday, but Monday, March 11th, we were dumfounded for a moment, but a further investigation showed that, owing to the proximity of these islands to Australia, time is reckoned here according to the Australian standard, which is a day later than western time. In other words, in coming from the east it becomes necessary to drop a day after passing the 180th meridian, and the Samoans prefer to keep their time by the Australian standard, so that we had to lose our Sunday, greatly to our disgust.

Search The Scriptures.

And Moses turned and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand.—Exodus, 32:15.

And Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto Mount Sinai, and took in his hand the two tables of stone.—Ex. 34:14.

Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand.—29th vs.

The size of the tables of stone was 6 ells long, 6 ells broad and 3 ells thick.—Talmudic account, Col. 8, Vol. 38.

An ell equals 18 inches; thus we find that the measurement of these tables of stone was each 9 feet long, 9 feet broad, 4½ feet thick, and if stone weighed as much then as now, the total weight was 28 tons. So much for the veracity of the writer of Exodus. H. D. BURROWS.

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