CROSBY-HALL LECTURES ON EDUCATION

Dr

To the Right Hon. Lord Brougham
with Mr Ed. Baines' Compts

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[Congregational Board of Education]

CROSBY-HALL

LECTURES ON EDUCATION.

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PREFACE.

In the new circumstances of the Congregational Board of Education, originating in the meeting at Derby, it was thought to be wise, and necessary, that the sentiments of the Board on the Educational question should be propounded fully, and in a permanent form; and hence the Course of Lectures, contained in this volume, was delivered, under the direction of the Board, in Crosby Hall. The announcement of their delivery was responded to by crowded audiences; and their publication in the columns of the British Banner has given an opportunity to many thousands of persons to read them, who would never have seen them in their present form.

The Board feels under deep obligation to the Lecturers for the time, and labour, devoted to the preparation of the Lectures; and tenders to them its warmest thanks; and trusts that this volume will not only lead to the increased diffusion of sound principles, but will encourage many to make

vigorous efforts for the spread of Education, and to contribute liberal donations and annual subscriptions towards sustaining the Board in its general operations, and in the establishment of its contemplated Normal schools.

As the Lecture of the Rev. John Burnet was not written, the Board feels that it would be unjust to that gentleman to print the brief, and imperfect, report of it, which appeared in the Newspapers.

Congregational Board of Education,
4, Coleman-street-buildings,
Moorgate-street,
April 30th, 1848.

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ERRATA.

Page 38, last line, for "proportion of the children of the working classes in Day-schools in 1846, 1 in 2½," read, "1 in 2⅓."

In page 33, line after the table, "increase of population from 1833 to 1846, 86 per cent.," ought to be, "from 1803 to 1846, 86 per cent."

LECTURE I.

LECTURE I.

ON THE PROGRESS AND EFFICIENCY OF VOLUNTARY EDUCATION IN ENGLAND.

BY EDWARD BAINES, JUN., ESQ., OF LEEDS.

Introduction — Government measure of education — Reasons against it — The voluntary principle explained and defended—I. INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE PRIOR TO THE MODERN ERA OF POPULAR EDUCATION—London, a century ago—II. THE MODERN ERA OF POPULAR EDUCATION — Sunday-schools — Day-schools—Joseph Lancaster and Dr. Bell—British and Foreign School Society, and National Society—Infant Schools—Ragged Schools—Mechanics' Institutions—Other educational societies and establishments — Normal Schools — STATISTICAL VIEW OF THE GREAT RESULTS OF VOLUNTARY EDUCATION—Comparison of 1803, 1818, 1833, and 1846—Great improvement in the character of education—Grounds of confidence for the future—Opinions of Mr. Macaulay and Mr. Burke—Progress of the periodical press—Conclusion.

AMONG the many controversies of the age, it is cheering to find some great truths which receive general assent. Few persons, for example, would question the proposition, that Religion, Knowledge, and Liberty conduce to the highest prosperity of nations. There would be great diversity of opinion as to the practical application of the truth,—as to the kind of religion, the method of promoting knowledge, and the best form of liberty. But it is an advantage, and one which England has not very long enjoyed, that the general principle is admitted. No English writer, now-a-days, commends Ignorance as the mother of devotion, or advocates the despotic in preference to the representative form of government.

Religion, knowledge, liberty, then, may be regarded as forming the golden tripod on which the genius of Britain sits, dispensing truth and happiness to the world. Each stem of the tripod should have the strength of the rock, and all should lean towards and support each other. The religion should be that divine principle which not merely restrains, but animates and ennobles,—which shuts out no ray of light, and sanctions no species of injustice. The knowledge should be pure truth, free from all superstition and servility, illustrating at once the claims of God and the rights of

man among his fellow-men. The liberty should be according to knowledge, and consistent with the peace and order inculcated in the Gospel.

I shall not be understood by this figure to imply that I elevate any right or interest of man into rivalry with the claims of his Maker. No. But I deem knowledge and liberty to be heaven-born,—to belong to religion itself,—to be embraced with it in the same radiant circle—even the girdle of righteousness and love with which the Almighty encompasses his decrees.

If this view be correct, it is the sacred duty of Englishmen to protect and advance religion, knowledge, and liberty, in their alliance with each other, and never to promote one at the expense of the rest. The facts to be brought out in this Lecture seem to me to illustrate the connection of which I have spoken, as natural and worthy of being perpetuated. Venerating religion and loving liberty, it will be my object to show that knowledge ought to be promoted among the youth of England with a due regard to both.

It is humbling but salutary to remember, that the influential classes of this country have not long admitted the duty, or even the safety, of encouraging the bulk of the people, that is, the labouring classes, to acquire knowledge. Popular education in England may be said to bear date from the commencement of the present century. Before that period, knowledge, like liberty, had been slowly though surely making way; but it very rarely extended beyond the upper and middle classes. It was thought unsuitable for the labouring class, or beyond their reach. The aristocracy, and even the clergy, regarded ignorance as the safeguard of order, and knowledge as incompatible with subordination.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, when education is more extended, and more rapidly extending and improving, than at any former period, our rulers have taken up the belief, that it is not safe to leave education to the people themselves, but that, in order to make it general and efficient, it must be aided and controlled by the Government. It is my firm and sorrowful conviction, that this is one of those aberrations in the progress of truth, of which history contains so many examples. How often have we seen error, when defeated on one side, unexpectedly making head on another, and threatening to recover all the ground it had lost! It has been so in the history of religion, of government, and in many of the departments of knowledge. Imperfect reformations, half conquests, and balanced

advantages, characterize the march of truth through this erring world. The eagle gaze of Luther did not receive every ray of solar light. The Protestant Reformation of Germany, Switzerland, and England did not quite destroy the shackles of prejudice. The almost blameless Revolution of America left the monster form of Slavery to rear itself beside the largest growth of Freedom. The great Reform of the English House of Commons was neither complete nor unblemished. In Germany and France we have seen philosophy debased by infidelity. The revival of spiritual religion in our own day is accompanied by revived superstition. And we have scarcely emancipated industry from Government control, under the name of "protection," when the same control, under nearly the same misnomer, lays its grasp on the more sacred interests of education.

It seems very remarkable that Government, which in all former ages held aloof from the education of the people, should now, for the first time, claim its superintendence as a right and duty, when the people have made such extraordinary advances in educating themselves. If it be indeed the duty of Government to promote the education of the people, it is a duty which has been so entirely neglected through all the periods of our history, that we could not safely rely upon the Government for its discharge in future. Of this newly-claimed right and newly-discovered duty we may say, that no claim could be made with a worse grace, and that the duty is undertaken precisely when it is least needed.

It will hardly be denied, within the limits of England, that *the people* have a *right* to educate their own children, and that it is their *duty* to educate them; that this right and duty belong first, by the law of nature, to *parents*, and next, by the law of Christianity, to those whom Providence enables to assist their poorer neighbours.

I shall not further discuss this question, because it will be undertaken by an abler hand in a future Lecture.* I will only remind you of the general rule, that the more responsibility is divided, the less efficiently is the duty performed.

Whilst I believe that education is the duty of the people themselves, I am equally persuaded that it does not come within the province of Government, according to just views of what that province is, under a system of political and civil liberty. But I am, if

* My friend and townsman, the Rev. Dr. Hamilton, author of the "Institutions of Popular Education," and of the third Lecture in this series, "On the Parties responsible for the Education of the People."

possible, still more strongly of opinion, that, wherever the duty lies, it is eminently the *interest* of the people to discharge it themselves; and for these, amongst other reasons:—1st. That a duty is likely to be best discharged by the parties on whom it most directly rests, and who have the strongest motives for its performance. 2nd. That our duties are the discipline ordained by Heaven for our moral improvement, and that to relieve men of their duties is to deprive them of their virtues. 3rd. That the virtues especially cultivated by Voluntary education are those which most conduce to the interests of liberty and religion, namely, self-reliance, the great safeguard of freedom,—and active Christian benevolence, our only hope for the evangelization of the world. 4th. That education conducted by a people themselves, is likely to have a more vigorous and healthful character, than it could have if the schoolmasters were continually looking with hope and fear to Government officers. 5th. That new and improved methods of instruction are more likely to be introduced under the free competition of a Voluntary system, than under the uniformity and *vis inertiæ* which usually characterize a Government system. 6th. That with whatever zeal a Government agency might be worked at first, it would be likely to be perverted to purposes of Ministerial *patronage*. 7th. That though at present a wish is professed only to *aid* Voluntary effort, yet the natural tendency of the system is to deaden the Voluntary spirit, and to bring schools more and more into dependence upon the Government. 8th. That the question of education is implicated with that of *religion*, and therefore the serious objections which apply to Government interference with religion apply also to Government interference with education. 9th. That in the state of things which exists now, and is likely still to continue, a Government Education Board must be under the influence of the Church and the Aristocracy; and from this and other causes, the Church of England is sure to obtain the lion's share of evrey education grant,—the only alternative being, the still worse evil of subsidizing the schools of all sects, which amounts to the subsidizing of all forms of religion.

I am aware that some of these reasons will not have their due weight with the friends of Church Establishments. It is evident that many have been prejudiced against the Voluntary system in education, by their rooted dislike to the Voluntary system in religion. Nor can I deny—on the contrary, I am fully convinced—that both rest substantially on the same principles, and must be opposed or defended by the same arguments. Whatever weakens the cause of

Voluntary education, weakens that of Voluntary religion ; and whatever strengthens the one, strengthens the other.

Whilst I say this, I cannot but express a doubt, whether it was sound policy on the part of Churchmen to seek to extend the Establishment principle, by obtaining a supplementary establishment for education, inasmuch as education had hitherto been free, and as the advantage they expect to gain will only aggravate the sense of injustice already felt by Nonconformists.

Two great and influential classes among our public men are jealous of the Voluntary Principle,—first, the partizans of the Church, because they regard that principle as hostile to the existing Establishment; and, secondly, the disciples of the Continental policy, of endowing all education and all religion, because, I believe, they really do not understand the Voluntary Principle, but connect it with over-earnestness, or fanaticism, in religion—an error with which they themselves are certainly not chargeable. Some object to the Voluntary Principle as *inefficient ;* but others object to it, though they do not say so, because it is *too efficient*. Most think it not trustworthy, on account of its alleged want of steadiness and uniformity : and, with all my admiration for the Voluntary Principle, I must admit that it has the same defects as—*Nature* and *Freedom ;* —that it does not always move in straight lines, or array its forces in regimental order, or obey pedantic rules, or make the succeeding century a copy of the preceding, or flatter statesmen by limiting improvement within Acts of Parliament; but still I believe that, like Nature and Freedom, it has a magnificent rule and range—the rule of a living spirit, and the range of whatever achievement God has made possible to man.

I speak here of the Voluntary Principle in an enlarged sense, not confining myself to its operation in providing the means of religious instruction. Of course I do not ask for it, throughout the scope of my whole argument, that New Testament sanction and authority, which rests the support of religion on voluntary liberality, to the exclusion of the compulsory interference of the magistrate. We must, indeed, extend that New Testament principle to religious education ; for, if we once receive public money for religious instruction in our schools, we should very soon receive it for religious instruction in our chapels. On that point there can be no dispute, except with men whose views are exceedingly confused. Nonconformists, giving religious education, are precluded by their religious principles from receiving Government money.

But I do not confine my views, in defending "Voluntary education," to merely religious education: I apply the terms to the cultivation of the human mind in all its extent—to literature, science, art, and politics—to colleges, newspapers, magazines, books, and literary and scientific institutions—to the life-long training of the adult, as well as the elementary instruction of the child. Concerning all these I am ready to declare my opinion, that the Voluntary Principle is adequate, is the most consistent with liberty, is conducive to the highest improvement; and, on the other hand, that these things do not come within the province of Government, whilst Governmental interference often retards advancement and shackles freedom. In support of my views, I appeal to the free press, the free literature, the free science, and the free education of England, in opposition to countries where all these things are taken under the care of Government.

If my argument should fail to vindicate the freedom of our schools, it must equally fail to protect the freedom of our periodical press and our general literature. The press is quite as important an educator as the school: the case for placing the former under Government help and superintendence, is as strong as for placing the latter,—nay, stronger, as any one will be convinced who reflects on the manifold defects and abuses of a free press, and on the unspeakable importance of that great engine, which so principally moulds the mind and will of England. Nearly all the Continental Governments which pay and direct the school, pay and direct also the pulpit and the press. They do it consistently. And our Government educationists at home would only be consistent, should they recommend Government grants and inspection to all our ministers, our editors, and our authors.

To prevent misconception, I may say, that I do not deny the power of an enlightened despot to erect a vast and complete machinery of education, and, by a large expenditure of his people's money on colleges, museums, galleries, and theatres, to force the growth of learning, art, and taste among them, especially when they are precluded from the nobler duties and more practical enterprises of a free people. I look at the whole question, and at the whole man; and, regarding man in all the capacity of his moral and intellectual nature, and communities in all their interests, I reject the petty advantages of despotism, and claim the more generous, though perhaps looser, regimen of freedom.

It may be well also to explain, that the Voluntary Principle does

not exclude, or affect to be independent of, the aid which men of wealth, power, and station can give to public objects. It even asks, that "kings should be nursing fathers and queens nursing mothers" to religion. It invites the largest donations of princes and nobles towards the erection of the temple, the college, or the school, when "they offer *willingly* of *their own proper goods*"—acknowledging that "all things come of God, and that of his own they have given him."* It accords praise to our Alfred, our Henrys, and our Edwards, and to a long train of nobles, prelates, ladies, gentry, and merchants, whose munificence founded, out of their own estates and incomes, most of our ancient schools of learning. The only conditions of accepting help which the Voluntary Principle requires are these—first, that the gift be truly Voluntary, not the produce of exaction, or the appropriation of what does not belong to the donor himself; and secondly, that it in no way interferes with the absolute self-government of the Church. Thus the Voluntary Principle is independent, without pride,—willing to accept, without covetousness or subserviency,—jealous for the purity of the Church and the interests of liberty,—not anxious for endowments, because of their liability to abuse,—more willing to give than to receive,—ever appealing to, and thereby cultivating and strengthening, the highest motives, love and duty to God, and love and duty to our fellow-men.

But we are told, by a thousand tongues and pens,—"The Voluntary Principle is a failure; however plausible it may appear in argument, experience proves its inefficiency."

I accept the appeal to experience; and boldly maintain that the Voluntary Principle, so far from having failed, has triumphantly succeeded.

In illustrating "the progress and efficiency of Voluntary education in England," I must ask leave to resort to two modes of proof, namely, the historical and the statistical. You may think it strange that I should apologise for using what may seem almost the only kinds of proof in a question of this nature; but in nearly every work or speech which I have read on the side of State Education, I find a tacit discountenance of all appeal to by-gone years. There is extensive research among the Blue Books issued by Government Commissioners, but an almost total abstinence from a comparison of

* The thanksgiving of David, when he, his nobles, and his people had "offered willingly" their treasures for the building of the Temple.—1 Chron. xxix. 3—14.

our present with our former educational state. I doubt whether, in all the speeches of Ministers and their supporters last Session, there was a single reference to the experience of the last fifty years, for the sake of ascertaining the progress of popular education, and determining the worth of the principle on which it had been conducted. Still less did they venture, by more remote historical inquiry, to pry into "the hole of the pit from which we were digged." And as to statistics, it is the fashion to scout them, not only as troublesome, but actually as proving nothing! Last year I was sneered at by the *Times* as "bristling with statistics." And a few weeks since, in reference to an examination of the educational statistics of Wales, the *Morning Chronicle* said—

"Mr. Baines has reproduced his old argument for the sufficiency of the Voluntary Principle, namely, the number of children at school in proportion to the whole population. We do not think it at all necessary to go into the details of this argument!"

On the same occasion the *Daily News* said—

"We repeat for the fiftieth time, statistics are next to worthless in this inquiry!"

Now if "the number of children at school in proportion to the whole population" be not a point of the highest importance in this question, and if "statistics are next to worthless," we might as well discard the science of numbers as a troublesome invention, tempting men to ridiculous exactness and inconvenient demonstration. I had thought that figures were admitted to be useful, as representing numbered, measured, and ascertained facts; but it seems the indefinite is preferred to the definite; and certainly it is more convenient to the rhetorician, who has to cover over an exposed fallacy. In the use of figures this evening I shall be sparing; and those which I introduce shall be so plain, that they may be instantly comprehended and easily retained. But I cannot gratify our opponents by treating an arithmetical question with an entire absence of arithmetic.

First, however, let us take a hasty glance at

THE INTELLECTUAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE PRIOR TO THE MODERN ERA OF POPULAR EDUCATION.

I persuade myself that you will accompany me with interest, whilst I select a few facts as symptoms of the state of the population

in former times. For unless we attempt to gauge the depth from which we have risen, it will be impossible to have any just notion of the elevation now attained, or any correct estimate of the agency by which it has been reached.

Before the invention of the art of printing, though there were colleges and schools in England, the educated classes were extremely few in number. The clergy almost monopolised the scanty portion of learning which was then to be had; and the nobles and knights were for the most part unable to write, and in many cases to read. The largest library in England in the middle of the fifteenth century, namely, that presented by Duke Humphrey of Gloucester to the University of Oxford, did not exceed 600 volumes; and it was the close of that century before the Greek language began to be taught in that seat of learning. Inasmuch as the bulk of the labourers were held in a state of serfdom till the end of the fourteenth century, we may infer, with certainty, that they were nearly as ignorant of letters as any tribe of barbarians; and though the boroughs were attaining some political and commercial consequence, yet their population was insignificant compared with the rural population. It is estimated, that all the towns of England, including London, then only contained 170,000 inhabitants, whilst the population of England and Wales amounted to 2,700,000.*

After the invention of printing, which was introduced into England in 1474, books multiplied; and the centuries which have since elapsed have witnessed a gradual extension of education. From the days of Chaucer a noble literature has accumulated in England. In the reign of the lettered Elizabeth a constellation of men of genius appeared. Many schools and colleges had been founded, and richly endowed. Yet, even of Elizabeth's day a modern historian thus writes—

"The learning which existed in this age, however remarkably it may have shone forth in particular instances, was by no means generally diffused, even among the higher classes; while the generality of the lower and many even of the middle classes, remained to the end of the period almost wholly uneducated and illiterate. The father of Shakspeare, an alderman of Stratford, appears to have been unable to write his name; and probably throughout the community, for one man that was scholar enough to subscribe his signature, there were *a dozen* who could only make their marks." †

* Pictorial Hist. of England, vol. ii., p. 269. † Ibid., vol. ii., p. 823.

This was at the close of the sixteenth century. With the growth of freedom, commerce, and wealth, education still extended itself. Newspapers were first published during the civil wars of Charles I. But after the Restoration, an Act was passed, that *only twenty printers should practise their art in the kingdom;* in 1666 there were only 140 "working printers" in London; and the censorship of the press—that early form of Government care for education—was not abolished till the Revolution of 1688. The periodical press, with few exceptions, was meagre and paltry till the close of the eighteenth century. The first magazine was published in the year 1731. But so scanty was our literature during the first half of the eighteenth century, from 1700 to 1756, albeit including the Augustan age of Anne, that the average number of new works published during that period did not exceed 93 each year. At present, the average number of new books exceeds 2,000 volumes yearly. It is a still more decisive proof of the small amount of reading, and therefore of education, in England a century ago, that, in the year 1744, not more than 100,000*l.* is computed to have been spent by the people in books, newspapers, and publications of every kind; whilst in 1844 the amount thus expended was 2,085,600*l.*,*—being an increase of more than twenty-fold, though the increase of population within that century was only two and a-half-fold.†

The moral state of the population a century back corresponded with its intellectual state. We often hear lamentable representations of the crimes and immoralities of our own day, which, in the estimation of some, is worse than all that have preceded it, and hastening to the catastrophe of public convulsion. Yet I never converse with old men, either in London or the country, but, notwithstanding the propensity of age to think former days better than the present, I am told of an astonishing improvement in morals and religion. It will be of real use, as giving us correct views on a most important subject, and inspiring thankfulness to God for the days on which we are cast, to recal a few particulars.

The reader of the lives of the Wesleys, Whitefield, and the Countess of Huntingdon, will remember only too many illustrations of the brutal ignorance, demoralization, and irreligion with which those great modern revivalists had to cope, especially in the early part of

* Mr. Charles Knight's "Life of Caxton."—Appendix.

† The population of England and Wales in 1750 was 6,517,035, and in 1841 it was 15,906,741.

their career. From the close of the "Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon" I select the following passage, descriptive of the Church and the clergy in the former part of the last century:—

"The parson sat in the kitchen of the village-inn, smoking tobacco and drinking ale with his parishioners; or he played the fiddle and attended at the merry-makings of the neighbourhood. A higher class hunted with the neighbouring gentry; as magistrates, joined them in the prosecution of poachers, and were game-keepers rather than soul-keepers; mighty hunters before the Lord, but not eager in the pursuit of truth; fishers, but not fishers of men! A still higher grade associated with the wits and *beaux esprits,* were fine gentlemen even in the pulpit, and gave the tone to their district. But the meek, the humble, the devout minister of religion was rarely to be met with; the earnest, eloquent, persuasive, energetic, urgent messenger of the Gospel was almost unknown. If such were the shepherds, what were the sheep? A few only were Papists, but multitudes were daily becoming Dissenters; the Socinian heresy was much encouraged, the Deists flourished, and there were even those who boasted of Atheism. Lambeth Palace had its balls and routs; music parties for Sunday evenings even the Bishops countenanced, and card parties were not unfrequent on the Sabbath evening. The humble classes imitated *their betters.* A sneer at religion was wit; the parson was the standing joke; and the church was used chiefly to rail at, on account of the occasional levies it occasioned, and which appeared to recal its memory to the otherwise forgetful people. Hundreds of thousands of persons were without the means of religious instruction; millions had never heard a sermon!

"Such *was* the case with the Church of England. What is the picture now?

"*The education of the people,* ONCE OPPOSED BY ALL THE GREAT, *is now the universal demand,* and the contest of the two grand political divisions in the State is, not *who shall best stave off the disagreeable necessity of general education,* but who shall have the glory of advancing it—who shall have the power to influence and to direct its course."*

The author proceeds to show the delightful contrast of the present times with the former in regard to religion and virtue.

Any one who shall turn to the close of the fourth volume of the "Pictorial History of England," will find drawn together, from

* "Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon," vol. ii., pp. 540, 541.

various authorities, many details of the morals, manners, and condition of the population of London in the reign of George II. I select a few :—

"There were many shops in which toys, trinkets, and jewellery were disposed of, not by regular sale, but by a raffle ; and to these places gallants were wont to take their mistresses, and treat them out of their winnings. These fooleries were imitated in humble life, so that the very fruit-stalls in the streets were places for gambling, where dice or the wheel of fortune initiated apple-munching urchins into the doctrine of chances. Thimble-rigging was also fearlessly practised as a trade in the open streets. But a still more pernicious kind of trade was that practised by a class of pedlars, who vended strong liquors in the streets upon stalls and wheelbarrows, or carried them about wherever a crowd was gathered. Drinking-houses were at least as numerous in London as they are at present, although the population was little more than one-third of its present amount."*

According to a Report, drawn up by the Justices of Middlesex, in 1736, "Every sixth house in the metropolis was a licensed gin-shop,"† in addition to those who sold liquors in the streets.

The consumption of liquor in England and Wales a century back and at present is illustrated by the following facts :—In 1742, the quantity of British spirits distilled was 7,160,000 gallons ;‡ in 1847, it was 5,356,794 gallons. At the former period it averaged 1 and 1-10th gallon per head to the population ; at the latter period only 3-10ths of a gallon per head.§ In 1750, the consumption of malt averaged nearly five bushels (4·85) to each individual in the country ; in 1845, it averaged 1⅓ bushels (1·30).‖ From these facts we deduce, that the consumption of strong liquors in England is not more than about *one-fourth* of what it was a century ago, in proportion to the population. The total abstainers among my audience will well know that this fact speaks volumes : let them "thank God, and take courage."

To resume my extracts from the History :—

"But the natural evils of rain, mud, and dust, were not the worst to be encountered in walking about the metropolis. Pickpockets

* "Pictorial History of England," vol. iv., p. 822.

† Ibid., p. 854. ‡ Ibid., p. 853.

§ Excise Revenue for 1838—1847.—(Parliamentary Paper.)

‖ Porter's "Progress of the Nation," (Ed. of 1847,) p. 564.

had become wonderfully numerous, so that, whether at church or market, the theatre or the ball-room, purses, snuff-boxes, and watches disappeared with a facility incomprehensible to the owners." In 1728, a gang formed a design to rob the queen, in St. Paul's-churchyard. "The squares of London were infested with throngs of beggars: frequently these wretches were also thieves."* "Play-going was still as frequent and as fashionable as ever, without the theatre having undergone any moral improvement: the same sort of plays were acted, and the same license in behaviour tolerated, as had prevailed during the reign of Charles II." A place of most infamous resort, called Bellsize-house, with gardens, music, and other attractions, was opened at Hampstead; and it is curious to read in the advertisements, that "for the security of the guests, twelve stout fellows (afterwards increased to thirty), completely armed, patrolled between London and Bellsize, to prevent the insults of highwaymen, or foot-pads, which may infest the road!" The historian brands this place as "a precious temple of Cotytto." "The great approaches to the capital, and especially Bagshot and Hounslow-heath, and Popham-lane, were traversed by mounted highwaymen, either singly or in small bodies." "Few, therefore, ventured to set out on a journey without being well armed, and sanguinary encounters with robbers were frequent upon the highways."†

In 1744, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London represent, in an address to the King, "that divers confederacies of great numbers of evil-disposed persons, armed with bludgeons, pistols, cutlasses, and other dangerous weapons, infest not only the private lanes and passages, but likewise the public streets and places of usual concourse, and commit most daring outrages." In 1751, the celebrated Henry Fielding, a magistrate, published his "Inquiry into the Causes of the late Increase of Robbers," in which he compares the London gangs to Italian banditti; and adds, that this state of things exists, though cart-loads of our fellow-creatures were once in every six weeks carried to slaughter at Tyburn.

The pressure of the poor-rates was far more severe a century ago than at present. The food of the population was far inferior.

At this period the amusements of the people, and not merely of the lower class, were brutal and degrading: prize-fighting and cock-fighting were patronized by princes and nobles; bull-baiting and

* Pictorial History of England, vol. iv., p. 823. † Ibid., pp. 825—832.

bear-baiting prevailed throughout the country; dog-fighting and low gambling were the favourite amusements in every suburb of London on the Sunday morning.

Speaking of a later period, namely, from 1760 to 1784, the historian says, in reference to the best paid class of workmen in the metropolis:—

"There was little of education even among these, the only sections of the lower classes where it could well be looked for. The aimless and excessive violence of their trades' unions, then for the first time heard of, show on how low a stage of intelligence they stood. Among the remainder of the honest poor, wages were in one sense high, but precarious. For the education of all this dense mass no provision was made. That class had drifted out of the cognizance of the Church: the charity and free schools of earlier times were organized on too narrow a scale for their use. Sunday-schools were an invention of the latter part of this period, but did not come into play till the next. The Methodists were the only teachers of the poorer classes of the metropolis; and persevering, and in some respects dexterous, teachers they were."*

One more authority as to the moral and intellectual state of the humbler class in the towns and villages of the country, towards the close of the century, and I close this part of my case. It is from the immortal founder of Sunday-schools, Robert Raikes, whom I am proud to call a brother-editor. In a letter of his, published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1784, he thus describes a common scene in one of the suburbs of Gloucester:—

"On Sunday, the street is filled with multitudes of little wretches, who, released on that day from their employment, spend their time in noise and riot, playing at chuck, and cursing and swearing in a manner so horrid, as to convey to any serious mind an idea of *hell*, rather than that of any other place."

In his first published recommendation of the plan of Sunday-schools, in his own newspaper, the *Gloucester Journal*, on the 3rd of November, 1783, he says:—

"The Lord's-day has hitherto been prostituted to bad purposes. Farmers and other inhabitants of the towns and villages complain that they receive more injury in their property on the Sabbath than all the week besides: this, in a great measure, proceeds from the

* "Pictorial History of England," reign of George III., vol. i., p. 654.

lawless state of the younger class, who are allowed to run wild on that day, free from every restraint."

And he adds, as the result of his experiment for more than a year,—

"The barbarous ignorance in which they had before lived, being in some degree dispelled, they begin to give proofs that those persons are mistaken who consider the lower orders of mankind as incapable of improvement, and therefore think an attempt to reclaim them impracticable, or, at least, not worth the trouble."

You will hardly think that I have wasted your time, in placing before you these evidences of the state of the population, in regard to education, morals, manners, and religion, before the era which I have called that of popular education. Where "progress" is to be estimated, I know no other way of doing it than by ascertaining first the point from which we started, and then the point we have reached.

But I may be told that a retrospect of the centuries we have glanced at is not satisfactory for the Voluntary Principle,—that it shows the people did not do much to educate themselves. I reply, if the people did little, what did the Government do? Nothing. Worse than nothing. During part of the time, it placed the Press under censorship, and often punished the free and fair use of it with cruel severity. The ruling and influential classes habitually, with few exceptions, frowned on the instruction of the working people. Whatever schools there were, whether superior schools, common schools, or charity schools, were provided on the Voluntary Principle. The means of education kept pace with the public sense of its desirableness, and even with the amount of intellectual food that proceeded from the Press. During the whole period we have reviewed, I apprehend that the improvements realized in our laws, institutions, literature, industry, and national character, originated mainly with the people, and in very few cases with the Government.

Our civil freedom, the main source of our present greatness, was undoubtedly won from reluctant governors, by the pressure from beneath. It is readily admitted that the Voluntary Principle in its action follows public opinion, and does not precede it. But Government, though in some rare cases it may precede public opinion, in the immense majority of cases refuses even to follow—until it is compelled. The grand question, after all, is, *which is the natural and usual source of popular improvement,—the Government or the*

people? If it is the Government, I give up my cause as lost. But if it is the people, then the interests of education, like those of liberty, are most safely committed to their keeping.

We come now to consider, secondly:

THE MODERN ERA OF POPULAR EDUCATION.

1. And first, in order of time, and in some respects even of importance, we speak of

SUNDAY-SCHOOLS.

This great institution dates from the year 1781 or 1782, when the first Sunday-school was gathered by Robert Raikes, in Gloucester. Nothing can be more simple than the history of the institution. It commanded approbation wherever it became known. There were, indeed, opponents belonging to the classes which are jealous of every innovation; but they were soon silenced by its rapid and decisive success. All sects adopted it. At first the teachers were paid; but it was found that gratuitous teachers might everywhere be had, who made up by their zeal and religious interest in the work what they might want in technical skill, and whose numbers also compensated any inferiority to the single paid schoolmaster.* Accordingly it was thrown entirely, or with very few exceptions, on gratuitous teaching. The effects have been most blessed. The teachers are almost as much benefited as the scholars,—reaping a moral and spiritual reward for their labours. That thousands of teachers derive intellectual improvement from their exercises for and in the Sunday-school, is undoubted; as it is, too, that thousands owe their conversion to its holy influence. Unions and associations of Sunday-school teachers prevail very generally, and are productive of many and great advantages both to the teachers and to the schools. Who would not tremble at the thought of losing this hallowed, edifying, and sanctifying employment for the better instructed youth of our congregations?

The effect of the Sunday-school on the working classes must obviously have been most salutary. This would be declared to be inevitable, even by one who had no practical knowledge of the

* A small tract very recently published, ("An Account of the Origin of Sunday-schools in Oldham and its Vicinity, by C. A. O'Neill,") shows that the Wesleyan Class-leaders of Oldham began the plan of gratuitous teaching as early as 1785.

matter. By giving to millions of children a sacred occupation for some hours of the Sabbath, instead of leaving them to range the streets and fields,—by giving them the habit of attending religious worship,—by placing them under the affectionate instructions of pious, or at least virtuous and benevolent persons, of a rank above their own, and possessing mental cultivation,—by establishing bonds of regard between teacher and scholar, which often have an influence beyond the school-days,—by the effect on parents of what the children learn, and of the teachers' visits,—and, above all, by the actual knowledge of Scripture truth imparted to the scholars,—an amount of good is done, and of evil prevented, which is beyond calculation. Who would not shudder to contemplate the probable state of our population at this moment, had Sunday-schools never existed?

There has been no general enumeration of the scholars in Sunday-schools, since the Parliamentary returns of 1833, at which time there were in England and Wales 16,828 Sunday-schools, containing 1,548,890 scholars. The proportion of scholars to the whole population at that time, was 1 scholar to every 9 1-3 inhabitants. I thought it a moderate estimate in 1846, that is, thirteen years later, to take the number of Sunday scholars at 2,000,000; which would be in the proportion of 1 scholar to every 8½ of the population. I am persuaded, that this proportion would now be an under-estimate. The improvement of Sunday-school tuition, the peculiar zeal manifested of late years by the teachers, the increased attention drawn to education, the happy invention of Ragged-schools, and the great increase of public day-schools, most of which are also used as Sunday-schools, combine to assure us, that the proportion of Sunday scholars to the population must have considerably augmented.

It is also to be borne in mind, that the children of the upper and middle classes rarely attend the Sunday-school. On this account, we may deduct about one-fourth from the population; after which it would appear, that the proportion of Sunday scholars to the labouring classes would be as 1 scholar to every 6½ inhabitants, or even, allowing for the increase which seems probable, as 1 scholar to every 6 inhabitants. This represents a very large proportion of the children of the working classes in Sunday-schools.

The number of children from 5 to 15 years of age, in England and Wales, in 1846, is correctly stated by Professor Hoppus, in his "Crisis of Popular Education," (p. 118,) as 3,891,127. Deduct

one-fourth for the upper and middle classes, and the number of children of the working classes, between the above ages, was 2,918,345. If the whole of these children attended Sunday-schools for ten years, from the age of 5 to 15, there would be 2,918,345 Sunday-scholars. If the number of scholars was only 2,000,000, it would either show that a considerable proportion do not attend the Sunday-school, or that, if they do, it is for a shorter term than 10 years. Two million Sunday-scholars would give an *average* attendance for *every* child of the working classes equal to *seven years*.

But, as we know that many young people attend the Sunday-school beyond their 15th year, and up to their 18th or 20th, let us take another view ;—let us take all the children of the working classes from the age of 5 to the age of 20; they are found to be about 4,177,774. If every child attended Sunday-school for 15 years, we should find 4,177,774 Sunday scholars; and as the actual number is supposed only to be about 2,000,000, it would follow either that more than half the children did not attend school, or that, if they did, it must be for less than 15 years. In this view, as in the former, the actual attendance averages about *seven* years for *every* child among the working classes. What is the real proportion of the children attending school, and what the duration of their attendance, must be matters of opinion. My own judgment would be, from the above figures, and from my knowledge of the discontinuous attendance of children, that there is no large proportion of the children of the working classes who do not receive some years of Sunday-school instruction.

There is great diversity in the proportions of Sunday-scholars in different parts of the country. In the metropolis, they do not much exceed 1 in 20 of the population,—so far as we can judge from the reports of the Sunday-school Union, and the Parliamentary returns of 1833. But in the manufacturing districts of Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire, they were found, by actual returns in 1843, to amount to 1 in 5 2-5 inhabitants. And from the Reports of the Commissioners to inquire into the state of education in Wales, it appears, that the Sunday-scholars are as 1 in every 4 of the population.* As a general rule, it will be found, that where the working classes are numerous, the proportion of Sunday-scholars will be large; and on the other hand, where the upper and middle classes

* The population of Wales, in 1847, was 970,857, and the number of Sunday-scholars returned by the Commissioners was 238,740.

are numerous, and great numbers of the children attend Day-schools, the proportion of Sunday-scholars will be small. The towns of Liverpool and Manchester illustrate this rule: in Liverpool, where the proportion of the labouring classes is less than in Manchester, there are considerably more Day-scholars, and considerably fewer Sunday-scholars. Notwithstanding many first-rate and model Sunday-schools in London, and its Normal-schools among the first in the world, the enormous masses of this unparaleled metropolis are, according to the accounts hitherto published, very ill provided with Sunday-schools, and not well provided even with Day-schools. The recent establishment of Ragged-schools will do something to supply the defect. But in all large cities and towns there are haunts of vice and wretchedness—the philanthropist's "Slough of Despond"—which baffle both police and benevolence, and challenge the utmost ingenuity, perseverance, and even heroism of Christian zeal for their cleansing.

There has been no general enumeration of Sunday-school *Teachers.* But in the returns from the Northern Manufacturing districts, in 1843, the proportion of teachers to scholars was found to be 1 in 6 1-5; in the recent Welsh Reports of the Commissioners, the number of teachers returned is as 1 to 7 1-10 scholars; and in the metropolis, the proportion is 1 teacher to 10 scholars. Perhaps we may assume 1 teacher to 8 scholars as a probable average throughout England and Wales; in which case, the number of Sunday-school teachers will be 250,000. A noble band! The Young Guard of England! The Volunteers of our Sacred War! Let them deeply meditate the charge committed to them, and by self-discipline, devotedness, and prayer, insure success in their blessed enterprise!

A few years ago it was common for our State-Educationists, both official and private, to scoff at the Sunday-schools as a contemptible agency. This tone has now been abandoned. The testimonies to the value of Sunday-schools are too important to be withstood. I select two or three unexceptionable witnesses. Dr. Hook, the Vicar of Leeds, says:—

"The *mainstay* of *religious education* is to be found in our Sunday-schools." "The *most earnest*, the *most devoted*, the *most pious* of our several congregations, are accustomed, with meritorious zeal, to dedicate themselves to this great work." *

* Dr. Hook's Letter to the Bishop of St. David's, p. 47.

Mr. Fletcher, the Government Inspector of Schools, says:—

"The history of Sabbath-schools would exhibit an amount of self-denial and benevolent devotion, unsurpassed in the annals of philanthropy." *

Mr. J. P. Kay Shuttleworth, in the official "Instructions" to the Commissioners on Education in Wales, says:—

"The Sunday-school must be regarded as the most remarkable, because the most general, spontaneous effort of the zeal of Christian congregations for education. Its origin, organization, and tendencies are purely religious."

Mr. Jelinger C. Symons, one of the Welsh Commissioners, says:—

"The thousands who throng these schools belong exclusively to the working classes;" "in many places these working people, in their Sunday-schools and chapels, have *alone kept religion alive*, and have afforded the only effective means of making known the Gospel." "The system is *admirable*."†

Mr. Henry Vaughan Johnson, the Commissioner for North Wales, calls the Sunday-school "*the main instrument of civilization* in North Wales." He speaks of "the vast number of schools;" "the frequency of the attendance, the number, energy, and devotion of the teachers; the regularity and decorum of the proceedings, and the permanent and striking effects which they have produced upon society."‡

Such are the admitted character and working of the Sunday-school. Contrast the state of our labouring population before its invention and at the present day, as shown by the facts and authorities laid before you; and say, if a moral and intellectual improvement has not taken place, compared with which all our extended commerce, wealth, and dominion are unimportant.

I remark, then, on this great institution—first, that it is purely *Voluntary*,—and, secondly, that it is distinctively *religious*. It is the fruit of the zeal of religious bodies for the religious education of the poor. I must claim it as a magnificent effect of the *Voluntary Principle*, combined with the *religious spirit*. It is unprecedented in the history of the world. An army—a vast army—numbering a quarter of a million, of teachers, organised and disciplined for a work of pure religious benevolence, and continuing at their duty

* Fletcher's Report on Schools in the North of England, p. 449.

† Mr. J. C. Symons's Report, p. 51. ‡ Mr. Johnson's Report, p. 59.

year by year, without fee or reward,—devoting themselves affectionately and prayerfully to the moral and spiritual improvement of no less than two millions of our rising youth, distributed among them in little companies of six or eight, so that nearly all the children of the working class, in their turns, receive the truest kindness and the most valuable example from those somewhat above them in society;—it is a spectacle beyond measure noble and delightful! England ought to be more proud of its Raikes than even of its Newton.

Imagine, for one moment, that all these two million children could be educated on the Sabbath by paid teachers under Government support and inspection. Would the result be as valuable? Not by one half. It is not the receivers only of the good, but the *doers* of it that are benefited; and, for our congregations to lose these fields of sweet and profitable employment for their young men and women,—and for society to lose this precious cement of its different classes,—would be a calamity of the greatest magnitude. But would any Government have ever conceived such a project, or attempted to execute it? The idea is ridiculous. The fact is, that *freedom* and *willingness* infinitely surpass Governments in invention, enterprise, and power of adaptation to circumstances. Governments have neither heart nor soul; and, so far from being disposed to self-denying activity, their natural and normal state is to be at rest.

We come now to speak, secondly, of

DAY-SCHOOLS.

The merit of giving the first great impulse to popular education in England belongs to Joseph Lancaster. But the method of tuition by which he attracted so much public notice was, in its great principles, adopted by him from the plan invented by the Rev. Dr. Bell at the Military Orphan Asylum at Madras. When superintendent of that institution in the year 1791, Dr. Bell one day observed a boy belonging to a Malabar school writing in the sand: thinking that method of writing very convenient, both as regards cheapness and facility, he introduced it in the school of the Asylum; and as the usher refused to teach by that method, he employed one of the cleverest boys to teach the rest. The experiment of teaching by a boy was so remarkably successful, that he extended it to the other branches of instruction, and soon organized the whole school under boy-teachers, who were themselves instructed by the doctor. On

his return to England, he published a Report of the Madras Orphan Asylum, in which he particularly pointed out the new mode of school organization as far more efficient than the old.

This publication took place in 1797, and the following year Dr. Bell introduced the system into the school of St. Botolph's, Aldgate, London. He afterwards introduced it at Kendal, and made attempts, with small success, to obtain its adoption in Edinburgh. Settling down soon after as rector of Swanage, in Dorsetshire, he was nearly shut out of the world for some years; yet he retained his strong opinion of the value of the new system of education, and had the school at Swanage conducted on that system.

In the meanwhile, Joseph Lancaster, son of a Chelsea pensioner in the Borough-road, London, opened a school in his father's house, in the year 1798, at the early age of eighteen. He had been an usher in schools; and being of an original, enterprising, and ardent character, he had himself made improvements in tuition. Dr. Bell's pamphlet having fallen in his way, he adopted the Madras system with eagerness, and made several improvements in its details. In the year 1802 he had brought his school into a very perfect state of organization, and found himself as well able to teach 250 boys, with the aid of the senior boys as teachers, as before to teach eighty. His enthusiasm and benevolence led him to conceive of the practicability of bringing all the children of the poor under education by the new system, which was not only so attractive as to make learning a pleasure to the children, but was so cheap as exceedingly to facilitate the establishment and support of schools for great numbers of the poor. He published pamphlets recommending the plan, and in one of them ascribed the chief merit of the system to Dr. Bell, whom he afterwards visited at Swanage. He also made his own school free, and obtained subscriptions from friends of education for its support. He had embraced the religious views of the Society of Friends, and some of the benevolent members of that society seconded his enterprise. The patriotic Duke of Bedford, having been invited to visit Lancaster's school, became a warm and liberal patron of the system. Lancaster pushed his plan with the ceaseless energy of an enthusiast; nothing daunted or disgusted him; he asked subscriptions for new schools from every quarter. At length the king admitted Lancaster to an interview, which took place at Weymouth, in 1805; and, being charmed with what he heard of his large designs, the admirable order and efficiency of his schools, and also with the simplicity and

overflowing benevolence of the man, his majesty subscribed 100*l.* a year, the queen 50*l.*, and the princesses 25*l.* each, to the extension of the Lancasterian system. George III. also declared himself patron of the society, which was soon afterwards formed, to promote education on this system.

Such was the origin of the "British and Foreign School Society," which was formally established in the year 1808, and designated "The Royal Lancasterian Institution for promoting the Education of the Children of the Poor." It was a favourite view of Lancaster, that, whilst the Scriptures were read, and Scriptural instruction given in the schools, there should be nothing taught in which all sects of Christians might not unite. This feature of the plan soon caused opposition from members of the Church of England. Whilst Lancaster was travelling about the country (in 1805) lecturing on the new plan, and obtaining golden opinions in every quarter, even from bishops, Mrs. Trimmer, a clever and zealous educationist, but of the straitest section of the Establishment, took and sounded the alarm. She corresponded with Dr. Bell, roused him to jealousy, brought him to London, and published pamphlets exposing the latitudinarian tendency of Lancaster's system, and summoning the Church to take up the education of the poor on Dr. Bell's plan, and so as to provide for "the proper instruction of the *young members of the Church and State*, in accordance with *the Act of Uniformity*." In her letters, she called Lancaster the "Goliath of Schismatics;" and, at a later date, Dr. Southey, who was a friend of Dr. Bell's, commonly spoke of Lancaster as "the Dragon," sometimes joking on "Bel and the Dragon"—the subject of a caricature of the day.

In process of time, the Archbishop of Canterbury adopted Dr. Bell's plan in the Lambeth Schools, and the Duke of York in the Schools of Chelsea Hospital; numerous schools were established on that plan in 1808, in London, Winchester, Shropshire, Durham, &c. Dr. Bell endeavoured to get the Government to take up his plans, and to establish a National Board of Education under the Government, with schools placed under the management of the parochial clergy. In this he failed.

At length, alarmed with the rapid progress made by the British and Foreign School Society, and fearing that the children would be drawn away from the Church, the bishops and clergy, with many of the aristocracy, combined to form "The National Society for

promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church throughout England and Wales." This Society was formed in October, 1811, at a meeting at which the Archbishop of Canterbury presided. Patronised by the prelates, the aristocracy, and members of the Government, it made rapid way. Diocesan Societies, in connexion with it, were formed the same year at Durham, Exeter, and Winchester, and others soon followed. A main object of this Society, as of that in the Borough-road, was to train schoolmasters; and for this purpose an institution was opened in Baldwin's-gardens, Gray's-inn-lane, of which Dr. Bell was made gratuitous superintendent. We find that in 1812 there were schools in connexion with the National Society, containing 8,620 scholars; in 1813, schools containing 40,484; in 1814, 60,000; in 1815, 97,920; and in 1818, no less than 180,000 scholars. It is not to be supposed, however, that all these were new schools: many, doubtless, were old schools remodelled, and placed in connexion with the National Society.

Such was the origin and early history of the two great educational Societies. They were both purely *Voluntary*, and so continued up to a very recent period. I could not better explain my own views of what is desirable for the education of the country, than by quoting a sentence from the Report of the National Society, for 1815:—

"The work which has been so auspiciously begun, they are satisfied will never be abandoned: *their resources are* INEXHAUSTIBLE: *their fund is the* NEVER-FAILING LIBERALITY *of an enlightened nation,* ever anxious to encourage the growth of pure religion, and deeply impressed with the conviction, that a Christian education alone can lay the solid foundation of national prosperity, in the virtue and piety of the people."

I am a firm believer in that "inexhaustible fund"—"the never-failing liberality of an enlightened nation." But the Society which trusted it when its scholars were 97,920, loses its confidence when, by means of that very liberality, the scholars under its superintendence, directly or indirectly, had swelled to 911,000!

It is impossible for me to trace, in ever so slight a way, the history of all the educational institutions which have sprung up in this country within the present century, to provide for the diversified wants of the community. Yet I must mention a few of the most important, among which is—

The Infant School—that beautiful exhibition of wisdom, kindness,

and gentleness, which might seem to have been designed only to promote the happiness of the playful inmates, whilst it allures them into knowledge, and charms them into order. Perhaps the first professed Infant School was that in Vincent-square, Westminster, which I remember to have seen with great admiration in the year 1824; though in the same year I saw children trained in nearly the same way at the admirably-conducted mills formerly belonging to the benevolent David Dale, and then to Mr. Owen, at New Lanark. I am not able to pronounce who was the inventor of the system; but it certainly owed its pretty general adoption to the zeal and ability of Mr. Wilderspin. The Infant School is an invaluable addition to our educational institutions; yet there are physical causes, such as the impossibility of sending very young children to any considerable distance from their homes, and especially in the winter season, which will prevent its ever including so large a proportion of the infant population as might be desired. At the educational census of 1833, the children of Infant Schools were 89,005. In order to train teachers for Infant Schools, the Training School of the Home and Colonial Juvenile and Infant School Society was opened in Gray's-inn-road. That excellent institution bears date from 1834. Like the Infant School system, it was of purely *Voluntary* origin, and so continued till the recent measure of the Government forced its supporters—as they thought, at least—either to accept public money, or to abandon the Institution.*

The Ragged School, or *School of Industry*, had its origin in Westminster, in the year 1837, where a school under that name was established by Mr. Walker, an agent of the London City Mission, and supported for many years. It was improved upon in the year 1843, at Aberdeen, by a few benevolent individuals, among whom Sheriff Watson took the lead. The design of its authors was to reach the very depths of ignorance, vice, and destitution, by drawing the mendicant and ragged children out of the streets,—and the Scotch improvement was the addition of one or more meals per day, in addition to the inducement of kind treatment and gratuitous instruction. Prudence and constant vigilance are required to guard such an institution from imposition; but when these qualities are exercised, together with peculiar kindness and perseverance, the

* So I have been informed by one of its leading friends. I presume some of the more influential subscribers must have threatened to withdraw, if the Institution did not place itself in connexion with the Government.

Ragged Schools are found to produce excellent effects. At Aberdeen, the school exceedingly diminished mendicancy and juvenile crime. Its operation having been made known through the press, and chiefly through "Chambers's Journal," Ragged Schools were established in London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, York, Dundee, and other large towns. In this city a Ragged School Union has been formed, and the schools include 6,000 children. It ought to be mentioned, that there has for some years been a Sunday-school for the very worst of the juvenile poor, in connexion with Surrey Chapel.

Once more I draw attention to the fact, that this most modern of our educational improvements is a fruit of the *Voluntary* Principle; and it is admitted by Lord Ashley, who has taken a lively interest in the Ragged Schools, as well as openly maintained by their leading friends, that these are institutions which can only be worked by Christian benevolence, and which would be marred by Government interference. They require too much self-denial, too much pure Christian principle, too much patience and delicacy of management, to be in any way trusted to Government functionaries. Mr. William Chambers, in his article on the Dundee Ragged School, in March last, earnestly deprecates any attempt to ally these institutions with "such inert bodies as parochial boards." He says emphatically:—

"Private benevolence and enterprise have done it all; and with these agents, *what* may not be anywhere, and on any matter of social concern, accomplished?"

I echo—"What?"

There is another class of institutions of which I have much personal knowledge, and which cannot be omitted, namely, the *Mechanics' Institutions.* It is proper to mention them, because many of them are not mere institutions for the benefit of young men and adults, but have large evening classes, especially for the instruction of the young, and even Day-schools. The Liverpool Mechanics' Institution has, in its various Day-schools, from 800 to 900 children, taught by upwards of 50 masters. In the Huddersfield Mechanics' Institution nearly the same number of youths attend the evening classes; and a Female Educational Institute in the same town, for the benefit of the factory girls and servants, is attended by 130. The Leeds Mechanics' Institution has Day-schools attended by 140 boys, and evening classes attended by some hundreds of boys and youths. The first Mechanics' Institution was

formed by Dr. Birkbeck, at Glasgow, as far back as 1790: but I only know of one other Institution of the kind established before that of London, namely, the Edinburgh. In the year 1824, I attended a lecture by Dr. Birkbeck, at the London Mechanics' Institution, which then met in an old chapel, I think in Falcon-square. Henry Brougham, who afterwards did so much to promote these institutions, was one of the audience. Since then, Mechanics' Institutions have multiplied rapidly. We have no less than 86 in Yorkshire, containing 16,000 members. Probably there will not be less than from 80,000 to 100,000 members in Great Britain. This is a kind of institution that may be established in every town and village of the kingdom,—so that no one can foretell what may be the extent of its usefulness. You will observe that the Mechanics' Institution, like all the others I have mentioned, is a fruit of purely *Voluntary* zeal.

Whilst Voluntary associations have stooped to the wants of the very lowest classes, they have shown themselves not unequal to provide for the education of the highest. Two colleges on the scale of universities have been established in the Metropolis—namely, University College and King's College—and a University at Durham, without any aid from the Government. Several important Theological Schools have been established by the Congregationalists and Wesleyans, and also several schools for the sons and daughters of Ministers and Missionaries. Numerous Proprietary Schools have been formed in various parts of the kingdom, both by the Church and by Dissenters, to combine the advantages of a high education with residence under the parental roof. At York, and, probably, in other counties, Yeoman Schools have been founded, under high patronage, for the special benefit of the agricultural population. Philosophical and literary societies, public libraries and museums, and various institutions under the names of Athenæums, Lycæums, Youths' Guardian Societies, as well as reading-rooms, news-rooms, &c., have been multiplied through the kingdom. All of these belong to the present century, and all are *Voluntary.*

There are several great Educational Societies, in addition to the National, the British, and the Home and Colonial Infant School Societies. The Wesleyans have undertaken to build 700 schools in seven years, and they are doing the work. The Congregationalists commenced an effort in 1843, by which the great sum of 120,000*l.* has been raised, to promote the building of schools. The Roman

Catholics have opened both schools and colleges. The Free Church of Scotland is raising 700 or 800 schools, besides a college. There are County Educational Societies in Essex, West Kent, Cambridgeshire, Devonshire, and Pembrokeshire.

A distinct and important feature of our educational improvement consists in the *Normal* or *Training-Schools*, for the training of teachers. It has sometimes been said, that all these have been assisted by Government; and it is, indeed, true that several of them have accepted public money in aid of their buildings. But you will remember that the Borough-road School was a Training-School for more than thirty years before it ever received a grant; that the Westminster, and several of the other Training-schools of the National Society, as well as several of the diocesan Training-schools, existed for many years purely on the Voluntary Principle; that the Battersea Training-school was established by two individuals, Mr. Kay Shuttleworth and Mr. Tuffnell, with their own funds; that the Home and Colonial Infant School Society's Training-school, in Gray's-inn-road, was founded on an independent footing; that Mr. Stow's Training Institution at Glasgow had existed many years, and acquired eminence, before it received a grant; that the Congregational Training Institution for female teachers at Rotherhithe, and the Brecon Normal College, are fundamentally and altogether Voluntary; and that the Male Normal School, now about to be founded by the Congregational Board, will be so. It is, therefore, absolutely false to say that the Normal Schools are the creation of Government, or that they require funds beyond the strength of Voluntary effort.

I last year enumerated twenty-eight Normal Schools in England and Wales, containing about 900 students, with accommodation for 1,100.* You are about to add to the number. A Normal School

* I quote the following from the Report of the National Society for 1846, and the Reports of the other Societies named:

NORMAL SCHOOLS, 1846.

	Students.	Accommodation.
National Society's Normal Schools:		
Battersea	72	75
St. Mark's College, Chelsea	59	70
Westminster Training Institution	146	—
Whitelands, Chelsea	54	76
Carried forward	331	221

for the Evangelical Church at Cheltenham is about to be opened; and a prospectus has been issued by Lord Ashley for another Church Normal School in London. The British and Foreign School Society lately contemplated four new schools of this kind. If Normal Schools do not rise up in England equal to the demand for them, we must read our political economy and our experience backward. It is puerile to suppose that for such institutions we need the aid of Government. Even if large and handsome buildings were required, could we not point to colleges in London, Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool, at Richmond, Didsbury, and Airedale, and to many Proprietary Schools, as well as to a multitude of ancient endowed schools, to show that nothing which is truly required is beyond the power of Voluntary benevolence and spirit?

And now have we any means of measuring the progress which, by

NORMAL SCHOOLS, 1846.—(*Continued.*)

	Students.	Accommodation.
Brought forward	331	221
Diocesan Training Institutions,		
For Schoolmasters:		
Canterbury	4	4
York and Ripon (at York)	36	36
Durham	13	13
Winchester	19	19
Chester	41	70
Chichester	10	13
Exeter	19	20
Gloucester and Bristol	6	12
Lichfield	26	26
Lincoln	1	—
Llandaff (at Newport)	2	—
Norwich	3	3
Oxford	14	28
For Schoolmistresses:		
Canterbury	4	6
York and Ripon (at York)	8	20
Chester (at Warrington)	20	35
Chichester (at Brighton)	11	16
Norwich	7	7
Oxford (at Kidlington)	6	40
Salisbury	26	30
British and Foreign School Society	103	—
Home and Colonial Infant and Juvenile School Society (instructed during the year)	156	—
Brecon Normal School	28	—
Congregational Training Institution:		
Rotherhithe	—	12
Total	894	631

all these appliances, has been made? Can we take an observation, and find the longitude? I think we can, if you will permit me to become a little statistical. And as it is of the highest importance not to delude ourselves or others with vague statements, I believe you will indulge me.

We have no earlier educational statistics than the year 1818, when a Committee of the House of Commons, of which Lord Brougham was Chairman, obtained returns of all kinds of Day-schools, from all the parishes of England and Wales, through the medium of the parochial clergy. But one object of Lord Brougham was, to ascertain the progress that had been made by the schools on the Bell and Lancasterian systems; and therefore his schedules contained columns for the "New Schools." It appeared from his returns, that in the year 1818, the number of Day-scholars in England and Wales, was 647,883. The numbers returned under the head of "New Schools," were 150,642; and as all these schools had been established since 1803, the inference drawn by Lord Brougham, and with apparent fairness, was, that by deducting them from the total, we should ascertain about the number of scholars in 1803. Deduct 150,642 from 674,883, and we have 524,241 as the probable number of Day-scholars in 1803.

The next educational census, after Lord Brougham's, was by a Committee of the House of Commons, of which the late Earl of Kerry was Chairman, in 1833. Those returns were obtained through the medium of the overseers of the poor. The schedules included many more particulars than those of 1818. The returns of 1833 gave a total of 1,276,947 Day-scholars in England and Wales, of which 89,005 were in Infant-schools.

The present number of Day-scholars, or rather the number in 1846, has been the subject of much controversy. In that year, I estimated them at 1,876,947, being certain that this was below the mark, but resolved to err on the side that was opposed to my own wishes and argument. This calculation was severely attacked. I say nothing of the result of the controversy; but I add, that Professor Hoppus, who published his "*Crisis of Popular Education*" about twelve months later, after the closest and most impartial scrutiny of all the evidence he could find, conducted on scientific principles, arrived at the conclusion, that the number of Day-scholars in England and Wales, in 1846, was 2,000,000, and that there was school accommodation (if equally distributed) for 2,300,000. Mr.

Charles Knight, in a very able article on the "Progress of Education in England," in the *Companion to the British Almanack* for 1847, after a careful and elaborate calculation, arrived at the conclusion, that there were 2,200,000 Day-scholars. Professor Hoppus's estimate, therefore, exceeded mine by 123,000, and Mr. Knight's exceeded mine by 323,000.

The reports of the Commissioners of Education in Wales show so extraordinary an increase of scholars in that country since the year 1833, that I sincerely believe Mr. Knight's estimate of 2,200,000 Day-scholars for England and Wales, not to be above the truth. However, I will still lean to the side of moderation, and will take Professor Hoppus's estimate of 2,000,000.

We see, then, that the number of Day-scholars in 1803, was 524,241; in 1818, 674,883; in 1833, 1,276,947; and in 1846, was at least 2,000,000. There has been a great increase of the population; but, allowing for that increase, we find that the proportion which the scholars bore to the population rose as follows: In 1803, there was 1 Day-scholar to every 17½ of the population; in 1818, 1 to 17; in 1833, 1 to 11⅓; and in 1846, 1 to 8½.

DAY-SCHOLARS AND POPULATION IN ENGLAND AND WALES, IN 1803, 1818, 1833, AND 1846.

Years.	Day-scholars.	Population.	Proportion of Day-scholars to Population.
In 1803	524,241	9,128,507	1 to 17½
— 1818	674,883	11,398,167	1 to 17
— 1833	1,276,947	14,417,110	1 to 11⅓
— 1846	2,000,000	17,026,024	1 to 8½

Increase of Population, from 1833 to 1846 . . 86 per cent.
Increase of Scholars, ditto ditto . . 281 per cent.

If we took Mr. Charles Knight's estimate of the number of scholars, of course the comparison would be still more favourable—the improvement still more extraordinary.

But the most interesting conclusion to be drawn from these statistics is one which I do not remember to have ever seen clearly brought out. It is, the immense extension of education among the *working classes,* as distinguished from the upper and middle classes. Nearly all the increase must have taken place among the working classes: it has by no means been spread equally over the upper and

the lower portions of society. This is evident from a slight consideration of the facts. We may assume, that in 1803 the children of the upper and middle classes were pretty generally educated. Now, what were their numbers?—and what was the whole number of scholars? The whole number of children between five and fifteen years of age, in England and Wales, in 1803, was 2,190,841. If we assume one-fourth of the population to belong to the upper and middle classes, the children of those classes would be 547,710. But we have seen that the entire number of Day-scholars, in 1803, was only 524,241. It follows, of necessity, that the children of the upper and middle classes were not then receiving education for the whole ten years from their fifth to their fifteenth year. If we suppose that they were at school eight years, instead of ten, we ought then to find 438,168 of these children in school at one time; and, deducting this number from the 524,241 Day-scholars, it would appear that there would be 86,073 scholars who must have belonged to the *working classes.* But the whole number of children of the working classes, at that time, was 1,643,130. The result is, that *only* 1 *in* 19 *of the children of the working classes, who were of the school age, was at school at one time, in* 1803.

How different is the case now!—The whole number of children from 5 to 15 years of age, in 1846, was 3,891,127; one-fourth of these may belong to the upper and middle classes, and the other three-fourths to the working classes. Suppose that the 972,782 children of the upper and middle classes attended school, on the average, eight years each; we ought to find 778,226 of them there at one time. But the total number of Day-scholars, in 1846, was 2,000,000,—leaving, therefore, 1,221,774 scholars belonging to the working classes. Now the total number of children of the working classes was, in 1846, 2,918,345. The result is, that 1 *in* $2\frac{1}{3}$ *of the children of the working classes, of the school age, was at school, at the same time, in* 1846.

In 1803, only 1 in 19 of the poorer children was found in school at one time; in 1846, 1 in $2\frac{1}{3}$ is found in school. At the former period there were only 86,073 scholars of the working classes; at the latter there are 1,221,774. Is not the improvement in the educational state of this class, forming the bulk of society, indeed astonishing? And I point it out, not merely because it is so gratifying in itself, but because it is the triumphant and crowning proof of the power of the Voluntary Principle; for the class in which this

mighty improvement has been effected, was precisely the class least able to help themselves.

But it may be said, that the figures just given are still very unsatisfactory, inasmuch as they show only 2,000,000 scholars, out of 3,891,127 children of the school age; and, if we confine our view to the working classes, only 1,221,774 scholars, out of 2,918,345 children of the school age. But this would be a perfect fallacy. No reasonable man can expect all the children of the country, rich and poor, sick and healthy, to attend school for ten full years, from their fifth to their fifteenth year. I have contended, that it would be as much as we could reasonably expect, if we found all the children attending school, on the average, five years. Dr. Vaughan distinctly says,—not in the *British Quarterly*, but in his "Reply to Mr. E. Baines, Jun.," prefixed to the republication of that article:

"I admit that *five years* is as long an average as we should calculate upon." (p. 13.)

Now, if all the children were receiving an average of five years' schooling, the number found in school at one time would amount to about 1 in 9 of the entire population. In 1820, Lord Brougham thought it would be sufficient if we had 1 in 10 of the population in schools; and in 1835, he thought it would be sufficient if we had 1 in 9. The Parliamentary Education Committee of 1837 estimated that 1 in 8 of the population would be sufficient to be found in schools; and this is the proportion actually existing in Holland and Bavaria,—countries of which the education is said to be very complete. Now we have seen, that in England and Wales, in 1846, we had 1 in 8½ of the population in schools.

The number of Day-scholars gives an average length of schooling of more than five years to every child of the school age in England and Wales.

If we suppose that the children of the upper and middle classes attend school for eight years, on an average—which seems to be a reasonable estimate — we should find that the number of scholars belonging to the *working classes* gives an average of 4 1-5 years for *every* child among *those* classes. Of course, I do not mean to say that every child is educated; but only that the number of scholars actually found in school would yield that average for the whole.

There is one circumstance which will make the result rather less favourable, namely, that the scholars in Infant-schools, most of

whom are below five years of age, are included in the 2,000,000 scholars, whereas the number of children with whom we have compared them are only those between 5 and 15 years. In 1833, the number of Infant-scholars was returned as 89,005: if they should have borne the same proportion to the whole of the Day-scholars in 1846 as in 1833, their numbers would be 139,397, out of the 2,000,000. They would probably, however, bear a larger proportion,—but we cannot tell how large. Suppose we take them at 200,000, which, being deducted from the 2,000,000 Day-scholars, would leave 1,800,000 between the ages of 5 and 15. The effect on my calculations would be this:—It would give an average duration of schooling of $4\frac{2}{3}$ years to all the children in the country within the school age, and an average of $3\frac{1}{2}$ years' schooling to the children of the working classes within the school age. But the proportion of scholars to the whole population would remain the same, namely, 1 in $8\frac{1}{2}$. And the reduced calculations do not show the whole amount of education in the country; because it must be remembered that, on the supposition, 200,000 infants below 5 years of age are found in Infant-schools.

If, however, Mr. Charles Knight's estimate of the number of scholars were correct, as I believe it is, it would not be necessary to reduce my first calculations. We should then have the general average of 5 years' schooling for every child in the country between 5 and 15 years of age; and, in addition, 200,000 infants below 5 years of age receiving instruction.

In regard to Day-schools, I must observe, that some assistance has been given by Government, since the year 1832, for the erection of the buildings, (about one-fourth of the cost of a large proportion of those buildings,)—the total amount granted between 1832 and 1846 having been 395,000*l.* But nothing whatever was given towards the annual expenses until the measure of last year. Voluntary benevolence has supplied three-fourths of the cost of the buildings,—in many cases the whole cost,—and in all cases the entire expense of maintenance, over and above the school fees. For these varied purposes, including the building and maintenance of both Day-schools and Sunday-schools, several millions sterling must have been voluntarily raised within the last thirty years.*

And now, having done with the items, let us strike the balance of

* For a calculation on these points, see my "Letters to Lord John Russell on State Education," (1846.)—Letters 4 and 5.

profit and loss in this great matter of the education of the people. But of loss I can find nothing—nothing in number of scholars, in quality of education, in the morals, religion, habits, or condition of the people. All has been clear gain. And what a gain! We have seen the Sunday-school institution spring up from nothing, till it comprises 2,000,000 scholars, and 250,000 teachers; and it is as though, on some piece of waste land, covered with rubbish, and ruins, and stagnant pools, we had seen reared, as noiselessly as the great Temple on Mount Zion, without the sound of axe or hammer, a glorious structure dedicated to the praise of the Most High. Then we have seen the whole people awakened to a sense of the value of Day-school education, and the number of Day-scholars increased from 524,241 to upwards of 2,000,000; whilst the working classes, which had only 1 in 19 of their children receiving education in 1803, had 1 in 2½ in 1846. We see, at this day, schools in which, on the average, every child in England and Wales, of the school age, is receiving about five years of Day-school education, and every child of the working classes is receiving seven years of Sunday-school education.

We have no information, except from a few localities, as to the proportion of scholars receiving both a Day-school and Sunday-school education. We may assume that very few of the 972,782 children of the upper and middle classes, or of the 778,226 children of those classes whom we have assumed to be found in Day-schools at the same time, attend the Sunday-school. And, on the other hand, as the children of the working classes attend the Sunday-school seven years on the average, and the Day-school only about half that length of time, we should naturally infer that about half of the Sunday-scholars would not be in actual attendance on the Sunday-school and Day-school at the same time. From these simple elements we should naturally draw the conclusion, that of the 3,891,127 children between 5 and 15 years of age, there would be very few who were not either among the 2,000,000 Day-scholars or the 2,000,000 Sunday-scholars; and, indeed, that a very large proportion of the whole must receive some period of Day-school instruction, and nearly the whole of the children of the working classes must receive a considerable period of Sunday-school instruction. Dr. Vaughan stated, in a letter to the *Patriot*, in December, 1846, that he found in "two Sunday-schools near Manchester, of a

description likely to give a fair average, in this respect, of Sunday-schools in general in the manufacturing districts," that out of 1,465 children, there were only 51 (or 3½ per cent.) who had not, at one time or other, attended Day-school. Of the 1,465, there were 616 attending both Sunday and Day-school at the time; 798 attending Sunday-school, and who *had* attended Day-school; and only 51 at the Sunday-school who had never been at Day-school. Dr. Vaughan himself drew the following conclusion from the facts :—

"It will, I think, be found upon inquiry, as indicated in this result, that in England Sunday-schools prove to be of value as subsidiary to Day-schools; but that *children who never become Day-scholars do not often become Sunday-scholars.*"—*Reply to Mr. E. Baines, Jun.*, (p. 9.)

I believe, with Dr. Vaughan, that nearly all Sunday-scholars receive Day-school instruction at some period of their lives; and if so, nearly all the children of the poor must be in that case. Professor Hoppus concluded, from the scanty evidence which he found on the subject, that about 3,290,000 children were receiving either Sunday-school or Day-school education; and Mr. Charles Knight carried the number up to 3,500,000. All these facts and calculations concur to show that there is but an inconsiderable number of children absolutely destitute of education; and of course there is a still smaller number destitute of the opportunity of acquiring it.

STATE OF EDUCATION IN ENGLAND AND WALES, IN 1846.

Sunday-scholars	2,000,000
Sunday-school Teachers	250,000
Day-scholars	2,000,000

Proportion of Sunday-scholars to Population . . .	1 in 8½
Proportion of Day-scholars to Population . . .	1 in 8½
Proportion of the Children of the Working Classes in Day-schools in 1803 (86,073 scholars) . . .	1 in 19
Proportion of ditto in ditto, in 1846 (1,221,774 scholars)	1 in 2½

Average Duration of *Day-school* instruction for ALL the Children in England and Wales (*exclusive* of 200,000 Infant-scholars) . . . . 4⅔ years

Average Duration of *Sunday-school* instruction for ALL the Children of the *Working Classes* in England and Wales . . . . 7 years

I do not say that this is enough. I am far from saying, that here the swelling tide of knowledge ought to stop, or will, or can. Looking at the mighty progress that has been made, at the velocity with which the great engine of education is now travelling on its magnificent way, at the unexhausted force of the motives which are impelling it, at the momentum which even the brute mass of society has acquired, I no more expect to see it brought to a stand, than to see our planet halt in its revolution round the source of light. But I could as soon believe this, as I could believe that the substitution of the Compulsory for the Voluntary Principle would mend its speed. To my judgment, the change is as wise as it would be, in dissatisfaction with the unseen forces and noiseless movements of the orbs of light, to hang each planet to its sun in visible chains. I think there never was a more vulgar piece of narrow statesmanship than that of Lord John Russell, in adopting the project of Mr. Kay Shuttleworth.

But we are told that the justification of that measure is in the inefficient character of the education now given. Two years ago, it was the fashion to say, that we had not half as many schools as were wanted. That delusion having been dispelled, we are now told that the education given in the schools is worthless. I frankly admit that we have still many wretched schools. I have been told by the *Morning Chronicle*, that I am the advocate-general of bad schools. In one sense I am. I maintain that we have as much right to have wretched schools as to have wretched newspapers, wretched preachers, wretched books, wretched institutions, wretched political economists, wretched Members of Parliament, and wretched Ministers. You cannot proscribe all these things without proscribing Liberty. The man is a simpleton who says, that to advocate Liberty is to advocate badness. The man is a quack and *doctrinaire* of the worst German breed, who would attempt to force all mind, whether individual or national, into a mould of ideal perfection,—to stretch it out or to lop it down to his own Procrustean standard.

I maintain that Liberty is the chief cause of excellence; but it would cease to be Liberty if you proscribed everything inferior. Cultivate giants if you please; but do not stifle dwarfs. The servants were well-intentioned, but not wise, who proposed to pluck up the tares; for there was danger that they should root up the wheat with them. Yet this is the very spirit in which many Members of Parliament and leading journalists,—calling themselves Liberal, too—are now proposing to remodel society by Act of Parliament, and to govern mind and morals by Boards of Commissioners.

In the better days of his political philosophy, Mr. Macaulay thus rebuked this dangerous propensity to lean upon the State for the mental and moral advancement of the nation:

"*It is not*, (said he) *by the intermeddling of Mr. Southey's idol, the omniscient and omnipotent State*, but BY THE PRUDENCE AND ENERGY OF THE PEOPLE, *that England has hitherto been carried forward in civilization;* and it is to the same prudence and the same energy that we now look forward with comfort and good hope. Our rulers will best promote the improvement of the nation, by strictly confining themselves to their own legitimate duties;—by leaving capital to find its most lucrative course, commodities their fair price, *industry and intelligence their natural reward,* idleness and folly their natural punishment, by maintaining peace, by defending property, by diminishing the price of law, and by observing strict economy in every department of the State. Let the Government do this; THE PEOPLE WILL ASSUREDLY DO THE REST."*

But I declare my belief that education has improved in quality quite as much as it has increased in amount within the present century. One feature of that improvement consists in the substitution of a mild and reasonable for an excessively severe discipline. This reform was a leading characteristic both of Dr. Bell's and Mr. Lancaster's systems. Dr. Southey thus speaks of Dr. Bell's experience in his childhood, at a school at St. Andrew's:

"He never spoke of the discipline, or rather tyranny, which he witnessed and endured in those years of his life, without indignation:—'Oh, it was terrible!' he said, 'the remains of feudal severity! I never went to school without trembling. I could not tell whether I should be flogged or not.' His father, he used to say, had been driven from the grammar-school by cruelties that would now hardly

* Critical and Historical Essays, contributed to the *Edinburgh Review*. By Thomas B. Macaulay; vol. i. p. 269.—See also the same article, *passim*.

be believed; yet neither his father nor he were wanting in capacity or diligence. Schools (adds Dr. Southey) were everywhere conducted in those days upon a system of brutal severity." *

I hardly need say, that this system is now banished from nearly all kinds of schools, and has been denounced by every educational reformer, as well as satirized by our most popular writers, who exercise an influence as great as a hundred Government inspectors. If there are any schools where the brutal severity lingers, I apprehend it is those which are furthest removed from popular influence.

The methods of tuition, the school apparatus, the school-books, the plans of constructing and ventilating school-buildings, the combination of moral and religious with secular instruction, and every other branch of this great practical question, have been illustrated and improved to a most gratifying extent, by Pestalozzi, Oberlin, Bell, Lancaster, Fellenberg, Wilderspin, Arnold, Stow, and many others,—by the Normal-schools of Yverdun, the Borough-road, Battersea, Chelsea, Gray's Inn-road, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Dublin. The Central Society of Education, the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, and many other voluntary associations, have at least circulated the improvements of others, if they have not made discoveries themselves. The science of education has made far greater progress in our own day than that of medicine, jurisprudence, or political economy.

Now, inasmuch as our Normal-schools at present contain about 1,000 schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, which number is renewed every year, or every two or three years, and as fresh Normal-schools are constantly rising up, it is absolutely certain that the country will soon be pervaded with well-trained teachers; and by the natural and necessary competition among teachers, in the presence of a critical public—and perhaps few portions of the public more critical than the parents among the working classes, or I may even say the children themselves, who are ever comparing notes with each other—the improved methods of tuition must inevitably be forced into general adoption.

If it be said, that private schoolmasters will not adopt these improvements, I reply, that they are far more interested in adopting them than the teachers of public schools. Their livelihood absolutely depends on their success. And if Parliament can discover stronger

* Southey's Life of Dr. Bell, vol. i. p. 5.

motives than *self-interest* and *necessity* for the rapid and sure adoption of improvements, it is the most remarkable discovery of the day. I am by no means sure, that large public schools will in the long run prove the most efficient instruments of education. The discovery of Dr. Bell was long supposed to be invaluable; but the monitorial system is now condemned by many able educators, especially on the Continent. Let every system have an open field, and in the end the best will win the day. Let private schoolmasters receive fair-play from the Government, and not be unjustly discouraged by grants of public money to public schools which compete with them. Every interference of Government tends to increase the necessity for that interference and the habit of it; the more Government interferes, the more likely shall we be to have a practical *Act of Uniformity* in regard to schools; and in my judgment that uniformity, so far from being an advantage, as many *doctrinaires* suppose, would be the greatest obstruction to improvement.

The private schoolmasters have just adopted an institution which promises to be of great utility, if it should keep clear of Government, and avoid the evils of a monopolising corporation, namely, the "*College of Preceptors*." If wisely and popularly conducted, the College will acquire public confidence; and its examinations and certificates will be quite as valuable as those of any learned body. This is another proof of the unlimited inventiveness of freedom.

It would be just as hopeless to continue bad modes of education when better become generally known, as it would have been to retain the old weapons of war after the discovery of gunpowder,—to spin with the one-thread wheel after Arkwright and Hargreaves had perfected their spinning-frames, and Watt the steam-engine,—or to travel by pack-horses and stage-wagons, after the construction of railways.

Even the strongest of all the Educational Societies is subject to the law of competition. In the year 1826, Dr. Bell, finding that the National Schools were falling off, wrote as follows:

"Our schools are not attended as they might be, because neither parents nor children find they are worth attending; and other schools, inferior in almost every respect, but where something is taught, however badly, have attractions for scholars which ours have not, because superior attention is paid to their modes of instruction, however inferior in themselves, and to superintendence." *

* Life of Dr. Bell, vol. iii., p. 317.

The National Society, then, was under the same necessity as any other Society,—of improving its schools, or losing its scholars. And so it ought. I am aware that Government wish to promote good education. The first effect of their interference may be to produce some improvement; but unless all experience is valueless, the ultimate effect will be *to stereotype the methods of teaching, to bolster up old systems, and to prevent improvement.*

One of the grand arguments of our State Educationists is, that the Voluntary Principle will not, and cannot, sustain the annual expense of well-conducted schools. This argument is strongly pressed both by Professor Hoppus and Dr. Vaughan; and my respected friend, the Professor, in a recent letter in the *Morning Chronicle,* after making a calculation of what he supposed would be the annual cost of public schools, appealed to me whether it was possible for the Voluntary Principle to sustain it. My reply is brief, but I think conclusive. First, That the Voluntary Principle, by its two modes of operation, namely, the payments of those who are benefited, and the contributions of the benevolent, can sustain, amply sustain, every needful cost, both of education and of religion. And, secondly, That if the people cannot sustain it, the Government cannot; for the Government has neither strength nor money but what it derives from the people.

It may be responded—"We know that the people have the power, if they are disposed to use it, but they are not; and, therefore, it is necessary to compel them." Oh, then, it is not a pecuniary or a physical ability that is wanting, but a *moral* ability; and for *that* you leave the people and fly to the Government!—you abandon the Voluntary for the Compulsory Principle! For shame!—Where have you been living, that you know so little, and think so meanly, of the people of England? Have you been shut up within the walls of colleges, poring over German philosophy? Yet even those colleges should have spoken to you of the power of English liberality and public spirit; for every stone of them was laid by the Voluntary Principle. Have you never heard that the Nonconformists of England and Wales, who are the poorer sections of the community, have built about 13,000 places of worship,* and are sustaining their own ministers and services; which, at an average of only 120*l.* a year for each place, implies an aggregate Voluntary expenditure of more than a million and a half yearly? Are you not aware that the Church of

* The following table of Nonconformist places of worship in England and

England have, within our own generation, built or rebuilt several thousands of churches, and that for most of them new funds have been provided? Do you forget the millions that must have been expended in building and supporting Sunday-schools and Day-schools; and the still more extraordinary fact of the moral and spiritual agency employed in the Sunday-schools? Do you not know that there are benevolent societies, having their centres in this metropolis, which collect from the people more than half a million sterling every year, by far the greater part of which is intended for the religious benefit of heathen nations,—the black man and the red, the savage and the cannibal? Have you not heard how many Sunday-schools and Day-schools are supported by these societies,

Wales has been compiled with care from the official publications of nearly all the religious bodies mentioned for the year 1847:

NONCONFORMIST CHAPELS IN ENGLAND.

Wesleyan Methodist	3,000	Methodist New Connexion	277
Independent	1,800	Unitarian	220
Baptist	1,435	Orthodox Presbyterian	147
Primitive Methodist	1,421	Lady Huntingdon's	30
Roman Catholic	540	Inghamites, New Jerusalem Church, and various, (estimated)	500
Bible Christian	391		
Quaker	346		
Wesleyan Association	316		
		Total	10,423

NONCONFORMIST CHAPELS IN WALES.

Calvinistic Methodist	759	Quaker	9
Independent	640	Wesleyan Association	6
Baptist	312	Primitive Methodist	12
Wesleyan	469	Various minor Sects, (supposed)	80
Unitarian	30		
		Total	2,317

SUMMARY.

Chapels in England	10,423
Ditto in Wales	2,317
Total	12,740

Beside the above, there are many preaching-places. For example—The Primitive Methodists, in their Annual Report, say that the 1,421 chapels mentioned above are "Connexional Chapels," in addition to which they have 3,340 "Rented Chapels." The Wesleyan Association also mention 215 "Preaching-places, rooms, &c." The Wesleyans, Independents, Baptists, Quakers, and perhaps all the other bodies, have also preaching-rooms and stations, in addition to the chapels enumerated.

thousands of miles from our own shores;—that they have founded colleges for training ministers in Hindoostan, China, and the islands of the Pacific;—that they have Normal-schools and Infant-schools as successful as those of England, in islands a few years since only peopled by the most brutal barbarians;—that their devoted agents plunge into the wilderness, take up their abode in the most pestilent climates, and brave every danger and hardship, for the benefit of tribes who often repay them by seeking their blood? Or, as it is the *moral ability* of the people that you question, have you not heard that a million and a quarter of the inhabitants of Britain, and a much greater number in Ireland, have had the moral courage to abandon the use of intoxicating liquors? And that at least half a million of persons in England, representing perhaps families comprising two millions, are joined in Provident Societies, which require the self-denial of years to provide against remote and contingent evils?

If you know these facts, as you do, how can you doubt the ability and willingness of the religious people of England to give their poorer fellow-countrymen and fellow-Christians whatever help may be needed towards the education of their children? And above all, how can you doubt it, when you must know that *by far the greater part of the work is already done, and the schools already in operation?*

You talk of the impossibility of raising a few hundred thousands a year,—forgetting that the annual income of the people of England and Wales must be from two to three hundred millions!

If you think my confidence in my fellow-countrymen unwarranted, listen to the far bolder faith, which one of the greatest of our political philosophers expressed in the people of our American colonies. Had his wise and generous principles been acted upon, England might have saved her colonies, her blood, and 140,000,000*l.* of her treasure. What Mr. Burke said of the American Assemblies in 1775, may, with confidence immeasurably stronger, be said in 1848, of the people of England. He represents his ministerial opponents, who were for levying taxes by force on the Americans, as saying to him, by way of objection to his measure of conciliation:

"Your plan gives you no revenue. No! (he replies;) but it does. It secures to the subject *the power of* REFUSAL;—*the first of all revenues.* Experience is a cheat, and fact a liar, if this power in the subject of proportioning his grant, or of not granting at all, has not been found the richest mine of revenue ever discovered by the skill or by the fortune of man. It does not, indeed, vote you

152,752*l.* 11*s.* 2¾*d.*, nor any other paltry limited sum; but it gives *the strong box itself*, the fund, the bank, from whence only revenues can arise from a people sensible of freedom: *Posita luditur arca.* In truth, this dread of penury of supply from a free assembly" (I may say, from a free *people*) "has no foundation in nature. For first observe, that besides the desire which all men have naturally of supporting the honour of their own government," (I may say, of their own country, or county, or city,) "that sense of dignity and that security to property, which ever attends freedom, has a tendency to increase the stock of the free community. Most may be taken where most is accumulated. And what is the soil or climate where experience has not uniformly proved, that the *voluntary flow* of heaped-up plenty, bursting from the weight of its own rich luxuriance, has ever run with *a more copious stream of revenue* than could be squeezed from the dry husks of oppressed indigence by the straining of all the political machinery in the world?"

Thus "*the power of refusal,*" which our State Educationists consider the fatal vice of the Voluntary System, is pronounced by Mr. Burke to be "*the first of all revenues:*" and the power "of *not granting at all,*" which they believe would certainly be exercised, is declared by that statesman to be "*the richest mine of revenue ever discovered by the skill or by the fortune of man.*" In that one passage is contained the true and profound philosophy of the Voluntary System.

May I, before I close, present to you an ocular illustration of that vast advancement of the people in knowledge and intelligence which it has been the object of this Lecture to demonstrate, and to trace to the independent energies of the people themselves? Lord Brougham has called the newspaper "the best possible public instructor." Whether this description be correct or otherwise, no one will deny the vast power of that instrument of the diffusion of knowledge. Perhaps in a free country there could hardly be a truer indication of the amount of popular thought, active intelligence, and general reading, than the newspaper. The supply of intellectual food must bear some proportion to the intellectual appetite. I wish, then, I had had copies of the London newspapers of the last century, to contrast before your eyes with the colossal papers of the present day. Unfortunately I have not. But it chances that I possess copies of a provincial newspaper belonging to four different periods; and as the memory of the eye is stronger in many persons than that

of the ear, I will exhibit them. This is a provincial newspaper of the year 1729;—this is the same newspaper of the date of 1739;—this of 1778;—and this of 1848. [The Lecturer exhibited copies of the *Leeds Mercury* for the above periods.] The first is a 4-page tract; the last contains more matter than an ordinary octavo volume. The first contains 5,000 words,—the last 180,000. Such has been the growth of knowledge and intelligence in England *without* Government help. Would the growth have been as great with it? Would it have been one-tenth part as great? The improvement in those newspapers explains the political reforms of the last hundred years: and I ask, did those reforms proceed from the Government, or did they proceed from the people?

I have done. The case is before you for your verdict. You will bear me witness that I have drawn my facts from no narrow range, my authorities from no exclusive circle, my conclusions from no scanty or doubtful premises. A broad view has been laid before you of the growth of education and intelligence, in combination with that of virtue and religion, among the people; and, at the same time, we have so entered into details, and applied the test of figures, as to avoid the delusion that often attends vague generalities. Am I not warranted in saying that the progress of England during the last century, but most of all within the last half-century, has indeed been mighty?—that it has been accomplished by the independent and voluntary exertions of the people themselves?—that Religion, Knowledge, and Liberty have gone hand-in-hand, and mutually strengthened each other?

For myself, when I survey the recent history of my country, my heart swells with exultation. I am proud to be an Englishman, and still more proud to be a Voluntary. But if I am proud of the past, I can trust the future advancement of my country to the same principle which has achieved such great moral triumphs. I should neither think it honourable nor wise to change our policy in the full tide of our success. And if a Continental policy should be creeping in among us,—a policy whose spirit is materialism, and whose grand resource is functionarism,—a policy which would impair the noble self-reliance of the people, and bring religion itself into bondage,—I call upon you to give it your utmost resistance, and to rally but the closer around that standard of *virtuous Willinghood*, which our fathers reared in worse times, which we will never desert, and which, I confidently believe, will wave over a regenerated world.

LECTURE II.

LECTURE II.

ON THE EDUCATION OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

BY THE REV. A. WELLS.

Present difficulties connected with the question—Working classes—Their full manhood—Their vast numbers—Their social importance—Their depression—Exaggerated representations of the evils prevailing among the working classes—Desires for their elevation—Virtue essential to this—The working classes need many ameliorations, but education essential to them all, and religion essential to a just education—Means already provided for their education—Constant improvements therein—Aims in education ought to be high—The people should be moved to seek and provide education for themselves—An educated nation a noble spectacle—Congregationalists can only educate religiously—Cannot receive Government grants—Are not sectarian in their present educational course—Could not possibly approve the present Minutes of Council—Regard education itself but as a means to promote liberty, piety, and salvation.

A LARGE subject—a theme in itself of deep interest—and now rendered by circumstances in England doubly momentous. Here, past neglect, with its arrears of labour, and its dangers of mischief—with its difficulties to be overcome, and its controversies to be decided—addresses a loud call to every lover of his country and of his species, to contribute his mite, however small, towards the great work of educating the people of England; while there are dangers not a few to be avoided, arising out of the excess, and irregularity, and impatience of our new-born zeal, which may rush upon its end, too regardless of the means employed, and exaggerating at once the evils to be remedied and the results to be gained. Just now some sober wisdom, some exact inquiries, some moderated expectations, may be hardly less useful, and not at all less necessary, than energy and courage, to do well, and for permanent good, the too long-neglected work of general education.

Our sympathy is this evening challenged for the working classes: that is, in fact, almost for human kind at large, the condition of labour being so universally that of our race, as to render the sons of wealth and of ease but the exceptions, and the fractional minority in all lands and in all ages. Ever imposed on by appearances, and seeing mankind distributed into ranks and orders, presenting an

exterior, in some to dazzle, in some to repel, we yield to an influence too likely to sway our judgment, till we call the proud happy, and despise the poor. But here we own the working classes our fellow-men. We see in each peasant and artizan entire human nature, in all its integrity and completeness. In each we recognise and honour all the physical and mental, all the social and moral, all the spiritual and immortal endowments and capabilities of man. We put aside rank, employment, culture, condition, that we may come at the nobleness and value of our common nature. Nor do we perceive, in these our brethren, any inferior type of humanity,—a feebler reason, a heart capable only of less noble sentiments, and less tender affections—a moral sense, yielding but poorer virtues, and less trustworthy integrity. No!—all the differences of developed man we attribute to culture, but find original, native man, quite irrespective of rank—the equal child of the impartial Maker and Benefactor of the race.

Neither can we admit or feel, that the well-being, happiness, and future destiny of an individual in humble life are less important than those of an individual in a higher social position. To relieve the pain of a peasant, is to remove as much suffering as to cure the equal ailment of a prince. To save the soul of a labourer from death, is to effect a work as important as if that spirit dwelt in a person arrayed in fine linen and faring sumptuously every day. To render a cottage the abode of household virtues, and domestic enjoyments, is to diffuse as much happiness as to carry the same blessings into a more splendid abode.

The Christian revelation teaches the sublime and ennobling doctrine of the essential, not of the social, equality of mankind. The personal man—the accountable, immortal man—is, in its creed, the same curious, wonderful, and fearful workmanship of God all the world over. Outward development and position may indefinitely vary. Diversified ranks and relations among men for social purposes are as much the will of God, and therefore as sacred, as the essential equality of the race. Just sentiments towards our fellow-men can only result from giving due weight to both these considerations. But by far the more common and fruitful source of views unfavourable to benevolence and to justice is found in the prevalent habit of sinking the individual in the class,—of rarely coming close enough to the person through thought of his condition—and of forgetting the man equally in the great and the humble, the splendid

and the mean. Genuine philanthropy is that love of man, and care for his welfare, which nothing but fellowship with personal, living human nature, in its native powers and workings, can produce.

But when we pass from consideration of the individual to that of the class, then the interests and welfare of the humbler portion of mankind are found to preponderate unspeakably. Here numbers tell with prodigious, overwhelming force. If each man of every class be essentially of equal worth, the multitudes of these equal beings, grouped as the working classes, give to that division of our common race an unutterable importance. How they swarm and increase in the earth! We labour for terms to express or intimate their numbers. They are the "masses," the "millions," the "people." They are thought of as in excess. They increase too rapidly. How shall they be fed?—how governed?—how improved? Indeed, their multitudes render them awful. We equally want faith in God, and love to man, when contemplating in thought the sublime spectacle of these innumerable crowds,—we inquire, what can we do for their welfare? How can they be lifted up to knowledge, virtue, and happiness?

Nor is their social importance inferior in its place to their essential consequence. The three elements of the resources of the great human commonwealth are labour, intelligence, and capital—the last is gathered and administered by the wealthy; the second is contributed by the gifted and studious: but that first great contribution of endless toil is supplied by the working classes. There are they in your fields and your mines, your factories and your ships, your warehouses and your workshops, giving an amount of manual and physical effort which no nature, no patience but that of men bred to labour, could sustain. Hardly less consumers than producers, they form that great elastic power in the community which endures privation and adjusts demand and supply. Amidst scarcity and high prices, their unavoidable privations diminish consumption; and amidst plenty and cheapness, their increased enjoyments restore the remuneration of capital and the profits of trade. In national policy their judgment, once enlightened, would have immense force and equal value—their voice, raised in favour of religion, peace, rational liberty, and just government, would be irresistible. These multitudes, once enlightened and virtuous, would render the social fabric immovably secure and peaceful.

Hitherto the condition of the working classes has been, in all

times and in all countries, one of severe and unjust depression. In itself it is far indeed from dishonourable or unhappy. It favours health, simplicity, and freedom from factitious care. Its wants and temptations are few. Thoughtful moralists pronounce, that if in the scale of advantages for human welfare it does not rise above, at least it does not sink below, the positions occupied by the learned, the wealthy, and the powerful. Of course this vast portion of the human family must ever take its full share in the calamities incident to the human race in its present condition—such as are the results of the order of things prevailing in this world beyond the power of human control—such as bear undeniable marks of being the appointments of the Great Ruler of the system amidst which we live From neither public nor private calamities can the lowly position of the multitude shield them. Disease and death spare them not. By them the horrors of famine must be first endured. Among them pestilence reaps its most ample harvest. The iron hoof of war tramples them to the dust. Unjust laws and exactions make them their first victims. It is to these last that reference is here most relevant. The many of mankind have suffered awfully at the hands of the few. Either terrible retributions, or better days are at hand. The latter, we hope and believe. The very names branded on the sons of the soil vividly portray the treatment they have received from its lords. Villein, serf, vassal, slave, are terms of dire import. The notion that the people must be kept down, is a shocking maxim. The sentiment that they must not be taught, lest they should cease to obey, smites a heavy blow on the Government which is conscious that it would never be endured by an enlightened people. Through fatal mistakes, it has been thought necessary to maintain rank by proscription—trade by monopoly—religion by ignorance—power by force—property by terror; and the dregs of this cup of miseries the poor have wrung out and drunk. Neglect of the people—unconcern at their sufferings—apathy or despair as to their improvement—forms a serious count in the indictment brought by justice against those who ought to have been their shepherds and benefactors, using for their behoof all the powers of Church and State. But brighter times are at hand. Light breaks through these heavy clouds in all directions. The glorious enterprise of elevating the multitude has been commenced. The heavenly mission of proclaiming glad tidings to the poor has been entered upon. On all sides men are busy in exploring their suffer-

ings, and publishing their wrongs, that they may be redressed. This is the bright and hopeful feature of our time. This fully redeems it from the opprobrium, that it is utterly sordid and material—that it has no great thought, no noble impulse. Care for the many is its great thought, its noble impulse : a far higher mood of man this than that which has fought battles, built cathedrals, and adorned cities. Nor will this mission be vain and unsuccessful. The many may be instructed and raised. They will be found grateful for benefits. Light will vindicate its superiority to darkness ; Christianity will win its last earthly honour, and gain the last earthly confirmation of its truth, in the power of its spirit and its doctrine to raise the multitude out of the wrongs and miseries of so many afflictive ages.

The condition of the working classes in our own country at this time has been portrayed in very dark colours. Not a little exaggeration must be allowed for in the descriptions given by many excellent persons in pursuit of most laudable and benevolent efforts for the general good. Zeal to move the public mind, and to obtain the necessary funds for the removal of diversified evils, has led in many instances to representations of those evils, too strong, too highly-coloured, too general : hence our country has been, in fact, libelled. The Romanist has derived from Protestant witnesses a testimony unfavourable to the influence of the Reformation, after three centuries of trial, on the English people. The advocate of State centralization has borrowed the statements of the friends of Voluntary education, to prove Prussia and France far more generally educated countries than England. The Protectionist has drawn most gloomy pictures of the operatives—the Free-trader in reprisal has set forth in still darker colours the condition of the peasantry. Churchmen and Dissenters, after their different modes, bewail the irreligion of the people. Advocates for sanitary reform proclaim the squalor, indecency, and domestic degradation of great multitudes ; while those who toil for the improvement of our criminal code and prison discipline, make every reader shudder by their details of hardened profligacy and juvenile delinquency. On all sides a dismal chorus is heard chaunting one unvaried theme of reproach, lamentation, and terror, on the condition of the people—the millions—of England. It is all true, or not true, as it is applied. If these statements are made to embrace all, or most of the English people, they are false and libellous ; if only to apply to portions of the people, unhappily they are too true ; and they supply a melancholy

comment on party religion, party politics, class legislation, and excessive commercial cupidity. But, after all, the great multitude of the working classes in England are not brutal, not ignorant, not vicious. There are soundness and health in the land. There are materials for improvement, and grounds for hope. The better qualities, the better condition of the great mass of our population, supply motives for effort, no less than the wretchedness and vice of detached portions of it. Some require to be redeemed;—all want to be raised. We are not for keeping down, we are for raising up. We would lift, by a tranquil process of improvement, the entire fabric of society without dislocation, conflict, or confusion; as the wide surface of society is elevated, we would have it heave up all the higher ranks at their present relative altitudes, or in better adjusted and safer proportions—all rising together equally, and in due order: like those vast geological forces which lift whole regions —plain, mountain, valley, lake, and river—without convulsion or disturbance—a rise unknown till the previous line of sea margin on the shore is found to have been raised far beyond the reach of ocean's highest tides.

Our ambition is to see the multitude of the English people enlightened and virtuous—raised above dishonourable dependence, and whatsoever is abject in want and suffering. We would see them in decent attire and comfortable dwellings—in family order and domestic pleasures. They should have their rational sports and recreations—their well-spent holidays and excursions. Their toil should be lessened, and their pleasures increased. England is a free country. She has noble representative institutions. She makes public opinion bear powerfully on legislation and policy. She summons her sons to think and speak on public affairs and national interests. It is, therefore, at once unsafe, inconsistent, and disgraceful that any numerous class of her people should be uneducated; unable to appreciate either her interests or their own; impatient for a suffrage which it is equally unsafe to concede or to withhold, because they are disqualified, not by poverty, but by ignorance, for the trust which only the enlightened and virtuous can fitly hold.

We have no idea of either personal or national elevation apart from increased virtue in the individual or in the multitude. Social virtue is the parent of social welfare. The good man in the good citizen. Temperance, honour, courage, prudence, and self-respect; the fear of God and the love of man,—these are the virtues which

will ever bless the possessor, and make him a blessing. Impregnate with such virtues the multitudes of a nation, and that will become a great and glorious people. The wealthiest and the mightiest of men cannot dispense with these virtues; without them their possessions and their power will be but a curse to themselves and others. The humble sons of labour need them no less; for they alone can redeem their toil and straitness from degradation and misery. Virtue is our want. Whatever will promote virtue is our remedy. Without virtue we are but mocked with promise of reform, and predictions of prosperity. Religion without virtue is a sham. Liberty without virtue is a cheat. Free institutions without virtue are but chains in another form. Intelligence without virtue is but illuminated wickedness. Tell not the people knowledge is power: virtue is power. Tell not the people, the franchise is liberty: virtue is liberty. Speak not of national conscience, of incorporated religion. Goodness is ever personal, and the virtue of a nation is the virtue of its individual citizens. Their several bosoms are the only store-places of this inestimable and noble treasure. There is a God in Heaven, and a law on earth, which will ever bind together crime and misery, virtue and happiness, as in the most inevitable connexion of cause and effect.

What, then, shall be done for the working classes of England? Many things would we do for them, were power and will to us the same. We would improve their dwellings, and make them scenes of comfort, order, and affection. We would shorten their hours of toil, and in many cases greatly increase its remuneration. We would lessen their need of charity by rendering to them more justice. We would diffuse among them afresh the power of religion, and gather them into the sanctities of the Sabbath and the house of prayer, as the scenes of their holiest, happiest earthly hours. But one thing must be done: they must be educated. This alone is not all they want; but this they do most urgently need, and without this their many other wants can never be supplied. Through this the way may be found to their full emancipation. Non-education is indeed an impossibility. The child not trained to knowledge will be schooled in ignorance; if not brought up in industry, idleness will be his instructor; if not disciplined for virtue, the lessons of vice are at hand. Every true lover of education raises his standard high. He can be satisfied with no low aims. He would have the understanding informed, the powers exercised and enlarged, the character formed, the man developed. Instruction and education

are his two ideas. By instruction, he would have knowledge stored and built into the mind. By education, he would have the native, in-born powers of the mind drawn forth and invigorated. In both processes he would have the sacred and the common mingled and interwoven. They are in their own nature allied, and mutually dependent and helpful. Everything true is in harmony with all other truth. No knowledge can we acquire of nature, of history, of art, but, if we will trace it to either its root or its end, we find it in God. Nothing that we know can we interpret or apply, but it will give an utterance in favour of virtue and right. Knowledge has been too much and too long divorced from religion: their dislocation, not their blending, is unnatural and injurious. It is not, indeed, so much theological and dogmatic religion that should be blended with all education,—but that of the heart and the life—the simple and the practical—the rudimental and the genuine. The teacher of religion, whether parental or professional, should ever be religious, and teach religion—should employ its sanctions—unfold its principles—drop into the young mind its seeds; be himself governed by its spirit, and be animated by an enlightened care for the very highest interests of his pupils.

How shall the working-classes be indeed educated? How shall schools be provided for those as yet altogether neglected? How shall the schools already in operation be improved and rendered really efficient? How shall the working-classes be themselves awakened to a just sense of the value and necessity of education for their children? How shall education for the many be best diffused throughout this country in harmony with its free institutions, and without collision with its numerous and deeply-rooted diversities of opinions and parties in religion? These are questions equally weighty and difficult. But they are not now asked for the first time. The answer to them requires not still to be sought in speculation and theory. On the contrary, these problems have already been studied and solved by wise and practical benevolence. The answer to them is, in great measure, supplied by the schemes, the exertions, and the successes of the first half of this nineteenth century, during which eventful and illustrious period a firm foundation has been laid, on which to carry forward the noble work of universal education. Beautiful and astonishing are the contrivances and adaptations of recent philanthropy to diffuse the advantages of education among all classes.

There are Infant-schools, for children of an age at which it was

formerly thought impossible that they should acquire knowledge or endure discipline, and so were left to acquire every habit and disposition hostile to subsequent culture. Now, to the first freshness of childhood, school is rendered a pleasure, and learning a pastime. The years that were once worse than wasted, are now made to receive an influence preparatory and advantageous for all the instruction of after-years. There is now also added the Sunday, as well as the week-day, infant-class, when these interesting groups are guided to knowledge and devotion by methods of engaging gentleness and skill, instead of being coerced into unnatural quiet, amidst the scenes of worship they could not in the least comprehend.

Then follow Sunday-schools in their almost universal adoption and use. In them intelligence and religion are happily blended. The sacred hours of the day are not desecrated, but hallowed, in these labours of benevolence and necessity. Every charity of the human heart is here exercised. Instruction is afforded in ingenious and endless diversity, from the Infant-class for those that can but lisp, to the Bible-class for those of more advanced years and attainments. These Sunday-schools are the honour and salvation of England.

There are your Daily-schools in constantly and rapidly increasing numbers. Then there rise above these, evening-classes, people's colleges, and mechanics' institutes.

For the outcasts there are Ragged-schools. For juvenile delinquents, Penitentiary-schools. For pauper children, Union-schools; these two latter classes of the unfortunate or criminal being legitimately provided for by the Government, to whose care they are confided, equally by the necessities and institutions of the country.

All these diversified forms of education are even more rapidly improving than extending. They constantly become more efficient. No part of the entire system shows any mark of decline or deterioration. It is in full growth of power and improvement; but is as yet at an early period of development. In this age of astonishing progress, education is seen holding an equal and honourable place in the general advance. To this nothing has more contributed than the strenuous efforts made for the improvement of teachers. Normal and Training-schools for instructors are admirable and indispensable institutions: in them the future teachers of your schools are themselves trained in knowledge and in the best mode of instructing and governing youth. In these, also, there is constant improvement: they will soon be made colleges of no mean rank. The elevation

of the schoolmaster has commenced, and is certain. The old opprobrium of his ignorance and tyranny will be wiped off. He will become the man of intelligence and character—the friend and benefactor of his charge.

Constant, also, are the improvements in school books and school plans. The science of mind is found as open to discovery as the science of matter. How to teach, how to improve children, are questions admitting of new and advanced solutions, no less than inquiries how best to cultivate the soil, or to perfect manufactures. And these improvements cannot fail to proceed indefinitely, so long as education is kept wide open, and free to competition, and to all those impulses which liberty constantly supplies. But once close up this great science and movement of mind from these invigorating breezes, whether by monopoly or bounty, whether by coercion or patronage, and the sure result will be torpor and stagnancy. Remove the popular impulse—tell the people they cannot, or they will not do this work—give them the notion that there is another power at hand to supply their deficiencies, and to do whatever they neglect—let this be done, and education will obey the same law that has hitherto invariably consigned to decay endowed religion, protected trade, regulated literature, and patronized art.

If it be asked, "What limits would you place on the education of the working-classes?" the answer is, "NONE." Teach them all you can, by any means induce or enable them to learn. How far would you carry the instruction of the working-classes? As far as possible. Alas! we need place no limits, we need be jealous for no bounds, we need fear no excess here: they, your pupils, will restrict you. You will have no need to restrain them. Look at the case. Ponder the facts. How brief an attendance can you secure at your daily schools! How few can you allure to your evening classes and people's colleges, for advancement of their education in the youthful period from fifteen to five-and-twenty!—In how few can you kindle an emulous desire of advancement? How do toil, care, and want quench aspiration, and press down noble purpose! How does disordered human nature fail to value the intellectual, the moral, and the immortal! No! ye friends of education, advancement will be your toil; limitation your fear! You are not yet surrounded by clamorous applicants. Far remote appears the day in which too much acquirement will be the peril of the multitude.

But apart from this,—Who is afraid of knowledge?—of sound, healthful intelligence? Of knowledge, the light and joy of souls!

Of knowledge, the object for which minds were made, and their faculties given! Of knowledge, in capacity for which man resembles his Maker; and in acquiring which he communes with all created things! Of knowledge, the foe of everything infidel, sensual, and brutal! What page of history, science, or genuine poetry must we close from any man, saying, Here knowledge is perilous—here ignorance alone is safety? Of what discovered facts in nature—of what refined productions of genius—must we say, "These are the luxuries of the few alone?" If, indeed, only of the few, those few are not the favoured in circumstances, but the select in mind, and these may be found among the working-classes in as large proportion as among the privileged classes; and wherever they may be found, there they should be sought, that at this uncostly and noble banquet of mind they may be welcome guests, and joyful partakers. Lift up the people, cheer on the people, to as much acquisition of knowledge as possible. Raise everywhere the standard of mind. If some, if many, so encouraged and helped, press upwards into higher departments and circumstances in society, so much the better: they will bring health and power with them into the ranks, by which they will be hailed as brothers, not scowled upon as intruders. No; teach the people all they can learn, all they will learn.

Then we would instruct the working-classes in manhood as well as in childhood—we would prolong their education from the school into life. By the pulpit, by the press, by lectures, meetings, and discussions—by missions, politics, and affairs—we would inform, enlarge, and elevate the general, the universal mind. We would have a knowing and a thinking people. Nor is this impossible: we are on the way to this noble state. Should the second half of this century equal the first in progress—should it advance as far onward from its present starting-point as that now closing has done from its infinitely more unfavourable beginning, England will commence the twentieth century of the Christian era, a land of light such as the world never before saw! And this is, moreover, the true sentiment on which to attain whatever degrees of education are really practicable; namely, to aim at the highest mark and standard. It will be found an entire mistake to suppose that, if we design no more than to teach the working-classes to read, write, and cipher—this, being a simple matter, will be easily effected—and zeal to accomplish it will be in proportion as the object seems practicable.

On the contrary, so poor, so mechanical a notion will never rouse to any generous, inspiring effort; neither will such acquirements be ever valued for their own sake, by the working-classes. It is only as means to an end that elementary school-learning can ever be thought valuable. When these accomplishments were rare, and a distinction to the possessor, then the working-classes valued them, because, on going into life, easier and more lucrative situations were open to them on that account; but now that they are becoming common, even universal, they no longer confer this distinction and advantage, but must be recommended as the necessary avenue to mental advancement and pleasure—to a respectable character and position in society—to a share in the great movements of mind everywhere in action.

And though, at first sight, it may not appear so, yet, in truth, this proposed elevation of the people is rather the recovery of a lost, than the creation of a new, equality in society; for, when in past ages the noble and wealthy could but seldom read and write—when the history of the nation was sung in ballads and preserved by traditions—when the wisdom of the age was limited to maxims of prudence, signs of the weather, and tales of wonder—then the serf knew as much as the baron—and, however power and wealth distinguished the oppressor from the oppressed, they lived, at least, in the same intellectual world, and were, by force of a common superstition and an equal ignorance, one people. But now that intellectual has accumulated perhaps even more than material wealth, while the possession of the former, equally with that of the latter affluence, has been confined to a portion of society, the causes of distance, and the difference between the working and the reading classes, have been injuriously augmented. Were a wider, and somewhat less unequal diffusion of wealth than that now prevailing, possible, it might be healthy and good for the body politic—but, to diffuse among all a portion of that magnificent treasure of knowledge now possessed not merely by the learned, but by the informed, of this country—an equitable adjustment, by which none would be wronged, none robbed—a distribution, possible as well as just—this would be a benefaction and a blessing, which, however inestimable in itself, could not come alone: it must draw thousands in its train. One movement of immense force and value in the great work of advancing the education of the working-classes will be gained, whenever this great benefit shall become a matter of demand as well as of

supply. At present, the universally prevalent idea is, that education must be provided for the working classes—given to them—pressed upon them. It is thought much if they can be induced to receive instruction. The idea generated in the minds of many not unintelligent working men, by the interference of Government in the affair, is, "We had rather have schools for our children as a legal right, rather than as a charitable boon—by Act of Parliament, than by effort of benevolence." It may be greatly doubted whether, in such a case, dependence on public taxes, and control by public authority, is really less dishonourable than dependence on benevolent exertion. But, indeed, why any dependence at all in the case of a vast number of skilled artizans? Their resources are surely adequate to secure education for their children in schools of their own selection, and under their own influence. Once moved to take the work into its own hands, this class can do for itself far more than either Government or benevolent associations can effect in its behalf. Then would arise competition among schoolmasters, and the inspection, not of a paid agency, but of interested and vigilant parents. Then would the funds of benevolence be released for a more effectual supply of real destitution. And then would education be no longer a controversy, but a work and a triumph.

The world has never yet seen the magnificent spectacle of an educated nation. France and Prussia are not educated nations. Their people may be taught less or more; but, for general enlightenment, free thought, command of books, liberty of discussion,—they know nothing of these elevating privileges. The instruction given by power must subdue, not emancipate: it must inculcate slavish sentiments equally on the teacher and the taught. But when a whole people may and can explore all themes, discuss all subjects, think freely, and speak free thoughts; when freedom, enlightenment, and virtue meet together,—how will a people, so ennobled, reform its institutions, maintain its peace, spread abroad its commerce, and become more mighty to diffuse blessings and happiness in the world, than ever the most renowned of conquering nations to carry victory and havoc, triumph and miseries, far and wide among mankind!

It may not be unsuitable for the present Lecturer to offer some explanatory remarks on the course recently adopted by the Congregational Union on this most important and national interest—the education of the working classes. His hope is, that these proceed-

ings will be found worthy of the principles and objects ever sacredly cherished by Independents in every period of their history.

They deem glorious and Divine Christianity specially the friend of the people,—the multitude. They find among the prominent and lasting proofs of its divinity, "that it proclaims glad tidings to the poor." They read in its history the sure, though often interrupted, rescue and advancement of the people. The corruption of mild and merciful Christianity they find to have been ever the wrong and scourge of the people. They perceive a blessed adaptation of the gospel to the people, and of the people to the gospel. Carry simple Christianity to the multitude; it will win them and bless them. Let a people receive the gospel, and they are emancipated and blessed. Independents have no hope for mankind but in connexion with pure Christianity. Its designs and promises, its resources and means, they think alone adequate to regenerate the world. They also deem the gospel as friendly to knowledge in all its forms and developments, as it is to the people. Itself a revelation of truth on subjects respecting which without its guidance man could discover and know nothing, it gives aid to every rational inquiry, and subordinates to its purposes every advance of truth. Moreover, Independents have ever laboured to harmonise strict religion and entire liberty. They have ever rejected priestly claims, and secular authority in religion. They have turned from the great to the humble. They have sought strength from the many, not from the few. They have trusted their cause to a wide diffusion rather than to a perilous height. For better and for worse, they abide by principles and a mission, which send them among the people.

Nothing could be more natural and inevitable than that Independents should bear part in all movements for popular education, and that they should pay special attention to the principles on which it might be proposed to conduct this work. For them to adopt any separate operations for educating the people, detached from Christianity, was impossible. Could they have borne part in a merely secular education, they would have acted as citizens among their countrymen, not as religionists and Dissenters, apart by themselves. As churches, they could have no ground of combined action but their sacred principles; they could have no object but to combine, with their best efforts for general enlightenment, their equally strenuous struggles for genuine Christianity: hence, with them, an insurmountable obstacle to the receipt of public money for their

schools. Their schools must be religious. For religion they can receive no tax-raised money—they can admit no interference of that Governmental authority which ought to follow, and must follow, wherever public funds are received.

Moreover, to them entire independence is essential. They must ever be equally free to act and speak. They must hold themselves entirely clear of all temptation to ask, when their public testimony is required,—How will our conduct affect our grants? The belief of many Independents is that, from the hour they received Government money, they would be a changed people—their tone lowered—their spirit altered—their consistency sacrificed—and their honour tarnished. They know not how to conceive of their deputations waiting at the Treasury—how honoured men, whose names must not be mentioned, could there mingle with the delegates of other nameless bodies in the antechamber of the Committee of Privy Council. How they would be received by the dispensers of Parliamentary funds, we can easily imagine; how welcomed with bows and smiles; how they would be complimented on their enlarged views and new liberality of sentiment; and how they would feel we may be sure—that their birthright was sold, their locks shorn, and they like other men. Therefore some Independents think the question is, not How can we obtain Government money? but, How can we avoid it? If there must be any ingenious interpretation of our principles for any purpose, let it be to determine how we can maintain our liberty, not how can we receive the grant? So that, supposing such Independents to have no settled judgment, whether the State can or cannot rightfully and usefully interpose in the work of general education; whether some other classes of the community could or could not, consistently and advantageously, receive State co-operation, money, and control in their schools,—they would still say, Independents must be independent; which they will be no longer, and no further, than while they "owe no man anything." This may be an arduous, but it is an honourable, position: to be Dissenters in education, as well as Dissenters in religion; to be misunderstood and repudiated on all sides; to be shut out and kept down, without hope of emerging into national equality and advancement, is no light matter; but a clear, ringing testimony to truth and liberty is worth it all.

It is not without many regretful feelings that Independents find themselves now acting their part in this national work in their separate denominational character. For all the pleasure, and for many

of the advantages, presented by co-operation in such a cause with the wise and good of other Christian communities, they would have preferred to act on a wider and more open basis. In part, necessity, and in part conviction, led them into their present course. Those acting on this sectional basis have concluded, after anxious deliberation on all the complex circumstances of the case, that they could thus most effectively contribute their influence and aid to the common enterprise. No alienation of heart from Christian brethren —no indifference to the great interests of their common country—no desire to build up party strength—no love to differ—no fondness for the little and the narrow, drew them into their present position. Their hope is, that by the compactness and unity of sectional organization, they will be able to work with most power for the public good, and to exact most effectual influence in favour of true educational principles, of the best educational plans, and of true-hearted rivalry to excel in this great department of philanthropy and patriotism. Some of those bearing part in the movement which has originated these Lectures, have altered their early opinions on the subject of State aid and control in popular education. At first, zealous and arduous for the object, they hailed Government as a powerful co-worker. Experience, progress, and discussion changed their views. But their sentiments on the grant, as now administered, have never undergone the slightest alteration. As Voluntaries in religion, they always objected to pay their portion of the tax, as much as to receive their portion of the grant. They demur to pay for the teaching of the Church Catechism and the Roman Missal—of John Wesley's System and the Improved Version; and, were civil equity to be fully carried out, of the Jewish Ritual and the Deist's maxims. They do still resist the erection of a supplementary establishment of schools in aid of the establishment of Churches. As firm Whigs, they do object to the unconstitutional procedure of a summary settlement of delicate questions of religious freedom by Minutes of a Committee of Privy Council, sanctioned only by a money vote of the House of Commons, sitting in Committee of Supply. They do believe centralization un-English and perilous to liberty; and are still in favour of that system of local action and government, as old as Alfred, which carried Saxon liberty through the Norman Conquest, the Papal tyranny, the Crown encroachments of both Tudor and Stuart, the perils and advancements of the glorious Revolution, and without which England never could have been free, and never can continue to

be free. Yet, after all, strong and moving as were these considerations, it was, and is, as Educationists, that Independents most of all object to the Government grant for education. They believe it will in the end impede, deaden, restrict, and injure this sacred cause. Could they have thought otherwise on this point, they would have felt under temptation at least to acquiesce. The practical might have overcome, in their minds, the theoretic. For the sake of education they might have risked apprehended injury to liberty. But there can be no such dissonance and contrariety among true principles. The sacrifice of truth and liberty can never be the redemption of knowledge and enlightenment. One freedom will beget, one liberty will protect another. But unfair authority is no less generative and prolific. State power in religion, State power in education, State power in money, State power in inspectors, State power in Whitehall reaching over England; these all, as kindred influences, are against Dissent, against liberty, against national spirit,—and therefore against every allied interest of a self-governed, self-acting people.

But enough. Liberty itself is with us but a means to an end—the handmaid of virtue and religion, the instrument of intelligence and happiness. We desiderate a people, an entire people, raised through liberty to knowledge, with knowledge to virtue, by both to happiness and honour. If we have mistaken our way to that end, we shall be happy that others share not our error. If paths which we thought had a different direction, conduct other labourers to our wished results, we shall rejoice when their success convinces us of our mistake. We would see educated England the model nation of the world, that other peoples may take our State for their pattern, our history at once for their warning and their guide; that so they may reach our results without our distractions, and that we may be inspired and solaced amidst every labour and struggle by which we tend to so glorious a destiny!

LECTURE III.

LECTURE III.

ON THE PARTIES RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE.

BY RICHARD WINTER HAMILTON, LL.D., D.D., LEEDS.

Definition of the terms—The parental constitution—The right to education—False premises on this subject—The province of government—That it is bound to educate, a new dogma—Its compact and its capacity—Disadvantages with which voluntary education has to contend—Hopeful presages.

It is the People which the present examination respects,—a wide, generic, term. Statistically considered, they are the inhabitants of a given land. Imperially regarded, they are the subjects of a sovereign power. The term knows nothing of classes, orders, differences: it is the patent of simple citizenship. "High and low," "rich and poor," "small and great," are the same in this category. No man can aspire to any nobler rank. He who springs from the people can never pass beyond them. All ambition ranges within this fellowship. Everything is great only as it is popular. Prerogative is but the borrowed loan of the people. Aristocracy and commonality are but spontaneous marshallings of the people. The crown is but the badge of the voluntary service of the people. There is no right which the people can surrender or transfer. They have no power of alienating aught of their manhood or of their civism, one particle of human or social claim! All power is in them, all honour,—all that they can do in reference to those possessions is,—not to cancel them, that were their political annihilation, —not to sell them, that were their moral slavery,—but to entrust the power for particular administration of public affairs, and to invest the honour for particular reward of patriotic virtues. Let neither be parted with! If that people be great, if they would become greater, let them keep in mind and in hold the original compact; let them remember, that this outward condition of things is mere arrangement and compromise,—that the signiory is native and necessary to them,—that it cannot be pawned by venality nor betrayed by abjectness,—that it not only immediately reverts, but

never can be relinquished,—and that while their lien is maintained upon whatever they have allowed the use of to some for the benefit of all, the equality is absolute, and the fee-simple of this glorious inheritance is only and for ever in themselves.

In speaking of the people, I would not refuse nor hesitate to apply the term in the universal sense. It may predicate our kind. And as we both desire and foretell the extension of every blessing to the species, to every member and portion of the human family,—it would not be an improper treatment of the thesis, though inconveniently large, to demand, What parties are responsible for the education of the race? I trust that we should not be behind, in our benevolence of definition, the philanthropy of toast which a warm-hearted man, once suddenly called upon to give one, most candidly and impartially proposed, "All people that on earth do dwell." A difficulty, indeed, occurs in all such inquiries, whether more restricted or comprehensive,—What those parties can be that are to educate the people? Are they not themselves the people? And if so, who are to educate them? "*Quis custodiet custodes?*" Whence do they kindle their torch?

We do most repugnantly allow the term to denote the labouring multitude. We envy and grudge them such a distinction. They are no more the people than ourselves. It is to our shame if they have won propriety in it. Deeply will it mortify us, should we be compelled to resign our share. Not as a refuse, at least, can they so be called. Theirs is the majesty of numbers. Not as lower orders can they be figured, save as the rustic work of the palace, or the plinth of the Corinthian column. In them is productive wealth, and that which multiplies value tenfold. They are strength and life to a community. All besides are for them; they are for themselves. Without them capital is not wealth, and knowledge is not power. Not that they are selfishly divided from the rest. They sustain and elevate. They are not the trunk on which flower and fruit are grafted, but which bears them after its kind. We cannot, therefore, speak of them in scorn. Scarcely know we pity. We burn at their wrongs. We sicken at their abuses. "This people!" cried the ancient hypocrites: "the people," thus a vulgar refinement describes them. A philosophy, cruel as Herod, scowls upon their birth, as though they intruded upon nature's festival, and incommoded lordly guests holding banquet there. Thus are their practical applications computed. To what account can they be turned? Mechanism can be made almost intelligent: why should

not intelligence be made almost mechanical? They are the inferiors! Coarser clays to be rudely shaped into the vessels of dishonour! Born for menial drudgery,—sound into their ears incessantly their destiny and doom! To hope to be otherwise, is a quarrel with a fixed law, an inexorable fate! They are the tools of gain, the conscripts of ambition, the materials of luxury!

It is somewhat a new doctrine that the people, as they are styled, ought to be instructed. Time was when the opposite doctrine was favoured and impressed. They could not know too little, or be left in a too contented ignorance. They were bound to let others think for them; they had nothing to do with such privileged things as government and religion. But it is now discovered that they must be taught. That which was maintained to be the spring of their industry, the preservative of their virtue, the mother of their devotion, is now discarded. The truth is, that the people have found for themselves an education, and have acquired the art of thinking, —and these parties do not approve of the spiritualism of that education and the independence of that thinking. They would take both under their management. They would give it their own direction. Hence their sudden conversion and new-born zeal. They would unsting the evil. They would wield the power.—"That it spread no further among the people!"

It is necessary that we should fully and distinctly inform ourselves of what education consists. The education of the people may suggest to different minds most different ideas. If it be a business of mere instruments,—for reading and writing are only means, and not ends,—we should take very little interest, and certainly no share, in the controversy. We would not run a tilt or a gauntlet for the sake of alphabets,—we would not know an ebullition for pothooks, nor bare our bosom for hangers. Ours are deeper, more solemn, views. We look upon man. We seek to educate him. He must be developed and expressed from inward capacity; he must be directed and disciplined for an awful future. He must be interpreted aright. He must be properly placed. With at least as careful study as with which we examine the instinct, the habitude, the habitat, of bird, or beast, or fish, we are bound to search into the true nature of man. Like other existences, he is marked by a fixed nature. All hearts are fashioned alike. But there is not that inflexible certainty of acts which may be affirmed of the mere animal. The creature of reason and volition cannot be foreseen by

us in his doings. We must, consequently, allow in him for moral eccentricity. Yet may we define what he is. Man is something more than matter,—he is a spiritual being. He is accountable for the exercise of his liberty, possessing a choice of conduct. Death is his enlargement and enfranchisement to immortality. He lives for ever. These are the views which make him great and dread. To draw out such a being for his duties, and his beliefs, and his prospects, must be a religious task. Any attempt to educate him, save religiously, is a mockery and an insult. It is like the prophetic picture, the "roots in the earth, with a band of iron and brass." It is depreciation and repression. We cannot, indeed, conceive of an education of man's nature, without a constant appeal to his relations towards the Deity, and to the influence of rewards and punishments over him. What is defended as secular education is most superficial, considering the depths of his soul; most incidental, considering the laws of his being; most temporary, considering the revolutions of his duration. Such a secular education need not say, there is no God! but it must not say that there is one. Such a secular education need not say, that Christianity is a lie; but it must not say that it is the truth, and no lie! Such a secular education need not denounce the faith of an hereafter; but it, as a thing of an earthly *seculum*, must never point to *secula seculorum!*

But we admit, that the children of the poor are placed under serious disadvantage. If every man has a right to education, if education be due to every man, if he must be educated to be properly the man, then indigence does interpose a great restriction, and handicraft demand a vast diversion. And we also admit that, upon this showing, there is a class to which the labouring poor may look up for help in the matter of education. It is a proper indemnity to them. They who owe to them the means of wealth, leisure, and knowledge, ought to pay back to them not only the wages of labour, but that priceless possession of which labour tends to deprive them.

In saying this, we are aware that there is an appearance of concession. The right of man to education needs to be well considered before it can be allowed. Upon whom of his fellows is it to be enforced? If it be his due, of whom is it to be required? These researches might only conduct us more circuitously to our thesis, and but clog our discussion; for they, in some sort, would be a

petitio principii; they would anticipate and assume what we have to prove. Nor would the *desirableness* of education establish its right and due. Many other advantages might be pleaded for the same consideration. If there be any claim of man, it is such as he may assert, and which he may be left to himself to win. The original title to education is of the child on the parent: the gentle *Desdemona* could thus address her father, *Brabantio*—"To you I am bound for life and education!"

I am anxious, before any other party be admitted, most supposititiously, in the education of the people, to defend and hallow the parental constitution. This is the grand provision. Society is based upon this law, the earliest law. It cannot be imitated. It cannot be transferred. It cannot be superseded. All nature cries aloud, by a common instinct, against interference with offspring. No outrage is so universally resented; no bereavement is so bitterly rankling. Say what men please against its too arbitrary power,—it is the only check to a tyranny, not like itself, possibly capricious, but necessarily and only oppressive. Say what they will against its transmission of error and prejudice,—it is the only new independence to break up the conceits and presumptions which otherwise would be perpetually secure. Say what they will against its engendered evils,—it contains the solitary corrective and remedy of every evil. The scheme which would repair its mischief, would indefinitely multiply mischiefs, all of them indefinitely more portentous. There is not a fouler treason, than to gainsay this original institution. A distrust of it is a traitorous spirit. Trace it where man is worst—amidst his worst habits and temptations,—still, where could you replace its tenderness, its care, its guardianship, its sacrifice? Those brawny arms of toil speak its strength, alike with the softest arms of embracing love. Intrude upon it, and society stands still. The incentive of labour is gone. We live no more in the future. Come once between parent and child, and the golden band which knits all together is snapped asunder. What is that—call it State, conspiracy, rapine—which affects to take charge of my offspring? My other acquisitions are conditional; my other treasures are alienable; my civil rights are things of covenant and arrangement; these have been earned, inherited, or won! But I have another property and propriety in my children; these are imprescriptibly my own—they are myself! Parenthood is their protector! It is the vulture which tears the broodling from the covering wing! Traverse the length

and breadth of the land. Enter its cabins and its hovels. Judge not according to a sentimental romance, but judge righteous judgment. There are abuses, grievances, cruelties. These mark themselves. They stand out. They force themselves into notoriety. They are noted—conned. What are they in figures, what in exceptions, to domestic allegiance and regularity? Count them against the rural peasantry of the village and hamlet, going forth to their work and their labour until the evening, when the housewife spreads the simple repast, and children greet the return! Count them against the, perhaps, ruder crowds who, at the reverse of the curfew, hasten to the factory, but eat their meals in their adjoining cottages, and, when the shadows lengthen, there lie down to rest! The brawl of the street is rare. Nightfall, in its stillness and in its peace, vindicates the domestic character of the people. Those homesteads of poverty are, after all, though slandered and reviled, happy dwellings —tabernacles of joy. I have faith in the great workings of Nature; in the tenacious links of parent and progeny; in household order, and rule, and influence. I deprecate whatever would tamper with it. There cannot be a substitute for it. Its *penates* are worth a whole mythology besides!

I do not allow, by any of the previous admissions, that labouring habits are incompatible with a considerable share of education; nor that they are unfavourable, except for their consumption of time, to self-cultivation. To allow this would be fatal to the question; for it is a chimerical idea, that the poor shall cease out of the land, and that engrossing occupation shall be no more needed. It may be requisite, in some future conditions of society, that every man, like the ancient Jews, shall learn a trade. The world will never refine into a learned leisure. If education be destined to universality, it must consist with hardy, as well as skilled, labour. We want to be disabused of our artificial prepossessions. We ought to feel that there is no unlikelihood nor contrast between Araunah and the threshing-floor,—Elisha and the plough,—David and the sheep-fold, —Amos and the sycamore-tree,—Peter and the fisherman,—Paul and the tent-maker.

We shall surely concede to the labouring poor, not only the full parental investiture, but the right, in common with ourselves, to depute the educating power where they please. If they cannot teach their children, they are entitled to choose those instructors whom they prefer. They are not to be shut up to this or that. If it be

replied, that they will not avail themselves of any, the fact is ostensible, that poverty is generally extravagant in this. There is a pride which overcomes a very parsimony,—or if it produces parsimony, for its sake, in all else, cheerfully abides the strait. If it be replied, that they are unfitted to discriminate between rival claims, the tact which guides them to the best leech and lawyer will be adequate to direct them to the best schoolmaster. It is the old dogma,—the people can know nothing about religion, and it must be dictated to them. But so the religious mind of Britain was never created,—it is self-formed and self-renewed.

We may be expected, on our known principles, to protest against forcible, compulsory, education. We only passingly notice it for future observation. It is surely little to say, that liberty is more precious than education; that education could be no counterbalance to the disturbance of any right; that the reluctant parent, embittered by the violence, would thwart any contingent good; that the deported, abducted, child would participate the parental rancour, and nurse his little revenge; and that this would be a civil war to the very hearth. We do not believe that, whatever pains be taken to blind and corrupt the people, the nation's heart will ever be so craven and so sunk as to endure the indignity.

It is now asked by many, What is to be done? Who are to be evoked to do it? We proceed to the answer,—but by no means conceding that parents have generally failed in their responsibility, or that there is any great dearth of the educatory apparatus.

That which is public mind is often long in being stirred to public opinion. It is commonly inert and stagnant, loves a careless ease, settles into a dreamy notion, until its fears are alarmed and its interests endangered. Then its short-sighted stupor is roused, and its activities may only become too eager. Public opinion is slow in its formation. Great general principles are commonly elicited and matured in retirement. Quiet, reflecting, spirits have patiently been at work upon them. They are wrought in studious abstraction. They resemble not the experiments of the forge, the crucible, and the retort. They are tried, and tried again, in another laboratory. They, like mathematical truths, must be the same at every time and in all possible circumstances. They resemble the gold vein, the richest of ores but the latest of minerals. Think of Adam Ferguson or Adam Smith (such first and foremost men deserved the original man's patronymic!) sitting with wrinkled brow and wasting lamp in

their deep meditations. They have mused long and searchingly. The problem at length is solved. They have found it! They have found it! They cast some greatly simple principle into the public mind; it is not quickened except it die, or seem to die; it is buried in seeming death. It takes hold of the surrounding soil, it spreads its fibre, it strikes its root, it bursts the surface of the ground, it multiplies on every side of the furrow into which it fell, it waves to heaven! We may not be ruminant as they. We cannot boast their far-seeing sagacity. But we have come by a greatly simple principle. We have found it, we have found it! We see how the people can be educated, and how they only can. It is in struggle. That is what we want. It cannot henceforth be overlaid by indifference and scorn. It is opposed. It must then be heeded, sifted, agitated. This is good for truth and right. The harrow is as necessary as the share. Tremendous interests are stricken. A shattering blow has fallen upon ancient and mighty foundations. We are prepared for a death-grapple of sides. The terms are most unequal. The odds might affright the stoutest nerve. But we are so assured of the principle, that we should sin against it were we to falter in its maintenance or to despond of its victory.

We have seen false maxims, once deep-seated in the public mind, once strongly fortified by the public opinion, yield to argument, and shrink before truth. Few, some brief years ago, doubted that the ratio of wages was to the price of food. It was assumed, it was not discussed. Once brought into question, the theory was quashed. It was contrary to common sense. The wages of labour could only be ruled by the standard of labour,—by its worth or by its demand. It is exploded, it is extinguished,—it cannot come into human thought again. As little do we doubt that very popular, very plausible, very enticing, assumptions, touching the question of education, are even now about to receive condemnation, and are hastening to inglorious exposure. This, at furthest, is the beginning of their end! No sentiment seems at present more rife and attractive in certain quarters, than that it is the province of the Government to educate the people. This is the statesmanship of the times.

We may venture to inquire, What is Government? Many make a mystery of it. They hedge it with a divinity. Now, none are better satisfied, more profoundly convinced, than we, that He, who is not Author of confusion, wills the social order of men, adapts them to it, and has ordained its larger outlines. The duties of the

ruler and of the subject are given a general interpretation and enforcement. From the inspired code, we ascertain that the things of God are eternally distinct from the things of CÆSAR, that earthly jurisdiction cannot encompass thought, that faith and conscience go together, that the civil sword is not borne in vain in regard to well-doing and evil-doing, but that it is borne in vain, that it is a very vanity, "an air-drawn dagger," when it is brandished over the soul!

It is not necessary to argue the abstract proposition. We are not timid of it. We do not shrink from it. Were a people unanimously to invest a Government for this purpose, we deny that they could give it this right. They could not thus transfer to it parental duty. They could not convey the requisite power and capacity. So far as it was attempted by the deputed party, it must be wretchedly performed. It will suffice, however, for our present argument, to contest the question in simple reference to the elements of our Government and the principles of our Constitution.

To try the question, whether this be the province of the Government, we must apply various tests. Let us examine our own. Is it, in this case, enacted and provided? Is it in the bond? I love not to hear my fellow-subjects speak doubtingly of the Constitution, —where it exists,—what it is. It is an understanding, an intelligent covenant, something better than dusty archives, or engrossed parchments,—which guards property, liberty, life. Its reign is that of law. Its tribute is that of suffrage. Look at your statute of treason, your trial by challenged jury, your Habeas Corpus. Its principles are avouched and inviolable. It may not be consistently carried out. But it is in itself a wondrous thing. Every republic looks to it, even for its model. Our fathers devised it, upheld it, and shed their blood in its defence. But, we demand, knowing that in its spirit it is a trust had and held of the people,—when, in this great compact, again and again renewed, sometimes at the sword's point and the cannon's mouth,—in Council-chamber, in Aulic congress, inaugurated at Runnymede, and rallied at Chalgrave,—by oath, by blood,—where does the people, in what clause, surrender to the State the responsibility of their education,—and where, in what clause, does the State undertake it? Show us the statutes at large. Apply to them the constructive latitude of exposition. Let court-lawyers and constitutional lawyers be summoned to give judgment. We are appellants to them, and let them answer our appeal. What tribunal speaks? What juris consults respond? What grey-beard

ancestry calls up the remembrance? From what remote antiquity comes a voice? Out of what depth of ages resounds the oracle? We are constantly reminded of the wisdom, of the foresight, of the providence, of our fathers. They bear authoritative names. We venerate their urns. On which part is their prescription? To whom do they give their sanction and bequeath their experience? Education was a part of their religion. None honoured it more than they. "Ever witness for them" their schools and their colleges! How they spread the means of learning over our land! Did they abandon the task to Government? Did they crouch for extraneous and public aid? Their endowments, the broad stripes of their estates with which they cheerfully parted, their princely bequests, prove how olden a principle is Voluntary self-reliance. Descend to nearer times. Unwind the scrolls of your best patriots, senators, magistrates, true to prerogative, yet ever most on the side of the people. Listen to your Somerses, your Newcastles, your Chathams, your Burkes, your Camdens! Talked they of the right or duty of the State to educate? It coalesces with none of those high principles which gradually develop themselves in the constitutional history of our country, which season the very forms of our legislative and juridicial institutions, which seem to thread themselves, like as the nerves which rise almost imperceptibly from the human brain, until they are foliated and knitted into the organs and instruments of the manly frame.

Government Education is the crudest novelty. It was not attempted until 1833. It is not fifteen years old. Is it so proved, so clear, so efficacious, that it must disturb and subvert all that centuries have confirmed and achieved? Is the upstart to scatter all that is rooted and well tried? Is the Grecian monster-toy to be trusted rather than our anciently enshrined Palladium?

But whether it rank among modern platitudes or not, let us examine its pretensions,—let us canvass its merits: is it right or is it wrong? Is it strong in truth, and benevolence, and policy; or is it unhealthy and untenable?

Putting from us all the mystery of things,—acquainted with nothing, however high and holy, into which we may not inquire,—we address ourselves to the simple question, What is Government, as it obtains among a free people? We know nothing of its arcana,—we will hear nothing of its State-craft,—we do no worship to heaven-born Ministers, though we have often prayed that they had

been heaven-retained, and had never quitted their birth-place. Government is—we employ the term with no sneer—the creature of the nation. It is a trust. It can possess no legal competence to do otherwise than the nation's will. If it assume an independence of that will in some great peril,—amidst some gross popular delusion,—still at its own hazard, still awaiting its own account,—we might even see a heroic virtue in the act. Our idea of the most liberal Government is far higher than delegateship. It may be obliged to resist momentary outcry. But we deny that it can introduce a new principle into the code, much less into the constitution, without an appeal to the nation. It must be put to issue. When has such a convention been held? When have popular meetings, and municipalities, and petitions, declared for the principle? Some have approved aid, some have sought it,—none have been bold enough to avow the principle. Nay, they have charged us with morbid sensitiveness and cruel wrong in suspecting that such a slavish principle could anywhere, or by any one, be possibly entertained.

Before the State can fairly take upon itself the work of public instruction, it should establish its peculiar capacity for it. We say no more concerning the distance at which hitherto it has stood, and the delicacy with which it has hitherto refrained, from this work. It has all to begin. It finds no machinery to assist its operation. It looks around in vain for a minister of education. It can go to no board, nor bureau, nor portfeuille. The wisdom of our ancestors has left no such appendage to a Cabinet. All is to be created. The ministry sets about it. There is a chief,—he is a Cabinet minister, —and then an array of clerks and inspectors, who certainly are not of the Cabinet. The whole is irresponsible. But the justifying allegation is, that a Government, from its high position of intellectual superiority, should guide the mind of the people. In what does this superiority consist? Scarcely in literature. Its speeches and its manifestoes lead to a rather painful distrust of its peculiar aptness to teach the art of eloquence and the syntax of composition. Scarcely in politics. It invariably lags behind the questions of the day, always carried from without ere they receive its support and stamp. Scarcely in religion. Perfect respect sometimes fails to follow its expositions of doctrine; nor can a true holiness invariably warrant even certain points of practice. Heaven does not uniformly hear our prayer to "give unto the Lords of the Council grace, wisdom, and

understanding," nor to "teach our senators wisdom." We are compelled to conclude, that the people are generally in advance of those who govern them, in all the higher elements of a true education.

It may be objected, that this is an inversion of things; that a paternal idea is involved in the State. That this is sometimes averred, we know,—and we know, that the supposed duty of teaching the people is suspended upon it. But all the parental duties are then implied; and we must not stop at one. Well! can the State carry out all? It is thus that figures are abused. "These sheep," said David, "what have they done?" The metaphors of the family and the flock are beautiful—but only beautiful—metaphors. No argument can be raised upon them. They are not literal truths. Children owe their existence to parents. But the people exist independently of the State. If it be said, that only political existence is intended,—be it so. We are helped. The people is here the parent; it is the author of political existence; it is before all other things; it is the source of all relations, and the origin of all institutions: it begets the State, it feeds the State, it clothes the State, it revises the State, it checks the State, it chastises the State, it may outlaw the State! It finds, no doubt, a froward child and a forgetful pupil. But it has the means of discipline. It has the key of the wardrobe of velvet and ermine. It has the charge of the refectory of tribute and revenue. It has not, however concealed, quitted its hold of the rod. In extremity, it may turn the prodigal out of doors. If the question be stirred, who shall educate?—who is the better qualified?—at least the respective postulants must submit to a previous examination!

Rights and duties, it is allowed, are not always correlative. I may have a right, and yet it may not be my duty to press it. Things lawful may not be expedient. Still is it scarcely conceivable that the rights of a Government should lie in abeyance. Such rights, if genuine, if beneficial, if unselfish, are for use. How can it be a right to educate, and not a duty? Be it remembered, that this is not a business of personal rights, inherent and connate in the individual,—but public, the trusts of public investiture, the pledges of public benefit,—not like those which are private, under the control of a circumstantial prudence. We, then, infer that, if it be the right, it must be the duty, of a Government to teach. Two consequences will be granted. First, that it ought to enforce obedience.

Law needs an executory principle. Be the penalty some disqualification, some deprivation, it is force as much as mulct and imprisonment. No matter what,—sanction is required, and it is the duty of the Government to see that its behest is obeyed. But, secondly, if the obligation be in Government to teach, the obligation must be on subjects to learn. If such were a theocracy, God would have made these duties parallel. If a nation has formed its Government with this provision, that nation is bound to take the attitude of the scholar towards its own anointed instructor. Let us see where we now are. Let us weigh the corollaries. These parties cannot lawfully think in different ways. Teacher and learner must act in common. All, in the condition of subjects, cannot but yield. This is the foot of intellectual tyranny; but we have bowed our necks to the sole of that foot. Nor is this all. There are other and more serious consequences. Education must be religious. Numberless awakenings rise in the course of it, which can only be religiously answered. If Government has found out the true religion, and can insist upon infusing into education some parts of it, why may it not insist upon its whole? Indeed, it has always seemed to me, that if Government is seised of the right, and laid under the duty, of establishing a religion, all toleration is inconsistency. From such right and such duty persecution becomes the clearest of all rights and duties. Doubtless, we may rejoice in every degree of religious sufferance or liberty,—but it is only a relief, a mitigation, under a state of things which never should have been.

A true moral philosophy, blending with a hardy logic, deals with certain questions, not only on their own principles, but by pushing them to their necessary difficulties and natural results.

The pecuniary assistance of the State—the lowest, though perhaps not the least, exercise of this supposed right and duty—must have its conditions. It cannot be flung idly away: it must be accounted for. Now, if this boon cannot be equally divided, or if it must be accompanied with invidious distinctions, then is there partiality. And let us never forget, that all this money is the people's money, and that they all have an equal right to it. Why should it most lavishly be bestowed upon the rich? Why should a religious section be preferred? Why should it be turned into a bounty upon particular opinion? Why should some parties be altogether denied their pittance of a share? We complain not of these consequences, we tax them not with injustice,—they are inevitable—they belong

to the responsibility of managing a public expenditure; but we do thus convict such measures of injustice when they, of their own nature, debar and force back impartiality.

That statement is good for nothing which proves too much. The statement that Government ought to educate a people, is general. Does the whole educational system of the country properly attach to it? Is the entire nation comprehended? Some will qualify it, and say that they only intend the poor. Then there is one law for the poor and another for the affluent. Then, too, poverty and affluence—mere accidents—are rendered the types of ignorance and wisdom, which are mental states. But it is not impossible that some shall contend to include the wealthier classes. I am free to declare that this is my opinion, the case being allowed. If Government be authorised to teach any, let it teach all. Let it study hard, and begin with itself, for self-cultivation often bears a full ripe fruit. A Normal-school for courtiers would be worth a visit of inspection. An Infant-school for those of noble blood might elicit that sweetness of common nature which fictitious manners so soon disguise. A Finishing-school for placemen and pensioners, would afford a rich exhibition of supple joint and sinew. A very gymnasium might open its gates, teaching by its poles how to climb, and by its hoops how to bend, until curved backs and itching palms should fill the scene. Here, too, might be taught the manly sports of shooting pheasants in *battu*, or of evicting tenants by almost as summary a process, without which how could proprietors live on their estates or endure their homes? Oh, let it go round! Let the State do its duty by all alike. Teach the poor for what they were born. Teach the rich their proper destiny. Discern between the delf and the porcelain. There must be no exception. None must play truant. The nation's forms are set! The nation's tasks are appointed! All in! all in! (as some of us urchins used to say at school.) Seems this absurd? It is but a legitimate dilemma.

An equal support of all religions is the virtual proclamation that all are equally true. But as this is impossible, the real construction is, that all are equally false. Either the one or the other is a most evil and noxious implication. A practical mischief ensues, not incidentally, but necessarily; for if the danger be escaped of considering them alike and tantamount, then has every man to assist that which he rejects, and still may not find his equivalent (which conscience cannot allow it to be) in the maintenance of his own. He

who consents to such an arrangement takes an ignoble bribe. To advance himself, he submits to the encouragement and premium of those forms of error which he most abhors. It is a poor boast for the Protestant, that what he receives for his cause he must give back in aid of Romanism,—a wretched truce, that as Trinitarian Christianity is helped, so is Unitarian aggression upon it promoted likewise. If this be to build, it is only to pull down what we build, and to make over to others the materials. They mock us in every rival structure.

Nor let us suppose that the worst evil is involved in this loose and indiscriminate support of all the Christian professions. The principle is carried farther. Look at the vast colonial empire of this country. Continents as well as islands, mainlands as well as coasts, fill its map. In the Indian Prefecture, schools are maintained where idols are set up for the reverence of the children. Amidst the Australian territories, new people are tampered with by all that is slavish in underling policy and corrupt in pseudo-catholicism. These latter specially threaten our country. They are the wider circumvallations of a siege which, if not arrested, would constantly close upon the innermost citadel. They are the convolutions of the serpent, which, if not destroyed, will press out the life of our civil and religious strength.

If it can be shown that the aid of Government leads to the discouragement and extinction of the Voluntary support of education,—its only imagined or argued support until a few most recent years,—many would esteem it, so far, an evil. It must ever be a generous and elate emotion which springs from independence. It is something to bear a weight alone. We summon all our strength for it. Let us be *helped*, and the strenuous effort is relaxed. Its glory is snatched from it. Atlas would drop his load of earth, and sink under his burden of heaven, were a brother Titan to interpose. Now, when the Exchequer opens for us, the consciousness of pressure upon us ceases. It may be said this is but to incite us. It is not according to the laws of human motive that it should. For a time we may maintain it, because the aid is measured out in strict proportion to it. But we are tempted to withdraw, not believing the threat that Government will withdraw. The school is built,—the master is appointed,—the pupils are gathered. Shall that school be left to decay,—that master to starve,—those pupils to become outcasts? Government has expounded its responsibility to us; and we

have reliance, though we decline, that it will remain true to it. If it be its duty, it is a pitiful mode of performing it. To require a bribe before it will act at all, would seem to show little heart for it. It would seem, upon a triple calculation, that it has reached the conviction that its duty in this affair is as one to three, and that of the people is as two to one!

I have no wish to impute any sinister design; but many men about Government avow the policy of getting the mind of the nation under an unitive system of education. They would cast all its ideas. Can we think these men the enthusiasts of knowledge and freedom? They would bid for all influence,—the Pulpit and the Press; they would buy up all priesthoods and fellowships. They would torture all into shape, and fix that shape for ever. It is against such a Machiavelian, Austrian, Chinese archetype that we contend!

A concession is sought to be wrung from us, in respect to certain departments and classes, among which it is affirmed that the State only can be the educator. We are pointed to our prisons, to our troops. Government, in these cases, is said to stand *in loco parentis*. Little welcome may be given to Voluntary instruction in such instances. Still has it found its way. Where gyved hardihood and profligacy yelled with bestial strength and gnashed with bestial fury,—where sympathy was derided and kindness spurned,—was found a better teacher than the State! The State was the keeper before the door, and kept the prison; but an angel of the Lord came upon those wretched and branded inmates, "and a light shined in the prison." Elizabeth Fry sat, prayed, persuaded, wept, there, *in loco matris*. She was to them more than a parent; and, as they listened and as they gazed, they were as those whom their "mother comforteth." Where is the gaol, to which we might have access, that should want a Voluntary education? Our distant soldiers and sailors find evangelists, teachers, pastors, in those noblest of Voluntaries, our Missionaries.

The argument for the jurisdiction of the State in popular education often halts, but still more frequently betrays and neutralizes itself. Its advocates will rarely assert that it ought to ply its jurisdiction, the people being already educated. But this proves that its interference might not be necessary, that the object might be otherwise attained. If it ought not to interfere, its task being accomplished by others, then it may either depute its duty or suspend it. The common plea is, that it ought to educate the poor,

because the parents of the poor cannot, or will not. This is to make it but a succedaneum. It reserves to itself an *ad interim* power. Its present right or duty grows out of the neglect of the rights or duties of others. Then it has not the primary, the inherent, vocation. When parents shall attend to these rights, or duties, the Government is superseded, and reverts to its natural irresponsibility. The argument is complete. We, at the same time, deny the assumption on which it proceeds,—that these parents generally are chargeable with such inability or negligence.

Then, who are to do it? Do what? We believe that a very large bulk of the people are now under instruction. But there is defect. We feel that there is much to overtake. The sentimental, or the partizan, cry of them who never expressed a care, or took a part, for education until now, shall not turn us to indifference. I do not think any can be over-educated. I wish every man understood geometry as well as Barrow, and the stars as Newton. But, first of all, let the people trust to themselves. Let them seek all that is withheld from them, by the force of knowledge, and virtue, and religion. These are the only weapons with which they must contend, with which they can succeed, in the conquest of their immunities. Much of education is in their power. The thirst, the effort, the resolve, for it cannot be in vain. Mind enlarges with these dispositions. Thousands of ways are open, thousands of means are at command. They never want help who will help themselves. Let the vicious vulgar,—let the low dissipation,—let the contented ignorance,—let the hopeless apathy,—be eschewed. Let the people, the mighty folk of labour and industry, lift themselves up. The ocean-coasts more generally sink than rise; but some have been known, without convulsion, to rise,—nobler headlands than before, while the billows recede and sink. So shall the true elevation of the people be hailed by all the good! Its swelling rampart shall not appal, but only more firmly beat off the waves And now, let all true-hearted and Christian philanthropists show themselves ready to this good work, zealous of these good works. They have every augury in the state of the public mind. They, on every hand, may read note and presage of onward movement. I do not say that Christian ministers, as ministers, Churches as Churches, are peculiarly obliged to lend an impetus to it. But all that is benevolent in them, all that breathes warmly for our humanity, all that is refinedly and expansively Christian, assuredly does. It is

no superfluous, no gratuitous, duty, to desire and pursue the weal of our race. We must love our nation. We must honour all men. We must condescend to the man of low estate, the brother of low degree. We must not despise one of these little ones. Let us act, with others, if it might be a national league. Let us act, but only when repulsed, alone. Let us keep the cause before the world.

It is wrongly objected, that we withstand others in doing the work which we will not do ourselves. We only withstand a noxious principle, which we believe to be destructive of the work. We do not boast, but of that work we hope that we emulate our share. Yet we are likened to the dog in the manger. We never were in the manger. We keep watch at the stable-door. We guard the entrance against the intruding steeds which would eat our master's hay and corn, and the pilfering varlet grooms who would abstract it. We raise the alarm by our deep baying. We should be caressed if we took the bait thrown out to us,—were we dumb dogs that would not bark, lying down and loving to slumber.

Do not suffer yourselves to be hurried into extreme conclusions. Let not the taunts which meet you irritate, and thus blind, your judgments. Your business is with your Government, and your people. If there be an argument which could vary the question as to others, this does not bind yourselves. If there be aught to favour such a treatment of serfs and slaves, repel it when it approaches freemen. Nor does consistency pledge your objection to every act of the State in extending science and art. Let it equip the voyage of discovery. The national navigation may be its lowest excuse. Let it purchase statues and pictures. The national refinement may not exhaust its reasons. We have contended against Governmental Education. By this we have understood the whole civil and moral training of our nation. We would not that its mind be cast into a mould. We would not that its ideas should be normally prescribed. But what have expeditions to burst the polar ice, —what have galleries stored with treasures snatched from Ilyssus and Xanthus,—to do with our constitutional jealousies and wholesome fears? To encourage and cheer the State to these enterprises is one thing; but it is a very different thing to entrust it with the key of knowledge, and to acknowledge its right of custody over that key!

That which we had best attempt, considering our means, is not the building, furnishing, and peopling, of schools, but the training

of teachers. Our Churches are rich in suitable candidates. Our principles are most adapted to form right views and habits of instruction. We shall thus concentrate our influence. We shall direct the moving power. We shall stand at the springing of the waters. Let nothing divert us from it. Let us run to and fro, that knowledge may be increased. Our prosperity and greatness can rest on no comparable foundation. It will be the stability of our times. It will give each his place, and all their intercommunity. And when shall come the consummation, theirs shall be the praise, theirs the triumph, who went straightforward with steady principle to achieve it,—never seeking it by crooked policy—never helping it by beggarly elements,—satisfied to be esteemed lukewarm, unrepining when accused of disaffection and hostility,—never turning aside to sophism or to lure, determined on conquest, but as determined that the conquest shall be worthy of the cause!

Constituting a religious community, the system of Sabbath-school instruction particularly appeals to us. Be sure here is a mighty power. We see it now in a very elementary and inchoate condition. It has hitherto been a struggle with the crudest prejudice and ignorance. Its labour has been that of the pioneer. A nobler work is before it. It is the sower going forth to sow. Here is the fulcrum of that lever which shall raise society from its most degraded depths; and here, too, is the holy signet which shall stamp upon it an exalted sanctity.

We do not conceal from ourselves our disadvantages. We cannot soon forget our proud sacrifices. We love education, but there are things which we love better. For them we have suffered loss and rupture of the oldest and the dearest ties. It was, indeed, a taunt which we had not deserved, when Education was inscribed on the standard of our foes!

We see arrayed against us that love of money which makes stooping sycophants and crawling mercenaries, called into action by bribe and bounty. The teacher and the child are to be bought. It is a small beginning: the wedge has one side thin. Commonly, to give it power, you must strike hard if you would drive it to its head; but this works its own way, for it is a wedge of gold. "*Virtus post nummos.*"

We see in all such measures a tendency to pauperize education. It is already made too eleemosynary. Where it is paid for, it is always more thankfully estimated. Any aid which is now proposed,

so vain is the scheme, will not originate a school, nor cheapen one; but then it is known that the Government has power over it, yields support to it, and each child will be thought its foundling.

We see in these tamperings with a higher independence more than a tendency to destroy the self-reliance of a people. It is but an experiment and reconnoissance. It is a precursor. A system is avowed, of which this is little more than a symptom. It is publicly recommended to take all general interests into the State, and to stipendize all who superintend them.

We see strengthened, by these means, that ghostly power which seemed well-nigh laid,—once more ruling by superstitious fears, now beguiling maiden simplicity and sensibility,—then extorting the miser's hoard. The cowl and the crucifix insinuate themselves. The infant mind is brought under the control of those unscrupulous agents, who are the hirelings of one Church, but the familiars of another.

We see an insatiable rapacity which millions of sterling cannot appease, grasping at more. It knows not Balaam's check, though its house is full of silver and gold. Not the little addition makes it happy, but the prospect which that addition opens! It sees it with a gloating eye! Its joy for it is almost riotously elate! It "grins horribly a ghastly smile, to hear its famine shall be filled, blessing its maw, destined to that good hour."

We see a centralization which is always to be deprecated,—not as accidentally, but necessarily, tending to abuse,—an over-riding of the country by inquisitors, a multiplication of officials,—new sources of a corrupting influence in seduction and in intimidation. It is an insidious attempt upon the independence of the electoral constituencies. It is to be a quietus to the rising claims of the poor.

We see in it a futurity of evil. The nation will blindly lend itself to an accrescent power. We shall have a new pension list, a new national debt. Claims thicken and seize on a perpetuity. It is "little," it is "small." But,—for it is not the pecuniary cost about which we comparatively care and fret,—so is the alligator's egg, and the lion's cub. "It is but a scratch; marry, 'tis enough. No; 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door." The well of truth they would not sink, and the church-door is wide enough for all our renegades.

We see a fetter forged for the restriction of educational freedom and competition. Left to its native strength, committed to its true

independence, mind will grow up under it variegated and prolific. When the culture is cramped, there will be a dwarfish and barren growth. There will be an organization of ideas. A very concrete of dead intelligence only will be left. Nothing will be created to inform the life within, or to enrich the world beyond. That which should liberate will rivet; that which should develop will straiten. There will be no laying open of the soul of man. In a modern instance of statesmanship nothing very great is contemplated—though visions are made to play before us of a more artistic laundry and a more mathematical excise!

But I do not despond, much less despair! It will be hard to bow the mind of England! There are too many historical glories, too many constitutional safeguards, too many free institutions, too many popular habits, to justify a drooping thought. It is a pending crisis; but crises are the birth-throes of all great issues. It is a serious struggle; but struggle is the price of all momentous victories. At present the few must stand against the many; but "the fewer men, the greater share of honour!" I pity the schoolmaster who is set over boys to teach them servility and slavery. There is, ground and kneaded into our native temperament, that enthusiasm for freedom and erectness, that this may be a hapless fate. One of this order, among the ancient Falisci, brought his pupils with him to betray them to the Roman general, Camillus, who was then besieging that people. Revolting at such treachery, though in his own favour, the generous conqueror spurned him; and, arming the boys each with a rod, sent back the traitor, with a strict command to them to flog him all the way. I trust they stoutly obeyed. I hope they settled all arrears. What would I have given to have claimed the opportunity of reprisals upon some who reared my tender thought with little commiseration of my tender skin! So may every school, turned into a house of bondage, be in an uproar,—and such taskmasters learn, from a well-swinged experience, the peril of insulting their country's mind and independence!

The retrogressions of social and religious truth are illusory, and not real. No step is lost. All—though it seems to waver, or even to recede—truly advances. It must make way. Whatever surrounds it, must make way for it. We might have thought that this battle had been decisively fought. We were prepared to claim the field. We had well-nigh shouted the victory. But it is happy that the strife has been rejoined. We may rejoice that it is once again put

to the issue! The whole of the question was never before placed in sight. The entire gage is only now thrown down. And though we may deem the repetitions of error and sophistry tiresome,—though we might have hoped that the common places of vulgar ignorance and obtuseness were worn out,—yet this has always been the trial of those who would forward the race, and amend the world. It is to be done, and to be done again. But thus only can that which is achieved be consolidated. There is no giving way—no yielding. The giant plants his foot a little farther back to take a more mighty spring, and to deal a more conquering blow. There is no mere turning round—no circle. Like the seven ledges of Dante's Mountain-cone, we travel no ground again: each curve is a spiral ascent, and each winding lessens as we rise!

At least we have one "*Patriot*" with us. That is a patriotic host. It has stood firm with us amidst frown and menace. Its high and eloquent intelligence has been of the greatest stead and service. Its "leaders" might be manuductions to the age. Now up with the "*Banner!*" I am not content with a flag-staff, with its drapery reefed and furled! Where is the meteor streaming forth of its folds? Where the breadth of the shadows it might fling? Where the thunder of the flappings it might resound? Where is the battlemented height on which it should be planted,—a signal known afar? It wants but one device to its emblazonments, but one motto to its legends,—Free, self-sustained, self-advancing, Education. Then, what will be its gorgeous field? Then, what will be its triumphant flight? When will the meridian hour strike? *

Our ranks may even thin. Truth may fall in the street. Men may ride over our heads. Our natural allies may turn to be our bitter foes. Whig, Reformer, Free-trader, whom *we* never forsook in their evil hour, may desert us. Where we cannot find consistency, we can ill hope gratitude. We grudge the delay for our generation. For ourselves, we can bide the time. We do not seek, with Malcolm, "some desolate shade, and there weep our sad bosoms empty;" but rather say, with Macduff, "Let us hold fast the mortal sword; and, like good men, bestride our downfallen birthdom." Galileo was not more convinced of his principle than we. Somewhat like his is our persecution. Others would bring the sun of knowledge

* The allusion is to two well-known newspapers of the Nonconformists. The latter had said that it was only an early hour as to its convictions: if it were true at seven, it must strike at twelve.

to wait upon them. We would bring them to wait upon the sun of knowledge. If the earth will catch its light and warmth, the earth must move, and move round it. The mechanics of the universe were always right. The laws of mind have been disturbed. But they once were duly obeyed, and shall be obeyed again! Look forth upon the spiritual, moral, universe! The sun is high; and if it moves, it moves not to us, though it may draw us with it into some more glorious depth of splendour, into some mightier firmament of power. The earth circles it, in tribute and for regeneration. Let the people, like the planet, know their duty. As she relumes herself at the great urn of solar fire, let them seek their true enlightenment. It will not revolve for them: let them secure for themselves this only peaceful and holy revolution. Still, with Galileo,—not in suppressed mutter, but with outcry from the housetop,—we proclaim, The Earth must move! does move!

LECTURE IV.

LECTURE IV.

ON NORMAL SCHOOLS FOR THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

BY THE REV. ANDREW REED, B.A.

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1. Importance of the subject—Normal schools the garrisons of education—2. That party must succeed which trains the best teachers—3. (a) *Description of a Normal school*—4. Effects—collects into a focus the experience of teachers—5. Gives rise to Model schools—6. Prevents teachers from hastily quitting their work—7. Longer time needed at the Normal school—8. (b) Principle at the basis of the Normal school—*that many persons have a natural passion for teaching the young*—other educational impulses—love of parents—curiosity of children—benevolence of the public—9. The love of teaching—the born teacher no hireling—10. Teachers too incompetent—underrated—American specimen—11. Humiliating treatment of teachers—12. Government reports of English teachers to be suspected—13. Self-supporting schools to be preferred to a charity education—Free Normal schools tend to create the former—14. (c) *History of educational efforts*—15. Pestalozzi—16. Count Fellenberg—17. Lancaster—interview with George III.—18. Wilderspin, &c., all volunteer teachers—19. (d) *Means of elevating the class of teachers* as a whole—no outward means alone raise personal character—20. Train only religious teachers—opinions of Central Society—Prussia—Arnold—Derby resolution—21. Elevating influence—make education a Christian mission to the young—22. (e) *History of Normal schools*—Prussia—Holland—France—Saxony—23. Effects on Germany—Stow's opinion—Horace Mann—Carlyle—Howitt—Krummacher—24. Effects in France—despotic power—25. America—few Normal schools—no Model schools—26. American teachers deficient—instances—27. General effects of American education—28. British Normal schools—began as early as abroad—29. British and Foreign School Society Normal schools—connexion with Government—indefinite religious basis—30. National School Society Normal schools—general character—31. Home and Colonial Infant Normal school—32. Battersea Training school—33. Irish Normal schools—34. Scotch Normal schools—Glasgow—35. Congregational Normal schools—36. Government effort to ally with itself all British Normal schools—dangerous effect of such an union—37. (f) *Principles for the future conduct of Free Normal schools*—38. United or Denominational action—39. Spirit of Directors—40. Economy in building—41. Use existing schools as model schools—42. Not over-cheapen the training—43. An Infant Normal school required at once—44. Improvement of Sunday schools—45. Character of Director, Matron, &c.—46. Care in selecting pupils—47. Summary of argument—48. Concluding address to Congregational Dissenters—49. Address to teachers.

A PATRIOT of olden times, full of noble confidence, is said to have thus addressed the rulers of the day: "You shall make the laws—let me make the ballads for the people." In a similarly profound consciousness of the importance of my subject for

this evening, I feel disposed to say to my colleagues and the public, "You *shall teach* the children—*let me but train the teachers.*" The more important the subject, the more sensible of a want of experience and capacity to treat it as it deserves must the lecturer acknowledge himself. I come forward by request. I cannot be charged with presumption. But apologies are vain. The effort must be made, and there is at least a powerful stimulus to brace up the utmost energies in order to illustrate a subject which appears to me second to none of this series in practical moment.

1. I must confess my surprise, that, in recent discussions on education, this subject has found so little illustration, that the public are but slightly acquainted with the purport of this branch of education, and by no means alive to its high claims on their attention and support. Those persons who are most conversant with modern education on a large scale know, that the real secret of power lies in *training the teachers.* I wonder at the anxiety of our Government to burden itself with the charge of local schools, while it can quietly secure the entire control of the Normal schools. The State may make the most liberal offers of grants without inspection, of aid without control, and may safely surrender the choice of the teachers to the local subscribers, and rarely trouble itself to look after the schools, provided it has under its plastic influence the model schools on which all the general schools are formed, and the Normal seminaries whence the teachers are sent forth, imbued with such bias as the State Commissioners may please, and through life held to the central school, whence future help and promotion may be expected. Were I asked an opinion as to the ultimate probability of success on the part of the great educational rivals in England at present, those who accept State grants, and those who refuse them, I should unhesitatingly say,—the party which secures *the training of the teachers,* which ultimately succeeds in sustaining the *best and most numerous Normal seminaries.* I would say to educational societies, let the schools for children take care of themselves, but busy yourselves to train teachers. Beat all competitors here, and you are safe. Spare no effort to supply the best teachers in the greatest number, and it matters not what appliances are brought to bear on schools,—what petty bribes or promising inducements; it will then be evident that to you belongs the palm of increasing both the number and the efficiency of the schools; you will obtain the confidence of Committees, the gratitude of teachers, and the meed

of public distinction. *Normal schools are the garrisons of education.* Whoever possesses the garrisons commands the open country around them. While others are mainly striving to allure children to their schools, and lavishing funds on fresh and sightly buildings, be it your wisdom to expend the chief effort on first-rate Normal schools, and you will have your reward.

2. There can be no doubt that we, the Congregationalists, are fully committed to an honourable contest to preserve liberty of education for this country. We have passed the Rubicon; there is no retreat; for, like Hannibal, we have burnt the ships. We are pledged, in the face of every opposition, to maintain, so long as we are able, a system of religious education independent of State aid. We firmly believe, that eventually we shall succeed. Government education will not be popular. Secular education cannot be effective. Sooner or later, our principles will triumph. But the struggle may be long and arduous, and it is of the utmost consequence to us to avail ourselves of every modern improvement which may economise our resources and give us an advantage. But have not our rivals the start of us? Are not all the Normal schools in their hands already? Can they not work this principle better than we can? There is much cause of alarm in these queries, but as yet there are only few Normal schools in this country, and those by no means so efficient as they might be. We are therefore at less disadvantage in starting than might have been expected. These institutions may be worked with far more economy, and with even greater effect, than has been usual. Let us strain every nerve to have the best British Normal schools.

3. (a) But I am in danger of beginning to build without laying a foundation. Not a few persons may require a *definition and brief history of Normal schools* before they are prepared to consider their value, and duly to estimate their importance. The word *normal* is derived from *norma*, a rule or standard. It is conventionally used for a seminary in which teachers are trained, because there, in effect, the standard of education is formed for a particular system or country. A Normal school, therefore, means an institution where persons desiring to qualify as school-teachers receive instruction for as long a period as they can afford, under an able conductor, assisted by lecturers on various branches of education, who superintend their training in the science of teaching and the improvement of their own minds; besides which, there should be,

in union with the establishment, schools of a superior order for children, (therefore called model-schools,) in which the pupil-teachers may have frequent opportunity of practising the art of instruction in the classes under the eye, and corrective suggestions of an intelligent and kind master. Such is the *outline idea of a Normal school.* The idea of such schools probably originated out of the use of monitors. When a larger number of children was placed under one master, by employing some of the older ones to teach classes of the younger, a great advance was made in extending the means of popular education. These monitors the master, of course, found it necessary to drill with special pains, that they might be qualified to teach. The training of monitors became of prior consequence, even to teaching children. Some of these monitors remained a considerable time in the schools, and ultimately went forth as teachers. Here is, then, the germ of a Normal school for training teachers, and the next step of the generalization is perfectly easy and natural, from the training given by a master to his monitors, to the collecting of a number of pupil-teachers, or candidates for the position of teachers, under one roof, to be trained under a superior master, and in connexion with a model-school.

4. Some of the objects contemplated in forming these *pædagogical* schools may be here noticed. It soon became a general maxim, that "*like master, like school;*" or, as it has been quaintly expressed, "*The master is the mirror at which the children dress themselves.*" The improvement of masters was soon, therefore, felt to be a primary concern, and the real secret of all educational success. Committees, before engaging a master, felt the insecurity of trusting to a passing examination of his knowledge, or to vague testimonials of ability, often the most hollow and deceptive. A man may converse well and be well informed, and yet have no ability to teach children. Teaching is partly a gift; but the art may be acquired, and is always susceptible of much improvement. A good teacher, untrained in the various methods which genius has discovered and experience confirmed, must spend the first years of his labour in a series of experiments on the first principles of tuition, at the expense of his pupils; and almost as soon as he becomes familiar with his vocation, he may be removed, and all his hard-earned experience dies with him. A Normal school collects the scattered experience of past educators into a focus, and communicates its concentrated impulse to succeeding generations; so that by a year's instruction

at such a seminary, a teacher is spared much trouble and disappointment in the outset, commences with far better principles than he could have struck out for himself, and has, through his whole course, a valuable centre of information, whither returning at intervals, he may learn the improvements of others, and to which he may communicate any fresh plans which matured reflection has suggested to himself. As might be expected, it is found that nothing tends so rapidly to advance tuition in a district, as the foundation of such an institution. I shall presently trace its origin and history; but it has now been tried in Germany, England, Holland, France, Switzerland, and partially in America, with uniform success. While in Austria, where teachers are still trained by mere attendance at a common primary school, without the advantage of a Normal school —the school system is comparatively stationary, and exhibits little progressive improvement.

5. The *model schools* connected with Normal seminaries must usually be of a high character, and give an elevated tone to all other schools in their neighbourhood. Other schools branch off from these in different directions, and an element of education is produced, which will always create its own demand—a large number of competent teachers sent forth with due qualifications every year.

6. If it be objected, that teachers furnished with a superior education would be tempted to relinquish their calling for a more lucrative pursuit, it may suffice to reply, that each pupil-teacher usually pledges himself, on entrance, to give three or four years to school instruction after he leaves the Normal school, or to refund the value of the pecuniary assistance he has received there. If a person so trained has not sufficient love for teaching, or finds on trial that his tact is not in that direction, or that he prefers and can succeed better in some other walk of life, surely it can hardly be a source of regret that he should be enabled to better himself! The tendency of these establishments is decidedly to elevate the rank and profits of the educator, and eventually to counteract the disposition to leave this class of occupation for others.

7. The time spent at these schools varies considerably. It has gradually lengthened as these institutions have risen, and their worth has been felt. Stow states, that at first "a month was considered a great sacrifice—many contented themselves with a fortnight, and some even with a week: by-and-by the students remained two months. We then refused to admit any for a less

period than three months. Next, six months was fixed, and now *a year* is required."*

The period has extended abroad to two and even three years, which last term will, I am persuaded, not be thought too much when education takes its proper rank among the useful professions. Every trade has its apprenticeship of five to seven years. The farmers have their agricultural college, or are with a practical farmer for several years to learn their business. Law, medicine, and the arts have their colleges, curriculum, and pass examinations for their pupils. The clerical office has its colleges and course of preparation. It is high time for the educator of the young to have similar advantages extended to him, quite as much from a sense of the importance of this profession to the public welfare, as from any idea of personal kindness to himself. Three years would be well spent in such preparation. The first year would be used in confirming the knowledge already possessed, and in giving it depth, solidity, and extension. The second in studying the theory of education, and bringing the pupil up to an average standard of acquirement in each branch of knowledge. The third might be more particularly given to practising in the model-school, with the presiding teacher, which might occupy partial attention during the previous years also. On leaving, an examination should be held, and various certificates presented. The pupils would retain a connexion with their alma-mater during life, and hence would arise a kind of inspection of the Normal school over schools supplied by its teachers. Everything should be done to consolidate the establishment, that it might become worthy to be called, what it really is, the *Educator's University*.

8. (b) Having thus described the Normal school, for the benefit of any who may be imperfectly acquainted with its meaning, I will now proceed to illustrate some principles which may more fully show the great importance of this modern improvement. It must not be forgotten that the chief hope of the general education of the people rests on *that strong disposition to teach the young which is with many persons a ruling passion of the character*.

Those who despair of the education of children, save under the interposition of the Government, cannot have properly considered the constitution of society, and the strong and varied impulses communicated by Divine Providence, in order to secure that most

* Stow's Training System, p., 104.

important object. There is the instinctive and fond love of father and mother, who, in different ways, extend to their offspring a tender, self-denying care, which all the adverse influences of social selfishness cannot quench, and which needs only to be enlightened to prove effectual. There is the inherent curiosity of the child—his desire to learn—his docile pliability and quick observation and inquisitiveness, which affords a ready avenue to the hearts of the young, if rightly used, and needs only to be properly directed in order marvellously to facilitate the work of education. There is the emotion of public benevolence, which comes in as an auxiliary where the former are dormant; the strong desire which man feels, that his neighbours should share the privileges he enjoys—a feeling which Christianity arouses to the highest pitch—which has given birth to a great variety of charitable institutions—which has already effected much in aid of the education of the poor, and promises a daily advance. Now, the interference of the State, instead of fostering these native impulses, sets them aside, and becomes a poor substitute in their room. This is the strongest objection to such interposition. But there is yet another social guarantee for education, less regarded than the former, yet no less directly efficacious, and which, as it more especially lies at the basis of my topic, I shall notice at greater length.

9. I refer to that *love of teaching*, that desire to communicate knowledge, with which many minds in the community, in every nation and age, have been strongly imbued. Though parents may fail to train their children from ignorance or carelessness, and though the docility of children, together with the benevolent efforts of the public, were less operative in favour of popular instruction than they are, yet there may always be found a large number of persons in society providentially disposed to perform the teacher's office from a real love for its duties, with the additional and natural expectation of some fair remuneration. To some, this service appears so destitute of all charm, and so servile a drudgery, that they wonder the richest rewards can tempt a competent person to undertake it. But they must not judge of others by themselves. There are those who feel a peculiar fondness for little children. Like an ear for music, or a taste for the arts, this disposition seems innate. To the female, it appears like a part of the essential distinction of her sex, though some are more fully under its influence than others.

There are also those among men who vie with the softer sex in being enamoured with the engaging society and artless ways of children. Of their prattle they never weary. Their opening characters they love to trace. They delight to gratify the spell-bound listeners with the marvellous tale, the merry song, the amusing or harrowing narrative. They discern the importance of making their influence bear upon the formation of right conceptions and virtuous feelings. They feel amply rewarded in the unfeigned and transparent gratitude of these affectionate young creatures. This disposition is happily combined with the natural impulse—the almost craving to communicate which the possession of knowledge usually inspires, and the yet more general desire of benevolent minds to benefit other minds as largely as their powers extend. Out of these mingled elements Nature's teacher is formed; and such characters are more numerous in society than may be supposed. Such a man becomes an instructor spontaneously, whenever he falls into the society of children. He intuitively understands their sympathies, and has the happy art of becoming one with them. He possesses the true professional ardour. He is the born-teacher—the educator *nactus non factus*. There is no earthly situation he more covets. Even without large emolument he would select the educator's sphere; nay, at a sacrifice, he would aspire to the noble task of training the "young idea." He is no hireling, who drudges on at a labour he detests for the consideration which he covets. The means of living are necessary to him of course, and he gladly avails himself of them in this work; but the work itself he loves, whether he gain or lose by it. As the faithful minister feels within himself the call to preach the gospel, irrespective of station or emolument, so the teacher is conscious of an inward call little less distinct and imperative. Very commonly, the ideas which lead men to both offices are the same; for the true teacher is not often a man without religion. Many such minds are moved by very decided spiritual influences. They behold the work in its full evangelic importance connected with the eternal issues—the native obstructions—the scriptural expedients which revelation discloses. These considerations maintain their sleepless vigilance and prayerful anxiety under a sense of accountability to God, which arouses emotions unknown to the mere secular teacher. The teacher we describe is a pastor as well as a teacher, seeking, in the midst of his little charge, by the help of

God, that hereafter, as their spiritual father, through the Spirit, he may joyfully exclaim at the bar of God, "Here am I, and the children whom thou hast given me."

Such a man will need little inspection or oversight. He may be trusted. To the best of his power he will do his duty, whether men witness or he is unobserved; for he works to God rather than to man. He will be diligent in furnishing his own mind with all necessary acquirements, and will feel the importance of keeping up the interest of his pupils by continual freshness of information. No portion of their training will appear unimportant to him, for each has a reaction so powerful that all are necessary, in some sort, to his ultimate aim.

10. But it will be said, such eminently-qualified teachers are very rare. The common complaint is, that masters are so very *incompetent*, and that *the office is so despised* by society, that respectable persons hesitate to enter on it, and the *remuneration is so exceedingly small*, that no exterior attraction sets the situation in a better aspect. Here is a vicious circle, out of which many despair of finding an escape. It is to be feared such remarks are too true. The following racy *American dialogue*, from a Government Report, shows how much underrated are the services of a teacher:

"A. calls on one of the trustees. 'Well, neighbour A.,' says the trustee, 'we have hired a man to keep our school this winter.' 'Oh! how much do you give him a month?' 'Twelve dollars.' (48*s.*—30*l.* a-year.) 'You must be a bright one, to pay a man such high wages, these hard times, to keep our school. I've just hired a man to work for me this winter, at chopping, threshing, and drawing logs, and I give him only eight dollars a month, and he's a real smart fellow, too. He can thresh ten or twelve bushels of wheat in a day, and clean it up in the evening; and he'll chop his four cords of wood day by day, and not wink at it; and I think it is a pity if we can't employ a man to sit around the stove all day, and have thirty or forty to wait on him, as cheap as I can hire one to do the work I have for a man to do; and I think it's a chance if he has much of a school.' 'I know,' says the trustee, 'it's too much; but no one else came along, so we thought we had better hire him.' '*Didn't you try to beat him down any?*' 'I should think we did. We worked him from noon till nine o'clock at night, and got him down four dollars. He asked sixteen dollars at first.' 'You should have beat him down four dollars more; and that

would be more than a teacher ought to have.' "—*New York Report*, 1843, p. 136.

I rejoice to feel that, daring and false as our Government Commissioners are, (witness the Report on Wales,) they dared not have made such a statement as this regarding public opinion. Possibly such a scene might occur in some of our darkest rural districts; but, in all our towns, such an unworthy estimate of the educator, as an "unproductive labourer," meets with the contempt it deserves.

11. Yet the teacher is neither remunerated nor respected according to his real worth.

I have often been grieved to witness the conduct of the managers of schools to the master or mistress. They receive, too commonly, the treatment of servants. There is no shake of the hand, as to a labourer loved for his work's sake; no seat offered them; but their inferiority marked, by their standing while the Committee sits. They are taken to task without delicacy, even before their pupils. Strenuous self-vindication is considered arrogant presumption. If they succeed, they obtain a cold approval or a humiliating patronage. If they fail, under great discouragements, they are borne down by expressions of dissatisfaction, instead of being upheld by sympathy; and at length dismissed without ceremony, to find another situation, if, with broken spirits and damaged character, any door shall open to them. How trying to hear, on some great school show-day or examination, when parents and subscribers are gathered, and the poor teacher has laboured to prepare the children, and his strength is spent in conducting a most interesting examination, compliments paid to the subscribers,—laudations to the wealthy patron in the chair,—congratulations to the parents,—rewards distributed to the children;—and yet, amid these lavish praises, there stands the hard-working and poor-paid teacher, who has toiled daily against immense difficulties with untiring patience, exhibiting qualities of head and heart, which in any other station would gain him general esteem—he whose energy has brought up the scholars to the pitch of excellent order they exhibit—he stands there almost unnoticed, modestly retiring from remark, and cordially enjoying the happiness of the children and parents in whose welfare he has so deep an interest. Where are his praises, his congratulations, his substantial rewards! They are found less often in the earnest and respectful co-operation of Committees, than in the grateful affection of scholars and parents, and in the testimony of a good conscience. This

reproach is fast passing away. I cannot forbear lifting my voice against such an enormous wrong.

12. Many teachers, no doubt, have been unworthy of the position they have held. It is not my place here to hold them up to derision. I could soon extract, from Government Reports, statements respecting our common and dame schools, which would greatly tickle your fancy. But, for my part, I become more and more suspicious of the authority of those Reports. Be it never forgotten, that when Popular Education found a cold reception from the higher classes, she found her best friends among these humble assistants, who felt her value, welcomed her presence, and laboured alone in her service. Surely with an ill-grace do those higher classes, now they see their error, and repent, and are inviting Popular Education to their aid, turn round, and spurn away the poorer attendants, who so long and patiently attended her in the days of her humiliation! It suits their purpose, who come to spy the nakedness of the land, and sweep the ground clear for the introduction of their new-fangled State schemes, to despise these unpretending seminaries; but the true patriot has cause to glory in their general diffusion, which proves the spontaneous power of natural resources for educating the people, even during the apathy of Government, and the neglect or opposition of public sentiment. It may be fairly doubted, whether the mass of Government schools, in other countries, are better than many of our common day-schools. These are often kept by respectable persons who have seen better days, and have had a good education. The small number of scholars—the domestic air of the school—often gives it a greater moral influence over character than the larger and more pretending school acquires.

13. I am free to confess that I desire to see the *schools* of the poorer class *self-supporting;* conducted not by Committees, as charity-schools, but by enterprising and well-trained teachers on their own responsibility. Certainly, for the middle-class, schools kept by private individuals, who are responsible for their success, are usually preferable to proprietary schools under the control of Committees. But this change can never be wrought for the lower classes, except by training *teachers* qualified to raise and sustain schools which may ultimately stand on their own merits. Of course this system could not be generally adopted at present; but I hope the Normal school will gradually prepare the way for school after school to throw off all charitable aids, and stand on an independent

basis. I oppose all Government aid on the ground (amongst others) that it must prevent this gradual improvement; keep the education of the lower classes dependent on charity; and hinder even those schools which might easily become independent from assuming that superior position. From our free system and efficient Normal school we may expect to rise up a large number of good self-supporting schools, first in the larger towns and cities, and gradually even in country towns; which, in the outset, partly sustained by generous contribution, will remain in close alliance with our religious institutions, beside which they will have grown up.

14. (c)—Now that we have illustrated the love of teaching, and the character of the true educator—of whose efforts even yet society has so low an estimate—let us glance at *the history of the chief educational efforts in this and other lands.*

Slow has been the process by which educators themselves and the public have, by degrees, learnt "how to teach." As in other sciences, progress has been realised by the efforts of individuals. One has lived to remove this error, another to deposit this conclusion. Persons urged by superior intelligence and inspiring philanthropy to venture away from the ordinary routine, have applied fresh methods. The world has followed in their wake, but in the lapse of time their method proves its imperfection. The views of reformers are pushed to an injudicious extreme by their followers. Thought is awakened—others break away—correctives are sought—till some bold experimenter discerns a new principle, commanding both the former inadequate reform and its correction. He assumes the lead, and the world again follows the new guide. So by successive eliminations of error, we arrive at nearer approximations to truth, and society finds step by step the untracked, spiral path up the inaccessible and misty mount of science. Time will not allow me to speak of the educational efforts of past ages—the early Christians—the Reformers—of Fenelon and Spener, pious Catholics waked to a holy rivalry with the Protestants—of our own far-seeing and patriotic Milton—our sagacious and practical Locke—our Edgeworths, Hamiltons, Mores, &c.,—of the German Frank, whose noble orphan-house at Halle contained one of the earliest and best Normal schools, and who left his mantle on the illustrious Count Zinzendorf, 1700, whose pious system resulted in the schools of the Moravian brethren, which are so justly celebrated for their orderly and quiet discipline. Nor can I criticise the efforts of Rousseau and the sceptic philosophers

of France, giving them the meed they deserve; nor describe the counter efforts of Bassedow and the philanthropists, in their turn opposed by the rationalist Kant, and Eclectic schools, during which contention the question was, whether education should be based on the self-development of nature or on the remedial applications of revelation for a disordered nature, and which severe contest resulted in the defeat of the naturalists and the permanent connexion of religion with education.

15. We come now, however, to some names on which I am fain to linger, as fine specimens of the real educator. *Pestalozzi* is not improperly called the "Father of Modern Education." His school at Yverdun, and little book, "How Gertrude teaches her Children," formed an era in education. Dr. Biber's memoir should be perused by every teacher. He commenced his labours by teaching seventy children at the asylum at Stanz. They were from the lowest class, exceedingly depraved, and seemingly incorrigible, without school accommodation, destitute of friendly aid. Discouraged and opposed by various obstacles, he was resolved to attempt their transformation by power of sympathy and love. Well did he succeed. "Before," he relates, "the snow of our mountains melted under the influence of the vernal sun, those children could no longer be recognised as the same beings they came to me." "There," adds Dr. Biber, "in the midst of his children, he forgot there was any world besides his asylum. At the first dawn of day it was his voice that called them to the light of the rising sun, and to the praise of their heavenly Father. All day long he stood among them, teaching the ignorant and assisting the helpless, encouraging the weak and admonishing the transgressor. His hand was daily with them, joined in theirs; his eye beaming with benevolence, rested on theirs. He wept when they wept, and rejoiced when they rejoiced. He was to them a father, and they to him as children." Here was the true teacher.

16. The Abbé Girard followed the same principles at Friburg. Count de Fellenberg was a fine specimen of the enthusiasm for teaching. He originated the idea of a practical or industrial education. "Educate the people for what the people are designed to be." This man, born to aristocratic honours, and in high station, condescended to the position of a despised schoolmaster, under the influence of the most generous pity for the poorest of the poor—the lowest of the low. It was his desire to raise these depraved classes

by "the formation of the future man, who in twenty short years would be giving the tone and manners to his country." To this aim he consecrated a large fortune, a long life, and the entire faculties of a cultivated mind, and a large heart. For more than thirty years he kept his post, and had his reward in great usefulness and a wide esteem. He had above 6,000 pupils under his care at Hofwyl, though he began with literally a single scholar. He trained a large number of teachers, who, now he is gone, remain to spread his principles, and swell his usefulness. One of the most distinguished of these is Vehrli, who at present conducts one of the best establishments in Switzerland.

17. Nor must I forget our own Joseph Lancaster, the son of a Chelsea pensioner, a poor but a pious man. At eight years, he says, his heart "filled with love to God," with breathings of good will to the human race, "and with desires to devote his life to the service of God." At fourteen, reading Clarkson on the "Slave Trade" impelled him to start for Jamaica, to teach negroes to read the Bible. At eighteen, he began a school at home, with nearly ninety children in Southwark. Many were taught free of expense. Two benevolent friends paid for five or six poor children, and from this became regular subscribers. Over the school was the singular inscription, "*All that will may send their children, and have them educated freely; and those who do not wish to have education for nothing, may pay for it, if they please.*" The school filled, but his income was very scanty. Those philanthropic peers, the Duke of Bedford and Lord Somerville, helped towards a new school-house. "The children now came in flocks," and the "necessity was the mother of invention." The old plan of education was inadequate! He now struck out the monitorial system. He soon had 1,000 children, with whom he was always domesticated—joining in the games of play-hours—and he even gave dinners to the most needy of them in distressing times. "The character," says his biographer, James Corston, "of benefactor he scarce thought of; it was absorbed in that of teacher and friend. Is it any wonder that children so trained, to whom so many endearing occasions were presented, evidences should abound of affection, docility, and improvement? In them he had many ready co-operators, and, however incapable of forming designs, never were agents more prompt and ready to execute." He now became an object of fashionable notice. "Foreign princes,

ambassadors, peers, commoners, ladies of distinction, bishops, and archbishops," visited his school. He had an interview with George III., in 1805, characteristic of both parties.

"Lancaster, I have sent for you to give me an account of your system of education, which I hear has been opposed. One master teach 500 children at the same time! How do you keep them in order, Lancaster?"

"Please thy Majesty, by the same principle thy Majesty's army is kept in order, by word of command." "Good—good—it does not require an aged general to give the command—one of younger years can do it." Lancaster describes the system. "Good—good, Lancaster, I highly approve of your system, and it is my wish that every poor child in my dominions should be taught to read the Bible. I will do anything you wish to promote this object." "Please thy Majesty, I can go through the country, and lecture on the system, and have no doubt but in a few months I shall be able to give thy Majesty an account, when 10,000 poor children are being educated, and some of my youths instructing them." (Here is the first hint of an English Normal school.) "Lancaster, I will subscribe 100*l.* a year, and (to the Queen,) you shall subscribe 50*l.*; Charlotte and the princesses 25*l.* each, and you may have the money directly." "Please thy Majesty, that will be setting thy nobles a good example." The Queen: "How cruel that enemies should be found to hinder his progress in so good a work!" Charlotte: "A good man seeks his reward in the world to come." A truly interesting interview, and creditable to both parties.

Lancaster was well fitted for the teacher's post, but not for the management of a large association, and of complicated money matters. He got into sad troubles. A friend relates his first introduction thus: "I called at his school to inquire about the training of a teacher, and after some conversation about it, I slipped into his hand a 10*l.* note, as an acknowledgement of my obligations. What was my astonishment to see this quiet man, who had been calmly conversing a moment before, turn pale, tremble, stand fixed as a statue, and then, flinging himself on my shoulder, burst into tears, exclaiming, 'Friend, thou knowest it not, but God hath sent thee to keep me from gaol, and preserve my system from ruin.'" He was arrested for debt. His affairs arranged—a society formed of which he became a paid agent, out of which sprung the British

and Foreign School Society. Unfortunate in business matters, he was a true educator of the first class.

18. So also was *Wilderspin,* who was one of the earliest founders of Infant schools. If he did not first collect these very little ones into schools, he first systematized the teaching proper for such institutions. He had a large school in Spitalfields, and was called the "Baby Professor."

Some of our Sabbath-school teachers and the founders of our modern Ragged schools deserve a mention here, but I must not pause to describe their efforts.

There can be no doubt that the finest specimens of real educators have risen spontaneously, and that the chief improvements in the art of instruction are owing to them.

We may rely on it that society will continue to supply such Volunteer teachers, unless Government should step in and discourage private attempts by a stereotyped system of State mechanism.

19. (d) How, then, may *the common school teacher be raised,* and somewhat *of the exalted spirit of these great patterns be infused into the class?* Some say, give him the dignity of a Government officer, and a novel majesty will attend his office. Others, that we must offer better salaries before we can expect better men. Far more sensible is the suggestion we are anxious to advocate, that the opportunity should be given to teachers of a good training in a Normal school. Yet we own, our reliance does not rest alone on any of these mere outward helps. The teacher must raise his own office, after all, by the exhibition of a right spirit, and the carrying out of good measures to full success. The outward importance of the office may be elevated, and yet the teacher fail to support his dignity. The salary may be never so much increased, and yet the greater is the risk of the intrusion of hirelings. Even the Normal school may open its halls and send forth its quota of full-trained and certificated instructors; but unless they have an innate and strong love for the duties of their profession, they will soon flag and abandon it; and if they possess not the native ability to convey instruction, all the drilling in the world will not give them the incommunicable power of electrifying and vitalizing the minds of others, by the vitality and sympathy of their own. And unless they succeed thus, how can the public be expected to value their exertions? Men do not value, unless they feel advantage. Society must

be made to feel the full power of the educator—to see fruits—to witness glorious trophies. Men must examine a sample ere they will believe the praise lavished on the crop, and advance the funds required to reap the harvest. Whatever contributes to the success of education, tends directly to exalt and glorify its conductor in the public eye. No teacher, therefore, should be encouraged who takes up the vocation merely for a livelihood. This awful mistake must be corrected. It is felt that the care of souls is too solemn a matter to be an affair of traffic—that the Bible ought to bear no profit on its printing and publication, but be sold at cost price. How long shall the formation of the character of the young be left to tutors and governesses, who, from the inferior treatment they receive, cannot be expected to give themselves to the task from other than sheer necessity, or mercenary considerations? It must be loudly proclaimed, that education is a business which calls for a deep personal devotion and love in all who engage in it, and is too responsible to be placed in competition with pecuniary gain.

20. If a *religious education* is the *only real education, it also follows, that none but truly pious men are qualified to manage it.* This aphorism, most appropriately stated by the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, at a meeting of the British and Foreign School Society, should be regarded as an axiom, and must on no consideration be violated by those who would place the training of youth on its right footing.

Even the school of educators connected with the Central Society of Education, (not usually leaning towards the union of religion with education,) in their Journal of Education, in the article on Prussian schools, adopt this principle :—"It may be laid down as a principle, that a man whose religion is not intimately combined with his sentiments, is totally unable to teach religion to others with any practical effect, whatever may be his power of instruction or his eloquence." Even in Prussia teachers are required to prove, in the mystic, yet significant language of German philosophy, that "their religious and moral feeling is aroused." Dr. Arnold—than whom few men were finer specimens of the practical educator—has given a decided opinion on this subject in his Lectures on Modern History, in the following language:—"This is the exact difference between teaching and education: a teacher—whether it be of Latin and Greek, or of French and German, or geography and history, or of drawing, or of gymnastics—has nothing to think of beyond his own immediate

subject. It is not his concern if his pupils' tastes and abilities are more adapted to other studies,—if that particular knowledge which he is communicating is claiming a portion of time more than in accordance with its value. He has one single object,—to teach his own science effectually. But he who educates must take a higher view, and pursue an end, accordingly, far more complicated. He must adjust the respective claims of bodily and mental exercise—of different kinds of intellectual labour; he must consider every part of his pupils' nature,—physical, intellectual, and moral; regarding the cultivation of the last, however, as paramount to that of either of the others." Much more is it incumbent on a religious body like ourselves to resolve, as we did at Derby,—"That, agreeably to the practice which has hitherto been adhered to by the Congregational Board of Education, no candidate for admission into a Normal school in connection with this Board, shall be eligible, who is not in communion with some Christian Church." No information, no aptitude, no fervour of zeal, will make up for the want of spiritual motives. So far as we can judge of character, we must seek to put the conduct of our schools into the hands of intelligent Christians—men of God—full of love to God, and to the souls of men. How else can we hope to insure a religious education in our schools? How else can we believe that the blessing of God will be truly and acceptably sought, so that his "grace, which bringeth salvation," will be bestowed upon the hearts of teacher and children? The natural eye may not see much difference between a school under such a regimen as we have described, and one in which such holy influences are disregarded; but the eye of faith instantly detects the glaring want—the spiritual mind feels painfully the cold earthly touch—the privation of whatever evinces sacred unction and healthy moral feeling. The absence of fruitfulness will soon expose this destitution; for, without religion, the effects of education on character will be poor indeed.

21. But what is more sure to raise the teacher's office, than to fill it with men truly disinterested, sincerely at home in the work, and breathing into it the soul of holy grandeur and of heaven-inspired love? Who could witness such labours without a deep and favourable impression? How could such men be despised by the wise and good? Normal schools are excellent preparations towards exciting a higher professional tone among teachers, but they must be wholly re-modelled before their general tendency shall be such as

to produce teachers of the highest class. Not only must the qualifications for admission include the requirement of a well-accredited religious character, but the methods of training adopted must be consistent with this loftier aim. Then will a class of educators rise who shall extort respect, even from the worldly, by the practical effects of their superior influence. Then education itself shall be disencumbered of objections and difficulties which have narrowed the path, and shall command all the facilities proper to its merciful task. It shall wield a vast moral power over the destinies of mankind. It shall enrich earthly society with many unimagined blessings, and cause each generation to advance rapidly on that which preceded. It shall prepare for heaven, from the lost and perishing outcasts of society, many seraphic spirits to adorn the train of the King of Glory. The educator shall stand side by side with the philanthropist, the pastor, the evangelist, the missionary, exercising his ministrations for the good of humanity in a different sphere, but in a kindred spirit, and with like success and honour, when education shall be evangelised, and conducted as a Christian mission to the juvenile population of the world.

22. (e) Having thus illustrated the sort of elevation which is desirable in the character of our Day school teachers, let me proceed to examine the *value of Normal schools, in order to produce the contemplated improvement.* It has been supposed that we are indebted for the origination of Normal schools to the central influence of Governments, and that they are peculiarly and almost necessarily connected with a system of State education. Nothing can be more unfounded than such an idea. The plan for the formation of Normal schools was first conceived and executed by enterprising private educators, not only in this country, but in Switzerland and Germany, where they took their rise. The great improvements made by Basedow, at Dessau, and Solzman of Schnepfenthal, and, after them, by Pestalozzi, at Yverdun, induced other public schools to send their teachers, on purpose to learn their superior plans. Hence arose Normal schools. Teachers were sent to be trained in Pestalozzi's school in 1806. The State did not undertake this work in *Prussia* till 1817. (In 1833 there were forty-three Normal schools, with 2,036 pupils, sending out annually near 800 teachers of primary schools.) In 1838, forty-five Normal schools, with 2,583 pupils, sending out yearly near 956. The best of these schools (for they are very unequal) are in the Rhenish provinces, at

Moers and Bruhl; in Saxony, at Erfurt and Weisinfels; and in Brandenburg, Potsdam, and Berlin. These are in a good state of efficiency. The students are sure of promotion to schools, exempt from military service, raised in public regard as officers of Government, and permitted to retire on a pension when incapacitated. About one-third of the young men so sent out prove unfit for the work. The number required annually to maintain an efficient system is four per cent. on the number of teachers in schools. Prussia had 23,921 primary teachers in 1838, and, therefore, 956 pupils would be wanted. Only 846 were trained, so that 110 is the deficiency. It is held that twenty-five more Normal schools are required to perfect the Prussian system. It is through the Prussian Normal schools that the Government conveys its impress on the public mind.

In *Holland*, general education was first carried out by the Society of Public Utility, and taken under State patronage about 1804. Most of the Dutch teachers have been trained in primary schools, and only recently two Normal schools have been founded at Groningen and Haarlem. The latter, under that spirited educator, M. Prinsen, is well and favourably described by the French philosopher, Cousin, and our Chambers.

France entered on this career yet more lately, and it is hard to trust her education statistics. In 1842, they report seventy-nine Normal schools, with 860 pupils, of which, however, 713 had been placed there during the year. Their period of instruction must therefore be very brief. The best specimen is that at Versailles, which has furnished thirty pupils annually out of the 120 under instruction. Generally the French Normal schools are not of a high character, but in a state of experiment.

In *Saxony* were, in 1832, including the Freyburg school, seven Normal schools, with 253 pupils, furnishing seventy or eighty teachers per year. About 100 are wanted for this kingdom.

23. What, then, is the effect on the character of European schoolmasters and their teaching? Where the Government has least influence, as in Holland, the teachers are free; but in Prussia and France the Normal school is the most powerful engine of despotism, and the schoolmasters are functionaries, obsequious and subservient to the State, on which their promotion and even standing depends. In Prussia, the master is expected to educate 100 children without any monitors—a requirement which must be fatal to success. He

has minute instructions (according to Mr. Howitt) from Government, to inculcate reverence to royalty and implicit obedience, and the eye of Government is on him constantly, through inspectors and boards, &c. Mr. Stow says that John McCrie, an intelligent young man, was sent by the Glasgow Society, for nine months, to study the Prussian system, and reported that there was nothing new in it; that "in Prussia they had not moral training; and as to Bible training, it was not attempted."* Horace Mann, of America, (a great authority,) declares that many Prussian teachers are "inwardly hostile to the doctrines they are required to teach." He asked one how he could teach what he disbelieved? He replied, "It is a *lie of necessity:* the Government compels us to do this, or it takes away our bread." He found one *inspector* of a large district, a "thorough Pantheist and disbeliever in the Divine authority of the Book, whose use, and the inculcation of whose doctrines, as held by the State, he was enjoining on all schools under his charge."† Howitt, and even Thomas Carlyle, declare that the body of professors and teachers in Germany are generally *infidels.* Carlyle‡ says, "Formal and Normal schools of heresy are so organised, that one can only marvel how any pass through the ordeal of a university, or even a theological education, with a spark of faith remaining." And Howitt§ says, "Among the whole number of German students I have known, it would be difficult to select a dozen who are not confirmed infidels." Such is the effect of State training on the freedom, liberty, and religion of Prussian schoolmasters!

24. In France the teachers are much the same. There is even less possibility of competition. In 1831, a few spirited French gentlemen, with Count Montalembert at their head, opened a free school in Paris, unconnected with the State. It was forcibly shut up by the police, and the transgressors arraigned before the Court of Peers, prosecuted by the Government, and actually fined 100 francs

* Stow's Training System, p. 58.

† Report of Educat. Tour, pp. 233—238.

‡ Moral Phenomena of Germany, p. 67.

§ German Experiences, p. 91.—Several of these testimonies are taken from Edward Baines' Letters on State Education, Letter 9. To these may be added the testimony of the Rev. Dr. Krummacher, of Berlin, who has publicly denounced the present educational system of Prussia, in a clerical assembly, as "one of culpable neglect and soul-killing latitudinarianism, more fitted to rear a nation of infidel philosophers than of believing Christians."—*See Evan. Christendom for March,* 1848.

each, for keeping a public school without the authority of the Imperial University.* After such specimens, nothing can be a more proper subject for jealous dread to a patriotic Englishman, than the union with the Government of Normal schools—engines the most powerful for evil or good—for enslaving or elevating the public mind, as they are themselves fettered or free.

25. America, which, in respect to education, is said to be in advance of most countries, by no means appears to advantage, as regards the training and qualifications of teachers. There are but few Normal schools in America, and those which exist have no model schools attached to them, in which the pupil teacher may practise what he learns of the art of teaching. He goes forth, therefore, with armour which he has not proved, and knows not how to wield.

It reminds me of a young friend of mine who was sent to learn farming at a so-called Agricultural College, when, forsooth, there was no farm on which to train the students! He paid me a visit in Norfolk, and hearty was the laugh of the Norfolk farmers, when they heard of a youth learning to be a farmer at a college, without an acre of land. Such deficiency must attend a Normal seminary without a model school.

The Americans, sensible of the defect, ingeniously contrive a substitute, by forming the pupil teachers into classes, which they instruct as if they were real children, each in turn. I need not explain the poverty of such a substitute, or the impossibility of efficiently sustaining so fictitious a system.

26. The accounts given of teachers by their own reports are accordingly far from satisfactory. One says, "It was stated publicly by a member of a school committee in a town containing thirty or more school districts, that at least one-half of the teachers approved by them would be rejected, only that it would be vain to expect better teachers for the present remuneration."—*Central Society.—Paper on America.*

Massachusetts has very few Normal schools. New York State reports, since 1830, the foundation of sixteen such institutions, but they hardly deserve the name, and are spoken of by official reports as a "failure." In 1843, the following statement was made by the inspectors:—"It appears, from the reports of the deputies, that of

* France, her Government, &c., p. 183; a book which should be re-read at this crisis, by all who would see the real origin of the late Revolution.

9,000 teachers whose schools were visited by them in their annual inspections, one-half had taught the same school less than one year, 958 only two years, 475 for three years, 329 more than three years.

"The number of teachers under 18 years was 903: between 18 and 21, 2,421; between 21 and 25, 2,895; between 25 and 30, 1,170; over 30, 1,611.

"The average compensation for male teachers, 17 dollars (3*l.* 8s.) a month; and for females, 7 dollars (1*l.* 8s.); or about 40*l.* for a man, or 16*l.* for a woman, per annum." How can education flourish under so penurious a system?

"In the south of Alleghany, but *one* teacher out of 165 had taught the same school for two successive years. In Broome county, but six out of 242 for three years, and 133 less than six months on the whole. In the county of Cayaga, only ten out of 221 for more than two years, and 130 less than six months. In Columbia county, 121 of 266 for less than one year in the whole, and in the county of Gennesee 93 of 147 teachers were entirely destitute of any previous experience."

"I was forcibly impressed," says the Tomkins county deputy, "with the sage remark of a teacher who had been engaged in the business for years, when I requested him to have his pupils read less, and to be more particular that they understood what they read!" "Sir," he replied, "children can do but one thing at a time; and if they read well, they cannot be expected to understand what they read, nor can I require it of them. I wish them to learn to read well, and when they are old enough they can take dictionaries, and learn the definitions of words, and then they will understand what they read!!"

Another inspector states,—"During these examinations, I have found 169 teachers, of whom 68 were males, and 101 females: of the males, 17 or 18 may be, comparatively speaking, ranked among the first class of teachers, pursuing the inductive mode—teaching *ideas* as well as *words;* 14 of them ought not to have been licensed or employed, having no ability to teach, and in several cases they were wanting in all respects.

"In one instance the inspectors of schools in Mayfield granted certificates to a man known to be intemperate."—*New York Report for* 1843.

It is remarkable that female teachers are in many districts more

numerous than men. Often a man teaches in summer, and a woman in winter. Even boys'-schools are frequently entrusted to women. The idea gains ground, that women are as competent teachers for boys as men. How far economy and a defective idea of education originate such notions, I cannot say; but the fact tells badly for American schools.

27. Pennsylvania and the other States have scarcely any pretensions to offer to the name of Normal schools. If I have not been able to flatter the Americans on the high character of their teachers, I think I have shown the extreme importance of the institutions for training teachers, for which I am at present pleading, by the evil consequences which, in this enlightened country, arise from their almost entire absence, or very imperfect character.

I wish it to be understood, that, in speaking of American education, I have had special reference to the teachers and provisions for training instructors, but not so much to the primary school system. I should willingly testify on another occasion to the excellent effects of American common schools; at the same time, I hold that its connection with Government has proved injurious.

Those who understand the real working of the much-lauded American system, are aware, that though it widely diffuses the common elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic, it has glaring defects. It constantly tends to increasing centralization and Government influence. Permanent endowments in the hands of trustees are substituted for taxation and public representation. A gratuitous admission decreases its value, and produces a most irregular attendance of children, which would be far less if they paid for the teaching received, and can only be remedied under the present system, by making attendance compulsory.

The incompetence and small salary of the teachers, and the failure of Normal schools—the want of religious and moral influence in the school training, and the overbearing jealousy against Voluntary schools, sustained independently of the State system—show that America has yet much to do before her education be adapted to raise up a virtuous and godly republic, or even stand a comparison with the unendowed Voluntary common schools of Britain.

28. We have already seen that the first germ of Normal schools appeared in the school of Pestalozzi, in Switzerland, about 1806. It is satisfactory to know, that a similar institution arose in our own country about the same time, under the Lancasterian system; the

adaptation of which, whether by Joseph Lancaster or Dr. Bell, was about 1808, when was formed the British and Foreign School, and in 1811 the National School Society, which two societies have taken the lead in all English educational movements up to this day. Both these Societies now have extensive Normal schools.

29. That of the British and Foreign School Society is too well known in this city to require a detailed description. In 1818 the Borough-road sent out 45 teachers; in 1828, as many as 87; in 1838, increased to 183; in 1841, no less than 207.

In 1839, a grant of 5,000*l.* was received from Government towards erecting new and commodious buildings. The model-schools of this Institution, its staff of superintendents and tutors, are surpassed by no other seminary in this country,—perhaps in the world.

It is well known that the Committee of this Society has long shown a disposition to ally itself with Government; and that, in a recent deliberative Conference on the new Minutes of Council, a decision was arrived at which (*so soon as it has been confirmed by the next annual meeting in May, a step essential to its validity by the constitution of the Society*) virtually makes the British School Society a medium through which the grants of public money are to be distributed to schools applying. While the constitution of the Society allows the mixture of Voluntary contributions and public grants in its support, we cannot agree to recognise it as a Voluntary Society, nor, consistently with our views, can avail ourselves of the acknowledged advantages of its training establishment. It is with great concern and disappointment that we have witnessed these changes, which constrain us to provide for ourselves Normal schools, in which teachers may be received and trained according to our own principles.

But were the Borough-road School still unconnected with the Government, there would yet remain a serious defect in its arrangement for religious instruction, which would render it requisite for us to make some better provision. I am aware, that many schools connected with this Society are as religiously conducted as we could desire. But at the Normal and model schools the original purpose of steering between religious parties, so as to offend none, is preserved; the Bible is read and taught without explanation—public prayer is inconsistent with the rules of the constitution—and the liberality of the theory is found mischievous in practice. Attempts have been made, it is true, to require a profession of orthodox views,

and a certificate of piety from every candidate for Normal training; but such efforts have only partially succeeded, and have drawn down severe and just animadversions, as a departure from the original and free constitution of the Society. This Society, therefore, while it retains its present constitution, can never take the lead of an expressly Evangelical education. We would gladly indulge the hope, that even yet this valuable Institution—the child of Voluntaryism, and so long the sheet-anchor of the cause of liberal education—may not be lost to liberty, nor become the instrument of Government and the fountain of an irreligious secular education, such as liberal politicians desire to see, cooling down the Methodistic enthusiasm, which, to their disgust and dismay, is fast returning on the common people, and threatening to bring about a general religious fervour through chapels, Dissenters, and Sabbath-schools, and religious Day schools, similar to that which animated England in the Commonwealth, under the Puritans, only of a more enlightened and far less martial kind. I still hope better things of a Society cradled in opposition—inured to conflict—whose success has arisen from its very difficulties, and whose freedom of thought has been boldly maintained—at least till a year or two ago, when its Report thus closed—"Unpledged to any particular system, and by no means exclusively attached to that which is at present adopted, the British and Foreign School Society stands forth as ready to receive as it is anxious to impart. Its sole object is to have the children of the labouring classes taught in the best possible way, and by such methods only as shall appear most likely to effect that end. Its ultimate aim is to render them intelligent and devout students of Holy Scripture, the only book which is "able to make them wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

This Society had projected four additional Normal schools in the provinces, which appear to be delayed for the present.

30. The *National School Society* has several Normal schools. This system is closely connected with the Established Church. Every child learns the Catechism and parts of the Liturgy, and must attend Divine service at church. This Society has Juvenile and Infant schools; and, moreover, it is a Sunday-school Union. I shall afterwards use this fact to show the importance of taking our Sabbath-schools into close connection with our Educational Board. The chief training school of this Society is in the Broadway, Westminster. The Central Infants' school is in Tufton-street, West-

minster. St. Mark's College, Chelsea, under the Rev. Dr. Coleridge, has been recently founded on very superior plans. An interesting Report is furnished by the Rev. J. Allen. It is too young as yet to have had much effect. It had forty pupils. Establishments, also, for training adult teachers, are open at Manchester-buildings, and in Smith's-terrace, in which were sixty masters, and seventy-one mistresses, making up for previous deficiency. Through fear, on the part of the Evangelical party, lest these seminaries should fall into the hands of the Puseyites, a Training school has been opened in Cheltenham, under the Rev. F. Close, the state of which I am not able to describe; but its formation is a sign of the times. Such schools must raise the character of the Church of England education, which, in truth, greatly requires elevation. The *rote* learning of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Commandments, Collects, and often the Articles, occupy the first consideration, leaving room only for a little reading, writing, and ciphering. For a sample of the spirit of this system, I may point to the elementary arithmetic of the Rev. J. C. Wigram, Secretary of the Society, whose questions are formed on the idea of combining Scripture and arithmetic thus ludicrously. In numeration, he asks: "Mesha, king of Moab, was a sheep master, and rendered to the king of Israel 100,000 lambs. 2 Kings iii. 4. Write down the number." In addition,—"Of Jacob's four wives, Leah had six sons; Rachel had two; and Zillah and Billah also two each. How many sons had Jacob?" Also: "There were seven days between the birth of Jesus and his circumcision, and five days from that event to the Epiphany,—the time when the star led the Gentiles to worship the Holy Child. How long was it from the Nativity to the Epiphany?" What can be more unreasonable than such a use of Scripture, or more bewildering than such a mode of teaching arithmetic. Such education needs to be purged of nonsense, and elevated many degrees. Even in the central schools, however, there is much opposition to the introduction of further information. The average attendance of children in the model school, is said to be under a year. The period of training teachers, only a few months. The fear of over-educating the poor, which prevails among the clergy, aristocracy, and country gentry, is a constant clog to the progress of the Society. A new spirit, however, has awakened some of the Church party to the necessity of improvement, if they would keep pace with others, and maintain their hold on the public mind, which is doing much to overcome

old prejudices, and make them earnest and formidable rivals in popular education.

31. There is an admirable Infant Normal school in the Gray's Inn-road, called the Home and Colonial Infant Training School. This society is unsectarian, but has latterly fallen into some connection with the Government schemes. Its plans are, perhaps, the most worthy of imitation, in our view, of any Normal school in England.

The qualification of pupils are founded on the following admirable principle: "*Religious and moral principle.*—As the primary object of Infant schools is to cultivate religious principles and moral sentiments—to awaken the tender mind to a sense of its evil dispositions and habitual failings before it becomes callous by its daily intercourse with vice—and to lead it to that Saviour who so tenderly received such little ones, and blessed them—to accustom them to trace the hand of their heavenly Father in his works of providence and grace, and to be impressed with the truth that his eye is ever on them;—since such is the *primary object*—an object which, if unattempted, infant education is valueless—the Committee consider that, in addition to an unimpeachable *moral* character, *decided piety* is indispensable, and that without it no teacher can be fitted for his work."—*Report.*

A probation of a month is required of all candidates. Their stay in the seminary we think far too short—*twenty weeks.* In 1842, pupils, 194 admitted, and 47 before in the Institute; equal to 241. Of these, 56 had withdrawn, 148 been trained, and 37 remained to next year. There are good model schools. Half-yearly meetings, to discuss education, are held for the benefit of the pupils. The society appointed Mr. Bilby as an inspector of Infant schools, but were compelled to relinquish his valuable services by the expense incurred. One feature of this school deserves attention. Nursery governesses are trained at a reasonable expense, and carry into families the plans here used. This is a most important practice, which should not be lost sight of in our new Congregational movement.

32. There is also in London a Normal school, which sprang from private enterprise, in order to train teachers for industrial schools; but which has lately become completely attached to the National School Society. The account of the origin of this school is very interesting.* In a visit on the Continent by Dr. Kay (now Shuttle-

* Minutes of Council, for 1846.

worth,) and Mr. Tuffnell, they were particularly struck with the school of Vehrli, at Kruitzlingen, and whose plans they describe with a poetic enthusiasm. "Such men," say they, speaking of teachers trained in this school, "we felt assured would go forth cheerfully to their humble village homes to spread the doctrine which Vehrli taught of peace and contentment in virtuous exertion; and men similarly trained appeared to us best fitted for the labour of reclaiming the pauper youth of England to the virtues, and restoring them to the happiness, of her best instructed peasantry." Returning home, they resolved to establish a Normal school, for the supply of good teachers for the schools of our prisons and workhouses. They found a valuable coadjutor in the Hon. and Rev. R. Eden, of Battersea, and obtained suitable premises. In January, 1840, they opened the schools. The pupil teachers were 24, placed there at the expense of some wealthy friends, at the rate of 20*l*. per annum. Two tutors were engaged. A garden of five acres surrounds the house. The detail of the difficulties encountered and overcome, is one of the healthiest educational documents I ever perused. The plans of the institution are excellent. The balance of accounts in 1840, however, showed a debt of its then enterprising reformers of 1,283*l*. Notwithstanding the aid of the Government, and the great success of this experiment, in which 50 pupil teachers were trained, its originators found it too burdensome for private individuals, and have transferred it to the National School Society, under whose control it remains. They never fairly cast it on voluntary benevolence. These are the chief institutions of the kind in London, save our Congregational Normal schools, to which I shall presently advert. In the rural districts of England are a few similar establishments, but not of great standing or merit.

33. In Ireland, the Commissioners of National Education have a large and flourishing Normal school in Tyrone House, Dublin, for the use of which several excellent school-books have been provided.

34. Scotland has several Normal schools of high repute, the chief of which exist in Glasgow and Edinburgh, and originated, not from Government endowments, but from the earnest enterprise of intelligent educationalists like David Stow, of Glasgow, and Pillans and Wood, of Edinburgh.

The Glasgow Training school has been well described by its indefatigable originator, Mr. Stow.

The model school is a juvenile seminary for both sexes, who, as in the Infant schools, are educated together. The formation of character is the main object. The children are under the master's eye, both in the covered and uncovered school-room (as Mr. Stow happily styles the play-ground). He states the fact, that 180 children of the lower classes in Glasgow for five months frequented the play-ground, which is planted with flowers, shrubs, and fruits, without the slightest injury to the garden, or theft of the tempting productions. The Institution includes an Infant school, a juvenile school under fourteen years, and a Normal school. The use of books is discouraged, and the mode of simultaneous lectures to the children in the gallery preferred. After the lecture, the school divides into classes, under monitors, who examine the pupils as to what they remember. These schools received Government grants; but at the disruption in the State Church they took part with the Free Church, and, I believe, stand aloof from the schemes of Government education at present.

A model and Normal school has also been erected in Edinburgh, in connection with Government and the General Assembly.

35. Besides these schools, our own denomination has been the means of founding, since the alarm of Sir J. Graham's Bill, an efficient Normal school in Wales, which it has been lately resolved, at a very spirited conference, to remove from Brecon to Swansea, where it appears likely to enjoy liberal patronage, and to hold to its Voluntary character. Also, we have a very promising Normal school in London, for mistresses, which has already sent out some valuable teachers, and the arrangements of which our Committee are now earnestly labouring to expand and improve.* It is high time to do so: for the Government has already put itself in communication with all the other Normal schools. Irish education is entirely under the State control. But for the Free Church, all the Scotch Normal schools had been affiliated with the Government; and in England the two main societies—the National School Society, and the British School Society—have fallen into the wake of the plans of the Committee of Council. If we would secure our position, as determined

* Mr. Baines calculates that we have in Britain no less than 28 Normal schools, with at least 900 pupil teachers; an amount worthy of compare with continental efforts, and all originating in the Voluntary principle.—*See* Lecture I. of this Course.

supporters of free education, it must be by a prompt and liberal attention to the maintenance of Normal schools of a first-rate character.

36. Few sources of information throw so much light on the animus of the Committee of Council as their correspondence with various Normal schools, which have received grants. These documents show a disposition on the part of the Government to secure all possible power, a reluctance to concede to reasonable demands, and yet a positive anxiety not to break off such negotiations in the outset, by hazarding the refusal of their grants, and the consequent loss of influence. Thus it was only after a lengthened correspondence, that a veto on the appointment of Scotch Inspectors was given to the Committee of the General Assembly. The British School Society most humbly petitioned against being inspected by Church of England Inspectors, admitting, most unworthily, that they could not expect to have a veto like the Scotch, but only asking that the Reports should be submitted to them in writing before being published. They got an abundance of fair promises, but no sight of a *Report*. They accept a grant on condition that they shall be at liberty to refund it at any time, if they are disposed to refuse inspection. Mr. Tremenheere's crushing Report comes out, and is submitted to the Committee. Stung by its depreciating remarks, they at last adopt the bolder tone of threatening to abandon the grant. What reproof do they receive? Forthwith, Lord Wharncliffe gives them the veto already accorded to the Scotch, and, to heal the dreaded breach, 750*l*. per annum is granted in addition.* There is no doubt, therefore, that Government is alive to the importance of securing in their favour these Central Institutions, at whatever cost. Should the influence of the State predominate over Normal schools, a most formidable and growing power over the public mind must ensue.

It is impossible to be blind to the ramified powers over teachers, committees, schools, and parents, which the influence of a Normal school must gradually impart. If held exclusively by the Government, it constitutes a power the more arbitrary and irresponsible, because indirect. We must wrestle hard, in fair competition, to place this influence in the hands of a Voluntary society responsible to public opinion. The last thing to be yielded—the first which has been desired and sought—is the power to train teachers.

* Minutes of Council, for 1845.

If anything could make me regard with less sorrow the embarrassed state of the public funds—the retribution which has begun to fall on a shameless and military expenditure in a time of distress—the significant warning given by our French neighbours, who have forced out the ministry which has been long the tool of despotism, and which vainly sought to repress the just demands of the people for constitutional reform—or even the odious increase of the odious income-tax—it is the hope that an empty treasury may prevent our ministers from achieving their schemes of State centralization, borrowed from the Continent; and that they may learn, from the example over the water, to retreat in time from the effects of irritated public feeling, and let alone their constant officious tampering with commerce, education, and religion.

37. Let me now make a few remarks on the principles most suited to the future conduct of Free Normal schools.

38. I confess I could have wished to see a somewhat wider confederation of all friends of education, who, like ourselves, object to receive Government grants, and who hold evangelical views of religion. But this subject has been fairly discussed, and appears not suited to the temper of the present age. The various evangelical bodies seem as yet disposed to separate, rather than associated, action. This position has been taken, and can scarcely be reconsidered. Let us hope, that advantage may arise out of the emulation of division of labour among smaller and compact bodies; and let us labour to preserve a firm, good understanding,—a comparison of plans, and a readiness to co-operate, among the several denominations labouring in this field; otherwise the country will exhibit a patch-work supply of education, irregular as to its provision, its character, and its results. If these evils are watched against, the different societies may animate, impel, and imitate each other—sowing with each other broad-cast in the spring, and rejoicing with each other in reaping the autumn harvest.

39. Sure I am, that not the Directors of a Missionary Society ought to be more thoroughly penetrated with a sense of responsibility, and need of Divine assistance, than those who form a Board of Management for rearing a new generation for the service of God and the improvement of human society. They should be men of intelligent piety, men of prayer, of sound, tried wisdom, of educational experience, and they should engage in so sacred an undertaking with an earnest devotion to it of their utmost energies. Their primary concern must be, to fill existing schools with good teachers.

Reliance must not be placed on the offer of better salaries to teachers alone. The only way to raise the character of teachers is to raise their training. Then a model will be afforded for the imitation of local schools. Instructors will be annually sent forth into the country, well fitted to improve the tone of education, to raise public feeling to a juster appreciation of educational labour and results; and public feeling thus raised, would re-act on the selection of masters; for a people who had once been accustomed to good teachers would never again be content with an inferior class. An effective Normal school, then, is an essential pre-requisite to all improvement, or even to the retaining our present position. We have made a beginning, but our institution is as yet quite imperfect and immature. Let us try to conceive a *beau-ideal* of the training school with which we can be satisfied.

40. Many persons who have seen the Borough-road School, and pictures of the splendid buildings of the National schools and Scotch Normal schools, at once see, in imagination, rising in some fashionable part of London, a large, elegant, and costly architectural structure, which may bear on its imposing front the inscription, "*Congregational Normal Schools.*" I do not object to tasteful buildings suited to the object, and within the means; often, in a large and new edifice, beauty is quite consistent with true economy. But, after all, in schools and chapels, the beauty is in the moral work effected by them, not in the building. These sumptuous erections were the snares which made Government grants necessary, and for which they have been received. Let us free ourselves of this ambition, and be content with external plainness, that we may expend all our available resources on the internal efficiency of the institution. Some roomy, old-fashioned house, with enlargement, may suffice to send forth teachers as well fitted for their work as if they heard lectures in a classic theatre, took meals in a spacious hall, slept in the most commodious dormitories, and were ranged for daily worship in a splendid chapel appropriated to their use.

41. As to model schools, we have already in London some Congregational schools admirably fitted for this purpose, as at Bermondsey and at Stepney, the chief expense of which might be spared by locating the Normal school in their neighbourhood.

42. I am by no means an advocate for gratuitous, or even overcheap education, either for children or teachers. In most of the Normal schools the young people board at the seminary, paying

according to a fixed rate. In Edinburgh they do not all board under the roof. At the Borough-road there are, I believe, two rates of charge, 12s. or 6s. a week. At the Glasgow Training School the students support themselves, and pay a fee of 3*l*. 3s. on entrance. I would not seek to cheapen down our Normal schools. The depressed state of our colleges for the ministry is, in my opinion, owing mainly to the subscriptions of the public going to defray the board and lodging of the students, instead of obtaining for them the best literary and theological advantages. Let us spend as much of our income as possible in forming the character of the future educator, and as little as possible charge ourselves with the burden of his physical wants. Underselling other institutions in this respect must bring its own retribution; for the less you charge pupils for their own maintenance, the less advantages can you afford them in the great purpose for which they resort to the Normal school.

43. No central Normal school is complete without three distinct branches—the Juvenile Masters' Department, and Boys' Model School; the Juvenile Mistresses' and Girls' Model School, and the Model Infant School, with both male and female pupil-teachers.

We are now expanding our efforts so as to have a Normal school for masters as well as mistresses; but hitherto nothing has been said of an *Infant Normal School.* I cannot suppose that this deficiency is designed, and I feel sure that it ought to be at once removed, and the infant school effort be undertaken along with the others. The Scotch and the National School Society combine them, and they are found to strengthen each other, and play into each other's hands. Juvenile schools, without infant schools to feed them, and prepare for them, are at great disadvantage. In many places an infant school may be kept up, and after a time the elder children retained, where a juvenile school would have no chance, from the early age at which children go to work. In the Normal school, some pupil-teachers, who show no tact for juvenile children, are found well qualified to take charge of infants, and the reverse. Were the institutions connected, an exchange might in such cases be made. In the training of infant-school teachers, we should have but one or two competing institutions—the Home and Colonial, and the National school, both under Government influence. There is ample room in this field for all, and the want of a liberal establishment of the kind has been long felt, and would, I fear not, prove successful.

44. It has long been felt that our Sunday-schools need improve-

ment, and often has the idea been suggested of model Sunday-schools, in which all improved methods might be tried and shown in practice. The British School Society, from its constitution, could not enter on this field. The National School Society unites this with its other efforts, in some measure. At Battersea, the pupil-teachers are instructed in the management of a Church Sunday-school—in certain matters of parochial business, and even in playing the organ. Generally speaking, I am averse from expecting a Day schoolmaster to teach in a Sabbath school; but very often they both can, and will do so, of their own accord, and often would have a class of their own elder monitors on the Sunday, which might be of the utmost value to our Churches. But on Sunday there is no reason why the model schools of the Central Seminary should not be turned into Sabbath schools—boys', girls', and infant, and such of the pupil-teachers as were willing to devote part of the Sabbath to this purpose, practised in teaching. The novel institution already found so useful in many quarters—an Infant Sabbath school—would be improved, and the idea spread wherever it is yet unknown. No means could be more powerful in aid of our educational effort than the linking closely together our Day with our Sabbath schools. They would thus react on each other for mutual improvement. Never be it forgotten, that the Sabbath school was the pioneer of daily education for the people, and should be held in grateful esteem by all educationalists: of course I do not intend to suggest that our Day scholars should be forced or unduly enticed into our chapels or Sabbath schools, but merely that the two agencies for educating the people should be harmonised and combined.

45. We are then to suppose our operations thus expanded, our school buildings ready, and our model schools near at hand. What should be the internal arrangements? The model schools, with their master and mistresses, may be left out of the question. It is, however, very important that a due control should be possessed over these by the Board of Education, or that the Committee of the schools, which may be adopted as model schools, should be one in which perfect confidence is felt, otherwise the operations of the Normal school may be seriously impeded and thwarted. The Normal school itself will require a principal and a matron resident in the house, and having charge respectively—one, of the male teachers and the entire educational proceedings of the institution, and the other, of the female teachers and the domestic arrangements. Various

masters and mistresses for different branches of instruction are needed. Lecture-room, sitting-room for pupil-teachers, and sleeping-rooms must be provided. And so the establishment in its outline is before you.

The director of such an institution should be a sort of embodiment in his own person of the principles on which it is founded. His chief business is to lecture, and exercise the pupils in the art and practice of teaching. This is done by giving them instruction on the methods and objects of teaching, the general history and condition of education in other countries, the most recent improvements in different branches of the art,—into all which remarks there should be ever infused such a moral and religious spirit, as may mould and influence the character to higher aims than those of mere secular training. The lessons should usually open with a prayer. His intercourse with the pupils out of the lecture-room is a most important means of benefit. It should be affectionate, improving, and religious in its tone. The director should be familiar with the private views and feelings of his pupils. He should visit them by turns in their own room, or have them into his, for the purpose of labouring to arouse them to the most eminent attainments, in their chosen calling, for the service of religion and their country. He may sometimes read and pray with them, taking kind notice of their difficulties—reproving, instructing, and encouraging them—entering into their personal circumstances and prospects—seeking to win their confidence—watching over their health and character with affectionate interest. His connection with them in the Normal school should be of such a character as to secure their grateful affection through life, and make them ever ready to have recourse to this early faithful friend and adviser in future difficulties. The matron, also, should be capable of similar influence over the female teachers; not a mere housekeeper, but one whose intercourse may prove quickening to the pupils who are in daily contact with her. The same may be said of all the masters employed. May our Normal schools be fortunate in obtaining the services of thoroughly qualified and devoted labourers, who cannot desire a nobler sphere, and may expect, in success, a rich reward!

46. The admission of pupils requires the greatest vigilance. Those candidates must be selected who are most likely to advance the character of education. Those who assume the position of teachers mainly for a livelihood, must not be encouraged. Those

who have no marked capability for the work, or who, whatever tact they possess, have no decidedly religious motive for undertaking it, must not find admission. Let the Board place little reliance on recommendations or certificates, but use every exertion to make personal and indirect inquiries, and rely much more on a judicious examination in their own presence. Few persons have courage enough to refuse recommendations if solicited, though they doubt, or are quite ignorant of the person's worth who asks them. Pastors cannot do a kinder thing to a young person, whose gifts are not striking, than to dissuade rather than encourage any application. The present system, according to which ministers sign their names and give testimonials, simply because they see that others have done the same, or to relieve themselves of trouble, is a disgrace to us as a body, and renders this kind of recommendation of none effect.

After all, the best test, next to a strict personal examination, is a month's probation; after which the case should be again examined formally, and decided. Timidity as to consequences should never induce managers to relax these requirements. To keep up the high character of their seminary is of far more ultimate importance than the losing a few mediocre applicants. Beside moral and religious character, natural good temper, active habits, fondness for children, and aptness to teach, as well as a good measure of general information to begin with, are very desirable in every pupil-teacher. At first, it may be difficult to find those who come up to such a mark; but the very setting up of the standard would soon gather a sufficient number around it, and when once the character of the educator is thus raised, an incomparable pattern would be exhibited to the country and the world. It is requisite, that the teachers should be trained beyond the point of intellectual attainment absolutely necessary; for no one teaches well what he knows, unless he knows a good deal more than he teaches. The pupils must practise teaching under the eye of the director in the model-schools. They should be trained to bear the criticism of their masters and fellow-teachers. At other times they should be left alone with a class. The period of residence at the Normal school should be fixed, and should not be less than two years. Some provision should be made to insure the services of those who leave the training school, for at least two or three years after the close of their preparatory course, or for the refunding of the expense incurred by the Institution in their preparation. So it might be reasonably hoped the services of a large

number of well-qualified persons would be obtained, and they would go forth, year by year, in more numerous companies, "full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom," to reproduce, by the grace of God, in various localities, what they had witnessed and assisted to sustain in the model schools. One such institution as this would effect a more salutary and radical change in our entire educational system, than the most unsparing profusion of schools scattered over the country, and retaining the present deficient objects and methods of popular improvement.

47. I have now done. I have sought to explain the proper character of a Normal school—the elevation required before the educator takes his right place in society—the utility of Normal schools in accomplishing that elevation, and the history of these institutions from Pestalozzi to the present day, in Europe and America, as well as in our own country. I have also ventured to suggest an immediate expansion of our Congregational Normal schools, to meet the present emergency, especially the speedy formation of a Normal school for training infant-school teachers. I would urge the expending on these efforts the main resources of our educational movements. I doubt not the gentlemen of the Board, and its officers, and the chief friends of education among us, are fully alive to the importance of training first-rate teachers. But possibly some of our ministers and people, looking anxiously to their local schools, may overlook, unless reminded, the imperative need of helping to maintain, in full vigour, that central institution, on whose efficiency must depend the character of all provincial schools, because it moulds their teacher. Let me entreat our wealthier friends, both in town and country, to contribute heartily and largely to this effort, remembering that in our present state it is more true than ever that "*Bis dat qui cito dat.*" On the whole, I regard the call on us to support our Normal schools peculiarly in this day of struggle for freedom of teaching, as scarcely inferior to the high claim of our colleges for the education of the ministry.

48. Congregational Dissenters, suffer the word of exhortation. We are committed to a noble but arduous stand for liberty, both of education and religion. We are entering on an encounter with formidable and numerous antagonists. The vast preponderance of influence, both in Church and State, is combined with a desperate eagerness to prevent the prevalence of our ecclesiastical principles. Our cause we feel to be good and right. The signs of the times are

in our favour. Our predecessors had not our opportunity to gain public attention. The time they were biding has at last arrived. If in this crisis we are to play the part of Christian men, it must be with sacrifice. For a time popularity may depart. As we gain a real power, our sense of weakness and the abusive opposition of opponents will increase. When we are decided, waverers will leave us offended. We shall be shaken and sifted. The burden may fall heavily on the property, character, and interests of those who are thoroughly earnest. Some may die before the triumph comes. Yet faith in a cause allied so closely with the honour of our religion, and the liberties of our fatherland, shall not be disappointed.

Some there are, I grieve to say, who would sound a retreat; who affect, most untruly, to represent a large disaffected minority; who expose to our opponents an exaggerated picture of our weakness and divisions; who provoke jealousies and heart-burnings amongst us; who blame our intemperate zeal, and boast their superior moderation; who bid us conceal our obnoxious principles, from a prudent regard to circumstances; who excite prejudice by declaring that we are neglecting to build the Church of Christ, in order to pull down other church systems, and that Dissent is now declining through the new rash policy of avowing our ultimate designs, wholly unmindful of its collapsed condition during the previous years of moderation and reserve. What though these unworthy attacks come backed by the grave authority of men of learning, character, and experience, who profess to befriend us! Here, in the heart of London, I lift my humble voice against the injurious and disheartening counsels of all such timorous spirits. Had our enemies spoken thus it were natural, but our friends—

> "Who would not laugh if such a man there be?
> Who would not weep if Atticus were he?"

Why conceal our principles, unless we are ashamed of them? Why fear to bring down the assaults and sacrifices which Truth ever expects her servants bravely to endure? Let us hold fast Christian charity, self-possession, and a reverential subordination of our own views to the will of the Most High. But let us not shrink. Remember Mordecai's motto, sent to Queen Esther in a fearful crisis, reminding her that influence bestowed by Heaven brings with it responsibility:—"*For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews*

from another place, but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed; and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this!" Divine Providence prepared our forefathers, even according to the infidel Hume, to save the civil liberties of Englishmen. "*Who knoweth*" whether he hath brought us to our peculiar and trying position for a similar noble purpose. If any smile at our apparent boasting, let him think that God has made us the depositaries of certain principles which seem destined to overthrow the present tottering ecclesiastical Establishments; and the same God can endow us with grace to become the means, in his hand, of producing the greatest changes. Great occasions have ever been the nursery of magnanimous and heroic conduct. The heroism of the Greek character was formed in the furnace of the Persian invasion. When the innumerable host of Xerxes threatened, by land and sea, to sweep the people from their ancestral soil, then discords ceased; a national feeling arose; Athenian celerity and inventiveness blended with Spartan fixedness and resolution; a combined devotion of property and person was called forth by stern necessity, from which the formidable foe at last recoiled.

We Congregationalists must pass through the furnace to become worthy of success. The present crisis may, under the Divine blessing, impart to us, as a body, that elevation of character and breadth of purpose which only can qualify us and our descendants to wield, with wisdom and purity, the influence which must accrue when our views become prevalent. This education struggle is our present battle-field. I look upon these Normal schools as a Thermopylæ, where a few brave hearts may rally, and succeed in repulsing from a free territory the encroachments of a powerful host. And I rejoice that we are not without a Leonidas, who, by his incomparable exertions,—his sacrifice of personal connections and interests,—his able, temperate, and unflinching advocacy of free education, at the very moment when it was both most difficult and most necessary,—has shown how much one man of resolute purpose may do in stemming the current of popular feeling. Fear not but, in the long run, a free education will work better, and be more popular, than Government schools. But, whatever the issue, it is our part to make the experiment, and to preserve our Voluntary schools to the last, in the face of the most overpowering competition. To this end, let our chief efforts be directed towards *the training of the best teachers, in the largest possible numbers.*

49. I cannot forbear from addressing a closing word or two to TEACHERS OF SCHOOLS, OR CANDIDATES FOR THAT OFFICE. Ponder well, I beseech you, my friends, which system will tell best in the end on your profession. No doubt, to you as individuals, advantageous offers may present inducements to accept public money. But are you sure whether by doing so even the remuneration of your services will be permanently increased? Will not the grant which Government gives go rather to save the money of the subscribers than to afford you any additional help? So it has been with the Irish Regium Donum, which has shamefully diminished the free contributions to the ministers' salaries from Presbyterian congregations. It is already reported to have been so in schools which have taken the Government grants. On the Voluntary principle, the salaries of teachers have been constantly rising and must rise, while the Government bounty, if it raises them a little at first, will fix them at a stationary point ever after. But you do not regard pecuniary interests as a paramount consideration. Look then, into the public reports of Government. Inspect, and ask yourselves, to what a stretch of power the influence of these gentlemen may not be carried, and how little independence will remain to teachers subject to it. To please a Committee may be hard enough, but how will you deal with a single Inspector, from whom you have no practicable appeal? who can at once dissatisfy your supporters with your labours, and may hinder you from gaining a fresh situation? If you enter a Normal school connected with the State, you will become through life part and parcel of a system which, though it appear liberal and generous in the outset, claims and possesses the power to rob you of all independence, to ruin your prospects if you resist, and which must become (as in other lands) more and more grasping and arbitrary as it consolidates its power, and loses fear of provoking dangerous resistance. Look at the clergy of this and other lands who have become endowed by the State. At first some independence, and the form of self-government, was left to them; but in process of time, that honourable profession has been stripped of all ecclesiastical power—burdened by oaths and other restrictions—bound hand and foot by the power and bribes of human governments. The forms of liberty remain in Established churches, but only as the objects of sad ridicule and deserved mockery to all intelligent observers; while the real power is exercised by worldly politicians, who tighten rather than relax the reins of usurped authority. Let

the day-school teacher, who is no hireling, but who honours and loves his profession, avoid the snare which has written "Ichabod" on the *endowed* clerical profession, lest a like degradation befal the educator also.

And, brethren, in a day when absurd panics of invasion—of wars, and rumours of wars—have directed public attention to the weight of martial taxation, the sin of national warfare, the folly of mural and armed defences, let those who are anxious to avert any recurrence to the horrors and atrocities of European war, employ the season of peace yet more earnestly in cultivating the intelligence of the masses of the people, and so throwing round our native land the best of all bulwarks—that sound Christian education which has been well called "THE CHEAP DEFENCE OF NATIONS!"

LECTURE V.

LECTURE V.

ON THE NON-INTERFERENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT WITH POPULAR EDUCATION.

BY EDWARD MIALL, ESQ.

Introductory and apologetic remarks—Limited view of the State Educationists—Their mode of dealing with the subject protested against—The question stated—Compulsory provision for education objected to—1. As displacing a confessedly superior system of means—2. As involving consequences too great for calculation—3. As retrogressive in its character—4. As offering no guarantee for the fulfilment of its promises—5. As likely to enervate social philanthropy, and lower the tone of public spirit—6. As condemned by experience—7. As essentially unjust—8. As opposed to the general tenor of God's moral administration—Concluding summary.

THE subject assigned to me for exposition by the Committee who arranged for the present series of Lectures was described by them in the following words:—"The Non-interference of the Government with Popular Education." If, guided by a reference to the other topics selected by them for treatment, and in the absence of a more exact specification of their plans, I have correctly caught their meaning, it is this—That it is neither the duty of Civil Government, nor would it be for the interest of its subjects, to make legal provision for the education of the people. This, at any rate, is the conclusion to which it will be my aim to conduct you.

I can most unfeignedly aver that I enter upon my undertaking with great diffidence. I would fain have shrunk from it, if my conscience would have permitted me. In many respects, I feel

myself to be ill-qualified to do it justice. Amidst the pressure of other engagements, I fear that my visits to the abstract truth, at whose shrine I bow my reason, have been too hurried, and, therefore, too irreverential to allow of a full and satisfying insight into its more hidden mysteries. I could have wished to have given to the contemplation of it a mind, at once calm, free, earnest, and undistracted—and not to have come forth from its presence until my whole intellect and heart had become penetrated by its light, and baptized with its spirit. I look upon the theme as involving in it principles of the grandest import, the reception of which by nations is an earnest of indefinite progress, the rejection of which is a sentence of perpetual wandering to and fro—in relation to which belief will conduct them at last to "a land flowing with milk and honey"—disbelief, leave them to "perish in the wilderness." Hence, I am painfully sensible, how likely it is that the question should prove too lofty for my reach, and too comprehensive for my grasp; and I candidly confess, that if sense of obligation would but have overlooked the cowardice, inclination would have prompted me to give my task the slip.

Let me not, however, be misunderstood. Painfully alive as I am to the deficiencies under which I labour, in this attempt to make good the position assigned me to defend, I have not the smallest misgiving as to the soundness of the position itself. With all my consciousness of the fallibility of human judgment, and with the readiest and heartiest recognition of the authority, learning, and talent arrayed against me, I feel myself entitled to declare, that my convictions on the subject are settled, and, I think, unchangeable. This profession, I am aware, savours somewhat of presumption; but unless a modest estimate of our own powers binds us to surrender at discretion any or all knowledge which we hold to be morally certain, at the bidding of superior intellect, or, it may be, pre-eminent virtue, I think I may retain my humility without letting go my confidence. A child upon a hill-top may see the relative bearings of the objects outspread before him more clearly than a philosopher at its base. That the advocates of a compulsory provision for the education of the people are wrong, I have no more doubt than I have that some of their premises are right; but the whole strain of their argument convinces me that they look at the question from a low position. I impugn not their motives—I am far from underrating their ability—but I do say, in no faltering accents, that from

the ground of immediate and temporary expediency, they cannot command a view of the whole subject before them. How the means of elementary education may most speedily overtake the wants of the people, however important an inquiry, is not one the answer to which should be held to decide the propriety of Government interference. And here, as it seems to me, is the radical error of our opponents. Their benevolence is in a hurry. The eyes of their judgment are bedimmed with the tears of their sympathy. Themselves rejoicing in the abundance of pleasure and profit resulting from education, and feeling acutely for the privations of the ignorant, they burn to impart to others what they value for themselves with all the haste which human possibilities will admit of. Like over-fond parents, they wish to stimulate the mind of their country into precocious development, forgetting, in the excess of their affectionate concern, that by a general law, admitting of but few exceptions, precocity of all kinds is followed by an early death.

I must protest, therefore, at the very outset of this discussion, against the claim of any conclusion to be regarded as final, which covers nothing more than the proof of a clear want, and a plan adapted to supply that want. I protest against the wrong done to my reason, when I am told, here is a terrible evil, and here are means by which it may be removed, and am bidden at the same moment to overleap all the considerations which lie between the want and the proposed method of removal. I may have physical demonstration of the inconveniences attendant upon an ulcerated limb, and I may have satisfactory evidence that it may be cured by the use of Holloway's ointment; but, surely I am not bound thereupon to admit, that a resort to such a remedy must be the dictate of far-seeing wisdom. I might inquire, for instance, before looking upon the question as finally closed, whether the ingredients of that much-advertised medicine, are such as prudence would consent to put in contact with my constitution—whether the sores it is capable of drying up may not be symptoms of a disease which it is sure to aggravate—and whether, whilst it does what it undertakes to do, it will not also do something else, which was not "set down in the bond," and in comparison of which, I would prefer to endure my pain and my infirmity for a few months longer. It is to the solution of inquiries precisely analogous to these, that I propose to devote the few remarks which follow. I am not here to deny the existence, nor the virulence of the festering complaint, although I take

leave to remark, in passing, that when partizans describe Englishmen as "the worst educated people in Europe," their tone of exaggeration suggests the idea of a beggar in quest of alms, rather than of a physician soberly stating his judgment of a case. Nor do I undertake to point out to you the efficiency of another and more natural agency of cure; this has already been done by one pre-eminently qualified in all respects for his work. My business, as I conceive, is this—I have to consider whether, taking for granted the worst of these representations which have been made to us of popular ignorance, and assuming virtue in the specific recommended, a wise people should consent to remove the one by the application of the other—whether there are not some great laws of mind and of Providential government which, in doing this, we should violate, and the violation of which will entail penalties more to be dreaded than those which past neglect have brought upon us,—whether, in a word, we should do well to listen to the advice of men who propose to alleviate present misery, without paying any very solicitous regard to prospective and remote consequences. Our opponents may be considered as counsel for the present generation. I stand here as counsel for posterity. They call for an instant suppression of a crying grievance. I ask for a wise suppression of it. They appeal to the specialties of the case. I appeal to broad, general, indefeasible principles.

I believe it is common for Englishmen, before they fight, to strip; for soldiers, before they lay siege to a fortress, to clear away the brushwood by which it is surrounded; and for lovers of truth to disencumber their argument of all those extraneous questions, which tend to perplex the judgment. I will try, then, to make bare, definite, and palpable, the point at issue.

It may be as well, at the outset, to state, that I shall have no occasion to put this audience to the trouble of drawing a distinction between secular and religious education—a distinction so easily laid down on paper, and so impossible to be preserved in practice. It will content me, so far as the present question is concerned, to understand by the term "education" the communication of desirable knowledge, and the formation of praiseworthy habits. This, I imagine, to be a fair statement of the good sought to be imparted, whether by the Government, or by any other organized agency. Neither do I intend to push my opponents to a strict definition of what is meant by popular education. It is quite certain, that to the

eye of a statesman attempting to reduce theory to practice, and words to things, a grave difficulty might be seen to lurk under the term. Is he to give education to the people, irrespectively of their worldly circumstances, to rich and poor alike; or is he to select the poor only, and, if so, where is he to draw the line of demarcation? I repeat it, I will dispense with the advantage which common sense might wrest from our opponents, by these and similar demands for further and more precise information. I will suppose this information to have been furnished—I will suppose the word "popular," or "national," when employed to designate the precise range within which a compulsory provision of the means of instruction is expected to bear fruit, to exclude all who can afford to educate their own children, and to include those only who are absolutely dependent upon help from without. Further, I will allow the advocates of Government interference—and herein I shall be far more liberal to them than the Legislature, whose aid they invoke—to choose their own plan, to construct their own machinery, to appoint their own officers, schoolmasters, and monitors, and to preside in every parish or district over their own schools. So far as I can avoid it, I will give them no opportunity of setting aside all my reasoning—the good, the bad, and the indifferent alike—by telling me that it is directed against the theory of a State system of education, whereas they contend merely for a National system. Government interference I will assume to mean nothing more than a legal provision of the means of desirable instruction for those who cannot secure them for themselves. And now I come to the point to be determined. A certain, and, in accordance with my concessions, a clearly defined portion of the community are wholly destitute of the means of suitable instruction. On what principle is that destitution to be met?—on the principle of moral and religious obligation, or on the principle of legal authority? Granting, not as a fact, but simply as an argument, that the force of "you ought" has not sufficed as yet to remove the evil, is it wise, is it just, is it, in the long run, kind to resort, for that purpose, to the force of "you shall?" With all the emphasis which strong conviction can give to expressive language, I answer "No!"

I am quite conscious that this answer is of little worth unless backed by an array of good substantial reasons, and that its dignity will be measured by the train of argument at its back. To marshal these before the judgment of this audience constitutes the burden of

this evening's task. Whilst engaged in this work, I venture to bespeak your patience and your candour. It may be, that considerations which have left an indelible impression upon my mind, may fail to plant a trace of their power upon the minds of others. Yet, perhaps, it will not be deemed unbecoming in me to remark, that, on high moral questions, the weight of an argument is not always to be calculated from the degree of pressure felt from it by the understanding. Where all the habits and exercises of thought have been called into activity, by what we term the practical business of life, it is only natural that men should exhibit a toughness of mental texture, which makes them insensible to the force of abstract moral speculation. It may be, also, that in an opposite case, that force may be unconsciously over-rated. All, therefore, that remains for me to do, is to submit to you, in order, the views which have guided me to the conclusion I maintain, and leave you to decide, after a careful examination of them, whether you can trust them to conduct you to the same point.

The first thought which beckons me in the direction of my final decision, is suggested by the spontaneous concession of our opponents. I find them forward to admit, that the education of the young devolves originally upon the parent, and that any lack of power in the parent to discharge his trust would be more fitly supplied, supposing it to be supplied at all, by benevolence, than by authority. They say, that if the force of "you ought" were but adequate to do the whole work of education, it were unquestionably to be preferred to the force of "you shall." True, some who have conceded this in terms, recal it in their argument, and claim for the poor man the luxury of demanding the education of his offspring as a right rather than a boon. I will not stay to test the validity of this claim, further than to ask from what source a man with nine shillings a week, and who may be taken, for argument sake, to come just within the line of destitution, derives his right to require from his neighbour, with ten shillings a week, who stands on the other side of the line, to contribute in taxation to the instruction of his children? Setting aside, then, this novel and over-stretched claim as empty flourish, I ask, whether the admission generally made, that Voluntary benevolence, if it were but up to the mark, is superior as a moving power to magisterial authority, does not imply something worth consideration? Either there is a virtue in this agency which cannot be discovered in that, or there is a defect or danger in that

which does not attach itself to this. Whether a sense of moral and religious obligation works the machinery of popular education more kindly,—whether it elicits and exercises more nobleness of soul, or gives freer scope to the play of generous affections,—whether its movements are less clumsy, and are capable of readier adaptation to changing circumstances,—or whether legislative intervention imports some elements of danger, deadens some laudable sensibilities, or drains its vitality from a spirit of self-reliance, it is not necessary for me to decide in the present state of the argument. My immediate business is with the concession itself,—with the recognised superiority in kind of "ought" over "shall," as a moving force in the matter of national education. It occurs to me, as I should presume it will occur to every thoughtful mind, to inquire what is the exigency which dictates a resort from the one to the other. The Voluntary principle, it is said, cannot overtake the evil calling for removal. Now, what does this mean? That it cannot overtake the evil this year, or next, or within twenty years, or within fifty? What are the broad features of its past history? Until a very recent date, it did whatever work was done, single-handed and alone, —did it, too, when fashion and authority opposed its influence, and sneered at it for its pains and perseverance. Well, has education advanced under its auspices,—and is it still advancing? Instances, no doubt, may be adduced, of efforts here and there given up, or of periods of exhaustion after particular outbreaks of spasmodic excitement and exertion. But draw not your inferences from the wavelets that ripple at your feet. The tide may be steadily rising, though the pebble you saw covered but just since is now left dry. Calculate by some surer marks. Cast your eye back some twenty years. Are the means of education fewer, in proportion to the population, now than they were then? Is the question less prominent than it was, or does it excite less interest than it did? Are there more or fewer readers,—an increased or diminished supply of books, papers, and periodicals? Are the working classes, on the whole, more brutal in their tastes, or less intelligent and enlightened than they were? Or, comparing the last five years of the twenty with the first, can it be averred, that sense of moral obligation in this particular matter is less general, less powerful, or less active than it was? I am not afraid of the answer. The pen of history has written it, and the world has yet to witness the effrontery which would tear out the leaf. Mark now the demand that is made upon

us! Two generations have scarcely passed away since England awoke to the importance of educating the poorer classes. Spontaneous benevolence commenced the work,—carried it on, spite of numerous difficulties and powerful opposition,—is still active, energetic, and, I may add, augmenting, both in power and in skill. Do you really believe, in the face of all this evidence, that what yet remains to be done can never be accomplished by this same system of agency,—a system which you admit to be preferable in kind to that of magisterial or legal compulsion? Let *your* faith, however, be what it may, *ours* roots itself in a knowledge and experience of the past. We cling to the confessedly superior system, and doubt whether "ought," which is prospering in its work, can be prudently thrust aside by "shall," simply because it has not yet completed it; because, although advancing by rapid strides, it is not "as swift as meditation or the thoughts of love." You point us to much yet remaining to be done,—to much more than Government itself can do in a trice; but we will take leave to question whether the ulterior and less difficult stages of the enterprise ought to be handed over for achievement to a totally opposite principle of agency to that which accomplished the earlier and the more arduous. We do not say that out of the concessions of our opponents we can fairly extract a justification of our refusal to admit compulsory aid; but we say that, viewed in juxta-position with the history of popular education in this country, they may well make us pause, and think further before we finally commit ourselves.

And here a second and still graver thought forces itself upon our consideration. The advocates of a legal provision for the education of the poor call for the adoption of a change so entire, so vast, so fraught with new elements of influence and contingencies of peril, that we must be excused for asking them if they really know and appreciate what they are about. Let us look at it first in miniature. Is it too much to assert, that individual character is largely, is incalculably affected, for good or for evil, by the kind of force which is brought to bear upon it, in order to the determination of conduct? Is not every one aware, that when the moving power is from within, the wheels, if I may so express it, which it sets agoing, and which direct and regulate, whilst they transmit it to its chosen end, are the main elements of virtue? and that, when the moving power is from without, the whole mechanism of mind is superseded as useless? Why, what is the essential distinction between a freeman and a

slave, but simply this, that the personal conduct of the one is prompted by his will, that of the other dictated by authority? The two states differ most materially, not merely in the class of enjoyments each will yield, but in the kind of virtues which they admit of. *No* moral change can happen to a man calculated more extensively to affect his destiny, than that which removes him from the sphere of "you ought" to that of "you shall." It brings the growth of his character under subjection to an entirely opposite set of conditions. Most of the impulses which before moved him become useless. All the exercises of thought, desire, prudence, judgment, self-command, and the like, are thrown out of gear. To the whole extent to which he is under external pressure and constraint, he ceases to be a living soul—he is nothing more than a structure of complex animal mechanism.

Now, we take the liberty to ask our opponents when, in relation to one great department of social responsibility and duty, they aim to transfer a whole nation from the dominion of the one force to that of the other—from the self-moving power of moral obligation to the external power of legal authority—whether they possess any certain means of measuring the extent of the moral change they are seeking to effect? Few of them, we suspect, have seriously taken this into account. They talk loudly of the impolicy, the cruelty, the danger of leaving so large a section of the community as are now devoid of the means of instruction in their present state of helpless ignorance; but have they, in that spirit of manliness which dares to look on both sides of the question, pondered the result upon, not a fragment of society, however large, but society itself—of placing it under what may be called a new dispensation? Why, in reach and duration of influence over national character, I cannot conceive of any merely political revolution that might bear comparison with it. How far it would ultimately reverse the current of thought—the seeds of what novel habits it would sow—what modifying power it would exert upon the sympathies—or what sort of effect it might have upon sense of obligation—are problems of solemn moment where a great nation is concerned; of far more solemn moment, though, perhaps, not generally so felt, than any change in the form of civil government. I do not determine, at this stage of the discussion, whether the alteration would be for weal or woe. My purpose, just now, is simply to draw attention to its magnitude. Men have talked so glibly, and even jestingly, about it, that we are in danger of con-

tracting the notion, that nothing more serious is involved than more or fewer schoolmasters—a better or a worse provision for the instruction of the poor. The truth, however, is, that the proposal put before us is nothing less than that, to an immense extent, we should shift the axis of social morality, and that, whereas, so far as care of the mind and morals of our neighbour is concerned, it once turned upon sense of responsibility, it shall turn, for the future, upon legal compulsion. Without deciding whether this be right or wrong, we say the change recommended is so vast, so incapable of accurate measurement, that, before we could be brought to accede to it, we must see a much stronger case of necessity than any which has yet been made out, and laid before the public. We are not disposed to try this tremendous experiment upon national character merely to put forward the cause of education by a few years.

I advance another step in the argument: I submit, that the transference of educational movement, so warmly urged, from the basis of Voluntary exertions to that of law, is not only a change of inconceivable vastness, but one which carries us in a backward direction. It deliberately sentences the nation to sit on a lower form. Hitherto, the progress of humanity has been upwards—from passive submission to power, to cheerful and willing obedience to truth. Just in proportion as the wise and far-reaching combinations of Providential government have developed man, just in that proportion have they elevated him into the region of individuality, and taught him to find his impelling motives in his own conscience and affections. That he might be governed by truth rather than by power, would seem to be the leading purpose of revealed religion. Hence, Christianity has exhibited truth to him in forms of loveliness so attractive, of adaptation to his wants so complete and cognizable, of mastery over his affections so potent and transforming, that, wherever it is received, it supersedes the action of law from without, by implanting a stronger and more generous law within. And it is worthy of remark, that all the arrangements of Providence are adjusted upon the principle of calling out into daily exercise this inner and individual life. The stage upon which we are placed is crowded with opportunities inviting it to action—all its appropriate exercises are accompanied by pleasure—all its neglects entail penalty. Within the range of his capabilities, each man is made responsible for the progress and welfare of the world; each has his post, his influence, his power over other minds, his share of social importance. The

first, the most natural, and, in the long run, the most effective, appeal of want and misery for help and alleviation, is to individual sympathy and sense of social obligation. No favourable response to that appeal can be given without improving and ennobling the nature of him that gives it. Society trained up under such an arrangement —encouraged, on the one hand, by the ample rewards which follow the discharge of obligation, and disciplined, on the other, by the sharp penalties incurred by neglect, gradually gets the better of its selfishness, becomes more thoughtful, acquires a greater sensibility of conscience, and drops, one after another, as not only useless but cumbersome, most of those severe restraints and appliances of coercion which it once judged to be absolutely indispensable.

Looking at the nature of the human mind, at the general principles of Providential government, and at the spirit and tenor of heaven-born Christianity, it may be safely affirmed that law, as law, is "a beggarly element of the world;" that in its operation upon human nature it advances none of the great ends of man's probation —elicits none of his active virtues—ripens in him none of the germs of truth. To the whole extent to which it displaces individual sense of obligation, it sends him back from manhood to infancy—from the world to the nursery—from a moral dispensation to a dispensation of physical force.

Now, I confess, that I augur no lasting good to society from the very general disposition of the present age to merge individual responsibility into that of civil government, and to perform our duty to our neighbour by a sort of public proxy,—thus attempting to evade the penalties of our own indolence and selfishness, by purchasing a joint-stock substitute for fulfilling our solemn trust. If peril arises to our social security and our free institutions, from the growth in our midst of a formidable excrescence of ignorance and vice, does not that peril warn us for some nobler purpose than that of going back to coercive principles, and of renouncing our reliance upon all the higher motives to exertion? Is that a wise, is it a becoming use to make of the punishment of our past neglect, to put ourselves into a position which exiles us from the region of future virtue, and ministers to our safety only by degrading us from the category of agents into that of tools? When Providence affixed to our social selfishness and inactivity the appropriate penalty of danger to our social interests, was it with the design, think you, of spurring us forward to increased vigilance, generosity, and concern

for others, or of driving us into a resignation of the high and honourable charge committed to us, into the hands of civil government? The men who counsel us to consent to a legal provision of the means of education for the poor, point to the consequences resulting from many generations of delinquency; and, instead of deducing therefrom the most cogent argument for instant, earnest, and self-denying activity, tell us that virtue must be abandoned as inefficient, and that we must seal our own humiliation by invoking the interposition of force. I object to this, as treachery to the moral dignity of society. I protest against this hasty revocation of the commission it holds—or, rather, this passionate and unmanly transfer of it to other hands. I challenge the right of any people, however unanimous, to shift the responsibility which God has imposed upon them as individuals, upon the shoulders of a mere Committee for the whole. And I am compelled to wonder whither has fled the respect of Christian men for their own nature, to say nothing of the genius of the religion which they profess, when, in a matter so vital as the training up of childhood, they ask that their country shall be relieved from any further trial of the law and dispensation of moral obligation, and shall be subject, henceforth, to the law of brute force. Why, it is nothing less than condemning a community—on account of some awkwardness in its earliest attempts to feed itself—to a perpetual infliction of the bib and the spoon. It is a concession made to laziness; one of those short cuts by which national sloth hopes to save itself the toil of a tedious journey—the vulgar impatience which cannot wait to untie a knot, but calls for a knife to cut it—the puerile officiousness which, distrusting the influence of sunshine and rain to open the rose-bud, pulls it open with rude fingers, and thinks to hasten it to its blushing and beauteous maturity. It bodes no good; it bodes, I fear, darker and drearier times, this itching propensity to go down to Egypt for help—to run for shelter from the land of promise, to the land of horsemen and chariots. If we take not heed, it will put back the moral destinies of the world for many generations.

Before we can be expected, in reason, to acquiesce in this great change, or to beat a retreat upon a principle which, in such a matter as education, we cannot, either as freemen or Christians, occupy without shame, we ought, at least, to be well assured that the special advantage which, by such means, we hope to purchase, will be fully obtained. That it should be as extensive as it promises—substan-

tial, and not hollow—permanent, and not transitory—is the *least* demand we are entitled to make. But, to my judgment, no guarantee has been yet offered us, that the demand will be satisfactorily met. This legal provision of educational means may possibly prove a failure. I confess, I, for one, have my doubts—doubts strong enough to drag me upon the very confines of disbelief. In the first place, the real disease appears to me to lie far down beyond the reach of *any* system of educational means. When you have placed your school, your schoolmasters, your books and apparatus, in every parish or district, just as you have provided your church and your clergyman, is there not ground to fear, that abject poverty will operate to prevent the use of them by the children, in the one case, as it does by the parents in the other? That undermost *stratum* of English society, in our large towns especially, upon which ignorance squats contented, and crime crawls about unconscious of its own hideousness—that too rapidly increasing class, in fact, which has stirred men's fears, and provoked the cry for Government interference,—will that be reclaimed, or even touched, by any instructional machinery which coercion can furnish? I will not say—far from it—that *no* mental and moral light can be let in upon this more than Egyptian darkness; but I do say, that, if there be any constancy in the laws of human nature, this numerous herd of outcasts from comfort and civilization, these familiar companions of squalor, filth, and brutality, can be attracted from their cellars and their garrets by no light but that which is warm from sympathizing hearts. I fear that nothing but burning love, like that of Him who *went in search* of the lost sheep until he found it, will be able to do much good in that grim region of desolation and the shadow of death; and that the unclean spirit which possesses and vexes that hapless section of the community, is of a sort that will not go out but by prayer and fasting. Glowing hearts and liberal hands must pioneer the way through that jungle, for alphabets and primers, books and pens.

And, then, as to the industrious poor,—the main body for whose benefit a legal provision of school means is claimed,—are we quite sure that, on the whole, and in the long run, they will be gainers by this plan? I refrain from speaking with perfect confidence on this point; but I beg to throw it out as a problem well worthy of mature consideration, whether, in the pursuit of any great social ends, moral in their kind, as contradistinguished from physical, the last

result is not always an equivalent, neither less nor more, of the amount of will which has been employed to achieve it? For my own part, the older I grow, and the more I observe, the less am I disposed to place reliance upon the power of mere machinery. Given, a certain amount of social interest in the work of education: and you will have, in real social value, a result equivalent to that amount. And no extension of machinery, which it does not itself make and sustain, will enable it to realise more than this equivalent. The facilities which aid it to cover a much larger surface, will also prevent it from giving the same degree of watchful and superintending care to the wider sphere which it did to the narrower. In process of time, when novelty has exhausted itself, the whole series of instrumentalities,—committees, inspectors, schoolmasters, and assistants, will become the medium of transmission to so much efficiency, and no more, as public interest in the matter will supply. A self-moving and self-improving apparatus, let no one expect! As is the man, so will be his strength. As is the life, so will be its development. As is the value at which society estimates the education of the poor, so, with or without Government interference, will be the ultimate value of the effect it will produce. All beyond that will turn out to be an imposing sham, or, in the words of the Lord Chief Justice of England, "a delusion, a mockery, and a snare."

It is, moreover, worthy of remark, before we quit this branch of our subject, that moral vitality seldom augments, either in intensity or in volume, as the result of being provided with a large stock of ready-made facilities. The will of man to do good is usually most lusty and vigorous when compelled by circumstances (pardon the homeliness of the phrase) to "rough it." He who wrestles with difficulties, is most likely to exhibit a brawny development. Action, antagonism, re-action, growth, is the order of things settled by Providential law. Where all is smooth and mechanical, the spirits soon flag. Of all the roads that one can walk upon, that which is straight and level is the surest to induce weariness. Many a man, charitable to the full extent of his small means, has speculated upon the immense good he would do with a princely fortune; and, pretty generally, where a legacy to a large amount has dropped into the lap of such an one, his benevolence has not expanded with his opportunity of expressing it. I have a grievous suspicion of all "royal roads" to great moral ends, and I feel a qualm come over me when I see inscribed upon any plan, "National Education made

easy." Whatever else may be the effect of such a system, sure I am that it will not brace up the now existing amount of intelligent and disinterested care about the matter. Spontaneous virtue, which grew and flourished out of doors, will be nóne the stronger for being removed into a greenhouse. Mind may make opportunities, but opportunities seldom make mind.

These considerations have carried conviction to my judgment, that the proposed change from "you ought" to "you shall," in reference to the education of the poor, vast as it is in its character, and retrogressive in its spirit, may, after all, fail to work out the permanent extension and improvement of the means required, with a view to which we are asked to adopt it. But this is not all. The substitution of legal authority for philanthropic zeal in this matter, will, if there be any constancy in the laws by which human hearts are swayed, or any truth in experience, inflict deep and irreparable injury upon the intellectual and moral prospects of this empire. I know how puerile it would be to utter such an opinion at random. I have not done so, and I proceed to submit to this audience, with all the brevity which the question will allow of, the train of reasoning which conducts me to this conclusion.

The advocates of a legal provision for the education of the people would do well, I cannot but think, calmly and patiently to revolve in their minds the question how far, in matters relating to the intellect, the character of every movement depends upon the point from which it starts. Commence, for example, with compulsion, in the shape of an educational rate, and all your machinery must necessarily be constructed with strict relation to the original moving power. Thereafter, nothing whatever can be safely left to any force but a compelling one. From the first step to the last, all must be kept in motion by pay, and regulated by authority. The ability, industry, and perseverance of the master; the due supply of the material of instruction which he is to employ; the efficiency and regularity of inspection; the worth of periodical examination—all the details of arrangement, must be legislated for on the presumption that you have unwillingness to deal with. At no stage of the process can you pass into the region of Voluntaryism. Nowhere will the mechanism admit of the introduction of spontaneity. It must needs be pervaded throughout by compulsion. The system must be destitute of inherent vitality. The force which sets and keeps it in action must, in every instance, come from without. Upon this

hypothesis all provisions and regulations must be framed. Now, we do not believe that indifference can be made, by any series of evolutions, to work out the same ends as Voluntary zeal. The problem to be solved is the vivifying of national intellect; and the solution proposed is a galvanic battery. We have no faith in it. Like begets like. The stamp answers to the seal. Where all the appliances of mastership are but a graduated scale of external restraint, the general features of scholarship will be sure to exhibit traces of the same character. To teach up to the point absolutely required by law, will be all that the first will attempt; to learn as little as such instruction will demand, will be all that the last will profit. To minimise trouble will be the ruling motive of all parties. The object to be accomplished—an object, let it be borne in mind, which is expected to raise the character of the rising generation—is thus entrusted to an organised army of functionaries, whose leading idea it will be to accomplish it to the least possible extent. Compulsion ought always to suppose a natural antagonism between the obligations it imposes and the inclination of the instrument it employs.

We are convinced that a greater misfortune cannot befall a people than to have their intellectual habits gradually encroached upon by this spirit of authority. We can conceive of no condition more certain of terminating in disastrous results than one in which "you shall" is promoted to the guardianship of mind and morals. If, in that department of human affairs, there is not freedom; if the training of intellect and of conscience is to be deliberately committed to an authority whose force is official rather than real; if the idiosyncrasy of the nation is to be determined, not by men whose hearts are prompted by spontaneous interest in the matter, but by pay and preferment; if, in a word, all that is truly spiritual amongst a people is to take its origin from the low and sordid motives which endowed officiality inspires, then, as a people, we are undone. All hope of progress is paralysed: all tendencies to growth are doomed to extinction. Everything is after its own order; every seed produces fruit after its own kind. If we can satisfy ourselves with external decency—a state of things which appeals to the eye rather than the judgment—then a compulsory provision for the education of the people may answer the purpose. But if we aim at higher objects—if it be our desire to furnish mind with full and free scope for natural development—if we would have organised institutions to be something nobler than "organised hypocrisies"—if we are anxious for

the embodiment of the true, the real, and the living, as contradistinguished from the false, the nominal, and the dead—if the expansion of a God-begotten thing be dearer to us than the extension of a mere form of human device, then we shall patiently work the principle of willinghood. The immediate results may not be showy, but they will be solid. There will be less outward decency, perhaps, but more life. The body, for a time, will not be comely, but it will be quickened by a soul. And this, after all, is what we want—life—reality—conscience. The mechanism which undertakes to fill up the vacancy which these ought to fill will be found, in the end, to be an impediment rather than an assistance.

Meanwhile, who will furnish us with an estimate of the deteriorating influence likely to be exerted upon the public spirit of our people by this transference of responsibility? The value of moral obligation as a moving force is to be computed,—in the secular, as well as in the religious education of our countrymen,—not merely from the direct results to which it conducts, but also from the indirect influence of the process which it employs. Dwell upon it a moment or two! Society, suppose, is conscious of some urgent want—lives on in the neglect of its obligations, and reaps the penalty. Anon, here and there, men of sensitive consciences, large hearts, and indomitable resolution, are inwardly impelled to cast about for a remedy. Here is life to begin with. The germ may be as "the smallest amongst seeds," but it is a living one. The unostentatious philanthropists, each in his own sphere, become "preachers of righteousness,"—inculcate upon individuals their responsibility and their duty—hold up before society the light of some forgotten truth, and commend it, by persuasion, to the notice. Presently a few kindred spirits wake up from previous torpor, respond to the appeals with which they are addressed, and, gathering about the original nucleus, swell the amount of life. So much mind and feeling are now awake in reference to the particular object. Combination follows—concert—co-operation. The press is employed. Arguments are collected, marshalled, and sent forth to invade and subdue the general indifference. Triumph after triumph is achieved; not, however, without hard labour, great self-denial, and unflinching perseverance. New domains are won from the vast territory of public listlessness. The spirit of moral conquest becomes contagious. Whole classes are seized by it. Activity grows to be as universal as it is spontaneous, and by the time the end is

gained, one is at a loss to decide which is most important—the object accomplished, or the tone and habits of the public mind, nurtured by the process of accomplishment.

I assert, without the fear of contradiction, that it is to the action of this moral force, to the gradual working out of its ends by the power of "you ought," and to this alone, that Great Britain is indebted for whatever public spirit it can boast of. Devolve upon the principle of compulsion the social obligations which are now spontaneously, or from inward impulse, assumed by the philanthropic, and patriotism would shrivel up into a senseless prejudice—a mere chattering, boasting, self-glorifying passion. The men who work, because the voice within them commands them to work—who act up to the extent of their capacity and means, without waiting to see what others will attempt—who seek their happiness in the discharge of duty, and who cultivate responsibilities which others willingly permit to perish of neglect—these are the men who preserve the social body from actual putrefaction. One such, in a district, will create a silent public opinion, which renders further degeneracy all but impossible. In his own sphere, one such will diffuse just enough light to make sleep uneasy, and to compel all sorts of noxious things, which else would have lived and gendered there, to crawl away into completer darkness. Not a few of these practical patriots and philanthropists have been disciplined by their moral obligations, in every part of the empire. To them most modern schemes of social amelioration and progress may trace their origin. They are to be found in every Committee-room in which a good work is to be done, for the mere pleasure and the utility of the doing of it. From them goes forth, through various channels, a powerful influence to modify the opinions, principles, and modes of action of all classes of society. They are the life, the conscience, the heart of the body politic. Senators may be ignorant of them; the public press may know nothing of their whereabout; the wealthy may hear of them only through some appeal for pecuniary contribution; but, after all, these are the men upon whom the higher interests of manhood rest—the springs which keep the world in motion towards a brighter and a happier destiny. If, therefore, it could be proved that the country would gain, from a legal provision of educational means, a large increase in the amount, or a considerable improvement in the quality, of the book-learning imparted to the people, the advantage would be dearly purchased by

the loss, or serious diminution, of the class we have attempted to describe. And yet this, in our judgment, would be the certain and disastrous issue of the introduction of compulsion in aid of education. The two principles "ought" and "shall" are antagonistic, and cannot well run in couples. The Irish *Regium Donum* is the most modern proof of that. Make the erection of the school-house, the maintenance of the schoolmaster, and the superintendence and direction of education, the business of authority, whether national or local, and the active and earnest advocates of popular enlightenment will die out in a generation or two. For a brief period, those who took an interest in the work will take an interest in it still. But their occupation will be gone. Their hold upon the conscience of the community will be lost. Their arguments will want cogency—their appeals, pertinence and power. Mechanism will have displaced life, and mere doing will supersede all care for the mode and spirit in which it is done. I characterise any approach to such a consummation as a great national calamity. The moral sympathies of society, rendered comparatively useless by the constant presence and action of legal authority, would shrivel up like an unexercised limb. Supersede the necessity of philanthropic effort, and the *vis vitæ* of the nation will become extinct. We can derive no permanent advantage from aught that is not capable of spontaneous growth amongst us; we can ensure only evil by counteracting Providential laws. Communities, as well as individuals, are under the merciful sentence, "By the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread." All attempts to evade our responsibility will terminate in disappointment and in sorrow. Indolence, however ingenious its devices, will bring home to us at last sickliness and shame. Increased sense of duty is more to be desired than increased knowledge. Let us beware lest, in the ill-considered methods we adopt to enlighten the understanding, we harden the conscience, and breed a canker in the heart.

I pass on to observe, that a legal provision for the education of the people is condemned by experience. I am prepared, of course, to see this decision controverted. Instances will be adduced whose testimony in favour of resorting in this matter to the compulsory powers of law, many are disposed to accept as worthy of confident reliance. So far as they apply, let them, by all means, have their weight. To me they do not speak in very convincing accents. Where time enough has elapsed to allow of the full influence of the

system upon national character, results have not been such as alter my judgment. A wide, or even universal, diffusion of knowledge, when accompanied by a general intellectual pugnacity, servile submission to ancient standards, and a rigid attention to mere shows of propriety and decency, and, at the same time, unattended by superior morality, deficient in generosity, devoid of all high-toned principle, and quickened by scarcely a breath of spirituality, may have its charms for utilitarian philosophers, but will never do much, I fancy, to help on the right in its struggle with might, or to make conquest of any large domains of human nature for virtue and religion. I may be a heretic for saying so, but I would rather have an ounce of heart, than a pound of brains. And where the experiment is going on amongst a newly-settled people, whose amplitude of territory produces more than enough for all, and by whom, consequently, pinching poverty need never be known except by the hearing of the ear, no proof is afforded me that the much which is now done by law, would not be accomplished as easily, as surely, as efficiently, and with greater satisfaction, and nobler rewards in the doing of it, by the simple force of moral obligation. The experience, however, to which I refer, lies at our own door. We have had, for centuries past, a legal provision for the instruction of the people—for training up the nation in morality and religion,—I allude to the Established Church. It has enjoyed ample revenues—it has secured the services of highly educated functionaries—it has distributed them with skill over the entire breadth of the country—it has wielded immense influence—and it has had time enough to develope all its capabilities; and what has been its success? I do not ask, what sort and measure of Christianity it has diffused among the people, because I shall be told in reply, that the question is irrelevant—that the nature of religion elevates it above the reach of assistance from law—and that spiritual ends were never likely to have been promoted by any merely secular machinery. I will not therefore press for a reply *quoad* vital godliness, nor dwell, in accents of commiseration, upon the evidence daily thrust before our eyes, of the strange uncomfortableness exhibited by the genuine Christian spirit which unfortunately has got entangled with this unlikely system of means, and which, if it were to utter its complaint in Scripture language, could discover no sentence more appropriate than that exclamation of the Apostle, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" But then, if reference to the failure of the Established

Church, in so far as spiritual Christianity is concerned, is pronounced to be beside the mark, it may claim to be admitted as pertinent, up to the limits of all that is merely intellectual and external. If it be anticipated, that legal compulsion will diffuse abroad some accurate knowledge of Julius Cæsar, surely I am not out of order in inquiring whether it *has* communicated to the poor an historical acquaintance with the life of Jesus Christ. Revelation consists, for the most part, of facts, narrated with inimitable simplicity, and instinct with marvellous interest. How comes it that, with such ample provision for their instruction, the poor of this country, by tens of thousands, are represented as utterly ignorant even of these facts? The doctrines of the Gospel may be understood, as mere propositions, by the most unlettered. Whence happens it, that they know nothing of them even as propositions? The precepts of Christianity will be admitted to be sufficiently plain and comprehensive. Why, then, do you marshal before us troops of ragged children who, on your own showing, can scarcely distinguish between right and wrong? If your immense system of means and appliances for religious instruction, as by law established, cannot convert men's hearts, it might, at least, have informed their minds, and have imparted to them the first elements of religious truth,—a mental cognizance of its facts, dogmas, and principles. Now, has it really done this? Have its vast resources and peculiar advantages been made to conduce to even this narrow result? Withdraw our Sunday schools, the most precious of the embodiments of moral force, from our villages and hamlets, from our districts and haunts of the poor in manufacturing towns and great cities, and how much Scriptural information, think you, will be left in their midst? What proportion of the residue can be fairly traced up to the legally authorised source? And yet men, who would blush to answer these questions as conscience dictates, would fain persuade us to repeat and enlarge the experiment. Because an elaborate and richly-endowed national system, constructed and kept in motion to civilize and moralize the people, by instructing them in the leading facts and doctrines connected with the life and death of Jesus Christ, has utterly failed in its duty, we are desired to set up a similar and supplemental system, to compass the same point, by teaching children the history of Socrates or Julius Cæsar. Why, it is really a tax upon our patience to reply to so preposterous a demand. If you rely upon a pecuniary provision and a staff of able teachers, as sufficient to humanize the destitute by instruction, have you not got them in

the Established Church? If any kind of information let in upon the intellect is calculated more than another to elevate, to purify, to refine, is it not just that kind which there are already the most ample compulsory means for imparting? And, in the face of egregious failure, are we to be taunted with indifference to the mental and moral progress of our poorer countrymen, because we decline to be parties to the erection of *more* machinery, on precisely the *same* principles, but intended to work up far inferior stuff? I really wonder where the wits of some of our good friends have fled! If they had half the faith in the Voluntary Principle which they appear to have in the Compulsory, or half as keen an eye to the short-comings of the last as they clearly have to those of the first, Dissenters at this day would have presented an unbroken front against the advance of a principle which has already cost them so dear.

I hurry on to the last argument upon which it is my purpose to dwell. I might, perhaps, and not without effect, have arrayed against a legal provision for popular education some considerations illustrative of its essential injustice—and, indeed, such was my original intention. I might have challenged the *right* of human law, whether representing the will of organized power or merely of a majority of rate-payers, to reproduce in the next generation, at the public expense, in which I am compelled to bear part, opinions which I hold to be unsound and prejudicial. But lest I should unreasonably detain you, and, desirous of leaving for a more fitting occasion every argument which might possibly provoke a skirmish upon mere details, I will content myself with having barely mentioned it,—reserving, however, my right to expand it hereafter, should I deem it expedient.

I request, then, your candid attention to that principle of the Divine administration which every resort to legal compulsion for the achievement of positive moral good, seems to me to counteract. Glance, in rapid thought, over the history of this country, justly regarded as one of the most signally-favoured spots on the surface of the globe. Where is the mind that can take in anything approaching to an adequate idea of the iniquity, crime, and impiety, which *have* run, in times past, and still *continue* to run, their devastating career? In the Church, as well as out of it, what lamentable perversities, what miserable mistakes, what hideous forms of selfishness, what awful hostility to the purity and benevolence of revealed truth! What myriads of lives have been poured out before the

altar of ambition—of hearts, have been broken by the cruel lawlessness of lust—of souls, have been destroyed by the prevalence of a lie! How many sighs of anguish have gone up to Heaven, laden with the touching story of the poor man's wrongs! If earth could give back all the scalding tears she has drunk up, wrung from the defenceless by the iron hand of oppression, who could look upon that vast lake of sorrow, without having his spirit within him stirred to vengeance? And yet the whole scene is patent to the eye of God—*has been* from the first. Why has He not interposed? With Him has dwelt at all times the power of standing between depravity and its prey, and of forcing disorder back within the lines of peace and justice. How comes it that He allows the yet unequal struggle between right and might, light and darkness, truth and error, holiness and sin, to be so indefinitely protracted, when it were but for him to will victory, and instantly it would appear? Who questions His power? Who doubts His goodness? Who impugns His wisdom? Six thousand years has He looked down upon the wretchedness and malignity of mankind, and yet never during that time has he abandoned his mighty plan of destroying moral evil by the sheer force of moral good. The sublime principle of His administration is calmly and unswervingly adhered to, although human fears, hopes, passions, prayers, and curses, cry out unceasingly for a temporary suspension of it. Silently, like the dew, He is penetrating, refreshing, and beautifying individual spirits, sending them forth into regions of darkness and death, and waiting, in majestic composure, the slow development of the assimilating energies of his own truth. And, whilst the process goes on—to our apprehension, how tardily!—mark how he holds back the hand of his power! When, by the slightest pressure of his almightiness upon the springs of human destiny, he might put forward our history at his will, and cut short, in their very midst, the days of iniquity and woe, he, nevertheless, forbears, and having, from the beginning, chosen to obtain sway over man by a moral sceptre, refrains from every display of the sceptre of force. Can any man contemplate this soul-subduing spectacle without being filled with the thought, that there is deep meaning in all this? When the world's history shall have been completed—haply before its days have finally run out—can any mind which has faith in God entertain a misgiving, lest the grand secret should not transpire?—or doubt that when it does loom upon created intelligence, it will satisfy every soul that all has been

right? When man's eye can discern the connection of the now past with the now future, and trace back the tree of life, laden with the fruits of immortality, to those earlier ages, when the extreme slowness of its growth excited his special wonder, will there not be reason ample enough to bless Eternal Goodness that it had power to wait, and that the hurry and impatience of creatures, incapable of seeing more than a part of the magnificent plan, did not and could not extend themselves to the all-seeing Creator?

Now, inasmuch as God is thus manifestly carrying on a stupendous process of moral amelioration by moral means alone, working out his high purposes in this world by the force of truth on individual consciences, and hiding, meanwhile, "the thunder of His power"—inasmuch as he has authorized us his servants, in humble imitation of Him, to seek the elevation of our fellows, and the fitting development of their faculties, by means such as He employs, but has nowhere authorized us to compel the unwilling to assist us—inasmuch as no interpositions of his resistless might to hasten on the great experiment, invite, sanction, or suggest a resort by us to force—does it become men of religion, men who have faith in truth,—for I address myself this evening specially to such,—to exhibit all the flurry of a sceptical impatience at the apparent slowness of sense of obligation, and to be foremost among those who clamour for a meaner, but somewhat swifter, power? If the work of educating destitute childhood does not prosper as they would wish to see it, in the hands of spontaneous benevolence, self-denial, and devotedness, why is it? Are these great moving agencies comparatively torpid? Take up, then, the trumpet of warning, and blow a blast which drowsiness itself shall hear! Put your heart into the strain, for the echo will surely correspond with your earnestness! Have you done this? Are you doing this? Do you verily believe in this? If so, calm your apprehensions, and possess your souls in patience. You are doing what your Master has bidden you to do, and you may leave the results with him. But, alas! this is just what you, the advocates of a legal provision, are not doing. No! with the best intentions, doubtless, but with the vexed temper of disappointed eagerness, you go up and down society uttering all kinds of unworthy suspicions as to the competency of moral obligation to do its own work—weaken its elasticity by the breath of your own unbelief—collect statistics to prove its powerlessness—and end by renouncing it as too feeble for what it has undertaken, and by calling in compulsion to paralyze and

rid the world of it. Fatal mistake! Virtue turned out of doors, as an impostor, by the hands of her own friends! And why this outrage? Why this dethronement of conscience, and this installation of magisterial power? Because, forsooth, your sympathies are in haste, and cannot bide the issue of God's appointed method of raising dejected mankind. Words of persuasion, of exhortation, of entreaty, of encouragement, of reproof—words that will burn their way into the heart—words that, like the lyre of Orpheus, will draw life and spirit forth from inanimate nature—words that, wherever they fall, will quicken into deeds—words that will shake and scathe even thrice-mailed selfishness—these, which in other and higher enterprises are found effective, and upon which, backed by God's blessing, you rely for subduing the whole world to Christ—these will not do—are all too inefficient, in the work of education! Albeit, they have made some way since first they were directed to this end, and, against fearful odds, have won a vantage ground, they are not strong enough for the magnitude of the undertaking, nor swift enough for the vehemence of your desires! You must have thunder—the thunder of this world's law—"nothing but thunder." Oh! it is a mournful sight, this propensity of religious hands to snatch up the sword of the magistrate, in order to drive on their own schemes of usefulness. It argues anything but confidence in the ultimate superiority of moral force, or approving acquiescence in the leisurely movement of the Divine purpose. If we really believe that mankind may be intellectually and morally bettered, more speedily and effectually by mere power than by truth—and that the main-spring of our mechanism to convey instruction to the mind must be forged out of compulsion, because sense of obligation is too weak to bear the strain—why, it is about time for us to cease boasting of an all-pervading Providence, and, since we reverse his plans, we may as well lay aside our hope in his triumph. But, come! I cannot continue further in this strain. I do trust that this return to "the beggarly elements of the world" has been proposed without serious consideration of all the evil it involves. Other minds, looking at the question from other points of view may not have discerned in it the dishonour done to moral principles, and to God's administration, which strikes me with so much force. They will pardon me for speaking out all that was in me—for only thus could I have delivered my soul! I own, I am growingly jealous for the sufficiency of Christ's Gospel, as embodied in men's hearts, to carry on, as fast

as the nature of things and the laws of mind will permit, all great enterprises of practical usefulness; and hence I seized the opportunity, unexpectedly and courteously offered to me by the Committee under whose arrangements we now meet, of vindicating the paramount claims of the principle of individual moral obligation from some of the obloquy recently cast upon it.

I have now laid before you the course of reasoning which has compelled my judgment to pronounce against any system, however modified, which would provide means of education for the poor on the principle of compulsion. I need hardly point out to you that my arguments, if good for anything, cut away the ground on which every plan, admitting the aid of law, must ultimately rest. Indeed, it has been my aim to steer clear of all plans now before the public, and to strangle the error itself rather than any particular form of its development. It was open to me to have reached the same conclusion by a widely different path. I might have commenced with an examination of the legitimate objects, powers, and functions of civil Government; and have gone on to show, that the care of mind does not fall within the range of its duties, and cannot be assumed without injuring the people it is professedly taken up to serve. But, as I have already hinted, the occasion appeared to me to demand, that the argument should be built up on high moral considerations, rather than on a basis, however solid, of merely logical deduction. My object has been to drive at conscience, for it is possible to take the understanding captive without touching the will.

With a brief summary of the whole case, as I have endeavoured this evening to present it, I will close my observations. The substance of the question submitted for examination was:—"Is it expedient, is it wise, would it be conducive to national well-being, to provide for the education of the destitute by the interposition of the authority of law?" To this question my answer has been, "No;" because Voluntary benevolence, prompted by sense of obligation, universally admitted to be superior as a moving force, is already largely engaged in the work, prospers in it, and promises to complete it. "No;" because to abandon moral for legal force, in so important a department of social duty, is fraught with contingencies of peril, and may involve effects upon national character, which no man can accurately estimate. "No;" because the change proposed is nothing less than social retrogression—a retreat, without necessity, upon "beggarly elements." "No;" because we have no

guarantee that the surrender we make of a high position, will insure even the specific advantage for which alone it could be given up. "No;" because, even if we had, the good attained would be counterbalanced by the greater evil, of damage to our intellectual character and to our public spirit. "No;" because experience warns us to anticipate an egregious failure. "No;" because the step recommended cannot be taken without trampling upon the claims of justice. "No!" finally and emphatically, because we cannot adopt such a course without a virtual impeachment, and immediate counteraction, of the manifest design, scope, and principle of God's moral administration. On these grounds, leaving out of sight the nature and purpose of civil government, which conduct us to the same conclusion, we offer our protest against any interference of the Government with popular education.

LECTURE VI.

LECTURE VI.

ON THE PROGRESS AND EFFICACY OF VOLUNTARY EDUCATION, AS EXEMPLIFIED IN WALES.

BY THE REV. HENRY RICHARD.

Reason why the subject was selected—The Government Commission—HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN WALES, during the first three centuries of the Christian era—Fame of British learning in Europe—The monastery of Bangor-Iscoed—The mission of Austin—His intercourse with the Fathers of the British Church—His instigation of the Saxons to make war on the British—Alfred the Great invites professors from St. David's College to Oxford—Decline of learning amid the civil wars—The Welsh and Henry VII.—State of Wales after the Reformation—Dr. Llewellyn's testimony—John Penry's efforts—Rev. Rhys Pritchard—Rev. Thomas Gouge—Rev. Griffith Jones, Llanddowror—His circulating schools—Mrs. Bevan's munificence, and its results—MORAL STATE OF WALES ABOUT A CENTURY AGO—Description of it from the Rev. Thomas Charles's *Trysorfa*—Testimony of John Wesley—Of Mr. Charles's Welsh biographer—Of Mr. Charles himself—Of the Rev. John Davies—Of Arthur James Johnes, Esq.—Statistics of Education in 1803—PROGRESS OF EDUCATION IN WALES—Statistical comparison of 1803, 1818, 1833, 1846-7—Efficiency of Voluntary education—Extent of reading among the people—Number of Bibles circulated—Of Commentaries—Their general literature—Mr. Symons's judgment respecting it—List of English theological works translated—Periodicals—Effect of education on the character of the people—Their chapels and Sunday-schools—Their liberality—Testimony of Mr. Johnes—Of Rev. W. Jones—Of Dr. Owen Roberts—Of Dr. Carl Meyer—Of T. W. Booker, Esq.—Official testimony—Criminal returns—"Rebecca" commissioners—J. Wyatt, Esq.—EXAMINATION OF THE COMMISSIONERS' REPORT—Their character of the people not true—Their incompetency for their work—From ignorance of the language—From their prejudices as Churchmen—From want of sympathy with the religious feelings of the people—From wishing to make out a case—Their mode of conducting the Inquiry—Selection of assistants—Proportion of Dissenters and Churchmen examined—Suppression of evidence—Method of eliciting evidence—The most ignorant and depraved class made to represent the whole population—Mr. Symons's unfairness—Cause of clerical hostility—Examination of evidence of the Rev. R. P. Davies—Of the Rev. John Griffith—Of the Rev. Henry Lewis Davies—The effects of the Report in Wales—Conclusion.

I CANNOT conceal from myself, that it is owing to an accident, and that of no very flattering description, that the subject which is to occupy your attention this evening has gained the distinction of a place in the present course of Lectures. It may be true enough, that there is much in the past history and present condition of the principality of Wales, that well deserves and would amply reward

the study of both the philosopher and the Christian. Its people might well be regarded with a mixed feeling of curiosity and veneration, forming, as perhaps they do, the only pure and genuine remains of that ancient Celtic race, which occupied at one time so large a place in Europe—the aboriginal possessors of this island—the first stratum in that wonderful social formation which it now exhibits—who amid all the changes that have affected and amalgamated its population, the successive immigrations of Romans, Picts, Saxons, Danes, and Normans, sweeping like so many inundations over its surface—have alone retained unmixed their distinctive national character—cherishing in the mountain retreats to which they were driven by these repeated invasions, their own ancient language in its purity and strength, and preserving many hereditary customs, and the fragments of a traditional literature, hoar with immemorial antiquity, where may be found, imbedded, as it were, to this day, the fossil remains of a former European world. It may be also true that this ancient people, after having been first oppressed, and then neglected for many centuries, have, within the last hundred years, become marvellously quickened into a new life, by having infused into the heart of society among them the leaven of mighty spiritual principles, which have raised them from the degradation of barbarism into the light and liberty of the Gospel; and the practical result of which is seen in the most complete and remarkable machinery of the means of spiritual instruction and worship that has probably ever been produced by the spontaneous and voluntary piety of a poor and obscure, but earnest and true-hearted, Christian community. All this, and much more, may be true; but it is owing to none of these things, but to a cause far less creditable, that my native country has been raised to the questionable eminence which it is to occupy to-night. It is because the whole nation has been brought publicly to trial, at the instance of the Government of this country, and on the most serious charges against its intelligence, morality, and religion, that those who cherish towards it yet some lingering feelings of favour, have granted this opportunity to one of the humblest of its sons to bring forward what it is yet possible to say in its defence, before it is abandoned to summary and final condemnation. Perhaps, also, the gentlemen who arranged this course of Lectures, feeling that, as in the case of Marathon, Morgarten, and Naseby, those names became magic and memorable words in the ears of men for all ages, not because the spots themselves were specially

distinguished by any natural attributes of beauty and grandeur, but because they were the fields on which the supposed battles of liberty were waged and won,—so the principality of Wales might well be raised out of its native obscurity, and become the object to which all eyes should be directed, when it is known or suspected that it is likely soon to be chosen as the battle-field on which a conflict of great principles is to be fought, in the issue of which, the liberty, the independence, and the social dignity and progress of the people of this country are most essentially involved. You are all, doubtless, aware, that in the latter part of the year 1846, a Commission was appointed by the Government to inquire into the state of Education in Wales. This Commission consisted of three gentlemen, Mr. Lingen, Mr. Symons, and Mr. Vaughan Johnson. They have accomplished their task; and the result of their labours has been presented to the public in the three bulky volumes now before us. It is assumed, of course, that the Commission is a prelude to some system of practical action on the part of the Government in reference to the education of the people; and most assuredly, if the spirit in which this preliminary inquiry was conducted is to be taken as any index of their future intentions, it may well awake the earnest and immediate alarm of every true friend of evangelical Dissent and Voluntary education.

In treating the subject allotted to me this evening, the plan I shall adopt will be this: I will first give you a brief and rapid sketch of the history of education in Wales, from the earliest times to the rise of Methodism and modern Dissent; I will then endeavour to show what has been accomplished there, in the work of education, since that time; and lastly, I will try to examine the character of the Commissioners' Reports, with a view to ascertain how far they may be taken as a fair, satisfactory, and trustworthy representation of the present state of the principality.

It will answer no practical purpose to lead you back to the times of our Druidical ancestors. Suffice it to say, that from the fragments of their ancient literature that have come down to us, it is evident that they held knowledge in high veneration, and conferred special, social, and civil privileges upon those who were engaged in cultivating it themselves, and in teaching it to others.

After the introduction of Christianity, which took place unquestionably within the first century of the Christian era, it was not likely that this love of learning should be diminished, after objects

of knowledge and inquiry, so much worthier their attention, had been introduced among them. Accordingly we find, in the records of the first three or four hundred years of the Christian church in Britain, that many large collegiate establishments were formed, dedicated to religion and literature. Of these the most celebrated was that at Bangor-Iscoed, in Flintshire, where, at one time, were two thousand one hundred monks; part of them devoting themselves to bodily labour to provide sustenance for their brethren, that they might uninterruptedly give themselves to reading and the ministry of the Word. From these institutions went forth men thoroughly instructed in all the learning of their times; some of them bearing the fame of their country's piety and erudition to the uttermost parts of Europe. In the large œcumenical councils, summoned under Constantine the Great and his sons, in the third and fourth centuries, at Arles, at Nice, and at Sardica, to decide the great Donatist and Arian controversies, which disturbed the unity of the Catholic faith, we are told that the British churches were represented by men who bore an honourable part in the defence of sound doctrine; for Athanasius himself testifies that bishops from Britain joined in condemnation of the heresy of Arius, and in vindication of himself. As a further illustration of the extent to which theological learning was cultivated among the British churches, it may be observed that Pelagius, who, though he unhappily swerved in some of his speculations from orthodox doctrine, and thereby agitated all Christendom by the controversies to which he gave rise, was, nevertheless, acknowledged by the most illustrious of his adversaries, Augustine, to have been a man of great ability and piety. Pelagius was a Welshman, whose name originally was Morgan, and who was educated, it is supposed, at the monastery of Bangor-Iscoed, to which I have already referred. Now, you will please to remember, that the Britons had attained to this high state of mental culture and Christian erudition, which enabled them to send forth learned men, whose names resounded throughout all Europe, some centuries before your ancestors the Saxons had begun to forsake the old Pagan superstitions which they had brought with them from Germany; and when, at length, in the sixth century, the Pope sent the celebrated Austin, as a missionary, to convert the Anglo-Saxon inhabitants of this island to the Christian faith, he found that the ancient Britons, driven, by the successive invasions of these formidable foes, to seek their last asylum in the mountains of Wales, were not only

in possession of Christianity, but were so well instructed in its principles, that they firmly resisted all the attempts made by that arrogant ecclesiastic to bring their churches to acknowledge the usurped spiritual authority of the Bishop of Rome. When he first arrived here, he invited Dunawd of Bangor-Iscoed, who had been represented to him as pre-eminent among the scholars of the age, to come and assist him in preaching the Gospel to the Saxons ; but the abbot replied, that he did not think it worthy to preach to that cruel people, who had treacherously slain their parents, and robbed them of their just and legitimate property ; and at the same time, we are told, "did dispute at large, with great learning and gravity, against receiving the authority of the Pope, or of Augustine." Having thus failed with Dunawd, that he might demonstrate to the Cambrian priests and monks the legitimacy of his pretensions, he assigned them a conference on the banks of the Severn, the limit between their territory and that of their conquerors. The assembly was held in the open air, under a large oak. Augustine required the Britons to reform their religious practices according to the usages of Rome ; to return to the Catholic union ; to be obedient to himself ; and to employ themselves, under his direction, in converting the Anglo-Saxons. In aid of his studied harangue, he set before them a man of Saxon birth, who, he pretended, was blind, and restored him to sight. But neither the Roman's eloquence, nor his miracle, had power to terrify the Cambrians, and make them abjure their old spirit of independence. Augustine, not yet discouraged, appointed a second interview, which, with a degree of complaisance that attested their good intentions, was attended by seven bishops of British race, and a number of monks, chiefly from the great monastery of Bangor ; but, after a long conference, they conveyed to him their decision in these words : "We will never acknowledge the pretended rights of Roman ambition, any more than those of Saxon tyranny. We owe to the Pope of Rome, it is true, as to all Christians, the submission of fraternal charity ; but as for the submission of obedience, we owe it only to God, and, after God, to our venerable superior, the Bishop of Ker-leon-on-the-Usk." For a long while, the British Church continued resolute in its refusal to recognise the Papal authority ; and the consequence was, that in accordance with the ancient policy of that persecuting church which he represented, Augustine and his successors excited their Saxon converts to make war upon the British, exasperating the national

animosities, already sufficiently violent between the two people, by adding to it the fanatical frenzy of religious bigotry. For many ages, therefore, the Britons were liable to frequent incursions from their Saxon neighbours ; who, instigated by the councils of Rome, invaded their country, destroying their churches, burning their monasteries, and putting to death the pious and learned monks, who, in the seclusion of those establishments, were pursuing the peaceable occupations of literature and religion. But that the British did not forget their ancient love of learning, even in the midst of these commotions, seems clear from the fact, that when Alfred the Great ascended the throne of England, one of his first acts was to invite three able teachers from the College of St. David's to superintend the University of Oxford. The persons selected on this occasion were Asser, who taught grammar and rhetoric ; John Menevensis, who read logic, music, and arithmetic ; and John Erigina, who professed geometry and astronomy."*

After this, however, it would seem that learning gradually declined in Wales, agitated and torn as society was constantly by civil feuds among their own princes, and by the fierce and sanguinary conflicts which they waged, but waged in vain, against the ascendant destiny of the Saxon and Norman races. Severe and oppressive laws, also, suppressing the ancient bards and minstrels, who had always stimulated into activity the national mind, and enacting that no Welshman by birth could hold the smallest public office in his country, which were from time to time passed by the English kings, must have tended greatly to discourage the cultivation of knowledge and the progress of education among the people. When Henry VII. landed in Wales, to contend for the English throne with Richard III., the poor Welsh, knowing that the blood of their own Tudor was flowing in his veins, planted the banner of the Red Dragon on the top of Snowdon, and rallied enthusiastically around his standard, and, by their devotion and bravery, contributed not a little to secure for him the celebrated victory which changed the dynasty of England on the bloody field of Bosworth. "Henry VII.," says M. Thierry, "placed the Cambrian dragon in his arms by the side of the three lions of Normandy, and, by means of the archives of Wales, traced his genealogy to Cadwallader, the last chief who bore the title of King of Britain. But these frivolous acts of vanity, rather than

* Thierry's History of the Norman Conquest, book i.

of gratitude, were all that the new king did for the people whose devotion had given him victory and a kingdom. His son and successor, Henry VIII., treated the mass of the people—like all his predecessors—as a conquered nation, to be feared and disliked. He studied to destroy the ancient customs of the inhabitants of Cambria, the remains of their social state, and even their language."

When the Reformation was established in England, as the result of royal will rather than the spontaneous election of the national mind, Wales, never much attached to the Roman Church, became, without reluctance, nominally Protestant, along with the rest of the country. But, as it was the work of the Government and not of the people, it seems to have produced in the Principality little effect on the popular mind, for no efforts were made by the Government to secure to them those means of instruction which, according to the theory of Protestantism, ought to be provided for all whose faith, being set loose from the anchor of dogmatic authority, need to be put in a condition to use with efficiency the principle of private judgment, substituted in its stead. Not only did the Government lend no assistance in the religious enlightenment of the Welsh people, but they actively interfered to repress the efforts they put forth themselves; for although they gave every encouragement to the translation of the Bible into English, when some persons in Wales, zealous for the new reforms, had undertaken, at their own cost, a version of the Scriptures, orders were given for the seizure and destruction of all the copies, which were carried off from the churches and publicly burned. Nay, in Dr. Llewellyn's historical account of the Welsh versions and editions of the Bible, it is said,—" For upwards of seventy years, from the settlement of the Reformation by Queen Elizabeth, for near one hundred years from Britain's separation from the Church of Rome, there were no Bibles in Wales, but only in the cathedrals and in the parish churches and chapels. There was no provision made for the people in general, as if they had nothing to do with the Word of God; at least, no further than they might hear it, in their attendance upon public worship once in the week."

About the middle of the reign of Queen Elizabeth the celebrated John Penry, whom you regard as one of your Puritan fathers and confessors, and who was a Welshman, made an attempt to call the attention of the Government to the deplorable destitution of the means

of religious instruction which prevailed in his native land. There are two pamphlets of his still extant on this subject, entitled, "A Treatise containing the Equity of an humble Supplication to Parliament for preaching the Gospel in Wales," and "A View of the Wants and Disorders in the Service of God in Wales, with a Petition to Parliament for their Redress."

But I cannot find that these patriotic efforts of Mr. Penry, acting, of course, according to the prevailing convictions of his time, as to the duty of the State to provide religious instruction for the people, was ever followed by the smallest practical result.

In the reign of James I. there arose a very remarkable man in South Wales, who for a long time exerted an extensive and most salutary influence upon the mind and character of his countrymen: I allude to the Rev. Rhys Pritchard, Vicar of Llandovery, in Caermarthenshire, known throughout the whole principality to this day, by the familiar and emphatic name of "The Vicar." This most excellent man, penetrated with deep sorrow at witnessing the degraded condition of his countrymen, took all means in his power to awaken the slumbering mind of the nation. By his earnest and eloquent preaching in his native tongue, (a thing at that time most rare in Wales,) he attracted such crowded congregations, that he was often compelled to come out of his church, and to address the assembled multitudes in the churchyard. He is said to have translated many books into Welsh. But the work by which he is best known, and by which he will continue to be known as long as a fragment of the Welsh language survives, is the "Candle of the Cymry," generally called by the Welsh themselves, "The Vicar's Book." This work consists of a number of poems on moral and religious subjects, most simple in their language, and even slovenly in their metrical composition; but full of poetry and feeling, and thoroughly saturated with evangelical truth. It is not a very easy thing to give to an Englishman a correct notion of the beauty, sweetness, and simplicity of the original; but the following specimen, translated by an able Welsh scholar, seems to be, on the whole, happily done. It is called "Gweddi Foreuol,"—Morning Prayer:

"At dawn, when first thy slumber flies,
Raise to the Lord of Hosts thine eyes;
To him who watched, and gave, and blest
Thy hours of helplessness and rest.

"Oh! give the first-fruits of thy heart,
The first-fruits of thy mind and tongue,
For second thoughts are not the part
Of Him to whom all hearts belong.

"The redbreast, ere his little bill
He moistens in the morning dew,
Carols to Him who saved from ill
His tiny couch the darkness through.

"Alas! that man should wake more dead
To all the blessings God has shed,
Than the wild birds, which, morn and eve,
His gifts with hymns of praise receive."

The effects produced by this work none can conceive, who do not know the enthusiastic love of the Welsh for the poetry of their native tongue. It ran like a stream of electricity throughout the country, vivifying the national mind, and lodging many of the precious truths it embodied deep in the core of the national heart. And yet, it would seem, that during his own life-time these poems were not printed, but recited by him orally, and thus taught to the people. The reason for this, no doubt, is to be found in the representation which he gives, in one of these beautiful poems, of the mental and moral state of his countrymen:

"'Tis a reproach and bitter shame,
That rests upon the British name,
That not a hundredth part, indeed,
God's book in their own tongue can read."

To remedy this crying evil, as far as he could, he gave an endowment of 20*l.* a-year—no insignificant one in those days—to establish a school in his own parish. This school went on prosperously during the life of the founder, but soon after it disappeared. The school-house, we are told, having been built on the banks of the river Tywi, was swept away by an inundation of the river, and the endowment was swept away by another torrent yet more violent and voracious, which has swamped and absorbed a good many more such charitable bequests—I mean clerical rapacity; for we are told that "Thomas Manwaring, the son of Dr. Manwaring, Bishop of St. David's, who had married the vicar's granddaughter, took possession of the land belonging to the school, undertaking to pay the schoolmaster himself, which he did for a year or two, and then withheld from it all support."

The next effort which I find made on behalf of the education of

the Welsh people, was by a pious and excellent Nonconformist minister, of the name of Gouge. I suppose he must have been acquainted with the language of the Principality; * for, after having been ejected from his living of St. Sepulchre, in London, he immediately turned his attention to Wales, and began to travel and preach in that country, and translated, or got translated, various useful works from the English. But seeing the deplorable destitution of the means of education among the Welsh, he seems to have formed an association of English gentlemen, to raise and establish a fund for publishing pious books, and opening elementary schools in Wales. And it is delightful to observe the men of which that association consisted; for there we find the most illustrious names of the Church of England and of the Nonconformists, forgetting their own differences of opinion, uniting together to bless and befriend our poor country—Archbishops Tillotson and Stillingfleet, combined with Richard Baxter, Poole, Bates, Patrick, and others. In the first report they published of their operations they say, among other things, "that they had placed 812 poor children in schools, to learn the English language, in 51 principal towns in Wales, and that there have been bought and distributed in several families 32 Welsh Bibles, which were all that could be had in Wales or London, and likewise 240 New Testaments."

I suspect that this generous contribution was not an endowment, but an annual subscription, which ceased with the life of the benevolent donors; for I am not aware that any of the schools established by Mr. Gouge and his coadjutors survived for any considerable time after his death.

Another long interval of drowsiness and neglect appears to have elapsed before anything more was done for the education of the Welsh, during which they had sunk into the grossest state of ignorance and brutality. About the beginning of the eighteenth century God raised up another man of apostolic mind and purpose, whose heart was stirred within him as he looked abroad, and saw his countrymen wholly devoted to iniquity—Griffith Jones, of Llandowror. He was the founder of what are called the "Circulating schools," in Wales, very remarkable institutions, the account of whose origin is as follows:—Mr. Jones was accustomed, on the Saturday before the sacrament Sunday, to assemble his parishioners, for the purpose of familiar catechetical instruction and prayer. By the difficulty and

* Mr. Charles, in his *Trysorfa*, I find, says that Mr. Gouge did *not* know the Welsh language.

reluctance manifested to answer the simplest questions which he put to them on scriptural subjects, he discovered the appalling ignorance which prevailed among the people. He determined, therefore, as he had no other resources, to appropriate the money collected at the ordinance to the establishment of a free day-school. In process of time he began to procure aid from other quarters, especially from the munificence of Mrs. Bevan, a lady of large property and great generosity, residing at Laugharne, in Caermarthenshire. This enabled him to originate several others; and, in order that the advantages derived from them might be diffused as widely as possible, the schools were removed in two, three, or four quarters, from one parish to another: hence they obtained the name of "Circulating schools." In 1763, the year of Mr. Jones's decease, that is, about thirty years after the first experiment had been tried "with the sacrament-money of the parish of Llandellin," the number of schools which had been established at different times, and in various places in Wales, amounted to 3,495; and the number of scholars who had been educated in them amounted to 158,237. This was certainly a degree of success which the most sanguine friends of the institution could have hardly anticipated. We can only justly appreciate its real extent when we recollect that the population of Wales during this period contained, on an average, between 400,000 and 500,000.

For twenty years after the death of Mr. Jones these schools, which had been multiplied to more than 200, were entirely supported by the private liberality of Mrs. Bevan, who, when she died, left in her will 10,000*l.* for their perpetual support. The validity of this will was contested by the Lady Stickney, the heiress and executrix to Mrs. Bevan, by which means the property was thrown into chancery for twenty years, when it increased to 30,000*l.* Mr. Charles Bala, writing in his "*Trysorfa,*" in the year 1800, and in reference to this property, observed that there it continued till very recently, when the Lord Chancellor decided the case in such a manner as to render the money utterly unavailable for the benefit of Wales. This prognostic proved true; for although there are a few of the schools still in existence, they are in a condition miserably languid and inefficient, and entirely under the control of the clergy, who prize and employ them far more as instruments of petty vexation to the Dissenters, than as means of promoting popular education.

Notwithstanding, however, these scattered and occasional efforts,

the state of the country, previous to the rise of Methodism, and the beginning of what may be called modern Dissent, was, on the whole, very dark and deplorable. As it is impossible to estimate aright the amount and value of what has been accomplished in the way of education, without comparing the present with the past condition of the people, I must ask your attention to a picture, drawn from the most authentic sources, of what that condition was in the Principality eighty or a hundred years ago. In a publication, called the "*Trysorfa,*" edited by a man whose name will be fragrant in the memories of his countrymen for ever—I mean the Reverend Thomas Charles, of Bala—and which was published in 1799, the following account is given of the state of Wales, about the middle of the eighteenth century:—"In those days the land was dark indeed: hardly any of the lower ranks could read at all. The morals of the country were very corrupt, and in this respect there was no difference between gentle and simple, layman and churchman. Gluttony, drunkenness, and licentiousness prevailed throughout the whole country. Every Sabbath there was what was called a *chwareu gamp,* a sort of sport in which all the young men of the neighbourhood had a trial of strength, and the people assembled from the surrounding country to see their feats. In every corner of the town some sport or other went on, till the light of the Sabbath-day had faded away. In the summer, interludes (a kind of rustic drama) were performed, gentlemen and peasants sharing the diversion together."

John Wesley, on his first visit into Wales, at the beginning of Methodism, has left on record in his journal the opinion, that the ignorance of the people was so great, "that they were as little versed in the principles of Christianity as a Creek or Cherokee Indian." But to come yet lower down: Mr. Charles's Welsh biographer, in referring to the state of the country a little before the time when he (Mr. Charles) commenced his labours, describes it thus:—"Ignorance, recklessness, and every species of iniquity, had spread with great power through the land. The Church ministers were in a most degenerate state, both as to principles and practice—the gentry using no influence in favour of religion or good morals, but themselves giving examples of many kinds of wickedness; the common people sunk in darkness and superstition; and the few Dissenters that remained, generally asleep, in mere formality, and some of them fallen into doctrines and practices equally corrupt. In short, the

condition of our country was very deplorable, through the absence of knowledge and religious influence; the Bible rarely to be found, despite the valuable exertions of the Christian Knowledge Society, and in many parishes of our country it was impossible to find ten persons that could read in any language." Then he adds, in a note:—"The publisher of this memoir has obtained credible testimony, that in Anglesea there were many parishes in which there were scarcely two or three persons, besides the clergyman, who could read, about the year 1740." Nay, what does Mr. Charles himself say, in a letter written to a friend in London, so late as the year 1808?—"In my journeys through many parts of North Wales, about twenty-three years ago, I found that the condition of the poor, generally, was so low, with regard to religious instruction, that there was scarcely one in twenty, in many places, who could read the Scriptures; and in some places, after special inquiry, it was difficult to find even one who had been taught to read." I might multiply quotations of the same kind; but I will try your patience with only one more, taken from the Memoirs, recently published, of an excellent and venerable man, well known to me—I mean the Rev. John Davies, of Nantglyn, who died so late as June, 1843, at a very advanced age. In writing, some time before his death, an account of the state of the country in his youth, he says:—"About sixty years ago, the people were sitting in pagan darkness and ignorance, and all, great and small, lying in wickedness. Few went to the churches, or anywhere else, to worship God; all parts of our country were full of every species of sports on the Sabbath-days—others in the taverns, drinking immoderately, dancing and singing to the harp. Interludes were then in high esteem among the people; they were wont to travel a great way to hear and see them, and they were regularly announced by the parish-clerk in the churches, after the service, and the sports in like manner. There were very few in a parish that could read at all; and those who could were rather high people, who had received some English schooling. Occasionally a Bible might be found in a great house, which was kept in a chest or box, locked up as a charm, to keep the house from harm. There were many charms performed with the Bible. As an instance of this, I remember an old man, a neighbour of mine, who suffered greatly from asthma. Somebody advised him to place a Bible under his head for three nights. His wife went through the neighbourhood to search for one, and at last

found an old English Bible in a house called Plas-Newydd, Henllan. She brought it home, and placed it under the old man's head; after which she declared that he slept very comfortable. Another person, a large farmer, had a cow very ill on Sunday. After giving her physic, it was thought the animal was dying. He immediately ran into the house, procured the Bible, and read a chapter out of it to the cow. Another time, the clergyman and the clerk of the parish went to administer the sacrament to a farmer who was ill. The clerk entered the house before the clergyman, and the farmer's wife asked him, 'What have you got in that green bag, Thomas?' 'The Bible and Common Prayer Book,' was the reply. 'Pray let me look at the Bible!' said she. 'There it is,' said Thomas. 'Well, blessed be God!' exclaimed the old woman, 'there never was one in this house before, nor any occasion for it before, blessed be God!'"

Mr. Johnes, in his "Essay on the Causes of Dissent in Wales," to which I shall presently advert, after tracing the effects of Griffith Jones' schools, says:—"We are irresistibly led to three conclusions—

"1st. That, before the rise of Methodism in Wales, the churches were as little attended by the great mass of the people as now.

"2nd. That indifference to all religion prevailed as widely then as Dissent in the present day.

"3rd. That if the influential members of the Church had evinced the same zeal for the religious education of the people as was shown by G. Jones and his coadjutors, the Welsh peasantry would have continued to look to the Church for instruction, instead of seeking it from the Methodists. But," he adds, "that a portion of the clergy zealously opposed Mr. Jones, and that many of the higher classes were systematically opposed to the education of the poor; while the bishops of Wales had not even countenanced his measures."

According to a statement made by Lord Brougham, in the House of Commons, in 1820, it would appear—and I can easily believe it, as it corresponds with the authorities I have already quoted—that, before 1803, the proportion of day scholars to the population in Wales was 1 to 26. On this part of my subject, I gladly avail myself of Mr. Baines's admirable statistical analysis of the Commissioners' Reports, together with the view he has given of the results which these exhibit, as compared with previous returns of the educational state of the Principality; and I take this opportunity of conveying to him what I believe I may represent as the

earnest and unanimous thanks of a whole people, for the gallant manner in which he stepped forth to do battle on their behalf against the Commissioners and their allies, the London papers :—

NUMBERS OF DAY SCHOLARS, AND PROPORTION TO POPULATION.

Years.	Day Scholars.	Proportion to Population.
In 1803	21,369	1 to 26
— 1818	30,601	1 to 22
— 1833	54,810	1 to 15
— 1846-7	110,034	1 to 9

But this is not all. "Remarkable and even marvellous," Mr. Baines remarks, "as this is, the increase in strictly religious education, as indicated by the increase in Sunday-schools, is still more surprising." It was in the year 1789 that the Rev. Thomas Charles established the first Sunday-school in North Wales. And now mark the wonderful rapidity with which these excellent institutions have struck their roots, and spread their fibres through the whole extent of the country.

NUMBERS OF SUNDAY SCHOLARS, AND PROPORTION TO POPULATION.

Years.	Sunday Scholars.	Proportion to Population.
In 1818	24,408	1 to 28
— 1833	173,171	1 to 4 4-5ths
— 1846-7	238,740	1 to 4

How, then, has such a statement as this been dealt with by the Commissioners and their abettors? They dispose of the whole thing by pronouncing, with oracular air, this comprehensive dogma: "That statistics are next to worthless in this inquiry," and "that no mere statement of either the number or increase of their schools can possibly prove that the Welsh are able to provide for their own education." It is not a little remarkable to observe the change which has come over these gentlemen's minds, as to the value of figures. I remember well, when these liberal politicians and *literati* began to awake in earnest (and let me add, at a very late hour of the day, after the Dissenters had been long at work,) to a sense of the importance and necessity of popular education, they abounded with statistics. We had calculations and returns of all sorts poured

upon us—calculations as to the proportion of children to the whole population—as to the proportion that ought to be at school—the proportion that were at school—the proportion that were not at school—the comparative proportion at school in England and other European countries. If any one attempted to open his mouth, in favour of past educational efforts, he was instantly deluged with a shower of statistics. We were told, there was no arguing with figures; no means of refuting the severe logic of the Rule of Three. But when a gentleman was found, who had vigour and dexterity of arm to wrest their favourite weapon out of their own hand, and to turn it against themselves, and in defence of Voluntary Education, they suddenly discover that "statistics are next to worthless in this inquiry."

But how does the remark apply to this Welsh controversy? Why, I suppose it is meant to be affirmed that the education nominally given there is inefficient and worthless, and produces no practical result on the intellectual and moral condition of the people. Well, I join issue with them on that question, and am willing to submit to any fair test they can themselves propose. Is the demand for books and the actual amount of reading, which prevails throughout a community, to be regarded as any proof that the education given them has, at least, taught them effectually the use of letters; stimulated their mental activity, and generated studious tastes and habits? Well, let us apply this test to the Welsh. And first, as to the circulation of Bibles among them. I hope the mention of this book will not cause any of those worthy gentlemen to curl their lip. A greater man than any of them is likely to be, has said, in comparing the choicest forms of heathen literature with these writings, even as guides on questions of political science—

> "Their orators thou then extoll'st as those
> The top of eloquence; statists, indeed,
> And lovers of their country, as may seem!
> But herein to our prophets far beneath,
> As men divinely taught, and better teaching
> The solid rules of civil government
> In their majestic, unaffected style,
> Than all the oratory of Greece and Rome.
> In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,
> What makes a nation happy and keeps it so."

Well, then, of this book, which, according to Milton, is best

adapted to "make a nation happy, and keep it so," the Welsh have had no sparing supply; nay, I should, perhaps, be safe in saying, a more ample supply, than any other nation under heaven. My esteemed friend, the Rev. Thomas Phillips, the agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Wales, has kindly furnished me with the following information on this subject, taken from the records of that noble Institution:

Bibles and Testaments circulated in Wales from the establishment of that Society in 1804, to January, 1847, 740,000 copies. In order to show the rate at which this work is going on now, he has favoured me with the following calculations:

Population of North and South Wales at the last census, 911,321.

Bibles and Testaments sent there during the last three years, 123,748.

Proportion to the number of individuals, 1 Bible to every 7.

So that, in addition to the enormous numbers previously sent, the Bible Society alone has, within the last three years, furnished a Bible or Testament to every 1 in 7 of the whole population in Wales. The highest average in England is 1 in 8¾. Mr. Symons is pleased to say, in one part of his Report, that the peasantry, especially the female peasantry in Cardiganshire, are grossly ignorant and illiterate. Now Mr. Phillips informs me, that the highest average of Bible distribution in Wales, for the last three years, is in that county; that is, in the proportion of 1 to every 3¾ of the entire population. Now, mark, these are not all the Bibles circulated in Wales. There are many issued by the Christian Knowledge Society, besides what are sold by private booksellers. In addition to which he informs me, that of the Rev. Peter Williams's Bible, which is a large quarto, with annotations, the price from about 20s. to 30s. a copy, there have been sold, in eighty years, 40,000 copies in the principality. Now, it should be remembered, that the whole of these Bibles, from the Bible Society and elsewhere, were not given away, but sold; so that this immense supply was fairly created by the demand. And, I ask, what could the Welsh want with such a multitude of Bibles, if they could not read?

But it may be said, that the Bible is sought by them only out of fashion or superstitious reverence, but that they cannot and do not make any efforts to obtain an intelligent acquaintance with its contents. In reply to this, I adduce the following significant fact,—that the Welsh have in their own language, and in extensive use among

them, translations, in whole or in part, of the following eminent English commentators:—Matthew Henry, Thomas Scott, Adam Clarke, Samuel Clark, Dr. Gill, Dr. Coke, Guise, Burkitt, Brown of Haddington, Campbell, and Barnes. In addition to these, there are six or seven original commentaries on the whole Bible, some of them very able and elaborate, with many more on separate books of Scripture. As an evidence of the extent to which they are in request, I may say, that one commentary on the New Testament, which has only been published a few years, has sold 8,000 copies, and a new edition was issued from the press about a twelvemonth ago. Later still has been the appearance of Barnes's admirable work, the demand for which has been still greater,—I may say, indeed, enormous,—if what I have heard of its circulation even approaches the truth.*

But let us pass from this to take a survey of their general literature. Mr. Symons, indeed, with his characteristic modesty, authoritatively declares, that "the Welsh have no literature worthy of the name;" and Mr. Vaughan Johnson still further improves on this dictum by adding, that they have "neither language nor literature" for secular knowledge. Really, in the face of such an assertion as this, one is almost startled out of the profound reverence which one would ever wish to cherish for so dignified and consequential a character as a Government Commissioner, and tempted to ask, be the literature of the Welsh what it may, what on earth can these men know about it? They have never read a single page of Welsh literature in their lives. The nearest approach that I can find which any of them ever made even to an attempt to understand it, was by the following notable device:—Mr. Johnson got some person acquainted with the Welsh language to translate, off the wrappers, the contents of one or two numbers of some half a dozen of the Welsh periodicals. And as a specimen of Mr. Symons's critical competency on the literature of the Welsh, I will give you a very edifying anecdote, which will illustrate also several things besides his critical talents. The Rev. Thomas Price, better known in Wales by his literary name, Carnuanhawc, is one of the most estimable and learned clergymen in the principality. In company with this gentleman, Mr. Symons visited and examined a school in his parish. Having

* "We have upwards of five hundred volumes of religious works, and of those, forty-two are commentaries on the Bible."—*Rev. W. Williams's Lecture on the Welsh as a Nation.*

asked a question which Mr. Price thought beyond the capacity of such young children, and, when they failed to answer it, having "commenced a lecture on their ignorance in a strain of severity which he considered not only out of his province as a Commissioner, but rather more harsh than the case required," Mr. Price was tempted into asking Mr. Symons if he could answer that question himself. The learned Commissioner blushed and blundered, but could bring out no reply. So great an insult to his dignity seems, however, to have sunk deep into his heart, as he takes every opportunity he can possibly find in his Report to sneer at and ridicule Mr. Price. Thus in one place he refers to a History of Wales, in the Welsh language, published by that gentleman some years ago, and takes upon himself to say, that it is written in such obscure and scholastic Welsh, as to be absolutely unintelligible to all but a few scholars, and that "the sale never paid the expenses of the printing." Now I know this work well, and can assure you, that it is as perfectly intelligible to every ordinary Welsh reader as Hume's "History of England" is to you. And as to the sale, Mr. Price says, in a letter to the *Times*, noticing this piece of spiteful impertinence, "This assertion, I am happy in being able to place amongst the other untruths of which I have to complain, and I have the further gratification of saying, that of the 2,000 copies which were printed, almost the whole were bought by the labouring classes—a description of people who, Mr. Symons would have us believe, are scarcely able to read at all." Mr. Symons, referring, in another part of his Report, to the Normal school at Brecon, says, in the depreciatory and sneering spirit which pervades all his remarks, that unless Government pays the teachers (for that is the plain English of his meaning), that "a college for the cultivation of Arabic in Birmingham would scarcely be a more hopeless enterprise than a Normal school in Wales." Now I venture to say, that he would be quite as competent to fill the Arabic chair in this imaginary college at Birmingham, as he is to pronounce a judgment on the merits or demerits of Welsh literature.

What, then, is the character of the literature which the Welsh possess? It would be of no avail for me to enumerate or describe to you the many able and admirable original works—the productions of native learning and genius—of which they can boast, as you would not be able, of course, to form any opinion of them. But you know the worth and value of your own literature. And I find that, in the department of theology, the works in whole or in part of the

following eminent divines, ancient and modern, have been translated into Welsh:—Calvin, Baxter, Owen, Charnock, Goodwin, Bishop Hall, Fisher, Brooks, Bunyan, Gurnal, Boston, Watson, Flavel, Fleetwood, Poole, Brown of Haddington, Colqoun, Samuel Clarke, Mason, Harvey, Doddridge, Watts, Jonathan Edwards (all his principal works), Cole, Fawcett, Maclean, Keach, Burder (Eastern Customs), Wesley, Robert Hall, Dr. Chalmers, Dr. Dick, Abbott, Finney, Angell James, Gurney and Jenkyn, together with many of the works of the Christian Knowledge Society, and Religious Tract Society. And yet "the Welsh have no literature worthy of the name!" There may be differences of opinion, to be sure, as to what *is* worthy of that name. Perhaps if the Welsh had in their possession Lord Byron's poetry and Charles Dickens's novels, Mr. Symons would have admitted they possessed something like "a literature." But I am content, before such an audience as this, to rest their claims to that honourable distinction on the noble list I have just read.

Turn we now for a moment to their periodical literature,—no bad index to the mental activity of a people. They have, first of all, a quarterly, which I dare to affirm contains articles which would not dishonour the pages of your own *British Quarterly* or *Eclectic*. They have about fifteen monthly magazines, with a circulation of at least 60,000 a month. But this does not half represent the case. By far the greater part of these circulate among the peasantry and the labouring classes. Nay, more, many of the principal contributors to them are men of that class. Mr. William Rees, a churchman, and a highly respectable publisher at Llandovery, who has sent forth from his press specimens of typography which would reflect credit on the first houses in London, gives the following evidence to Mr. Lingen on this point:—"The Welsh peasantry are better able to read and write in their own language than the same classes in England. Among them are found many contributors to Welsh periodicals. I publish a monthly periodical myself (*Yr Haul*), and have many contributors from this class." * Now, without

* I regret exceedingly to find that this gentleman has descended to so unworthy and ungenerous an act, in order to injure his competitors in Welsh Periodical Literature, as to inform Mr. Symons that, "during the progress and reign of Rebecca-ism, *his* was the only one of the Welsh magazines that openly denounced its promoters and abettors." This imputation, which was first advanced against the Dissenting periodicals by the *Times*' Commissioner (as he was called), was amply refuted at the time. I translated, myself, some articles of earnest and eloquent denunciation of the Rebeccaites from the

wishing to institute any invidious comparisons, will you allow me to ask, how much of the periodical literature of England finds its way among the agricultural labourers of Kent and Essex? How many of the chaw-bacons of Norfolk and Suffolk are accustomed to illuminate the world through the pages of our magazines? I wonder whether my friend Dr. Campbell has any large proportion of his literary staff from that quarter? Now, mark, gentlemen. In order to estimate aright the significance of this fact as to the extent of the Welsh periodic and other literature, you must take into account that all this provision is made for a population of not more than 600,000 persons at most; for, when you subtract those parts of Wales that are entirely Anglified, and those classes of the community whose literary tastes are exclusively confined to the English language, and who take no interest whatever in the literature of their native land, I believe the number I have stated is considerably outside the mark of the purely Welsh portion of society, who have to consume the whole of the literary supply I have described. Now, I appeal to you in the name of all common sense, if the Welsh are in such an utterly uneducated and illiterate condition, as some folks would have us believe, what do they want with all these books? They are not good for eating or drinking, but only for reading; and the poor Welsh have no money to spare, to lavish on commodities that are utterly unnecessary and worthless to them.

But what effect has the education of the Welsh had on their moral and religious character? It is difficult to know what order of facts would suffice to satisfy the sceptical and sarcastic gentlemen with whom we have to deal. What will they say to such a fact as this,—that, within the last fifty years, the Welsh have built, or rebuilt, for themselves, 2,000 chapels, for which an excellent judge computes them to have already paid at least eight hundred thousand pounds? Surely, in whatever contempt Dissenting conventicles may be held, the people who did this could not have been sunk in the "depths of ignorance, and in the slough of sensuality!" What will they say to this other fact, that, in about sixty years, the Welsh have, by their spontaneous energy, without help or sympathy, but the reverse of both, from Government or gentry, covered the entire face of their country with an array of 2,514 Sunday-schools, with its

Diwygiwr, edited by the Rev. David Rees, Llanelly, which were published, at the time, in the *Patriot.* I am afraid Mr. Rees must have *known* that he was reviving a slander which had been abundantly and notoriously disproved.

noble band of 33,662 voluntary and gratuitous teachers, and 238,740 scholars? Would they ascertain the influence of this system, in exciting and cherishing the benevolent sympathies of the people on behalf of others, let them attend to this third fact, furnished to me by my friend, the Rev. Thomas Phillips, to whom I was indebted for the return of Bibles circulated in Wales:—Free contributions sent from Wales to the Bible Society, in the last three years, in addition to paying for the large numbers they required themselves, 10,062*l.* 13s. 2d.; proportion to the number of inhabitants, $2\frac{1}{2}$d. to every man, woman, and child throughout the country. Free contributions from England during the same period, 81,645*l.* 10s. 11d.; proportion to the number of inhabitants, $1\frac{1}{4}$d.,—just one-half of what the Welsh have contributed. In England, the highest average of free contribution to this noble society has been in Rutlandshire, which was $4\frac{1}{4}$d. to each person. In Wales, the highest average has been in the Isle of Anglesea, which was $11\frac{1}{2}$d. to each person. And yet, this is the country "that is fast sinking into barbarism!"

Shall we look more minutely still for evidence of the character of the people? Be it so. Whither, then, shall we turn? I will not summon Dissenting witnesses—they may be supposed partial. A few years ago, there was published a prize essay, on the Cause of Dissent in Wales, by Arthur James Johnes, Esq. This gentleman is a churchman; and the whole purport of the essay is to deplore, in the bitterest terms, the prevalence of Dissent, and to suggest means for the recovery of the people into the bosom of the Church. It is, however, written with eminent ability, and in what may be called a somewhat candid spirit, for a churchman. This gentleman, speaking of the absurd reasons which some assigned as causes of Dissent in Wales, remarks:—"Nothing, for instance, can be more unsatisfactory, than to rank ignorance and individual eccentricity as in themselves causes of Dissent in Wales;" for the fact is, he adds, that "*Dissent has advanced with knowledge, and not with ignorance.*"

Shall we take the evidence of a clergyman? Take the following from an essay on the Character of the Welsh as a Nation, by the Rev. W. Jones, of Nevin, who, before he was ecclesiastically enlightened, was a Baptist minister, but who had then been received into the bosom of the Apostolical Church. This gentleman, let me add, has, since the publication of this work, been doing the *amende honorable* to his clerical brethren for the too glowing eulogies he

had passed on the influence of Methodism and Dissent, by coming forward very copiously in these Reports as the defamer of his country. But before he had been smitten with that influence, this was the style in which he spoke of the people :—"In an important sense, and to a very great extent, the Welsh are a religious people. Religion has been so far disseminated in all parts of the Principality as to give the Bible an universal reception. The people at large are able to read the Scriptures. True, there are exceptions, but those are limited to children under ten years of age, and to old people above seventy. One of the loveliest features of the moral condition of the Principality is seen in the careful manner in which the sabbath is observed. It may be doubted whether the seventh day is so scrupulously observed in any land on earth. It is just that I should say, that this arises, in a great measure, from the labours of the Welsh Methodists, and on account of the dissemination of their principles among the great mass of the people. The same views are entertained by other denominations, and they order the members belonging to them to observe the Lord's-day in a similar manner. The Welsh may claim a character for being honest. That much deception is practised by the most depraved part of the people, is a fact not to be denied ; *but the wicked acts of a small number must not be held as forming the character of the whole nation, whilst the majority of the people lead a life of virtue.*"

Shall we take the evidence of a layman? The following are the words of Dr. Owen Roberts, of Bangor, who, I believe, is not, professedly at least, a Dissenter :

"As to religious education,—if by that hackneyed phrase be meant a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and an acquaintance with the practical Christian duties inculcated in the New Testament,—I will, without scruple or hesitation, assert, that there can hardly be met with in North Wales a child, who is ten or twelve years of age, and whose parents are members of either of the Dissenting denominations, who will not be found as fully well informed, if not better, than four-fifths of the clergy of the Established Church ; except, perhaps, those who were originally educated for the ministry among the Dissenters. The advance made in Scriptural knowledge, which in so peculiar a manner distinguishes Wales, has been effected in spite of all the efforts, covertly and openly, made by the clergy of the Established Church, to check its progress, and to crush those individuals who have favoured so truly benevolent an object."

Would the opinion of an intelligent English gentleman residing among them be satisfactory? Here are the words of T. W. Booker, Esq., the present High Sheriff of Glamorgan, respecting what the Commissioners describe as the worst part of the Welsh population. In answer to Mr. Lingen's questions, he says: "A residence of thirty years in Glamorganshire has made me acquainted with the condition of the mining and manufacturing population of a great part of the county. Their domestic accommodation of late years is greatly improved, and each succeeding year improving. Habits of sobriety are, on the whole, well cultivated. Habits of providence and economy are, in my opinion, as well observed by the population of Glamorganshire as by that of any part of the United Kingdom. Their religious feelings and observances are very marked in this Welsh county: witness the almost universal orderly observance of the sabbath—the large attendances at weekly prayer, and other meetings—the careful maintenance of the churches and chapels—and the sacred reverence for the churchyards and depositories of the dead. Their care for their children, and sense of parental responsibility, are exemplary in the extreme; particularly so in comparison with other mining and manufacturing districts. When kindness and protection are manifested and extended by their employers and superiors, respect, with unreserved confidence and attachment, are returned. Their moral and mental condition is still improving, as evidenced by the banishment and absence of political discontent—the increased indulgence in domestic comforts—the growing neatness and smartness of dress and furniture—*the avidity to give education and schooling to their children*—and generally, wherever opportunity is afforded by local institutions, or influential encouragement, to make provision for a reverse of times and for old age. The women are kindly, tenderly, and respectfully regarded. Their "character" is chaste but confiding, honest and industrious. Their influence is great, and on great emergencies powerfully exerted. The duties of wife and mother are naturally and well understood, and fulfilled."

Would you prefer the testimony of a foreigner?—you can have it. Dr. Carl Meyer, a learned German, who has resided lately for some time in Wales, and has travelled throughout the country, gives the following important testimony:—"To speak against Dissenters is quite anti-national; and he who does so should not be considered a patriot—not only because the Dissenters constitute by far the great majority in Wales, but because they are the most respectable and

esteemed portion of the community, on account of their character and strict discipline, and their honest and straightforward dealings. Should Dissent become extinct in Wales, the chief ornament of the nation would be lost at once."

Would official testimony be more satisfactory to you?—we can furnish that. The criminal returns show, that in 1845, whilst the commitments in England were as one to every 635 of the population, in Wales they are but one in 1,311. Even the Commissioners of Inquiry that were sent down to investigate the causes of the Rebecca riots, in 1843, observe in their Report, that "the average amount of crime in the greater part of South Wales is so small, that a large proportion of the magistrate's duties is of a ministerial rather than a judicial nature."

In the "Cambrian Quarterly Magazine," vol. ii., p. 52, we have an extract of the evidence of J. Wyatt, Esq., the then Attorney-General for a part of North Wales, before the Law Commissioners. It refers to three counties in which Welsh is spoken exclusively, and which are proverbial for their Dissent:—"The great body of the people speak the Welsh language, and their habits and manners are but little changed. They are quiet, religious, and loyal people; their ancient simplicity and habits of respect to their superiors remain unaltered; and the crimes which disgrace and terrify England, and which her boasted judicature is unable to suppress, are little heard of. Capital punishments are rarely inflicted; and these three counties boast with pride, that for the last forty years only two executions have taken place in Merioneth, two in Caernarvonshire, and none has taken place in Anglesea."

I believe that every Englishman who visits Wales is struck with the peaceful, decent, industrious character of the people, their social order, and respectful demeanour to strangers. Notwithstanding all that is said in these Reports, "honest Welshman" is a proverbial expression, which has not yet lost its force, wherever the people are known. The following lines by Thomas Churchyard, an old poet of the age of Queen Elizabeth, describing the inhabitants of Wales in his time, is, I believe, still fully applicable to them; while, since that period, many higher qualities of character have been added to those which he celebrates:

> "They will not strive to roist, and take the way
> Of any man that travailes through the land;
> A greater thing of Wales now will I say:
> You may come there, beare purse of gold in hand,

> Or mighty bagges of silver stuffed throwe,
> And no one man dare touch your treasure now;
> Which shewes some grace doth rule and guyde them there,
> That doth to God and man such conscience beare."

Such, ladies and gentlemen, is the evidence by which I illustrate "the progress and efficiency of Voluntary Education in Wales."

Having thus endeavoured to furnish you with the means of judging what Voluntary Education has done for Wales, I turn now to compare this representation with that given by the Commissioners in their recently published Reports. And what is the character of their representation? Taking all the evidence of facts and figures contained in these Blue Books, it would be extremely difficult, from the confused and contradictory statements with which they abound, to elicit from them any consistent or uniform result at all. But there can be no mistake as to the general impression which the Commissioners themselves are anxious to convey, as to the state of the country. That impression is, in the highest degree, unfavourable. It is scarcely too much to say, that any one reposing plenary faith in the competency and fidelity of these gentlemen, and forming his judgment under their guidance alone, can hardly fail to come to the conclusion, that there is not a more ignorant, depraved, idle, superstitious, drunken, debauched, lewd, and lying population on the face of the earth than are the Welsh. That this is not too strong a representation, will appear from the impression which they have actually produced on the minds of Englishmen, who have no other means of information than that which these Reports supply. The *Morning Chronicle*, for instance, gathers from them the conclusion, that "Wales is fast settling down into the most savage barbarism." The *Daily News*, also, whose words I have not this moment at hand, strains language to the utmost, to express the total degradation, moral and social, in which the Principality is wallowing. The Editor of the *Examiner* infers, from the same evidence, that the Welsh "are sunk in the depths of ignorance, and in the slough of sensuality;" and, that "their habits are those of animals, and will not bear description." Is this, then, true? If the experience of eighteen hundred years, as to the effect which the faithful and earnest preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ will produce on the moral character of a community is not to be suddenly belied and reversed,—it is *not* true. If innumerable testimonies from men of all grade, condition, creed, and character, Whigs and Tories, Churchmen and Dissenters, rich and poor, Englishmen

and Welshmen, which are rising spontaneously from all parts of the Principality, to contradict these Reports, are to have any weight,—it is *not* true. If resolutions passed at crowded public meetings, convened in all the neighbourhoods, more specially and conspicuously branded by the Commissioners and their witnesses, to protest against and deny, line by line, and statement by statement, the charges contained in the evidence, and to dare and challenge their slanderers to the proof, are to be counted of any significance,—it is *not* true. If the universal cry of stern indignation, which has been wrung from the heart of a people of simple feelings and secluded habits, and utterly unused to all political excitement, but stung beyond all patience by a sense of intolerable insult and wrong,—a cry which is waxing louder and fiercer every day, and multiplying its echoes, like reverberations of thunder among the mountains and along the valleys of Wales,—if this unanimous and protesting cry of a whole nation is entitled to any attention,—it is *not* true. If the testimony of an individual so humble as myself, but not without means of forming a judgment at least equal to those possessed by these Commissioners, born and educated in the heart of Wales, intimately conversant with the character, habits, language, literature, and religious ministrations of the people, were of any importance to be added to this cloud of witnesses,—I scruple not to give it, and to say it is *not* true, but grossly, foully, scandalously false. How, then, comes it to pass that the Reports of these Commissioners, appointed expressly for the purpose of securing accurate information, and who prosecuted their labours with no small parade of impartiality, are of a nature so untrue and unfair? It will be my business now to explain how this happened, by exposing the principles upon which, and the process by which, these huge documents have been compiled. And if I do not convince every unprejudiced mind, before I have done, that they are utterly untrustworthy as a full, fair, and satisfactory delineation of the national character and the state of society in Wales, I shall be content to receive from your lips a verdict of Guilty, against my country.

Let me, however, at the outset, guard myself against misconstruction. I stand not here as the apologist of anything evil in Wales. I stand not here to assert its immaculacy, nor to pass extravagant eulogies on either its intelligence or virtue. I admit freely that, notwithstanding all that has been done and is doing, education in Wales, as in England, is still in a most imperfect condition. I admit that there is in Wales, as there is unhappily in every country

in the world, a large amount both of ignorance and immorality. I will even admit, that the kind of microscopic inspection which the country has undergone, by the labours of these Commissioners, has brought to light considerably more of both, than the more sanguine and hopeful of us had imagined to exist. I will admit further, that there are among the Welsh certain habits and practices of the most painful and reprehensible sort, which their Christianity has but partially corrected, and which reflect deep dishonour on the national character. I have not scrupled, frequently in the presence of my countrymen, to lift up my voice against those evils in tones of most emphatic and unmistakeable reprobation. And if I do not expatiate upon these to-night, it is because I feel (and I am sure I shall carry the sympathies of every generous Englishman with me in the feeling,) that the proper time to display your magnanimity and moral courage, in exposing the frailties and imperfections of a friend, is not when that friend is standing arraigned at a public tribunal, on a criminal charge, before partial and prejudiced judges, and on the evidence of his most determined and rancorous enemies, who eagerly seize the hour of his trial "to feed fat the grudge" which they have long cherished against him. I do not admire, and will not imitate, the chivalrous candour which would deem that a fitting opportunity to hold up to the public gaze the blemishes and defects of my Fatherland. I will, however, attempt to deny no charge that can be fairly made and sustained; but when the most ample concessions have been made with regard to the social evils we have still to deplore in the Principality, I do not hesitate to affirm, that these Reports present even those evils in a most exaggerated form, while almost all the good, which might serve to relieve and modify these dark colours, is habitually, studiously, and systematically kept back.

But I return to the task which I have set myself, of explaining to you in what manner these Reports have been concocted. I say, then, in the first place, that the Commission itself was originally constituted on a principle utterly at variance with all justice and fair dealing—that the men selected were entirely and in almost every respect lacking in the qualifications necessary to discharge the task in a manner impartial and satisfactory to the public mind—that the mode they adopted of prosecuting their inquiries, both in what they did and what they omitted to do, was such as thoroughly to disentitle the fruit of their labours to credit or confidence, and that much of the evidence which they have actually collected in these

books, derived, as it is, from men who were either most imperfectly acquainted with the real state of the people, or violently prejudiced against them, is not to be relied upon, as a mere statement and collation of facts.

I hold, then, that the gentlemen selected as Commissioners, whatever may be their personal accomplishments and virtues, against which I have not a word to say, were in almost all respects perfectly incompetent for the task they undertook; and, in the first place, mark, they knew not one word of the language! Whether it be their misfortune, as the Commissioners loudly assert, or their happiness, as others believe, the fact remains the same, that the great bulk of the inhabitants of the Principality speak and think in Welsh. And would it not strike any one as a practical absurdity, too glaring to be for a moment entertained, that when an inquiry had to be instituted into the education of a whole people—into their mental and moral training—the men to be chosen for this work should be those who had no acquaintance with the organ through which the mind of that people could alone reveal and express itself, and no direct medium of communication whatever between the inquirer and the objects of his inquiry? What greatly aggravates the absurdity in this case, is the fact, that these adventurous gentlemen, instead of restricting themselves to their proper duty as inspectors of schools, aspire to give a complete estimate of the national character, and of the whole system of society—to pass a judgment on the domestic habits, the religious institutions, and the literature of the country, together with the influence and operation of all these on its social character, and the development of its civilization; and all this without knowing a syllable of the language. Could so radical a disqualification be supplied by the aid of assistants and interpreters? Mr. Symons, in one place, speaking of the anomaly of administering justice in English to a people who do not understand the language, makes this strong remark—"*The mockery of an English trial of a Welsh criminal, by a Welsh Judge, in English, is too gross and shocking to need comment.*" Now, did it never occur to him, that to bring a whole nation to trial, under circumstances yet more unfair and disadvantageous, had in it at least something equally "gross and shocking?" The fact is, that such an appointment, after the Ministers had been expressly admonished against it, was an *experimentum in corpore vili*, an ungenerous presumption on the helplessness of their victims, which I believe they would not have dared to inflict had they not thought that the poor Welsh were

an obscure, defenceless, and unfriended people, on whom they could practise any injustice with impunity, because there was no one to stand up in vindication of their rights.

But this is not all: not only were the Welsh to these gentlemen foreigners in speech, but they were also, to them, schismatics in religion. It is now too notorious a fact, resting on indubitable statistical returns, to need being insisted upon here, that the great bulk of the Welsh people are Dissenters, both in fact and feeling. By a return, carefully and elaborately made last year, it was proved that the Dissenters, compared with Churchmen, are as eight to one. But this is not all. In the essay "On the Causes of Dissent in Wales," Mr. Johnes remarks:—"The mere number of Dissenting chapels (enormous as it is), furnishes but an inadequate idea of the popular feeling towards the Establishment. In many districts the churches have hardly any congregations whatever; many of those who frequent the church go quite as constantly to chapel; and it is a very common remark, that when the clergyman is beloved, it is generally rather as a benevolent layman than as a clergyman; and that even then the people chiefly confide in the Dissenting ministers for guidance and consolation." Such being the case, who does not perceive, that an inquiry into the state of education in Wales, conducted in the comprehensive form which these gentlemen chose to adopt, would, to a great extent, resolve itself practically, and in effect, into a trial of the influence of Dissent? And was it a small matter in these circumstances, that all the men who were to conduct this inquiry should be Churchmen in all their feelings, and habits, and prejudices? It is not necessary—in order to demonstrate the obvious unfairness of appointing Church Commissioners to inspect a nation of Dissenters—to assume that the gentlemen in question were blind and violent bigots. But it would assuredly be paying them a poor compliment to suppose that they were so utterly indifferent to the Church in whose bosom they had been brought up, and by whose spiritual ministrations their religious characters had been formed, as to have no fond filial partialities towards their ecclesiastical mother, and no lurking jealousies or grudges towards those who they saw had supplanted her in the affections of a whole people. Can you conceive it possible, without imputing to them a state of feeling which I should be very sorry to charge them with, that this circumstance would not, consciously or unconsciously, influence their judgment, and cast its own hue over the whole sphere of their vision?

And, in point of fact, innumerable evidences of this continually ooze out over the entire surface of these huge volumes.

But, even apart from these sectarian prepossessions, I suspect that these gentlemen (or at least some of them) laboured under a still more serious disqualification for doing justice to such a people as the Welsh—I mean a total want of sympathy with their religious views, sentiments, and feelings, and the modes of thought, habits of character, and forms of worship and action to which they give rise. It is a principle which I believe all men of any reflection will admit to be both true and important, that before we can *understand* aright an individual or a community, we must bring our own mind into some degree of sympathy with theirs. Now, the Welsh are pre-eminently a religious people. The Bible is their text-book and study. Theology is their science. The ministry of the Gospel is the great spring of their mental and spiritual activities. The discussion of religious truth, and the exercises of religious worship, constitute the chief impulses and excitements of their intellectual and moral nature. All this, combined with their national idiosyncracies, have conspired to form a peculiar type of character, which, I will venture to say, these gentlemen, from their own widely-different education and habits of thought, were singularly ill-fitted to comprehend or appreciate. I appeal to you as Evangelical Protestant Dissenters, whether you would consider every educated and well-informed man of the world, competent to estimate your religious system of thought and action, or whether you would be content to abide by his judgment? Why! do we not here in England, with the advantage of a common language and frequent intercourse, find it impossible to make statesmen and politicians, and even the leaders of the so-called *Liberal* Press, understand our principles? Are they not constantly falling into the most ludicrous blunders, as well as the grossest misconstructions of our feelings and aims, in their attempts to interpret and apply our sentiments? Now, the Commissioners who were sent down to Wales were men of this class—young Whig barristers, who accepted this job, no doubt, as a hopeful step to further official employment and promotion.* But were these the men qualified for so delicate a task, as to investigate and pronounce judgment upon the religious character and institutions of a community of Evangelical Christians? I have no particular grudge against gentlemen

* Two of them, Mr. Symons and Mr. Lingen, have already obtained their reward; the former having been appointed "Inspector of Schools."

of the law. It is my happiness to number among my friends some members of that profession, who are as much distinguished by their piety as their intelligence. But I would put it even to them, whether they would regard the sort of education which these young gentlemen passed through at Lincoln's-inn, as likely, in any eminent degree, to prepare them for such an occupation? Would the Sunday-school Teachers, that are present here to-night, like to see such men intrude into their classes? Would our ministers be content to submit their public teaching, their devotional exercises, their church arrangements, to the critical discernment of such arbiters as these? As they stood by, with pencil and note-book in hand, and, perhaps, a scarcely-suppressed sneer on their lip, to pry into our most sacred and spiritual services, would we not be disposed to exclaim, with Wordsworth, on another occasion,—

> "Art thou a lawyer? Draw not nigh;
> Go, carry to some fitter place
> The keenness of that practised eye—
> The hardness of that sallow face."

Now, the practical result of this utter want of sympathy with the religious system of the people, is everywhere painfully apparent in these Reports. There is a constant depreciation of the value of the scriptural and religious knowledge gained in the Sunday schools, and an elaborate eulogy upon the incomparably superior worth and importance of secular knowledge. There is a continuous running sneer at the interest which the people feel, and the great vigour and dexterity of mind which it is admitted they display on questions of doctrinal theology. The information illustrative of Scripture, which they derive from such commentaries as those of Thomas Scott, and Matthew Henry, and Adam Clarke, is contemptuously described as "the Rabbinical sort of learning, and exalted doctrine, which suits the popular taste." The language of their devotional poetry, which is as familiarly in use with us as with them, is characterised as "a singular piece of religious jargon." Forms of speech, technical if you please, but in constant and current use in all evangelical circles,—such as a "call to the ministry," a "gift in prayer,"—are sarcastically italicised, as evidently strange cant phrases in the estimation of the Commissioners. Revivals and Rebecca riots are placed in the same category, and their origin explained on precisely the same principles. Need we wonder, then, that the religious community in Wales of every denomination have protested, as with the heart of one man, against being judged on the evidence which has been collected,

and the opinions which have been pronounced by such men as these?

But there was still another circumstance which increased the *à-priori* probability that the labours and results of Voluntary education in Wales would not be fairly and impartially represented by these gentlemen. They began their work under the influence of "a foregone conclusion." They were sent, and they fully understood this implied purport of their mission, to make out a case in favour of Government aid and interference. The disciples of the transcendental philosophy maintain that the human mind, in its intercourse with external nature, projects so much of the forms of its own consciousness upon the things it sees without, that it may be said to half-create the objects it beholds—

> ——— "We receive but what we give,
> And in our life alone does nature live."

And so I am very certain that these gentlemen brought along with them, in minds prejudiced and predisposed, much of what they saw in Wales. The vigilant eye of Mr. Baines instantly detected this. It has, I believe, been denied by Mr. Symons, but his declaimer, of all men, on this point, will receive little credence. His report, more than any of the others, abounds with indications of his extreme and nervous eagerness to prove the utter powerlessness of the Welsh to educate themselves. The following is an extract from a letter I have recently received from a friend in Wales, which will serve to illustrate the way in which Mr. Symons collected his materials on this subject:—"Mr. S., in quoting the evidence of five gentlemen at Tregaron, to support his conclusion that the Welsh are generally favourable to receive Government aid, employs this expression—'They voluntarily made and signed the following statement.' Now, is not this meant to convey to the reader, that, having discussed the subject, they unanimously came to the same opinion, and then expressed it in the words they considered most applicable to their views? If so, then it is a mistake. The affair was managed as follows:—After conversing on the subject in his presence, Mr. Symons, constituting himself their chairman and secretary, expressed their views in his own style, and they afterwards signed it—I cannot say with certainty that they all fully understood *what* they signed, owing to their imperfect acquaintance with the English language." In the prominent and emphatic manner in which this question was brought forward on all occasions,—in the careful avoidance of those

men and their evidence, who were known to be declared and determined opponents of Government Education—in the extreme avidity with which sentences or fragments of sentences, favourable to that opinion, are seized and brought forward into ostentatious prominence by means of italics—in the constant insinuation, in the strongest language, of his own personal conviction on the matter, there are such ample proofs that Mr. Symons *was* ever desiring to make out such a case, that one cannot but be surprised at the cool audacity which could have ventured on the denial. And this secret purpose would, of course, lead the Commissioners to take and to give the darkest possible view of the character of the schools, the qualifications of teachers, the attainments of the children, and the whole apparatus of Voluntary education throughout the Principality.

I have thus shown, I think, pretty clearly, that the men selected to constitute this Commission were not such, in qualification or character. as were adapted to inspire beforehand much confidence in their labours.

I now proceed to examine whether their mode of conducting their inquiries was such as to remove the dissatisfaction and jealousy with which the original constitution of the Commission was justly regarded.

I have already given you the proportion of Dissenters and Churchmen in Wales. Well, the first thing which these gentlemen did on their arrival in the Principality, was to wait upon the bishops to consult *them* "in the difficult task of selecting suitable assistants." A difficult and a delicate task it unquestionably was; but were there none deserving to be consulted on this subject but the bishops of a church, which is in a minority of one to eight of the inhabitants of the country? The Right Rev. Fathers recommended, as was very natural, that they should seek their assistants among the young clerical students in the Church College of St. David's, at Lampeter. This arrangement was accordingly adopted, and out of ten or twelve persons employed as assistants and interpreters during the whole investigation, only two were Dissenters, the rest being Churchmen, mostly these half-fledged young clerics from Lampeter. The next question we have to ask is, From what sources did these gentlemen seek their information? To say that, from the predominance of Dissent, we might have justly expected Dissenting ministers would at least have been equally consulted in the collection of evidence, is only to state half the case. Not only were they entitled to this by

reason of their superior numbers, but they were, beyond all comparison, the most competent to testify to the state of the country. They are the pastors of the people, who mingle with them in all their relations, who understand their character, enjoy their confidence, preside over their religious institutions, and are themselves the most active and important agents in their moral and spiritual education. The clergymen of the Church of England, for the most part, live aloof from the people; some of them caring little for aught but the emoluments which they reap from them, and others regarding them with sullen and rancorous bitterness, on account of the preference they give to the unauthorized teachers of Dissent over their own canonical and apostolic ministrations. In these circumstances, then, how were the opportunities of giving evidence apportioned? In the following way. There were examined—

Clergymen	159	
Lay Churchmen . . .	73	
		—232
Dissenting Ministers . .	34	
Lay Dissenters . . .	45	
		—79

giving a majority of 153 Churchmen over Dissenters.

But as we trace the working of this system in particular districts, its gross injustice becomes still more flagrantly apparent. "In the hundreds of Dewisland," says a writer in the *Principality* Newspaper, "Keness and Kilgerran, in the county of Pembroke, in which the Dissenters are as nine to one of the population, as the Report itself will prove, we find out of 54 who give their evidence, 38 are clergymen of the Church of England, and *not one Dissenting minister!* Yet there are living in the above district a large number of respectable and influential ministers connected with the Independents, Baptists, and Calvinistic Methodists." Indeed, nothing strikes a person acquainted with the Principality so strongly, in looking into these Reports, as the absence of almost all the most conspicuous men connected with Welsh Dissent. Where, I may ask, (as has been asked by hundreds of Welshmen besides,) where is the evidence (to confine myself only to South Wales) of Mr. Richards, of Fishguard; of Mr. Rees, Llanelly; of Mr. Thomas, Pontypool; of Lewis and Lloyd, of Henllan; of Griffiths, St. David's; of Evans, Penygroes; Stephenson, Nantyglo; and many others, whose names are throughout Wales "familiar in men's mouths as household words?"

Now, gentlemen, let me ask you to conceive that a commission similar to this had been sent out in England, the practical result of which, whatever might be its ostensible design, would be to bring to trial the influence and operations of Dissent. What would you say if, in looking over the reports of such a Commission, you missed the names of such men as Mr. James, of Birmingham; Mr. Jay, of Bath; Dr. Raffles and Mr. Kelly, of Liverpool; Dr. Hamilton, of Leeds; Dr. Campbell, Dr. Morison, Mr. Wells, and Mr. Binney, of London,—and indeed almost all the best known and most trusted men amongst you? while you found given, *in extenso,* the evidence and opinions respecting the influence of English Dissent on the intelligence and morality of the people, of the Rev. Michael Augustus Gathercole, and the editor of the *John Bull* newspaper? I do assure you, most solemnly, that this is a precisely parallel case to what has been done towards Wales in these Reports."

But this is not all. Not only did these gentlemen ignorantly or wilfully omit to consult the best informed and most competent authorities, but they did far worse. Now, observe, I am not going to mince the matter; I have taken care to get firm ground beneath my feet before I stood here. I do distinctly and deliberately charge these gentlemen with having dishonestly garbled or suppressed, not once or twice, but in many instances, evidence given to them by some of the most respectable and intelligent men in Wales, but which evidence was almost uniformly in favour of the people. I will not refer to the numerous indignant complaints which constantly appear in the Welsh papers from persons whose evidence is contained in the Reports, against the mutilated form in which it is given, and against the manner in which the Commissioners have made a general application to the entire population of certain strong expressions employed only in regard to a small and most depraved class of the population;—I go on authority of the most direct and undoubted kind, when I affirm that the following gentlemen furnished valuable and copious information to the Commissioners, every line of which has been suppressed:—The Rev. Lewis Edwards, President of the Calvinistic Methodist College, at Bala; the Rev. John Phillips, Bangor, Agent for the British and Foreign School Society in Wales; Dr. Owen Roberts, Bangor, a respectable lay gentleman, who has interested himself long and deeply in the social and educational condition of his country; Rev. Edward Davies, of Haverfordwest, who, in a letter I received from him this week, says,—"I gave evidence

myself to Mr. Lingen, which covered nearly two pages of his folio note-book, and of which there is not a word in the Report; simply because, I suppose, it tallied not with the grand purpose of making out a case for Government aid;" the Rev. Thomas Thomas, Principal of the Baptist College, at Pontypool; the Rev. Evan Jones, of Tredegar; the Rev. Mr. Bright, of Newport.* There are some

* Mr. Symons, in a letter addressed to the Rev. H. Griffiths, Brecon, and which, at his own request, was published in the *British Banner* of March 22nd, *seems* to deny this charge. I feel bound, therefore, to produce the following facts relating to his district. The Rev. D. R. Stephen has repeatedly made this statement at public meetings held on the subject of the Reports, both in England and Wales:—"The Rev. T. Price, Cwmdu," the respectable clergyman already referred to, "had a long conversation with Mr. Symons, and of the whole conversation the latter *reports only a single phrase*, which Mr. Price says no clergyman could have uttered in such a connection as that in which it is given, and which those present at the time, say *he never uttered at all.* This I have from Mr. Price himself." The following is an extract from a letter which I received, in reply to Mr. Symon's assertion in the *Banner*, from the Rev. T. Thomas, Principal of the Baptist College at Pontypool:

"My dear Sir,—I am sorry I cannot very distinctly remember *all* that passed between Mr. Commissioner Symons and myself, when, about twelve months ago, he honoured me with a call. I, however, recollect enough of the substance of about an hour's earnest conversation to assure you, that I expressed strong views and opinions relative to the state and prospects of the Welsh population in these parts, which were at least as much entitled to be 'deemed evidence,' as the unwritten statements of others to whom Mr. Symons refers in his Report. While I expressed in emphatic terms my disapproval of the Minutes of Council on Education, and represented legislators and employers as, to a great extent, the authors of the people's ignorance and degradation, who were making the effects of their own bad laws,—heavy taxation on the necessaries of life, and on the means of instruction, &c.,—the reason for establishing, at the nation's expense, a system of educational patronage and police, *I stated to him my full confidence in the ability and disposition of the working men, if fairly treated, to educate themselves, without Government aid or inspection.* * * * * But what passed between us on the occasion referred to, Mr. Symons, barrister-like, will not by any means take as evidence, *though relating exclusively to the objects of the Commission;* for he says, in his letter in the *Banner*, 'What passed in conversation with my informants, I, of course, in no case deemed evidence, or reported as such.' Mr. Symons must mean only that when 'what passed in conversation' was *favourable* to the morals, intelligence, and religion of the working-classes of Wales, he in no case deemed or reported it as evidence; for when a nameless 'lady connected with and living at one of the large iron-works, *told*' him of a man who, while pouring rum into his tea, said he could not afford to spare his girl's wages,—and when a Bristol merchant, for whose respectability we have no voucher, *told* him that all his efforts to carry on commerce with the Welsh, were wholly frustrated by their inveterate faithlessness,—*their vivâ voce* testimony, made prominent in the Reports, must

of my countrymen, probably, present here this evening, and they know and can testify that there are not, throughout the whole Principality, men who, from their high character and standing, the official positions which some of them occupy, and the prominent and remarkable part which others of them have taken in connection with this very subject of education in Wales, are more entitled to be heard on this question than the gentlemen I have just named; and yet the evidence of all these men has been studiously suppressed! And why is this? I do not hesitate to say, that it was because it was of such a character as did not suit the purpose of the Commissioners;—nay, indeed, Mr. Symons scarcely makes a secret of this. He refers to the three gentlemen whom I mentioned last,—Mr. Thomas, of Pontypool; Mr. Jones, of Tredegar; and Mr. Bright, of Newport,—and acknowledges that they "gave him very valuable assistance in the prosecution of his labours." Why, then, are their testimony and opinions on the state and prospects of education in Wales withheld? No possible reason can be conceived, except it be found in a sentence which Mr. Symons has coupled with the introduction of their names, viz., that "they expressed, in no measured terms, their disapproval of the Minutes of Council."

Now, is not this monstrous? Did Mr. Symons, when he received his commission, understand that he was to accept and record the evidence and the judgment of none who differed from him in their estimate of the Minutes in Council? These, then, were the principles on which the Commissioners selected their witnesses.

Let us now turn to ascertain in what manner they elicited evidence from those who were thus chosen. Among them were not a few who were sufficiently ready, without any prompting, to bring forward

be taken as good 'evidence' *against* the people, and in favour of Government interference. The interview and subsequent correspondence I had with Mr. Symons were quite enough to satisfy him as to the kind of evidence I would have given in answer to his *printed* queries. Mr. S., therefore, did not furnish me with those queries, nor had I the remotest idea of their existence until I saw them, with convenient answers, in the Blue Books; and I cannot find in the Reports a *single instance* of evidence given by a Dissenting Minister, or other person, *previously known* to be hostile to the interference of Government with the education of the people. * * * *

"I remain,

"My dear Sir,

"Yours very truly,

"THOMAS THOMAS."

whatever would most reflect discredit on their neighbours; but, in truth, the Commissioners left them little option as to the selection of their materials. Their inquiries were evidently shaped in such a form as to bring out the worst aspect of character, and the lowest specimens of intelligence and morality, throughout the country. As an illustration of this, take the following out of a series of questions, which were sent in a written form, by Mr. Symons, to different parties throughout his district:—"Is there *any deficiency* of good Day schools, with competent masters, in your neighbourhood; and in what respect are they *defective?*" "Is there *much ignorance* among the poor; and on what subjects?" "Are their morals *defective;* and if so, in what respects? *State instances and facts* which illustrate this!" Now, is it not easy to foresee that in answering such leading questions as these, in which the attention of the witness is specifically and pointedly directed, not to the education but to the ignorance, not to the social virtues or good qualities, but to the immoralities of the population by which he was surrounded, that the inevitable result would be to bring to the surface, and to expose in undue prominence, all the corruptions and feculence of society? Can any one in his senses doubt, that if Mr. Symons had framed his inquiries differently,—that if he had asked for the amount of *knowledge* possessed by the people, instead of for their ignorance,—if he had sought to elicit an account of the humble virtues and excellences of the poor, instead of searching what was *defective* in their morality,—if he had desired instances and facts to illustrate their piety, their devout and religious habits, the self-denial and devotedness with which they support the cause of God,—that the eye of every one of those questioned would have been directed to another class, which, I thank God, are neither few nor rare in the Principality, and that practically, and in fact, a widely different picture of the social character of the people would have been evolved as the result? Now, I want your particular attention to this point, as it will serve to explain much of what these Reports contain. I do not deny, observe, that many of the evils depicted in them do actually exist in Wales; though even these are, I firmly believe, in many instances grossly exaggerated. But what I do object to, and vehemently protest against, is, the practice uniformly pursued by the Commissioners, of taking the utmost pains to hunt out, with the keen scent of a vulture, all the corruption and garbage of society, and putting these forward as fair average specimens of the intelli-

gence and morality of the people. Take the half a dozen foul and revolting statements, which have been carefully selected and paraded by the Whig newspapers out of these Reports, and what do they prove, even if they are true?—which some of them, at least, are *not*, as I shall presently prove to you. That there are in Wales, as there are, unhappily, in every community under heaven, extreme instances of gross depravity. But, in the name of all common sense and justice, is it fair to take these as the standard by which to form your estimate of a whole people, and, on the strength of them, to rush to the conclusion that "their habits are those of animals," and that they are "fast sinking into the most savage barbarism?" Apply the same test to the population of this metropolis. Let a number of men be appointed, who shall regard it as their duty to rake up all the ignorance, and filth, and vice, and depravity, and wretchedness, to be found in London, and let them bring forth the most hideous examples of pollution they can find, as illustrations of the state of society; and, let me ask you, would you be content that any foreigner should form a judgment of the whole metropolitan community from such materials as these? As I have been wading my way through these enormous volumes, where, I have asked myself again and again, are the hundreds, and thousands, and tens of thousands of my poor countrymen, who are the worthy, consistent, and exemplary members of our Dissenting churches, who, in their humble stations, exemplify the power and loveliness of Christian principle, and adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things—from whose stone hearths there ascends, day and night, the incense of a simple spiritual devotion, perhaps more acceptable in the sight of Him that reads the heart, than the glittering pomp of priestly pageantries, or the pealing swell of cathedral music; whose homely huts, though devoid of all pretensions to the elegancies, and even many of the comforts of life, are nevertheless adorned with the beauty of holiness? Where is the record of these men's characters and virtues? That there are hundreds and thousands of such, I know. Have I not stood beneath their humble roofs, whose naked rafters were polished and japanned by the smoke of the mountain turf? Have I not sat at their uncovered deal tables, to partake of their buttermilk and oatmeal-bread, which, coarse fare though it be, they feel a hospitable pride in dispensing? Have I not knelt on the mud floor, beside the wretched pallets on which they were stretched, and learned from lips pallid with the

hue of death, lessons of Christian resignation, and of holy and triumphant confidence in God, such as I never learned elsewhere? Where, I say, are these men who shed the lustre of their humble piety over the hills and glens of my native land? I find no trace of them in these Blue Books; and until I do find them, I utterly refuse to accept their contents as a fair representation of the character of my countrymen.

I do not mean to say that all the accounts given of the intellectual, moral, and social condition of the Welshmen in these Reports are of the one-sided and unfriendly sort I have described. I do say, indeed, that, for the most part, this was the kind of information which the Commissioners, and especially Mr. Symons, most diligently searched for. And I do say, moreover, that such is the prevailing and predominant character of the whole mass. In spite, however, of the careful selection of witnesses, and the significantly suggestive nature of the questions proposed to them, there have come out, in the course of these investigations, not a few facts and opinions, highly honourable to both the intelligence and morality of my poor vilified countrymen. And how do the Commissioners deal with this part of the evidence? I will admit (and I do it with the utmost pleasure,) that the testimony they have borne to the excellence and good effects of the Sunday schools is both candid and cordial. But, in other respects, the summary which these gentlemen had to construct out of the evidence collected, is founded upon, and illustrated by the very worst portions of that evidence, while that which is favourable to the people is, in general, kept in the background, or officiously and carefully explained away. I would undertake to compile out of these Blue Books themselves, without introducing anything of my own, beyond a few connecting and explanatory sentences, a widely different character for the Welsh from that which the Commissioners have brought into the foreground of their picture. I ought, perhaps, to say, that these remarks apply with more especial emphasis to Mr. Symons than to either of the other two. It is most remarkable to observe the resolute and relentless purpose with which this gentleman sets himself to blacken the reputation of the country. Not only does he bring forward isolated instances of extreme stupidity, wrung from terrified and confused children, as fair specimens of the school instruction—not only does he introduce mere hearsay evidence, which he may have picked up in casual intercourse at an inn, from some wandering and irritated bagman, as sufficient authority on which to

ground a sweeping imputation on the honesty and integrity of a whole nation—not only does he give the utmost prominence to the falsest and foulest charges against the teaching and services of the Dissenters, as directly nursing the grossest immoralities among the people, without apparently troubling himself in the slightest degree about their truth or probability—not only does he carefully mark in italics, lest they should escape any one's attention, these slanderous charges, and whatever else he could find unfavourable to the cause of Voluntary Education;—but, when facts highly honourable to the nation, and too marked and notorious to be overlooked, or kept out of sight, are forced on his notice, he anxiously sets himself to explain away any favourable impression which they were calculated to produce on the mind of the reader. I will give you one striking example of this. After he had drawn a picture of the morals of the country, daubed with the darkest colours, he remarks—"Notwithstanding this lamentable state of morals, the jails are empty." He gives, then, a short tabular comparison between the relative criminality of the three counties in his district with that of the neighbouring agricultural county of Hereford, the result of which shows that "crimes are twice as numerous in Herefordshire, as in Radnorshire or Brecknockshire, and five times more so than in Cardiganshire." Well! and does he pass this fact over to the credit of the moral and religious principles of the population, or even leave it without remark to make its own impression on the reader's mind? Oh, by no means! He first informs us that this absence of crime is to be regarded as a strange "moral anomaly in the Welsh character," and then proceeds to explain it in the following fashion:—"I attribute this paucity of punishable offences in Wales, partly to the extreme shrewdness and caution of the people, but much more to the natural benevolence and warmth of heart, which powerfully deter them from acts of malice and all deliberate injury to others." You see, Mr. Symons will allow nothing to be attributed, if he can help it, to the restraints of moral and religious obligation acting on the character of the people, nothing to the practical influence of that Christianity taught in their Sunday schools, and preached every Sunday, from more than three thousand pulpits, throughout the land.

It is time for me, however, to offer a few remarks on the evidence itself to be found in these books. And first of all, as to the physical condition and domestic habits of the poor. The Commissioners loudly complain of the want of order, cleanliness, and decorum, in

their economic arrangements. No doubt there is much to be deplored in this respect among the lower classes; but I deny that it is to be taken as a proof of their moral degradation. If they live together in their small cottages, in a manner which is at variance with our notions of propriety and comfort, it is because they cannot help it. "Their poverty, and not their will, consents." It is very well for these jaunty young gentlemen, travelling about the country in post-chaises at the expense of Government, to turn up their noses, in horror and disdain, at the want of decent accommodations and domestic comfort in the home of the poor Welsh cottager. But set them down with a wife and large family of children, to subsist upon seven or eight shillings a week—the usual wages of an agricultural labourer in Wales—and see what a figure they would then cut! What dignified domestic arrangements would they make in such a case? How many spare bed-rooms would they have to rejoice in? How much of privacy and social elegance would they expect to enjoy? I say it is not fair to the poor, in forming our estimate of their habits, to forget the mighty difficulties with which they have to contend, from the extreme narrowness of their means, and the necessary straitness of their habitations, to preserve even an approach to domestic order and decorum.

It is probable, however, that the Commissioners will justify themselves in drawing so dark a picture of the country, by referring to the testimony of others residing on the spot, and supposed to be intimately acquainted with the people. Now it is perfectly clear that it would be impossible for me, on an occasion like this, to deal with such an enormous mass of evidence as is collected in these volumes as a whole. All that I can do is to select a few of the most remarkable and characteristic parts, as samples of the rest. I had intended to advert, in the first instance, to some rather peculiar specimens of Dissenting evidence to be found in these pages; but I abstain for the present, in the hope, notwithstanding what has appeared in the *Banner*, that certain parties will deem it wise, even for their own sakes, to imitate my abstinence. I will say no more on that subject, but pass on to observe, that in almost every instance the worst evidence,—that which contains the foulest aspersions, and the most sweeping charges, has proceeded either from clergymen, or from renegade Dissenters, or from men who combined both these characters in their own person. I will endeavour to explain the cause of this. Separated as Wales has been, by position and lan-

guage, from the rest of the kingdom, it is not until within the last few years that the English public has been made acquainted with the actual religious and ecclesiastical condition of the Principality. A few of us, however, whose lot in Providence has been cast among you, have of late endeavoured to bring before your notice the fact, that so mighty has been the prevalence of Nonconformity in Wales, that it has spread like leaven among the population, until it has well nigh leavened the whole lump. Considerable publicity has been given, from time to time, to these disclosures. Now there is a class of clergymen in Wales, to whom these revelations were in the highest degree distasteful; men for the most part of the most worthless characters themselves, personal and official, who did and are doing little or nothing by their own exertions to promote the mental and spiritual improvement of their countrymen, but who nevertheless cannot endure that others should have the credit they deserve for fulfilling those obligations which *they* had so grossly neglected. These men attempted in the first instance, and for a long time, to deny the fact that dissent was in the ascendant in Wales. The last desperate effort of this sort that I have seen was directed against myself. At the great Educational Conference, held in this room last year, to oppose the Minutes of Council, I stated as a reason why the Government plan would press with peculiar hardship on Wales, that the great body of the Welsh people are Dissenters. A few nights after, Mr. Bright made a similar statement in the House of Commons. The following week there appeared a letter in the *St. James's Chronicle*, in which the writer did me the honour of coupling my name with Mr. Bright in reference to the above statement, and to charge us both, in elegant phrase, with having been guilty of "enormous lying." Abundant and accurate statistics have, however, come from various quarters, to illustrate the matter in dispute, and it was found at length that this war with figures was too utterly hopeless to be long sustained. What, then, was to be done next? Well, the next best thing was to endeavour to prove, by the most reckless and exaggerated representations of the ignorance and immorality of the people, that Dissent had been a great curse to the country, that under its *regime* the inhabitants, instead of improving, were sinking fast, not only into superstition and fanaticism, but into the lowest depths of moral and social degradation. Now this commission was a golden opportunity for these men to accomplish their purpose; and chuckling with secret glee at their

luck, they eagerly seized it, to pour out the long-accumulated rancour of their bigotry upon the people and their religion. Now let it be distinctly understood, that I do not include in this description all the clerical gentlemen whose names appear in these books. I acknowledge, with the highest gratification, that there are not a few who acted the part of high-minded and honourable men, who refer to their dissenting neighbours in terms of kindness and respect, who recognize their right to object to the imposition of the Church Catechism on their children, and who make frank and generous admissions of the value of their past and present services in the instruction of the country. There is no tribute of gratitude and admiration which I am not prepared to render to these men. But I am going to speak of a totally different class—fierce blustering bigots, who deem it a small matter to affix the stigma of infamy on the brow of their mother-land, so they might but avenge themselves upon Voluntaryism and Dissent. As a specimen of the *animus* by which these worthies are actuated, take the following extract from the evidence of the Rev. Lewis Evans, vicar of Llanfihangel-y-Creyddyn. Mr. Symons asks, "Do the Sunday schools supply existing defects in Day schools? and state your views of the character and results of the Sunday-school system in this district." To which replies the reverend gentleman: "They do not. *Their character is to puff up the young with pride and contempt of public worship.* And *they are beds to nurture Dissent and its evils;* disorderly behaviour and disobedience, inasmuch as they are generally left to themselves, or superintended by incompetent persons, and under the control of illiterate and ignorant masters." "What are the chief obstacles," again asks Mr. Symons, "to the mental and moral improvement of the poorer classes?" "The want of a more efficient body of the clergy—the poverty of the livings;" and after enumerating various other reasons, he adds, "*But above all, the night meetings of the Dissenters, and the immoral and polemic teaching of their preachers.*"

Take another specimen from the evidence of the Rev. Richard W. P. Davies, of Crickhowel. It relates to one of the mining districts in Breconshire, called Brynmawr, which Mr. Symons, mainly on the authority of this gentleman, describes as a sort of pandemonium. Mr. Davies, after referring contemptuously to the existence of Dissenting chapels in this neighbourhood, as being no antidote to the evil which prevailed, because they are without "responsible guides and pastors,"

goes on to depict his neighbours in the most hideous colours. The Commissioner, of course, eagerly seizes this delicious morsel, and putting it in the fore-front of his summary, assures the reader, on the strength of it, that "not the slightest step has been taken to improve the mental and moral condition" of this dangerous population. This flattering description of themselves comes to the ear of the people. They call a public meeting at the Market-hall. The attendance, we are told, "was crowded, and the excitement intense, and yet the people conducted themselves with good sense and propriety." At that meeting there came out the following facts, that while it was true enough, as the reverend witness had testified, that there was neither church nor chapel of the Establishment, within two miles of Brynmawr there were six Dissenting chapels, which had been built at an expense of nearly 6,000*l.*, and which numbered 1,136 members in actual fellowship, and in which accommodation for worship was provided *for every man, woman, and child in the place*. But this was not all. This dangerous and degraded population have lately erected a British school, at the cost of 300*l.*, and have among them a band of 200 Sunday-school teachers.

At the same meeting a medical gentleman, residing in the neighbourhood, and, from his profession, of course in habits of close and daily intercourse with the people, voluntarily came forward, though an Englishman and a Churchman, and made the following statement:—"Having been a resident for some time in your town, and having an opportunity afforded me in my professional character of judging whether or not the inhabitants of Brynmawr deserve the character given of them by some of the gentlemen examined by the Commissioner, I most emphatically assert that they have been belied by some of the gentlemen examined, and whose evidence appears in the Report. Let facts speak for themselves, and they are the best evidenc. I will mention one or two. There is a population of about 5,000 in this town, and I ask what has been the extent of crime in this place for the last few years, although without the protection or presence of the military or police (I was wrong, there is one police-officer in the town for the last week)? I say, very little, indeed. And what can we ascribe this state of things to, except the very moral and peaceable disposition of its inhabitants. But I should not be at all surprised if the very reverse was the case, and which undoubtedly it would, were it not for the Dissenting ministers and their congregations, whose conduct is creditable, and

beyond all praise. They have acted as men and Christian ministers; and, as a member of the Established Church, I regret to be obliged to say, that the contrast is great indeed between what they and the clergymen of the Establishment have done for the religious and moral instruction of the people; for while on the one side I behold five or six Dissenting chapels and schools, on the other there is not even a church or school, or substitute for one, to be seen in the whole town! I therefore say, it comes with a very bad grace from clergymen of the Establishment to say that the people are ignorant, and without knowledge of either a God or a Saviour. I also deny that the inhabitants of Brynmawr are the immoral, low, and degraded people they are made to appear by the Report, or that there are only one or two respectable shopkeepers in the town." Well, and how is all this to be accounted for? Did this reverend informer bear false witness against his neighbour? Oh, not at all! for to his apostolic eye these exertions of Dissenting zeal and benevolence, were in effect as nothing. For, listen to the lofty and oracular style in which he instructs the Commissioner as to what the Government should do, and in the course of which, perhaps, you will find some explanation of the strange circumstances just narrated. "It appears to me to be the imperative duty of a wise and patriotic legislature to encourage and facilitate, to the utmost of their power, by public grants, and public patronage, and advances, the education and instruction of the people committed to their care; the resources of Government cannot better be applied than by affording knowledge, civilizing and enlightening mankind; and it would ill become a minister of a Christian Apostolical Church, to suggest any other mode of dispensing education, than entrusting it to the heads of those, who, by Divine appointment and Divine right, are constituted the channel for diffusing the light of Christian truth. The Church and its ministers are the proper vehicles for carrying out the same." Do you not see the swell of spiritual and sacerdotal pride spreading and dilating over his reverend face; and what had the poor scabbed sheep of Brynmawr, who, when left, uncared for, to wander over the mountains, had sought shelter in the unconsecrated folds of Dissent, to hope from the tender mercies of this apostolic gentleman, who seems to hold sacred the "right Divine of priests" to garble the truth, and to slander their neighbours.

There is another instance of clerical bigotry, yet more malignant

and revolting, furnished by the evidence of the Rev. J. Griffith, Aberdare. I beg you to observe, in the first place, that it relates to the self-same district, described in such terms of generous commendation by J. W. Booker, Esq., in the testimony which I have already cited. There is this difference, however, between the two witnesses, that the latter, at the time when he gave his evidence, had resided among the people some thirty years, and the former about three weeks or a month. The substance of Mr. Griffith's replies to the Commissioners, may be given in a few words. " Generally speaking there is very little sobriety; the men drink in the beer-shops, and the women at home. Nothing can be more improvident than the Welsh miners and colliers. Nothing can be lower, I would say more degrading, than the character in which the women stand to the men. Promiscuous intercourse is most common, is thought of as nothing, and the women do not lose caste by it. Their religious feelings are peculiar to the temperament of the Welsh. They are very excitable—have nothing like what is considered elsewhere a disciplined religious mind. They go to meeting at six, come out at eight, and spend the remainder of the evening at beer-shops. *Properly speaking, there is no religion whatever in my parish; at least, I have not found it yet.*" Well, on Wednesday, the 23rd of February, a meeting was called at Aberdare, by public advertisement, which is described as " the largest and most enthusiastic ever remembered to have taken place in the parish." Mr. Griffith was invited by the Rev. Thomas Price, a respectable Baptist minister, " in a very respectful letter," to meet him there, to support the statements he had made in his evidence. His insolent reply was conveyed in this one sentence—" I will never give you that honour." The meeting, nevertheless, went on, when witnesses far more competent than Mr. Griffith deposed to the following facts,—That though no doubt there is there, as in all large works, too much drunkenness, yet is not this evil characteristic of the Aberdare workmen; that the women are *not at all* addicted to intemperance; that this "improvident" people had, within the last forty years, established no less than from forty to forty-five societies for the express purpose of providing for the contingencies of sickness and death, to which they contributed 200*l.* per month, or 2,400*l.* per annum, and that there were in the neighbourhood from 1,500 to 1,800 houses, built by the workmen alone for themselves, within the last few years; that the assertion about the women was

a gross and wanton slander, as "the women of Aberdare stand as high, with regard to moral purity, as any women in the kingdom;" that not one out of 800 persons ever frequented a public-house on Sundays, and that it "was a standing rule in religious communities belonging to Dissenters, to exclude from their society every man who frequented a public-house on Sunday;" that in this parish, where the reverend vicar could find "no religion whatever," there had been built, within the last thirty-seven years, sixteen places of Divine worship, at an expense of about 10,000*l.*, and twenty sabbath-schools and benefit societies had been established. It was also proved, that, although there are eight Dissenting ministers residing at Aberdare, two of them of thirty-five years standing, Mr. Lingen *never called upon any one of them*, but took his entire description of the character of the place and the people from this reverend bigot,* who, at the time, had been in the parish *about three weeks!* Was there ever a more utter defiance, I will not say of justice, but of

* I despair of conveying to the English reader any adequate idea of this man's character, except by saying, that he is a sort of Welsh Gathercole. Rabid hatred of Dissent is the one animating principle, which imparts a kind of grim and galvanic activity to an intellect otherwise of the meanest order. Since giving the above evidence, he has been writing letters in the *Merthyr Guardian*, expressly to neutralize "any favourable consideration of Dissent in the forthcoming Report of the Commissioners in Wales," an apprehension which, as the event has proved, he might have very safely dismissed. In these letters he deliberately makes the following atrocious assertion: "*That if nine* out of every ten of the Welsh people are educated by Dissenters, so *are eight out of every ten of the men so educated, when they can afford it, drunken and immoral; and eight out of every ten of the women, above the age of sixteen, unchaste and insensible to female virtue.*"

I had once intended to have offered some rather strong remarks on this man and his productions; but really, however strongly tempted to it by loathing and disgust, one is restrained by a sort of contemptuous pity, from planting one's heel on the head of a creature, already crushed and writhing beneath the concentrated indignation of a whole people. He may be safely left to "the universal hiss, the voice of public scorn," which is greeting his ears from every part of Wales. He is now trying to bear up under the load of obloquy, by which he is overwhelmed, by writing incessantly in one or two of the Welsh newspapers, in a style of affected smartness and *nonchalance*, dissuading Lord John Russell from paying any heed to the complaints and remonstrances of the Dissenters, in regard to the Reports, and reiterating with additional vehemence and ferocity, his thrice-refuted slanders against his countrymen and countrywomen—

"Wipe out the slime of calumny in vain,
The creature's at his dirty work again."

common decency, than is exhibited in the whole of this Aberdare business.

But I prefer selecting from all others, for special examination and remark, the evidence of the Rev. Henry Lewis Davies, of Troedyraur, in Cardiganshire. And I do so for several reasons. In the first place it is one of the worst (involving the most serious charges against the people and their religion) to be found in these three volumes. In the second place, it is put forward with great and studied prominence by Mr. Symons in his summary. In the third place, it has been carefully culled as a choice specimen, by all the Whig papers, and published as an illustration of Welsh morality; and, in the fourth place, the parties on whose authority I am about to contradict its statements are personally and intimately known to me, as men on whose veracity the most absolute reliance may be placed.

"The Day-schools are very deficient in Wales. The people generally desire and deserve to have better schools. I believe that good schools, where the Bible should be taught, without the Church Catechism or any sectarian doctrines, would flourish; but I am sure, that in this neighbourhood no schools exclusively on any Church or sectarian principles would answer, or be sufficiently attended. As an instance of this I may state, that when Sir James Graham's Bill was proposed, the Dissenters and Methodists in my parish opposed my school, and told the people I was a Roman Catholic. Very few children remained, and it was obliged to be given up in consequence. The Independents and Methodists then joined in establishing a Day-school in my parish. They tried to teach each their own doctrines and catechism in the joint school, and soon split, and were obliged to establish a separate school within two or three fields of each other; and yet their principles are nearly similar.

"The Welsh poor people are wofully ignorant on all secular subjects. They used to be well instructed in the Sunday schools in the Bible and in Scriptural truths; but latterly, since so much doctrinal controversy has arisen, they pretty nearly confine their questions, (*pwnc* in Welsh,) and catechising, to polemics. For instance, such as State and Church connection; that confirmation is contrary to Scripture; that baptism ought to be by immersion, or the reverse; Presbyterianism and Independency, &c.; they thus attend far less to Bible history and Gospel truths than to these sectarian points. Having been absent in England for about twelve years, I perceived a great

change for the worse in this respect on my return six years ago; and this state of things is rather worse than better now. The *pwnc* is generally printed, and always chaunted at the schools about here. They often meet at evening schools, in private houses, for the preparation of the *pwnc*, and this tends to immoralities between the young persons of both sexes, who frequently spend the night afterwards in hay-lofts together. So prevalent is want of chastity among the females, that, although I promised to return the marriage-fee to all couples whose first child should be born after nine months from the marriage, only one in six years entitled themselves to claim it."

Now, I happened to be pretty well acquainted with this locality myself, and having received the impression, from annual visits to the neighbourhood for nearly ten years, and free and frequent intercourse with the people, that they were peculiarly peaceful, intelligent, and religious, I was utterly astounded when I read this piece of evidence. I wrote instantly to a friend residing there, calling his attention to it, and begging to know what truth there was in it. He made it known to his neighbours, and a universal storm of indignation was raised through the parish. Mr. Davies was written to in the first instance, to produce his authority for the charges he had made, each of them being separately and minutely described. He sent back a note denying being actuated by any sectarian feeling in what he had advanced, and declaring "his intention to enter into no paper discussion on the subject." But that would not do, for the Welsh blood was up. A public meeting was called. The largest chapel in the neighbourhood was densely crowded. Every one of the charges contained in the evidence was deliberately examined, and indignantly denied. It was proved that Davies's school was broken up, not because the people thought him a Roman Catholic, but because he insisted upon the children, (nearly all of Dissenting parents) attending the Church on the Sunday; that such "a joint school of Independents and Methodists, which soon split, because each tried to teach their own doctrines and catechism," never had an existence, except in the curate's own imagination—that instead of the Sunday schools confining their questions and catechising to polemics, that not one of the schools in his parish ever had a catechism on any one of the subjects he mentions—that so far from the evening schools for the preparation of the *pwnc* leading to the immoralities he describes, there has been no Evening-school held in the parish for fifteen or twenty years,—that the secret of his never getting any one of his female parishioners to

claim the promised return of the marriage-fee, was not the cause which he slanderously insinuates, but because Mr. Davies had made it a condition that the child should be brought to him to be baptized, and the people, being all Dissenters, disdained to sell their principles for the sake of his contemptible bribe—that, in one word, almost the whole of this foul representation was a tissue of the most wanton and gratuitous ——— (you know what), invented by this man, to avenge himself of his parishioners, because they were Dissenters. But this was not all. These spirited Welsh farmers determined that they would not leave the matter half done. At the meeting referred to, they adopted a memorial to Lord John Russell, in which they call his Lordship's attention to the above facts, and earnestly protest against being judged on such evidence as this, and conclude with the following consolatory hint to his Lordship:—"Your memorialists beg leave further to state, that whatever may have been their impressions before, as to the desirableness of Government aid, the spirit displayed in these reports has gone far to awaken such deep distrust of their fairness and impartiality, as to make it more than doubtful whether such interference would not be more a curse than a blessing." This memorial, signed by 150 persons, all freeholders, farmers, and householders in the parish of the Rev. Mr. Davies, I now hold in my hand, and shall endeavour to find some means of transmitting it to his Lordship in the course of a few days.

I could easily multiply samples of the same description. But *ex uno disce omnes*. Such is the character of much of the evidence contained in these books, on the authority of which our schools are depreciated, our efforts to enlighten and elevate the people ignored or sneered at, our ministers and their labours defamed, our peasantry represented as mere animals, our women slandered, and our whole system of social civilization held up to the scorn and reprobation of mankind. But notwithstanding all this, I can hardly regret that this Commission was issued, and that it prosecuted its labours in so unmistakeable a spirit. It is working well in the Principality. Before it came out, I was greatly afraid that many of my countrymen—what with the severe pressure of poverty and the hardship of the times, on their scanty means, and the recent and imperfect manner in which their attention had been directed to the question, and the influence of many syren voices that had been employed, in soft and dulcet tones, to woo them into the caressing embrace of the Government,—I had begun to fear that they would allow themselves to be

tempted into becoming, in the matter of education, pensioners of the State. But the veil with which this fond suitor had covered his face, like the "veiled prophet of Korhassan," has been lifted too soon, and discovered features so hideous, that the half-consenting maid has hrunk back with a shriek of horror from the polluted embrace. Just in the nick of time, the *Principality* newspaper had been started as the organ of Welsh Dissent, and conducted, as it is, with admirable spirit, vigour, and ability, it has rendered to the people of Wales uch inestimable service, in rousing and sustaining, and directing the national opinion at this critical moment in their history, that they ought, were it only in gratitude, to rally around it, as with the heart of one man. The effects already produced have been great. "The Reports," says the editor of that paper in a letter to me, "have done incalculable service to Wales. I augur much good from them. A Government official would now be scouted from the country." A respectable minister of the Calvinistic Methodists writes, "My own Connexion are coming out to be Anti-State-Education and Anti-State-Churchmen. The slanders heaped upon them by their former friends of the church have done, and are still doing them, immense good." The Rev. David Rees, Llanelly, in describing to me what he stated to Mr. Lingen, says, "I told him that we at Llanelly had endeavoured to form a general educational union, but as many Churchmen and Wesleyans would not join unless we applied to Government, and as nothing but secular education would be given, we consented to apply for money to build the school, but that I thought that neither parents nor children would ever value a thing which cost them nothing. Subsequent to his being here, the Minutes made their appearance, and we at once stood up and said, 'Union or no union, we shall not be a party to receive one farthing of the 500*l.* voted to us by the Committee of Council.' Our brethren, who were for Government grants, respected our conscientious scruples, and we kept together, and rejected the 500*l.* And now a school-room, and a splendid one it is, capable of holding 600 children, which will cost 750*l.*, is built, the master is elected, and the school-room cleared."

I count myself happy to have had this opportunity to stand up in vindication of my calumniated country, in the presence of so large a body of intelligent and high-minded English gentlemen. You have the character, and, as far as I have seen, most deservedly so, of being pre-eminently a generous people—lovers of fair play, who do not like,

and will not suffer the weak and defenceless to be trampled under foot, by mere wanton and irresponsible power.

I appeal to you, then, on behalf of my vilified Fatherland. I appeal to you on the ground of right, and as you love justice, to protect us from being first overwhelmed with calumny, and then, under cover of that, be oppressed by a yoke on our conscience, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear.

I appeal to your sympathy as fellow Christians and fellow Dissenters, to help us to defeat the conspiracy which is assuredly forming against freedom of religion and education in Wales. I might appeal to you on the ground of self-interest—for in our persons your principles are imperilled. I invoke the justice and generosity of Englishmen, to interpose the impenetrable shield of their lofty moral indignation, between a simple, warm-hearted, but defenceless people, and the wrong which it is designed to perpetrate upon them, under the pretence of evils which do not exist, and in the name of a charity which is not felt.

LECTURE VII.

LECTURE VII.

THE EDUCATIONAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND: AND THE POSITION OF NONCONFORMISTS IN RELATION TO ITS ADVANCEMENT.

BY THE REV. ROBERT AINSLIE.

The Lectures previously delivered—Subject of the present Lecture—The condition of England affects all other nations—The true greatness of Englsnd—What is education?—Who are to be educated?—Education for real life—Moral and religious culture—Civil rulers not to enact, nor enforce religious teaching—The educational condition of England at remarkable periods, and among classes and professions—Failure of Government grants, and the success of Voluntaryism in advancing agriculture—Religious knowledge among different classes—The educational condition of peculiar localities—Some places specially require a Government commission—Our educational condition as to quality and quantity—Lost mind, and men who have emerged from the deepest poverty—Who are the Nonconformists?—Historical facts—Persecutions by the Church and the State—Dissenters and existing institutions—Deeds of Voluntaryism—Past success an argument for advancement—Joseph Lancaster—David Nasmith—Our duty to our country and to mankind.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—It devolves upon me to close this series of Lectures. For seven evenings you have listened with patience, kindness, and the closest attention, to the gentlemen who have preceded me. Great themes have been expounded; great principles have been illustrated, and sustained by irrefragable arguments; the misrepresentations and falsehoods, in the Reports of the agents of Government in relation to Wales, have been exposed—and refuted by the withering power of truthful evidence; covering the Commissioners with reproach and shame sufficient to justify the virtuous indignation of an outraged and slandered people—the censure of all impartial men in the House of Commons—the con-

demnation of all honest Englishmen—and the consignment of the "Reports" to the waste-paper department of the Committee of Council on Education.

Your attention to-night is respectfully asked to "The educational condition of the people of England, and the position of Nonconformists in relation to its advancement."

A comprehensive subject. Personally, socially, nationally important to Nonconformist, Churchman, and to every British subject; and indirectly, if not directly, to the well-being and elevation of mankind.

The condition of England, affects most materially the condition of all other nations. Our science, literature, commerce, laws, liberty, and religion; and our personal and social habits, are conveyed to other nations; modifying and changing ancient governments, enlarging national liberty, stimulating industry, and provoking emulation. They are taken to uninhabited shores—to unclaimed districts of the antipodes—to dense forests—and, borne on the tide of emigration of Britain's sons and daughters, they become the guide, and model for new countries, and infant empires—for monarchies, and republics—destined, probably, to last the duration of our globe.

England's greatness and influence are not to be measured by the extent of her sea-girt isle, her colonies, her dependencies, nor even by her wealth. These are surpassed by her knowledge, freedom, religion, great institutions, and great principles: which have cradled and nurtured her children into men and women—thinking, reasoning men and women—which have accumulated and expended an amount of benevolent and pious labour, self-denial, enterprise, and self-sacrifice on her own shores, and for the benefit of the slave and the free, the uncivilized and the civilized heathen in distant climes, unequalled, and unapproached by any other nation. Let us, in considering the condition of England, prepare ourselves for an enlarged and just judgment. Contracted views, class prejudices and notions, antiquated bigotries, defences of errors and abuses, because of their age and ancestry, must be abandoned. We want sound principles. Truth, justice, love, liberty, freedom of conscience, freedom in religion, wise and equal laws, the enjoyment of just rights by all classes of the people, and the education and elevation of the masses to their rightful position as our fellow-creatures before

God, and our fellow-subjects and citizens in a free and advancing commonwealth. The millions of England ask for these;—and they must have them. Be it ours to help them, by education, self-government, the love of order and virtue, and the fear of God, universally to obtain them.

In speaking of the educational condition of England, let us understand what we mean by education—who are the persons that should receive it—and whether the accident of birth, or of poverty, should be a barrier to any persons possessing it—or whether, on these accounts, they should be debarred the enjoyment of what they can acquire? The notion of education, now happily passing away, comprehended little more than being able "to read, write, and cast accounts." To make some of the poor a more useful kind of mechanical apparatus, appears to have been the highest aim of many who sanctioned education in a Charity-school; and even this was encumbered with notions and doctrines so slavish, and depressing, that the child dared scarcely glance at a superior, unless when performing an act of obeisance.

In education there is the end, or object we seek to accomplish; and there are the means by which it is to be effected. The means of education are even now, in different classes of schools, too much confounded with the end, and substituted in its place. The education of an intelligent being embraces; first, the development of the mind;—the unfolding, strengthening, and cultivation of the mental powers according to their constitutional tendencies and character. And second, the development of the heart;—wherein the culture, growth, training—and the discipline and government of the affections and passions should be assiduously attended to. Where such developments are not aimed at, the teacher is either deficient in a just conception of what he has to do, or blameable for neglecting the highest and most important end he has to accomplish.

For educating the intellect we must have proper means, and they must be judiciously employed. Reading, writing, and the science of numbers must be taught; and they should be acquired with as much ease and pleasure, and in as short a time, as accurate and sound instruction will permit. Knowledge of many things can be acquired chiefly by reading; writing enables us to preserve our thoughts, and the fruits of our reading; puts us in possession of the power of corresponding with absent relatives and friends, besides its multiplied uses in mercantile, professional, and literary life

And it is by the science of numbers, the poor boy selling oranges in our streets counts up his daily earnings, and Newton, La Place, and Airy measure the magnitude and distances of the heavenly bodies. Languages and the sciences still further enrich and enlarge the domain of mind; increase our pleasure, and augment our power of usefulness. The heart is to be cultivated by moral and religious truths and principles, and by examples of kindness, disinterestedness, and goodness; so that we may have loving children, affectionate and devoted brothers and sisters, faithful friendships, kind, humane, benevolent dispositions cherished towards all men, and that habitual desire of self-culture, and self-control—that honourable and Christian fulfilment of the duties and relationships we sustain, which shall sweeten life, smooth some of its rough and rugged features, and promote the happiness and common good of our families, our country—our race!

With these views of education, who are the parties to be educated? Shall the family of a working-man be excluded, or even neglected? or shall he, on account of his position, in which he cannot enjoy what wealth purchases, be in any way restrained as to his mental acquirements and aliment? Common sense—the honour and safety of our country—Christianity—and the common tie which binds us to Him who created the mind, and the heart, all condemn the exclusion, or the neglect even of the humblest, most defaced, and broken image of the blessed God we may find upon the earth. With us it is an axiom, THAT EVERY CHILD SHOULD HAVE THE BEST EDUCATION HIS MIND WILL ALLOW HIM TO RECEIVE, AND HIS CIRCUMSTANCES CAN COMMAND. Every person of sound mind should learn to speak and write his mother-tongue easily and accurately; every one should be taught to reason rightly on moral questions and duties, and on religious and general subjects; to utter what he thinks, easily, and without embarrassment; to be a lover of sound wisdom, truth, purity, and goodness; to be able, in a humble degree, to understand some of the wonderful works of the blessed Creator, which are around, above, and beneath him; and as he is amenable to the laws of his country, he should be so familiarly instructed in them as to prevent his breaking the law, or, through ignorance of it, becoming unconsciously involved in trouble and disgrace.

Many who are friendly to what they call education, and even ladies and gentlemen, on school committees, are unfavourable to

some departments of instruction, under the idea that they will lift a poor child out of his proper place. And what is his proper place, but that which he can attain, through a kind providence, by knowledge, industry, talent, ability, perseverance, and virtue? Why should a boy continue in a Union workhouse if he can become a merchant's clerk? Why should a ragged urchin, running about our streets, be left to become the prey of ignorance, vice, and crime, if we can clothe and instruct him; and, instead of letting him go to gaol, train him to industry—make him a useful member of society—a mechanic—a tradesman—or a teacher of others; and let him run a career with, and probably outstrip, those who were born under happier circumstances, and with a brighter prospect?

It is with us a deep, and growing conviction, especially in reference to our schools for the middle and upper classes, that much time is lost in unsuitable studies—much wasted by the manner and method of learning languages, which, in a majority of cases, are subsequently forgotten, or but little used—many matters of great practical moment for real life overlooked—and the learner and learning, not sufficiently aided by the teacher and teaching. An eloquent writer in the *Edinburgh Review,* nearly forty years since, thus propounded his view of education for real life; and so far as it goes, we think justly and admirably. Speaking of a young man intended for public life, he says, "We would exhort him not to affect the reputation of a great scholar, but to educate himself for the offices of civil life. He should learn what the constitution of his country really was, how it had grown into its present state, the perils that had threatened it, the malignity that had attacked it, the courage that had fought for it, and the wisdom that had made it great. We would bring strongly before his mind the characters of those Englishmen who have been the steady friends of the public happiness, and by their examples would breathe into him a pure public taste, which should keep him untainted in all vicissitudes of political fortune. We should deem it of the utmost importance that his attention was directed to the true principles of legislation; what effect laws can produce upon opinions, and opinions upon laws; what subjects are fit for legislative interference, and when men may be left to the management of their own interests; the mischief occasioned by bad laws, and the perplexity which arises from numerous laws; the causes of natural wealth; the relations of foreign trade; the encouragement of manufactures and agriculture; the laws of population; the management

of poverty and mendicity; the use and abuse of monopoly; the theory of taxation; and the consequences of the public debt." Neither our schools nor our colleges do much even as to elementary tuition in these matters; and our merchants, professional men, and senators, as such, are educated to a great extent in the counting-house, the office, the House of Commons, and by their intercourse with the people.

Deeply important as we deem these branches of education to be, we cannot sanction the absence of moral and religious training. No development of the mind is nobler, than when a Milton, a Boyle, a Bacon, or a Newton, is found in humble prostration before the eternal Source of all life and light; and no development of the heart can be more perfect, than when there is a growing likeness to the virtue, goodness, and love of Jesus Christ! Our religion we get from the Bible; our morals from the same book. God is the creator of the child and the adult we would educate, and the Author of the book whose Divine truths and precepts we would teach. There is in it that which can alone raise a fallen being to the highest virtue—enable him to pursue an honourable, useful, and holy career in life—supply him with the purest motives for the most self-denying and lofty actions—and inspire him, as he thinks of the loss of mother or father, sister or brother, friend or alien, with the hope of re-union beyond the grave. For the poor, whose homes, alas! in many cases, are not yet the abodes of piety, whose time at school is necessarily short, whose opportunities in after life for religious instruction are embraced or neglected, very much under the influence of their early training; we cannot, we dare not, give them only secular learning. They must have, if they desire it, or do not oppose it, the morals and the religion of the Bible. They must be taught, not by a hireling, but if possible, by one who believes what he teaches. The labourer is worthy of his hire: he must be paid. The parents must pay; where they cannot, richer neighbours and the friends of education must pay. No civil ruler, not even a House of Commons, is justified in enforcing the teaching of religion in churches, chapels, or schools, and compelling universal payment for it, by making the Socinian pay towards Roman Catholic doctrines, and Roman Catholics towards doctrines they deem heretical, and all parties made to aid, by compulsory payment, the spread of error and of truth. This is an injury inflicted upon us as religious men; an infringement of our liberty by the civil ruler,

which we ought not to bear, and is opposed to the freedom for which we have been struggling for years, and must struggle until we obtain it. In teaching religion in our schools, there must be liberty to teach what is considered essential to the enlightenment of the mind and the culture of the heart; making religion, by the spirit pervading the school, and the manner of teaching its lessons, lovely in itself, and the thing to be desired to make men and families live in peace, and love one another. We fully agree with Milton, that "the end of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents, by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue, which, being united to the heavenly grace of faith, makes up the highest perfection."

With such a standard to judge by, what is the educational condition of the people of England? On the one hand, we have to avoid the exaggerated statements, made by such travelling tourists as Mr. Kay, and such clergymen as Mr. Bennett, of Knightsbridge. On the other hand, we have to discriminate, and while bearing testimony to the largeness of the general supply, we must frankly admit any specific and remarkable local deficiencies, and endeavour to supply them. If we had larger space than one lecture furnishes, we might have referred at length to the educational condition of England—1st, at remarkable periods, or historically; 2nd, as it exists in the various classes and professions in society; 3rd, as we find it in peculiar localities; and, 4th, as it now exists, both as to quality and quantity, among the millions. Our allusion to these topics must be very brief.

There was a time when, instead of the Colossal metropolis which now exists with its population of 2,000,000, the banks of our river exhibited roughly-constructed wooden huts, inhabited by uncivilised beings, scantily clad. Their religion, or rather superstition, was very prominent. Their priests were the Druids,—their temples, groves and secret recesses,—their sacrifices human beings,—and their punishments, by the priestly power, the severest that could be inflicted. Knowledge, such as it was, the priests claimed. The Romans changed this state of things, but only by the strong arm of the law. Other priests in progress of time appeared, and at an early period in Ireland, Wales, and England, learning for a time flourished. The earliest literature in any of the native languages of the British Islands, of which any remains have reached our time,

appears to be the Irish, and the next the Welsh. The clergy for centuries were considered almost the only persons who were required to know anything. Schools, however, were multiplied, and about the thirteenth century such was the fame of Oxford that she numbered 30,000 students. Subsequently learning declined, and in 1357 the number was reduced to 6,000. Scholars became mendicants, and carried with them recommendations for the charity of the benevolent. The historian of the University of Oxford, Anthony Wood, relates a story of two of these learned travellers, who presented themselves at a baronial castle, and exhibited their credentials; in which, among other gifts that they possessed, it was said they had *a poetical vein.* The Baron was determined to put it to the test. He ordered them to be suspended in a pair of buckets over the draw-well, and to be dipped alternately in the water until each should produce a couplet on his awkward situation. The Baron and his friends enjoyed the fun. The exciting power of cold water, after some time, brought forth the poetry, and they enjoyed the hospitality for which they had begged.

Early in the fifteenth century printing was introduced to England. This soon began to work a change. The period of the Reformation was increasingly favourable to the spread of education. The foundations of Edward and Elizabeth were intended to consolidate the Reformation, by diffusing learning among the middle and humbler classes. The range of instruction was not very extensive. Reading was not taught earnestly, and writing was greatly neglected. The prescribed curriculum, as we find it in the 79th canon, was as follows:—" All schoolmasters shall teach in English or Latin, as the children are able to bear, the larger or shorter catechism, heretofore by public authority set forth. And as often as any sermon shall be upon holy and festival days within the parish where they teach, they shall bring the scholars to the church where such sermons shall be made, and there see them quietly and soberly behave themselves; and shall examine them at times convenient after their return what they have borne away of such sermons. Upon other days, and at other times, they shall train them up with such sentences of Holy Scripture as shall be most expedient to induce them to all godliness; and they shall teach them the grammar set forth by King Henry VIII., and continued in the times of King Edward VI., and Queen Elizabeth, of noble memory, and none other."

Neither the church—monastic education before the Reformation—nor the endowed grammar schools, nor free schools after the Reformation, were sufficiently numerous or comprehensive to instruct the population even of those times. In a very able article on the progress of education in England, in the "Companion to the British Almanack for 1847," the writer, though an advocate for State interference, bears the following testimony:—"The education of the people since the Reformation has proceeded from the people. It has been uniformly in a state of progress, though occasionally exposed to corruption and consequent decay. The endowed grammar schools are coincident with the progress of the middle class; the free schools, which are not grammar schools, go along with the gradual rise and progress of the operative class; the Sunday-schools, and the other schools of Voluntary association—the schools of the present century, belong to a new era, when the universal education of the people is held to be a matter of duty and necessity." We date the rise of popular education from the rise of popular preaching. Deep sleep had fallen on the clergy of the Establishment, and Dissenting ministers had great fear in their hearts of the political consequences of religious agitation, when Whitefield and Wesley came to rouse the slumbers of one world by the thunders of another. The Established Church had existed for upwards of two centuries. No want of revenues, no want of exclusiveness, no want of legal enactment, nor of priestly pretensions; the parishes were numerous, the populations comparatively small, but darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the people. The humbler classes at that period were in a state of great mental and moral debasement. Grossly ignorant, intemperate, brutal in their habits and sports, addicted to the profanest swearing, and living in open contempt of the sabbath and of religion. Such was the dread of evangelical piety at that time at Oxford, that six young men were expelled the University, not for immorality—that was allowed to flourish, but for reading, praying, expounding the Scriptures, and singing hymns in private houses. Whitefield and the Wesleys brought about a new order of things. With religious feeling came the thirst for religious knowledge, for the Holy Scriptures,—and the new era of Sunday-schools and Bible Societies, Tract Societies and Lancasterian Schools followed; and whatever may be said, or thought of the present time, as to education, religion, liberty, and onward progress in literature and mental free-

dom, sure we are, that this is the best instructed, most religious, and the freest age, of any in our national history.

As to the educational condition of the classes, and professions in society, very various opinions will be formed by thinking men, whose judgments will be guided chiefly by the kind and extent of education they have observed among them. We thank God for the great men, and the good men in the high places of society; for upright, learned, and just judges. The profound learning of our English judges, in their own proper departments, is not surpassed in any nation upon the globe. Among the clergy of the Established Church, we have scholarship of the highest order; extensive, accurate, and scriptural theology; great theological acumen; and virtue and piety of the highest class; and within the same pale, we have men who are superstitious, foolish, ignorant; whose theological knowledge is surpassed by a well-trained Sunday-scholar, whose religion is in ceremonies, whose piety is in alms-giving, and whose pleasures and sports are in the world. And as the Church is now constituted—with her prizes—with her bounties upon hypocrisy—the unprovided members of the aristocracy and of the gentry standing at her gates—she must remain one of the most mixed churches as to the moral character of her ministers, if not the most corrupt denomination in our land. All State-Church establishments, in all countries, are liable to this low state of moral character, and of religious disqualification for the discharge of the Christian ministry. Other denominations in this respect have infinite advantages over the State-Church, because they have discipline; and even as to learning, there are Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Congregationalists, Baptists, and others, who now rank with the most learned and able of the English clergy. Among our senators we have able men of birth and of rank; and some who have come up from humble life, and earned for themselves a fame which the oldest and ablest British statesmen have gracefully conceded. Political education has been considered to be almost the exclusive right of the aristocracy. That day has gone by. The army, the navy, and the bar supply too many senators: but it is obviously to the interest of these professions to do so, though greatly to the increase of our fiscal burdens, and the injury of the people. The medical men of England are not surpassed for skill, science, and benevolence, by any in the world. Our scientific men, for discovery and practical utility, take the precedence of all others. Our working mechanics, for intelligence, skill, ingenuity,

and finish of their work, in almost every department of labour are unrivalled. Our literary men constitute a mighty host, and our free institutions and our free Press, have given them an advantage over thousands on the Continent, who could think, but until recently could give no utterance to their thoughts. Our soldiers are a brave, fearless, desperate body of men, especially in any great emergency; but they are grossly ignorant, and thousands of them most licentious and depraved. Among our sailors, within the last few years, there has been an extensive reform. Temperance, and spiritual religion, are now found in many British vessels; and sailors, who see so much of the power and goodness of God, are not afraid nor ashamed to acknowledge and adore Him in whom they live, and on whom they hourly depend. These men, as the supposed representatives of English morality, habits, and religion, have in times past done inconceivable mischief on foreign shores, and sadly libelled their country. Many of them are doing it still; but the process of regeneration now going on we hope will not stop, until our naval and mercantile seamen are in morals and religion, as great an honour to Britain as in bravery, perseverance, courage, and skill. And what shall we say of our agriculturists—of our agricultural labourers?—men and women living in thinly populated districts, and in villages, where there is a church to a parish, generally with an excellent living; where the Clergy have had it all their own way for centuries; where they have had the finest opportunity of showing what a richly-endowed church could do in a small population; and where it is said the Voluntary Principle cannot possibly succeed. To the everlasting disgrace of the Church, and of the compulsory principle, we are compelled to say, that the agricultural labourer is generally most ignorant, senseless, and stupid. No class in society was of easier access to the Clergy, but it was neglected; while from the soil, on which the sweat of the labourer's brow fell like the dew of heaven, they annually gathered—never neglecting it—their tenth of the produce. Yes, the tiller of the earth they looked upon as one of its clods: the sheep they had sworn to feed and to fold, they did little else to, but shear: and then left them to wolf or bear; or to the still more destructive monsters—ignorance, intemperance, and irreligion. Let any man study the history, and understand the condition of our agricultural population for the last century or two; and let him ask what the millions of money received by the Clergy have done for that population?—generation after generation having grown up ignorant of the rudiments of learning and of religion, dolts in intellect, serfs in their social position, and degraded by utter ignorance

as low as a rational being could be made to descend. Hence they have been easily oppressed, hard worked, and badly paid; and by some masters not so much cared for as the cattle they feed, and the horses they plough and harrow with. Of course, in these remarks, we refer to the great body of the Clergy, as having acted thus in time past, and not a few of them who even now dislike thoroughly the instruction and improvement of the labouring population. Other clergymen, however, have done, and are doing all that they can to remedy the fearful state in which they find the people; but they are fettered by the prejudices and the fears of some of the upper classes: many of them dreading that serfdom and slavish submission cannot coexist with knowledge, elevation, and liberty. In 1841, we had 881,622 agricultural labourers; 277,135 farmers and graziers; and 49,232 gardeners, nurserymen, and florists: making a total immediately connected with the culture of the earth, of 1,207,989. Knowledge is spreading in the first class; the third class, for some years, by its position has been making great advances in learning and science: and the second class, (thanks to the Voluntary Principle,) has now taken an onward movement which we trust will conduct it to honour, to its proper status in society, and to prosperity.

We cannot resist giving you an illustration of the power of the compulsory, and of the Voluntary Principles in relation to agriculture. About the year 1793, agriculture was said to be in a very low state: as it is said of education in 1848. The Shuttleworth of education was the Sinclair of agriculture. Nothing, it was declared, could make British husbandry flourish but Government patronage, and annual grants from the House of Commons. Sir John Sinclair at length succeeded in establishing the Board of Agriculture.* It received a

* An Unfulfilled Prophecy.—Sir John Sinclair, in his "Code of Agriculture,", page 501, asks, "What public encouragements for the advancement of agriculture ought a wise Government to bestow?" And he proceeds to argue, and to prophesy as follows: "Many able men, *reasoning solely from the abuses to which the system of encouragement is liable*, have thence been induced to condemn this policy, and to recommend that of giving to individuals the entire freedom of exercising their industry in their own way, without any legislative interference whatever. They dwell much on the reply once made by some of the principal merchants of France to the celebrated Colbert, who, having asked *What Government could do for them?* was answered, 'Laissez nous faire' (Let us alone). It is certainly better to let agriculture alone than to establish injudicious regulations respecting it. But if a Government will make such inquiries as may enable it to judge of what can be done with safety

charter from George III. For nearly a quarter of a century it had an annual grant. These grants ceased in 1817, and the Board of Agriculture died a natural and unlamented death. Government grants had paralyzed it; its officers were comfortable; and, after a time, the only harvest looked for was—the annual grant. What is the state of things now? The agriculturists—and most of them good Churchmen—are trying the Voluntary Principle, and with admirable success. The Duke of Richmond, Sir Robert Peel, and others, took part in the formation of the Royal Agricultural Society, on the Voluntary Principle. It has succeeded. It is doing a great work for Britain and the world. In education, in the arts and sciences, it is eminently successful. It has about 7,000 members — an annual income of about 10,000*l.*; it had invested property, on the 1st of March, 1848, amounting to 8,999*l.* stock, and a cash balance, at the bankers, of 2,629*l.* A Government grant for agriculture would, I believe, be scouted even by Sir Robert Peel, as a "heavy blow and great discouragement" to its prosperity.

But what is the state of religious knowledge among the different classes we have enumerated—I mean of publicly reported religious knowledge? What is it in our schools and colleges?—What is it at Eton, Harrow, Westminster, Cambridge, and Oxford? And what is it in many schools of inferior repute? Is it made a primary, or even secondary, object, to imbue the mind and heart with the spirit of the New Testament? Are the principles and doctrines of Christ expounded for the modelling of the heart and the guide of the life? Is there an earnestness, a reality, in reference to spiritual and practical religion—a living and prominent imbodiment of it in our scholastic establishments? How many living Arnolds—and how much religious Arnoldism have we for the young men now growing up to fill the high places of society? Public opinion and the Press are doing much more

and advantage, and will promote agricultural industry, not only by removing every obstacle to improvement, but BY GRANTING POSITIVE ENCOURAGEMENT, AGRICULTURE WILL PROSPER WITH A RAPIDITY, AND WILL BE CARRIED ON TO AN EXTENT WHICH IS HARDLY TO BE CREDITED, AND IN A MUCH SUPERIOR DEGREE than by the 'let-alone' system, under the torpor of which ages might pass away, without accomplishing what might be effected in the course of a few years under a judicious system of encouraging regulations!" Sir John had the "positive encouragement" for a quarter of a century, and it failed: the "let-alone" system is now resorted to, and the science of agriculture is flourishing beyond any period in our national history.

than the systems and regulations of the schools. Whatever may be the deficiencies in the theories, there is, however, an improvement upon the practices of bygone years. The great body of the Clergy, sixty or seventy years back, was a public scandal. There are now in their ranks some of the best men upon the face of the earth. As for the House of Commons, one of the sources of our laws for the State, and for the Church, the very name of religion is, among many of its members, a bugbear, and a laughing-stock. It is a synonyme for cant, humbug, clerical power, rapacity, and bigotry; for selfishness, discord, and exclusiveness. And is it to be wondered at? Where have they seen religion, but in creeds, ecclesiastical history, Church-rates, tithes, penal enactments, party-strifes, and denominational struggles and feuds? And of what use do they think religion, but for a status in society, a good living, Government patronage, and occasionally a bishopric from the Premier, for some political relation or friend? Has anything for many years created a tithe of the contempt and disgust in the public mind, in reference to religion and Church establishments, that the falsehood, injustice, and worldly policy involved in the Hampden controversy have done? Religious education, (if these be the fruits of a "National religion") among the intelligent, moral, upright portions of the community, will be at a discount, while the corruptions of the Church establishment remain; and, like the immoralities of a theatre, they are essential, to its existence, and political utility. We have, however, more religious men in the House of Commons, and at the Bar, than formerly; but we have many who for infidelity, irreligion, and vice, are as bad as strong minds, strong passions, plenty of money, and corrupt companions can make them. There is more religion, morality, soundness of character, and social happiness among the middle classes of British society, than in any other country. They are the strength of the Commonwealth, the source and spring of our industry, genius, commerce, science, and prosperity. In the miscellaneous and agricultural population in England, there is but little religion, except where Voluntaryism has taken among them a religion, not of forms, ceremonies, tithes,—but of intelligence, feeling, and principle. Look at Essex, as an agricultural county, where an unendowed religion flourishes,—and then look at Dorsetshire, where an endowed Church has been subject to but few and feeble interruptions, and the state of society, of mind, knowledge, social enjoyment, and independence of thought and action, will tell which system is a blessing, and which a calamity to the country.

There is a third aspect in which we may look at the educational condition of England; I refer to certain localities in large cities, towns, and rural districts. And here we admit that some of them are very bad. We want an educational mission to these localities. These are the places where the black paint is obtained ready made, with which the Government inspectors exhibit upon their blue canvass the picture of England. It appears that Wales is very bad. Even hay-lofts have been ransacked to get at the state of the people. Three questions put by Mr. Symons, to elicit information, were these:—"Is there any deficiency of good day-schools, with competent masters, in your neighbourhood; and in what respect are they *defective?* Is there much ignorance among the poor; and on what subjects? Are their morals defective; and, if so, in what respects? State instances and facts which illustrate this." Now, let this same Commission be sent into all our cathedral cities, beginning with Westminster, and let them inquire into the state of the population, especially of that part of it living nearest to the cathedral; let them ask about the ignorance and the morals of the poor; let them witness the degradation of the wretched beings that they will find by hundreds and thousands in Westminster. They will want no "statement of facts." They will see enough in one hour, to disgust and humble them for a week; and let them ask what the cathedral has done for these people?—what the clergy of the cathedral? And the answers will be humiliating, and scarcely to be credited. We have no dislike to cathedrals, to daily worship, to soul-ravishing music; but unless these are the end of religion—the object of the mission of Christ—the great purpose for which he died; we would rather see the whole cathedral staff, headed by the Dean, pioneering their way into the abodes of indigence, squalor, disease, and death, discharging the high and Divine functions of the ministers of Christ, in teaching and comforting the poor, even were it but for one day, than we would hear their prayers and music for a week. Christianity is a living, soul-indwelling religion. Our Lord intended it for real life, for the enlightenment and comfort of the poor, not for the worldly aggrandizement and ease of men, elevated to preferment and to episcopal thrones by a civil ruler, whether from political friendships, or antagonism, or reward.

Having visited, and reported upon the state of the population around our cathedrals, let this same Commission go into Dorsetshire, Cambridgeshire, and Bedfordshire, and other counties where the

Church has not been much roused by Dissenters. Let Mr. Symons go to Oxford—to Cambridge. Let him go to the heads of houses,—to inn-keepers,—to stable-keepers,—to wine-shades,—billiard-rooms,—and other places I forbear to name. Let him ask, "Is there much ignorance here; and on what subjects?" Are the morals of the people [and of the students] defective; and, if so, in what respects? "State instances and facts which illustrate this!" Why, a commission upon the morals of Oxford and Cambridge, if fairly and honestly gone into,—nothing concealed, and all published in a blue book,—would, by comparison, leave Wales a land of rustic innocence and simplicity. And for a thorough acquaintance with the Bible, Wales need fear nothing in comparison with Oxford and Cambridge. Last Sunday I was at Cambridge. In the evening I preached in behalf of the Cambridge Town Mission. The population is about 25,000;—not 5,000 families. Now, with all the clergy and Dissenting ministers in the town, with the hundreds of young men—nearly 2,000, I understand—training for the Church, there are so many poor families in Cambridge, who are neglected, and have no religious instruction, that the Dissenters, by Voluntaryism, support a missionary, and want to support two, in order to convey (not ecclesiastical or party instruction—this is forbidden), but religious knowledge and consolation to the poor. It is time that the people knew and felt that religion is their inheritance; and while men are paid out of national funds to propagate it, and administer its consolations, some authorities, either spiritual or civil, ought to see that the poor are not neglected.

There is another, and the largest view of the educational condition of England, as it respects school provision and school agencies for the millions, that might and ought to be taken here; but it has been so fully, comprehensively, and ably illustrated by my friend Mr. Baines, that I feel it to be unnecessary to introduce it. It would be easy to introduce other illustrations of the past state of society, and to repeat similar statistics; but a reference to Mr. Baines's lecture will amply illustrate this part of the subject. In that lecture you will find information as to the past and present educational condition of the masses—Sunday schools—Day schools—British and Foreign schools—the school of the National Society—Infant schools—Ragged schools—Normal or training schools—the proportions of children to the whole population in attendance at schools, as well as general observations upon the whole question of the greatest value.

It is consolatory to mark the progress of education as to quality and extent among all classes, especially among the humbler. Although we have no love for the Church Catechism—the most meagre compendium of theology extant, and containing some most false and unscriptural statements whether in the hand of the child of a Dissenter, or Churchman,—yet, with the drawback of teaching this in National schools, we rejoice to know that these institutions, especially where there are competing schools, are greatly improved. For the people, we hope great things; and from the people we expect great things. Let them have the best education. Some of them, now in Voluntary schools, are obtaining a better education than many in boarding-schools and grammar foundations. To say nothing of what has been lost to nations, and to the human race, by neglecting the mental culture and development of the poorer classes, let us be encouraged by what has been gained by the force of circumstances in the providence of God. As travellers, the world has been benefited by a Columbus, the son of a poor wool-carder; and by Cook, the son of a farmer's servant. Science has had Ferguson, the son of a labourer; Brindley the engineer of canal navigation, from the lowest depths of poverty; and James Watt, to whom the world owes vast obligations for the steam-engine, the son of a block-maker and ship-chandler. Richard Arkwright, the youngest of thirteen children of very poor parents, and put out to be a barber, altered the cotton and stocking-manufactures of the kingdom, and gave them an impetus, unparalleled in the annals of commerce: yet so sadly neglected was he as a child, that when he had attained fifty years of age, deeply lamenting the want of early education, he encroached upon his sleep one hour to learn English grammar, and another hour to improve his writing and spelling. Alexander Murray, formerly the Professor of Oriental languages in Edinburgh, was a shepherd-boy; Dodsley, the great publisher, was a footman to the Hon. Mrs. Lowther; Lackington, of undying fame as a bookseller, was the son of a journeyman shoemaker; and the greatest European philanthropist, John Howard, on whom Burke pronounced a splendid eulogy, was the son of an upholsterer, and himself an assistant in the warehouse of a wholesale grocer. We could go on for an hour with such illustrations from the annals of the dead and of the living. At this moment we have greater men in our free country, who have risen from the humblest classes, than at any former period, and universal education will multiply them a thousand-fold.

The more we can cherish among the poorest class a noble self-dependent spirit, paying what they are able for education, letting them feel that they are not paupers upon benevolence, nor upon the State, the greater will be our success, and the more certain will be the growth of correct and virtuous principle among all classes.

We now have to consider the position of Nonconformists in relation to the advancement of education.

Some foreigner, unacquainted with British ecclesiastical history, or some Englishman equally ignorant, may ask the question, "Who are these Nonconformists? Are they ignorant persons, disloyal, unfriendly to liberty, enemies to the State, persecutors of other men, irreligious, patrons of ignorance, and anxious to prevent the spread of light, and of religion among mankind?" Let us briefly refer to them. Strictly speaking, every person who dissents from the Church established by law, and on this ground declines membership, is a Nonconformist. Roman Catholics and Jews, in relation to the Church Establishment, are Nonconformists. So are the Members of the Society of Friends, Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Baptists, Independents, and other bodies of Dissenters. Members of the Established Church of Scotland are Nonconformists to the Established Church in England. In Rome, in Germany, in Scotland, English Churchmen would be Nonconformists. The conventional use of the term, however, embraces Presbyterians, Baptists, and Independents. Our reference to-night will be partly, though not exclusively, to ourselves, as Congregational Independents, forming, as we do, one branch of the English Nonconformists. Our history, institutions, principles, and practices, prove that we are, and have always been, the friends of learning, of loyalty, of liberty, of religious freedom, and of the political and religious advancement of our race. This is the judgment and the testimony of men who belong not to us; and these things have been to our honour, or dishonour from the earliest period of our history. David Hume, the historian, says, "Of all Christian sects, this (the Independent) was the first which, during its prosperity as well as its adversity, always adopted the principle of toleration." But let us discriminately employ terms. Independents existed before the memorable Act of Uniformity, from which period, strictly speaking, Nonconformists date their existence. Dr. Hamilton says, "There were Independents when there were Lollards—when there were Puritans—when there were Nonconformists. They were not bound up with any of these, whether

considered as sects of Christian communion or as indexes of current belief." Bartholomew-day, 1662, was the birth-day of about 2,000 Nonconformist clergymen, and from that period they have not only not become extinct, but have flourished and multiplied. They have in the aggregate propagated their sentiments, throughout the British islands, colonies, dependencies: the islands of the Southern Sea, in Africa, India, and China, and they believe that as education extends, Church Establishments by the civil power will become more and more unpopular, and finally be modified and conformed to something like the churches of the New Testament, and the exigencies of mankind.

From the year 1662, (a period of 186 years,) Congregational Independents have ranked and been incorporated with Nonconformists. What has been, and what is their relation to the spread of education in England? We are taunted with having done but little. The Voluntary Principle which we advocate is pronounced to have been a failure. I suppose that no one imprisoned in Newgate is present in this hall, listening to this lecture. No one confined in the Hanwell Lunatic Asylum is expected to be of sound mind, and able to conduct his affairs, and fit to be at large. No American slave is expected to be at liberty in the streets of New York, and at his pleasure, taking his passage for England. No poor man in the Union workhouse has a demand made upon him for Income-tax. But any of these things would be just as reasonable as to have expected Nonconformists, until very lately, to take any part in the education of the children and people of England: or even to have done much to spread their principles, erect chapels, and educate their ministers. Let me refer you to a few facts in our history, to prove that, for a time, we were prohibited from doing anything,—that the Church, and the State, singly and together, persecuted and oppressed us—every degradation that could be devised, was inflicted—tyranny, with her rod of iron drove us from place to place, forbad us approach to a corporate town, shut up our schools, and threatened us that if we opened one, we should be fined and imprisoned, and if more than five persons met for religious worship, they should be transported. Is it just, is it manly, to taunt us with having done nothing—after having for many years bound us hand and foot, and it was hoped, had crippled, if not destroyed us? But to the facts:

From the year 1660 until 1672 (twelve years,) no less than six Acts of Parliament were passed to crush, and if possible, to extermi-

nate us from the British soil. The first was the Corporation Act; the second, the Act of Uniformity; the third, an "Act to suppress seditious conventicles," declaring it a transportable offence for more than five persons to unite in religious worship, except according to the forms of the Church of England. The fourth, was the Oxford, or Five-mile Act, by which it was enacted that no dissenting teacher who took not the non-resistance oath, should come (except upon the road,) within five miles of any corporation, or of any place where he had preached, under a penalty of 50*l.* and six months' imprisonment. The fifth was a revival of the Conventicle Act, with increased severities; and the sixth was the Test Act, which was not repealed until the year 1828,—only twenty years since. Two years afterwards (14 Car. II.) it was enacted, That if any schoolmaster or other person instructing or teaching youth in any private house or family, as a tutor or schoolmaster, before license obtained from his respective archbishop, bishop, or ordinary of the diocese, according to the laws and statutes of the realm (for which he shall pay 12*d.* only), and before such subscription and acknowledgment made as aforesaid, then every such schoolmaster, and other, instructing and teaching as aforesaid, shall, for the first offence suffer three months' imprisonment, without bail or mainprise; and for every second, and other such offence shall suffer three months imprisonment without bail or mainprise, and also forfeit to his Majesty the sum of five pounds." This was the work of the Clergy; this the toleration and liberty of the English Church; this the eagerness of an established priesthood to enlighten and elevate England; and this the interference of the Government with private and public education. Notwithstanding this Act, the Dissenters, in the beginning of the 18th century, did all that they could to promote education. At length their efforts in instructing the people aroused the jealousy of the Church; and in the year 1714, the infamous Schism Bill was introduced into the House of Commons, and on the 1st of June was passed by a majority of 237 against 126. Lord Bolingbroke introduced it into the House of Lords. The activity of Dissenters in the work of education was alleged to be the cause of its origin. An effort was made to introduce a clause to allow them schools in which they might instruct their own children; but it was rejected by 62 votes to 48; and at length the bill itself was carried by a majority of 177 against 72. Now what was its enactment? "That no person in England or Wales shall keep any public or private school, or seminary, or instruct

youth as tutor or schoolmaster, that has not first superscribed the declaration to conform to the Church of England, and has obtained license from the respective diocesan or ordinary of the place; or, upon failure of so doing, may be committed to prison without bail or mainprise. And that no such license shall be granted before the party produces a certificate of his having received the sacrament, according to the communion of the Church of England, in some parish church, within a year before obtaining such license. And if any person *teaches any other catechism* than what is set forth in the Common Prayer, his license shall be thenceforth void, and he be liable to the penalties of this Act." This was Government interference with education! And this the guilty conduct of men calling themselves the successors of the Apostles! Mercifully for Britain, God interposed. The bill was to have come into operation on the 1st of August; but on that day the Queen died, and the prospects of its promoters were clouded and blackened by the advent of the house of Hanover. It remained on the statute-book until the 5th of Geo. I., when it was repealed. It was about the time of the passing of this bill, that the populace was excited to commit acts of violence upon the Dissenters. Five of their chapels in London were greatly injured; and, among them, New-court Chapel, in which the Rev. Daniel Burgess preached. The pulpit and pews were torn out, the roof demolished, and everything that was combustible publicly burnt in Lincoln's-inn Fields.

In the beginning of the reign of Geo. II., the spirit of many of the clergy was of the worst kind. The celebrated Dr. Doddridge distinguished by his moderation, and by a most peaceful spirit, no sooner opened an academy at Northampton, than a prosecution was commenced against him in the Ecclesiastical Court, by some dignitaries of the Established Church. Yes, these men thought it a crime (and the state of the law sanctioned them) for such a man as Doddridge to instruct youth in knowledge, virtue, and piety, and for doing it he was cited into the Ecclesiastical Court—a Court which, to the dishonour of our country, the disgrace of the Established Church, and the injury of liberty, still exists, but must be swept away by the swelling tide of knowledge, of justice, of common sense, and of Christian liberty, which shall, ere long, carry with it Church Courts, and some other things, to their "own place." The clergy were determined to inflict upon Dr. Doddridge the full penalties of the law; but the facts of the case being fully stated to the king and especially the representation that was made of the

high and amiable character of the Doctor, George the Second, to his honour, ordered the prosecution to be stopped; and by the Royal interference the clergy were disappointed, and the Doctor escaped.

It is now about twenty years since we succeeded in gaining the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. So lately as the 25th of April, 1828, the Bishop of Bristol of that day made a remarkable speech in the House of Lords. He was alarmed at the petitions sent to both Houses of Parliament, from all parts of the kingdom. He did not like the repeal of the offensive Test Act, and, in speaking upon it, made the following extraordinary remarks about our schools. He said:—"The Dissenters are a powerful body; they have a great control in many places; they have established schools in various parts of the country; and it is not unworthy of remark, that they frequently keep the children at those schools on the Sunday, when the service of the church is going on, *by which they are deprived of religious instruction.* If your Lordships will permit me, I will mention one circumstance connected with this point which is worthy of attention. If your Lordships look at the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons, on Education, you will find it stated, in the evidence of Dr. Hunt, that, in his opinion, one great cause of the increase of crime is the detention of the children at these schools [Sunday-schools], by which they are deprived of regular religious instruction." This is an extract from a speech, not twenty years old, by a Bishop, in the House of Lords! The Nonconformists were then clearly doing too much for his Lordship; and what they did in their Sunday-schools accounted for the increase of crime; and now, the Government offers its patronage to do somewhat of the same kind of thing, even in Day-schools, in order to suppress crime!

Nothing is more certain and notorious at the present hour, to those who know the working of the Established Church in rural districts, and small towns, than that the zeal of the Dissenters, and their efforts to instruct the young, are very offensive to many of the clergy, and the most shameful practices are resorted to, to thin our Day-schools, break up our Sunday-schools, and, if possible, drive the Missionary from the district, the humble Pastor from the village, and his flock into an alien fold. Bribery, parish alms, school-bounty, and Society-relief, in the form of apparel and food, are employed to allure or to intimidate; while anything but fraternity is cherished on the part of the clergyman with the Dissenting minister. But

these things must have an end, and a sound religious education will rapidly and blessedly accelerate it.

The latter part of the last century, and the beginning of the present, the education of the people began to attract attention. Look at the two parties of Conformists and Nonconformists at that time. The former in possession of vast wealth annually, for the religious education of adults and children; in possession of the funds of the endowed schools, at that time grossly abused, and the education for which they were founded shamefully neglected; their churches built, and the influence, power, and learning of the kingdom in their favour, with grants from the treasury for new churches, unopposed. Look at the Nonconformists!—Poor, not freed from civil disabilities, oppressed, persecuted, despised. See what they had to do. Out of their poverty they had to build their chapels, support their ministers, and keep their edifices in repair; build colleges, educate their ministers, found Sunday-schools, attend to the claims of the local poor of every district, and build Day-schools. The extent to which they did these things, the statistics of various denominations amply illustrate: and in addition they attended to the claims of the slave, and of the civilised and uncivilised heathen.

A Baptist Minister was the founder of the Bible Society, and also of the Religious Tract Society; an Independent Minister was the founder of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum. Dissenters founded the Orphan Asylum at Clapton—since taken from them by Churchmen. An Independent Minister founded the Infant Orphan Asylum, also taken from them by the wicked test of the Church Catechism; and then he founded the Infant Orphan Establishment, where there is no test, and where there is given to the child of the Churchman in a Christian spirit what the Churchman denies to the child of a Dissenter in a sectarian spirit. Dissenters founded the Orphan Working School, now on Haverstock Hill. A Dissenter founded the London City Mission. A Dissenter was the origin of the British and Foreign School Society. Dissenters have, with Churchmen, aided in building and supporting British schools over the whole kingdom. The magnitude of Voluntary support is triumphantly but libellously stated to be the annual amount of about £2,000 contributed to the British and Foreign School Society. This is utterly untrue. Local subscriptions have built all the local schools in the kingdom, and sustained them until the recent operation of Government grants. But, besides these, the unselfish

Voluntary Principle sent a Baptist missionary to India, before a Church missionary or a Bishop had planted foot on that soil; and when, to the disgrace of England and English law, he was obliged to take refuge in a Dutch settlement: and a Congregationalist was the first Protestant missionary to China:—he translated the Scriptures into the Chinese language; compiled a Lexicon; and both of these men, —Carey and Morrison,—rose to the highest distinction in India and China. The South Seas, Africa, Greenland, and every part of the world, have been visited and blessed by men of God, sent forth and sustained by the Voluntary Principle. They have reduced spoken, to written languages, translated the Scriptures, founded schools and colleges, made large contributions to literature and science, and have conferred on Britain immortal honour. And the Established Church, as an Establishment, has done nothing in other lands, but what she has done on the same principle. She is now, however, by her emissaries and friends, wherever she can get a footing, trying to exist by taxation; and is already in our Colonies oppressing the people with some of her worst laws. South Australia, where it was understood none of these evils were to be visited upon the emigrants and settlers, has recently memorialized the Queen to withhold her sanction from the scheme of paying for religion out of the public taxes; but to their dismay and indignation, Lord Grey, the Liberal Whig, has sent them back his decree in these words:—"It has been my duty humbly to submit to Her Majesty my opinion, that the course pursued by the local Legislature, in applying some part of the local revenue towards the promotion of religion, knowledge, and education in the Colony, merits Her Majesty's entire approbation." A man with these sentiments, having rule in the Colonial-office, cannot be removed too soon, if we wish to preserve British connection with the Colonies, and to build them up in peace and prosperity.

Let the history of the Voluntary Principle for the last sixty years be written and read, as it has been illustrated by Roman Catholics, by Presbyterians before and since the Free-Church rupture, by Independents, Moravians, the Society of Friends, Baptists, Wesleyans, and other bodies, and even by Churchmen: and then let the history of the compulsory principle be written and read with its oppressions, cruelties, injustice, dishonour to Christ and Christianity, and its injury to the spread of religion; and let any impartial jury, even of Churchmen, pronounce a verdict on the usefulness of the two systems in enlightening and benefiting mankind. We want a concise,

well-written, popular history of the DEEDS of Voluntaryism for the spread of knowledge, education, liberty, commerce, Christianity; and for the support of benevolent and philanthropic institutions, including our asylums and hospitals. Such a book ought to be presented to Lord Grey by the Colonists of Australia, and by the Voluntaries of England to every Member of the House Commons, the House of Lords, and the bench of Bishops.

As to the advancement of popular education in Great Britain and the world, we are pledged to it. We must have, and encourage others to have, the best Normal schools they can command. Educate the teachers, and you do much to educate the people. We admire the proportions, the orders, the decorations of architecture; but our mission at present is not to gratify taste, but to build up and adorn the human soul. Too much money has been either ignorantly or wilfully spent upon some of our school buildings, and our colleges. We must have the best books, and the best apparatus we can command. Among Catholics, Churchmen, and Dissenters, we must know what is doing; and if they are in advance of us we must at least equal them, if we can,—overtake them. The quality and extent of education must not be ruled by prejudice, nor by narrow and sectarian views. Let us do what we can to adopt the best system—work out the most judicious and practical plans—use the best books—and confer the greatest amount of good in our power upon teachers and children. We are free to advance. Let our progress be marked by kindness, wisdom, discretion, sobriety, and zeal, and then we may hope for success.

There is one point on which a few words may be expected from me, as the Secretary of the Board of Education: it is that of acting denominationally. We would not have done it, could we have avoided it. There are two causes of denominational action. First; Churchmen, Presbyterians, Wesleyans, and the Free-Church of Scotland, have determined to act singly, and if they can get Government money on their own terms to accept it. But from the Church downwards, they will meet with more disappointments than they expect. The State will have its *quid pro quo*—and so it ought. Such Churchmen and Dissenters as can unitedly take Government money will do it on the floor of the British and Foreign School Society.

The other materials of union, are some of the Congregationalists, —some of the Baptists,—some of the Society of Friends,—and some of the Unitarians. With the last of these, we have no sympathy.

We think it dishonest and immoral, professedly to unite with Unitarians upon an equal platform, and teach nothing but Orthodox doctrine. We should not like to be served so; and we would not therefore like to serve others so. We sincerely respect and admire many of the Baptist body, and many of the Society of Friends; but the former have been represented to us as being willing to coalesce in school operations with Unitarians, more closely than we can feel ourselves justified in doing; and the latter we have thought have required, that on some points there should be too much that is negative, especially in respect to the religious management of Normal schools. Personally, we should prefer a union of all true-hearted Christian Voluntaries. The denominationalism of the Congregational Board consists, in the management of the Board, and its connection with the Congregational Union of England and Wales. In everything else it is perfectly undenominational. The education is to be religious, but it is left to the Committee of every school to direct it as it pleases. There is no creed, nor Catechism imposed upon any school, nor upon any child. Local schools may be sustained, directed, managed, by Churchmen, Baptists, Wesleyans, or by Friends: the teaching and management are under the control of the Local Committee. What we want, is to secure a religious education, resist temptations to bribery and Government grants, and to raise up schools that, for sound instruction, religious feeling, and Catholic government, shall be a blessing to our country. With all will we co-operate as far as in us lies, and with none will we have any strife, if we can avoid it. We are BRETHREN, for the common good of our country, and of the world!

And now, in conclusion, let me ask the friends of Voluntary Education and of freedom—men who desire to be consistent—who scorn a bribe—who court not a smile at the cost of principle—who are lovers of their country, and would not entail upon posterity, for a temporary advantage, a permanent, ever-increasing, and intolerable burden of clerical power, Government patronage, annual taxation, and of State scholastic appointments,—let me ask you to co-operate with one another locally and nationally, to educate as far as lies in your power such as are neglected, to improve and advance education, to sow in British minds and in British hearts seeds of loyalty and liberty, of justice, independence, charity, freedom of thought, speech, and conscience, freedom of worship, both as to the mode and support of it, not sanctioning the tyranny and oppression of Ecclesiastical or

State exactions, either in our colonies or at home, for the support and spread of education by Catholics, by Churchmen, by Dissenters; nor for the support of Catholic worship or Protestant worship, Catholic doctrines or Protestant doctrines, whether we believe them or not. The education that we and others have given to British children and adults, and even to British statesmen, encourages us; for although this may be but the hour of twilight, we know that the midnight of mind in Britain has passed away. Streaks of light appear in the horizon, the atmosphere is brightening, and, although we may have some storms, liberty, knowledge, and religion, like the rising sun, shall break forth, and illumine, and bless our land! Men gather not grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles. But that the fig-tree should never more yield its fruit, required a miracle. There are those among us, by the help of Heaven, capable of working out a regeneration of our working classes, and of our statesmen, which promises the happiest results. On all points we may not be agreed, while we would fain hope that our differences are not insurmountable. Our great objects should be exalted before us, and nothing should be permitted to intercept our view of them, nor cool nor quench our desire and determination to realize them. The course is clear before us—the race is glorious to run. Nonconformists! Voluntaries! Friends of Education! Friends of Freedom! your deeds are already registered in the annals of your country, and in the records of the Church of the living God! Kings and queens; Charles', James', Elizabeths', and Anns', who have tried to exterminate you, are dead and buried. The British nation has decreed that the principles they professed, shall be gradually, but decently interred in one common mausoleum, large enough to contain all tyrannous ecclesiastical and political enactments—all social, Church and State injustice and oppression—all tamperings with freedom, and all exactions to uphold error, and provoke to unkindness and strife. Your principles have lived and flourished. England, their native soil, suits them; let us act the part of faithful husbandmen. America—the soil to which they were carried when some of our number were driven away from our shores—also suits them. There religion spreads; but there is no State-Church. Our Colonies will suit them; they will flourish in their virgin soil; but if the enemy, occupying the place of power, commands that among our wheat his emissaries should, in early dawn, sow the poppy, the thistle, the nettle, the dock, and other weeds,

then we must prefer a fallow to bad farming; we must deep-drain in the neighbourhood of the House of Commons; and we must ask for the dismissal of a steward, who, in his ignorance or self-will, is determined so to cultivate our colonies, that instead of making them integral parts of the British empire, appears determined to goad them to anger, isolation, and independence.

It was the boast of Augustus, that he found Rome of brick, and left it marble. But for free Christian men, in the present state of the world's population, there are nobler deeds to do than this, and more glorious and lasting monuments to leave of our existence and power. To do the will of God, with respect to an orphan child; giving him shelter, clothes, food, instruction, and religion, and to train him for the happiness of heaven, is a nobler work than founding a city. To be devoted to the well-being of our country,—the instruction, social and domestic happiness, just liberty, and training of the millions, by the school, by the pulpit, by the press,—is indeed a noble mission. Thus we deepen the foundations of social and national happiness; we equalize our claims, duties, and responsibilities; we raise the poor from the dung-hill; lower the pride of him who holds his inferiors in contempt; teach the tyrant, that he has neither example nor authority from heaven to rule in any other way, but in justice, equity, and mercy, and practically inculcate the brotherhood of mankind, and the beauty and blessedness of peace, virtue and love! Of a truth, wealth and station are chiefly to be envied, because they bestow, to a larger extent, the power of thus benefiting and blessing mankind. But after all, the will and the power may dwell in the heart of a man who has not a shilling in his pocket, and God can make him successful. Remember Joseph Lancaster. That man has done more for the children of Britain, and of the world, than any prince that ever occupied a throne. He has left a legacy to his country, and his race, more valuable than had he endowed the Committee of Council on Education, with property as large as that possessed by the Established Church. And remember David Nasmith,—a man of pure and intense love for his fellow-creatures, and burning zeal to elevate them and make them happy. His race was swift, his course was short, his work was quickly done; but we fearlessly affirm, that by his establishment of City and Town Missions, he has directly and indirectly spread more religion and knowledge among the poor; he has diffused greater happiness in the social life of the lowest classes

of society, than any bishop of the Established Church, or the whole bench of bishops together. We go further, and affirm, that the State-Church, as an Establishment, has done nothing like the amount of good among the poor in our cities and towns, with her immense revenue, during the present century, that David Nasmith, by God's blessing, was honoured to accomplish. It is worthy of us, wherever we find ignorance—to supply instruction; divisions and strifes—to endeavour to heal them; oppressions and injustice—to exert ourselves to afford relief; irreligion and vice—to supplant them with godliness and virtue; and thus to leave children and men better than we found them: and should God honour us in converting but one sinner from the error of his way, we shall have saved a soul from death, and have covered a multitude of sins! To me, much reflecting on the rapid flight of time,—the vanity of human greatness, power, .wealth, and glory,—the uncertainty of fame, whether by the favour of a prince, or of the people,—the shortness of our existence, and the days that must come upon us, when we shall say we have no pleasure in them,—it seems a worthier and nobler honour to be building up, polishing, and furnishing living temples, as the habitations of virtue and of God, than to dwell in idleness, accumulate wealth, and cherish the pride of caste and of selfishness. Our great Model is a holy, just, benevolent, and merciful being, full of goodness and love, who, when upon earth, continually went about doing good. To follow in his footsteps, is to be his disciple—is, to do the will of God—is to acquire for ourselves the largest amount of happiness we can enjoy; and to confer upon others whatever can do them the most good for this state, and for immortality!

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