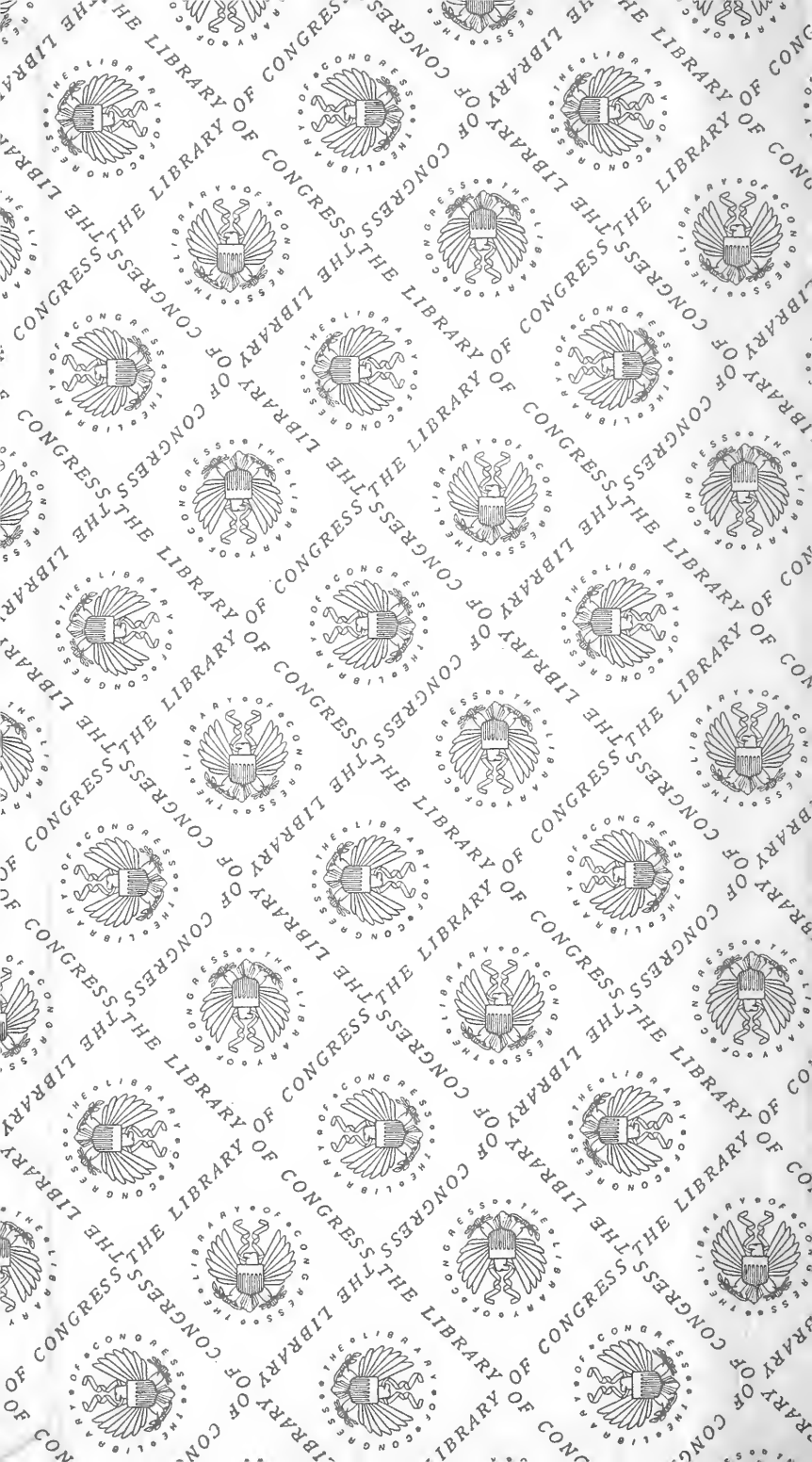


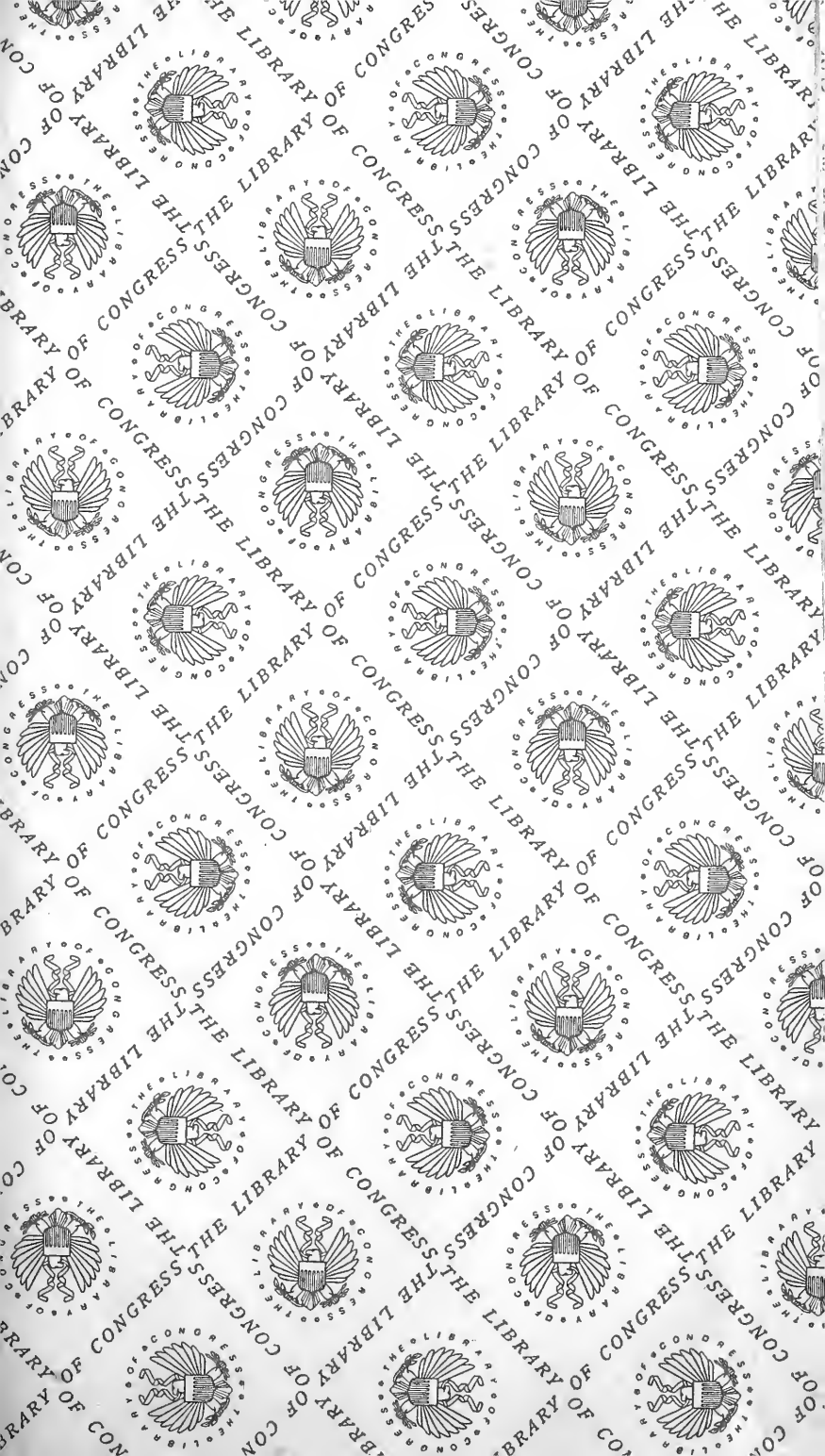
LC

111

.D6

1856







DOES

The Common School System

PREVENT CRIME?

“He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

“I can safely say, as a general inference drawn from a long familiarity with the prosecution of crime, both as District Attorney and Attorney General, *that as flagrant cases and as depraved characters have been exhibited amongst a class of persons who have enjoyed the ordinary elementary instruction of our New England Schools, and, in some instances, of the higher institutions of learning, as could be found by the most diligent investigation among the convicts of Norfolk Island or of Botany Bay.*”—EX-GOVERNOR CLIFFORD.

SECOND EDITION.

1
1
1
1
1

NEWARK, N. J. :
A. STEPHEN HOLBROOK, PRINTER,
No. 3 Mechanic-street.
1856.

GR

Forbes Lib

FEB 12 1910

3

LC 111
D6
1856

FACTS AND STATISTICS.

CHRISTIANS, RALLY FOR YOUR CHILDREN; PRESBYTERIANS,
METHODISTS, EPISCOPALIANS, BAPTISTS; CHRISTIANS OF
EVERY NAME, RALLY FOR YOUR CHILDREN.

The Common School System is proving a disastrous failure.

It has grown up on the pledges it has given of its ability to make crime less frequent, to confer greater security to life and property, and to give elevation to the tone of national morality. But it does not at all fulfil these promises. The whole system, we repeat, is proving a lamentable failure; denying by every day's experience its former pledges. Is proof demanded? Proof will be found in the following pages.

The prevailing system is lamentably defective in that it does not aim at the training of the whole man; neglecting as it does the moral and controlling powers of human nature, and concentrating all its force upon the development of the intellectual.

It has indeed achieved much in the improvement of this latter half of our nature.

No one acquainted with the subject can deny that during the last quarter of a century incomparably more has been done in diffusing knowledge among the masses than in many preceding generations. The common watchword of the times has been "*universal education.*" Our vast country has been thoroughly districted; school houses, constructed on the most improved plans, have everywhere sprung up in sight of each other; the press has teemed with the most approved books of elementary instruction; apparatus of every variety has found its way into the school room to assist the young in their comprehension of the sciences; Teachers'

Associations have been organized ; Normal Schools have been established for the training of instructors, and governments have promoted the system with a princely liberality. And no one can question the success which has been achieved in giving intellectual acumen and secular intelligence to the masses. On entering a school room we are much impressed with progress ;—so much readiness in arithmetical calculation is evinced ; the events and dates of history are so wonderfully memorized ; the affinities of chemistry, and the names of the stars are so thoroughly learned, and so much excellence in penmanship and readiness in geography are evinced, as to prove very conclusively, that the primary educational system in our country, is possessed of no inconsiderable degree of efficiency, in the work of a purely intellectual discipline.

But while the intellect is so sharpened and informed, the moral powers are suffered to slumber and dwarf. The multitudes who leave school, so ready in figures, so skillful with the pen, so well instructed in the anatomy of their bodies and the mechanism of a steam engine, go forth into the world ignorant even of the ten commandments and the Lord's Prayer, with an uninformed and slumbering conscience, with impure minds and enlarged but un-governed desires. Would not a careful investigation show that the Bible itself is not read in more than one-fourth of the schools of the land ? Is it not the prevailing idea of a *good* school that it is a place where a boy may be prepared for the counting room and a girl for higher circles of society, rather than the place where purity of thought, honesty, temperance and justice are constantly engrafted upon character, and occupy the same prominent platform that do the secular branches ? Does not the preparation of persons for teaching, as a general thing, simply mean their preparation to teach arithmetic, geography, grammar, and the kindred studies ? And when the authorities examine candidates for teaching, do they not fail to inquire into their moral as well as literary qualifications ? Do they not keep silent upon the all-important question whether they are qualified to handle properly that most delicate of all machinery, the moral constitution of a child, to suppress evil tendencies by preventing their exercise, and to strengthen the good by encouraging them into activity ?

Indeed the prevailing school system is daringly and criminally

deficient. Yet if we could be assured that the multitudes of the young were receiving a moral training anywhere outside of the school room, at home or at church, it would somewhat extenuate the enormity which is now perpetrated. But the lamentable fact is, that *five-sixths* of the homes of the land are irreligious, *five-sixths* of the parents of America do not even attend any place of public worship, and are therefore of course unqualified to give a moral bent and religious instruction to their offspring.* It was lately reported to the American Educational Society, that there are two *millions* of children between the age of five and fifteen who are receiving *no moral education*!† Ought not this alarming host, who are so unprovided for both at home and at church, in their daily school instruction be made to receive some adequate moral and religious training? But the popular common school system provides only for the communication of secular knowledge.

Now is it to be believed that such a system tends to the glory of God, to the security of human life and property, or to the prevention of crime in general?

The prevalent notion that mankind are vicious because ignorant, and that to make them virtuous it is only necessary to make them intelligent, is contradicted alike by sound philosophy and universal experience. The intellect is not the agent which gives shape to human conduct: desires and passions direct the steps of mankind; these are made our tempters; and unless they are brought under the restraint of a moral discipline and an instructed conscience, unless they be so educated as to take side with virtue and order, they will be sure to develop themselves in the commission of crime and the corruption of public morals. Mere intellectual illumination, by making known a greater variety of attractive objects, will inflame the desires, excite the imagination and multiply cravings, which, though ever so unlawful, will be gratified, provided the chances of escaping with impunity can be devised. Besides, the more intellectual accomplishments and penetration a man possesses, the better prepared he is to execute villainous designs; his knowledge becomes his tools. Can any other than a

* The Bible in our Public Schools, p. 133. By George B. Cheever, D. D.

† Proceedings of the Fifth Session of the American Association for the Advancement of Education. P. 83.

thoroughly trained hand be successful in forgery? Could an uninstructed mind have practiced the stupendous knavery of Schuyler, the railroad defaulter? Could one, ignorant of chemical poisons, have carried on the wholesale murder that was committed in England, not long since?

Again, the greater intellectual acumen a man possesses, so much more capable is he of *devising a way of escaping the detection of crime*, and therefore will feel less reluctance in committing it. While he projects crime, he may, Iago-like, stand behind the curtain and play upon weaker men, making them the active instruments of his villainy, or he may arrange such a train of circumstances as will cause suspicion to fasten on others than himself.

No: Something more than the *head* of man must be enlightened in order to keep him from the commission of crime. As reasonably may we expect to make good musicians by training the eye, and good painters by training the ear, and good carpenters by teaching foot-racing, as to look for right morals from teaching to read and to write, and to cast accounts. It is notorious that even some of the finest intellects and most accomplished scholars have prostituted their brilliant powers to the service of sensuality and infidelity. And if this has happened, notwithstanding the many restraints of their more elevated society and the easy circumstances in which their lives were spent, is it not certain that it will happen on a far more extensive scale in the lower ranks of society, where there are fewer restraints and many more temptations? Be assured that if we give them sharpened intellects only, we shall foster the adder in our very bosoms, only that it may give a more deadly bite. Moral principles must be established in man. His heart must be purified, his habits improved. It was the sagacious Lord Wellington who said, "Dissever Religion and Education and you only make men clever devils." It was John Falk, the founder of the first House of Reform for juvenile offenders, who said, "Of what use or advantage to the commonwealth are rogues that know how to read, to write or to cypher? They are only the more dangerous. The acquirements mechanically imparted to such men, can serve only as so many master keys put into their hands to break into the sanctuary of humanity."

It was Mr. Sergeant Adams, Chairman of the Middlesex

Quarter Sessions in London, whose lot it had been to try no fewer than 28,000 of his fellow men, who gave the following strong testimony last year, (1855) at the anniversary day of St. John's College, England. "He would speak," he said, "of the change his own views had undergone, because it might be of use to his hearers to know that, like many others, he had once thought that secular might be separated from religious teaching; nor was it till about five and twenty years since, when he came to hold his present office, that he ascertained by its practical results, *the bad effects of so bad a system*. One cause of entertaining his early opinion, had been that he had always understood, and taken for granted, that children necessarily received their religious education at home. But this was begging a most important question, for the fact was that at home they received no education at all. *He was persuaded that education without religion was a most dangerous weapon. Knowledge alone could only furnish them with greater facilities, nay, with greater incentives to crime*. He wished people could be brought to see that reading and writing were not education."—*The Guardian, May 9th, 1855*.

It was an eminent medical writer who said "there is no one characteristic of the present age more remarkable than its inclination to undervalue all moral education. The wonders which have been effected by the mechanical inventions of Watt, Arkwright, Fulton, &c., seem almost to have overturned the common sense of the times, and every power is stretched to its utmost to render the rising generation not a moral but a mechanical race. This is exactly the reverse of what ought to take place, inasmuch as the happiness of men depends far more upon the proper control of their internal feelings than their external circumstances; far more upon a mind void of offence than upon the highest intellectual acquirements. Neither can there be a greater mistake than the supposition, that knowledge is always in itself beneficial. It is indeed a tremendous engine of good or evil. With him whose mind is directed aright, it is an instrument of advantage to himself and to the world, but with him whose moral feelings are not decidedly virtuous, it is but an additional and terrible weapon of ill." It was Governor Wolcott who, as early as 1826, in a message to the Legislature of Massachusetts, said, "As high mental attain-

ments afford no adequate security against moral debasement, it appears to be indispensably necessary that we should unite with our neighbors, and with all virtuous men of the present age, in maintaining our share in the great conflict which is prosecuting, of virtue against vice."

It may be thought by some that all the foregoing is mere theory. Would that it were *only a mere theory*! But the deplorable truth is that it is a theory now daily illustrated and confirmed by facts, facts everywhere, both at home and abroad. Take Massachusetts, which has led the van in popular and common school instruction, and whither therefore the friends of the system may look for its greatest achievements. What Governor Wolcott theorized before its Legislature a quarter of a century ago, Governor Briggs lately in his message to that Legislature declared to be now realized, and earnestly called the attention of that body to the alarming increase of crime in that State. The Grand Jury for Boston (1853) in their report to the court, speak in the most forcible language of the increase of crime, especially juvenile crime. And Ex-Mayor Bigelow, of Boston, on a public occasion, lately said, "At the rate with which violence and crime have recently increased, our jails like our alms-houses, will scarcely be adequate to the imperious requirements of society." Ex-Governor Clifford, in a late letter to a gentleman of West Newton, Mass., used the following remarkable language: "I have a general impression derived from a long familiarity with the prosecution of crime, both as District Attorney and Attorney General, that the merely intellectual education of our schools in the absence of that moral culture and discipline, which in my judgment ought to be an essential part of every system of school education, furnishes but a feeble barrier to the assaults of temptation and the prevalence of crime; indeed without this sanctifying element, I am by no means certain that the mere cultivation of intellect does not increase the exposure to crime by enlarging the sphere of man's capacity to minister through its agency to his sensual and corrupt desires. I can safely say, as a general inference drawn from my own somewhat extensive observation of crime and criminals, that as flagrant cases and as depraved characters have been exhibited amongst a class of persons who have enjoyed the ordinary ele-

mentary instruction of our New England schools, and, in some instances, of the higher institutions of learning, as could be found by the most diligent investigation among the convicts of Norfolk Island or of Botany Bay.”

Look next across the Hudson to the Empire State, which in common public school education has followed close in the wake of Massachusetts. In New York city itself, Justice Conolly, who last year sat upon the main Criminal Bench, reported that for nine months preceding October 1, he had himself disposed of *nine thousand three hundred and forty-two* cases, or an average of forty cases daily, excluding Sundays.

The Tenth (1855) Report of the Prison Association of New York to the State Legislature reveals a most alarming increase of crime. The following table shows the arrests during each of the years 1853 and 1854.

	1853.	1854.
Arrests, - - -	39,700	52,700
Embezzlement, - - -	20	78
Felonies, - - -	57	114
Gambling, - - -	77	161
Grand Larceny, - - -	691	1,113
Petty Larceny, - - -	3,216	6,630
Receiving stolen goods, -	75	184
Picking pockets, - - -	261	375

And the convictions for arson were in 1854 about twice as many as in the previous year.

Courts of justice in that city furnish evidence of corruption which cannot but make the patriot tremble for the security and sanctity of law. An Empire Club there makes its supremacy felt at the ballot box. Members of the Common Council, it is affirmed, are flagrantly venial and corrupt, in a single year raising themselves to great fortunes by the bribes they receive.

But let us come home to our own New Jersey, which has made no contemptible efforts in diffusing Common School education among the masses; and is virtue on the increase among us? Listen to the following Report which our Prison Inspectors made to the Legislature last January (1856.) “ *We regret to have to say that we are of opinion, that the violation of law, by the com-*

mission of crime, is largely on the increase in our State, and as a natural consequence our penitentiary is full to overflowing."

But we need not statistics nor the opinions of others, for our own observation supplies us ample enough conviction of the deteriorating morality of the country, and the increasing prevalence of crime. We excel every other country in sharpness and money making. Yet among what other people is personal violence so frequent in high places? Where is there any other nation whose general and local governments have so rapidly deteriorated in virtuous principle and legislative integrity? Where are the laws of the Statute Book more frequently inexecuted? Is there any other people among whom life is so unscrupulously risked and sacrificed in the prosecution of our various enterprizes? Where is the other equally wealthy people, in the trading honor of whose majority there is less confidence to be placed? Where else is the people whose educated men would call for so many editions of a late autobiography which is a systematic detail of the ways and means of successful dishonesty? Among what other people are filial affection and a due respect for superiors so unknown, or juvenile crime so rapidly increasing? What country is more distracted by isms and quackery? Where is the other civilized land *five sixths* of whose population are habitual neglecters of public worship? Is not infidelity no longer disguising itself, but coming out boldly, revealing the whole of its cloven foot and brazen front, and infecting all classes of society to an alarming extent? Is patriotism gaining the ascendancy over avarice and ambition? Are we getting to attach a greater degree of sanctity to oaths than formerly, and is the sacred character of juror more respected or more worthily maintained? Are the ends of justice less interrupted by favoritism, money, party feeling, or other sinister considerations; and more easily and effectually attained than during our early history, when public education was scarcely talked of? Is the thirst for luxurious indulgence on the wane? Has the lust for instantaneous wealth, the desire of fortune without the use of means, been growing weaker? Are concealed, deadly weapons less frequently carried?*

* "We presume that *one thousand* individuals in the United States are provided with defensive armor where *one* had it twenty-five years ago. The

coming so frequent that our feelings have almost ceased to be shocked at their recital.*

Indeed the great efforts that have been made in our land for educating the masses, have not prevented the corruption of public morals nor the perpetration of crime.

The deteriorated condition of the country may be attributed to the great influx of foreigners. This has undoubtedly acted as a cause to some extent. But it has by no means been operative to the extent of disproving the inefficiency of our system of popular instruction: for immigration has in later years decreased more than one half,† while crime, during the same period, has *increased* in about the same ratio: besides in Europe, which has been giving away its surplus population to us, incomparably more has been done to develop and enlighten the intellect of the masses during the last fifty years than in the previous three centuries; and yet the system has been no more effectual in preventing crime there than it has in this country.

Sir Archibald Alison, the eminent and living historian of England, in one of his masterly essays, published some years since, speaks as follows of the nationally and morally ruinous consequences of a secular education: "The utmost efforts have for a quarter of a century been made in various countries to extend the blessings of education to the laboring classes; but not only has no diminution in consequence been perceptible in the amount of crime and the turbulence of mankind, but the effect has been just the reverse; they have both signally and alarmingly increased. Education has been made a matter of State policy in Prussia, and every child is, by the compulsion of government, sent to school, and yet serious

number of persons who carry concealed weapons has increased in a still larger proportion. An armed police was a thing unknown in our country ten years ago; and the charge of bribery and corruption, against men holding public or private office or trust, which would then have been resented as the foulest indignity, is now so boldly and flippantly made as scarcely to excite our attention, much less our surprise."—*Pennsylvania Journal of Prison Discipline*, July, 1856. P. 143.

* "Six hundred and odd *deliberate, malicious, cold-blooded* murders are registered in the public prints in a single year."—*Penn. Jour. of Pris. Dis.* P. 143.

† Of Irish emigrants there left Ireland, in 1851, 254,537; 1852, 224,997; 1853, 192,609; 1854, 150,209; 1855, 78,854.

crime is about *fourteen* times as prevalent, in proportion to the population, in Prussia as it is in France, where about two-thirds of the whole inhabitants can neither read nor write. In France itself it appears that the amount of crime in all the eighty-three departments is, with one single exception, in proportion to the amount of instruction received. The criminal returns of Great Britain and Ireland for the last twenty years demonstrate that the educated criminals are to the uneducated as two to one. In Scotland the educated criminals are about four times the uneducated. Nay, what is still more remarkable, while the number of uneducated criminals, especially in Scotland, is yearly diminishing, that of educated ones is yearly increasing. These facts to all persons capable of yielding assent to evidence in opposition to prejudice, completely settle the question. Experience has now abundantly verified the melancholy truth so often enforced in Scripture,—so constantly forgotten by mankind,—that intellectual cultivation has no effect in arresting the sources of evil in the human heart.”

Before we close our evidence upon the increase of crime under the prevailing system of secular instruction, we must speak of the change which seems to be coming over the spirit of the dreams of some of the leading intellect-educators themselves. Those who in former years were zealous in maturing our Common School system are beginning to open their eyes, and stand aghast at their own work, fearing that instead of cherishing a lamb they have been training up a wolf. Presidents and professors of colleges, directors of county and city high schools assembled last fall in the city of New York, from different parts of the nation, to participate in the deliberations of the American Association for the advancement of education. It was there that the venerable editor for several years of the Massachusetts Journal of Education, with great fervor insisted that “a great change must be adopted in our educational system, for from the midst of our schools, depravity is growing up; from them the Schuylers and Tuckermans have their origin.” “He had been,” he said, “in an official capacity brought in contact with five or six thousand of the teachers of New England, many of whom were morally unfit for their work, and he was persuaded that the State must be shaken to ruins under the present training of American youths.” Before he left the hall, he said,

that there was not one in ten of the teachers of New England to whom he would entrust the moral training of his child.

Another speaker, Professor Greenleaf, called for a different training of the young. He said he knew of thirteen young men who came from one school, and every one of them had rushed headlong into destruction. The same speaker said that one of our teachers had made to him the following declaration: "I think I must somewhat change my system of teaching; I think I ought to give a little more moral instruction, for already *two of my scholars have been hung for murder!*"

Professor Pierce of Harvard College said, "We must have daily religious culture in our schools;—separating religion from the daily work of a child and confining it to the church, is like taking all the salt that should be mingled with our daily food, and eating it alone before breakfast. If religion could not be taught in schools without sectarianism, then let sectarianism be taught. As for myself, I would much prefer my children to be instructed in sectarianism than be sent to schools where there is an indifference to religion." Alexander Bache, the retiring president of the Association, concluded his address upon the improvements our system needs, with these significant words: "I have reserved the most important thing for the last, that which must be at the bottom of our whole system; *religious education*. The religious man is everything, the intellectual man without religion is nothing."

Such were some of the omenous utterances of the intellect-educators of our land. Instead of being convinced that their system has been attended with an increase of public virtue, they seem to be painfully conscious that, in divorcing daily education from daily religion, they have been creating a keen, savage, remorseless monster of depravity that is already lifting its head in terror over the land.

Is it not therefore indisputably true that the Common School system is not fulfilling the high promises which have been made in its behalf; is not adding stability to our institutions; is not conferring security to life and property; is not preventing crime in general?

And what should fortify our conclusion is the fact that the popu-

lar system has to confess itself weak, *at the very period when other known humanizing agencies are most busy at work.* Than the past quarter of a century never has there been one characterized by more abundant labors in organizing moral reform societies, in extending relief to the poor, in providing homes for orphans and in reclaiming the victims of intemperance. Now if the secular education of the masses, and these varied humane enterprizes have together failed in preventing crime and demoralization, what could the popular system of instruction have achieved had it been *alone?*

Yet let us not be misunderstood. WE HAVE NOT AFFIRMED THAT EDUCATION CAUSES CRIME.* WE MERELY AFFIRM THAT THE TWO ARE COEXISTING FACTS; *and that the system of Common School education is attended with an increase of crime because it is the education of only one side of human nature, and that not the controlling side.* Man's moral and religious nature constitutes this other and better, but undeveloped half.

And we now further state, that this neglect of moral and religious instruction is a necessary consequence of a system where there are so many persuasions participating in the instruction, all of whose varying opinions must be respected. Each party is taxed for the support of the system, and each, however small, provided it be at all in earnest, pleads by the sacred rights of conscience, for liberty of opinion, for protection from religious bias; and thus every positive element of Christianity must be sedulously excluded from Common School instruction. Is it not so? Consider for one moment. How is it possible to avoid the questions of adult or infant baptism, predestination or grace and good works, the corporeal or spiritual resurrection of the dead, the sacraments, free-will and necessity? And yet these, and perhaps more important points, must be avoided. To teach that Jesus Christ was a *mere man*, would not be endured by the Presbyterians, Baptists, &c. and to instruct the school that He was *God-man*, and that he made atonement for sin on the cross, would

*It is presumed that the matter of this pamphlet will be criticised, especially by the salaried officers under the present school system. Let such abide by this matter at issue, viz: *that Education and an increase of crime are coexisting facts*, and they will have but little real occasion to multiply words.

not be endured by Unitarians; for they not only pay their taxes, but they live under institutions which sacredly guard their freedom of opinion. To teach that there is no judgment beyond the grave, no rigid retributive justice in eternity for crime on earth, will not be tolerated by the orthodox; and that there will be such a retribution, that the oaths in courts of justice is supported by awful sanctions derived from the future world, will not be brooked by Universalists, for they live under a constitution which guarantees freedom of religious opinion, and besides, they plead by all the sacredness of conscience against being compelled to pay for a system which seeks to enforce upon their children what they deem falsehood.

The inculcation of the *first* day of the week as *holy*, is resisted by Sabitarians and Jews; and to teach the *seventh* as the one *sacred day*, will no more be tolerated by others whose rights of conscience are to be as sacredly respected.

That the New Testament itself is true, must not be inculcated upon the Jewish children in our schools, and that the Old Testament is to be credited, must not be impressed upon the youths of the free-thinkers, who are a no very small number in these days.

Now if a *judgment and future retribution are to be ignored; if the resurrection of the body, and human responsibility, and the sacredness of a judicial oath, and the observation of a day of holy rest are to be unrecognized; if the truth of the very Scripture is not to be affirmed; how much of Christianity worthy of the name remains which can be taught in our schools?* NAY, GOD HIMSELF IS AS UNKNOWN IN THE MAJORITY OF THEM AS HE WAS IN ATHENS WHEN PAUL VISITED MARS HILL. Is it said that moral precepts can be inculcated in our schools? But what are precepts without the sanctions of religion. What are mere prudential rules before the gusts of passion, or when assailed by strong temptations? What is sand before the ocean billow? What is chaff before a tempest?

Now let all those who have an admiration for such a system abide by it and its consequences. But we demand of Christian men, by all that is good on earth and in Heaven, by their regard for the prosperity of their country, by their responsibility for the souls of their young, by their obligation to the church of their

Divine Redeemer, we demand of them why they will not rally and labor for some system of instruction which shall no longer insult the God of Heaven, but which shall impart the distinctive doctrines of Christianity to the rising generation, render their moral judgment discriminating, weave into their hourly thoughts the consciousness of God's presence, prevent the activity of the some one dangerous propensity which has the predominance in every child ; draw out into constant exercise, and thus strengthen, the humane and diviner powers of our nature ; habituate in the young the conviction, that they must give an account at the day of judgment, for every impure thought, and immoral word and deed, and establish in them habits of prayer and praise.

The separation of religious from secular instruction, is altogether a *novel* proceeding. In the language of the Presbyterian Board of Education, "The scheme of banishing religion from public schools and institutions of learning, is an *experiment*. The *doctrines of the Bible have been from time immemorial* inculcated in connection with secular knowledge, in the schools of Christian communities."

This divorcement of religion from education was unknown to our fathers. Washington's dying injunction was "*Never allow education to be divorced from religion.*" "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness. *The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and cherish them.* A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in the courts of justice. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."

The framers of the American Constitution were unacquainted with a mere secular instruction. In the fourth article of their ordinance for the government of the North-west Territory, they

expressed their conviction in the following language : " Religion, morality and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."

The position which was formerly advanced by the infidel Rousseau and others, that children are incapable of receiving religious ideas and a religious character, is unphilosophical as it is unscriptural. It is certainly unscriptural, for there are injunctions from God himself. " These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart, and *thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children*, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up." " *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.*" From these passages it is evident not only that children can be, but that they must be instructed, and that *daily* in the ways of religion.

The infidel notion is as much against fact as it is against Revelation. There is no period in life when the soul more instinctively opens to the great truths of religion than in childhood. God, judgment, eternity, heaven, hell and kindred themes come home to the youthful heart with the force of realities to an extent that is seldom ever reached in later life. And who does not know that the impressions made upon the soul at this tender age are the last to be erased ; that the seeds of first instructions are dropped into the deepest furrows.

" Scratch the green rind of a sapling, or wantonly twist it in the soil :—

The scarred and crooked oak will tell of thee for centuries to come ;

Even so mayest thou guide the minds to good or lead it to the marrings of evil :—

For disposition is builded up by the fashionings of *first impressions.*"

The infidel notion that we should not prejudice the youthful mind in favor of religion is in tendencies most disastrous. It would be otherwise, we grant, if the mind could only remain vacant until what is called the age of discretion. But the mind

can't remain empty. Its education WILL take place, whether we direct it or not. And it has beneath its surface seeds of evil, which *will* grow up into a harvest of sin, unless we pre-occupy the ground with better seeds. Rest assured that if we do not prejudice the youthful mind for good, others will for evil; if we do not mould it for God, others will for the devil. The answer of Coleridge to Therwall upon this matter is very illustrative. Therwall thought it very unfair to influence a child's mind by inculcating any opinions before it should have come to years of discretion, and be able to choose for itself. "I showed him," says Coleridge, "my garden, and told him it was my *botanical* garden." "How so?" said he, "for it is covered with weeds." "Oh," I replied, "*that* is only because it has not yet come to its age of discretion and choice. The weeds you see have taken the liberty to grow, and I thought it unfair in me to prejudice the soil towards roses and strawberries."

Now if both Scripture and reason teach that Christian education should be a part of the daily work of a child, the all important question arises, how can this work be accomplished? In the divided state of Christendom, the Common School System cannot, as we have seen, accomplish it. There is therefore but one alternative, *Denominational Schools*. LET EVERY DENOMINATION ORGANIZE ITS OWN SCHOOLS, EMPLOY TEACHERS OF ITS OWN FAITH, AND DAILY ADMIT ITS OWN CLERGYMEN TO SUPERINTEND AND ASSIST IN THE RELIGIOUS PART OF THE TRAINING.

To answer the various objections which may be urged against this plan, we have not space in this tract. This task we will reserve for a future number, in which we will endeavor to make evident that no party will suffer wrong, that the rights of the weakest denomination will be sacredly preserved, that more children of the land, than at present, will receive a better secular as well as religious education, that the children of the poor will be better provided for, and that this improved education will be secured at a much less expense than at present.

Do not all reflecting persons see that no other plan can be devised for giving a properly blended secular and Christian education to our masses? This is the plan, we are happy to say, which has been already recommended by more than one denomination.

THE PRESBYTERIANS OF AMERICA, AT THEIR GENERAL ASSEMBLY (1848) PASSED THE FOLLOWING :

“*Resolved*, That this General Assembly, believing that the children of the Church are a trust committed to the Church by the Lord Jesus Christ, and having confidence in the power of Christian education to train them, with the divine blessing, “in the way they should go,” do cordially recommend their congregations to establish primary and other schools, as far as may be practicable, on the plan sanctioned by the last Assembly—*of teaching the truths and duties of our holy religion in connexion with the usual branches of secular learning.*”

The number of Presbyterian parochial schools which are now established, we have not the means of ascertaining; in 1849 it was *eighty-two*.

The following are the standing regulations of the LUTHERAN CHURCH :

“The school books shall be selected by the Consistory; the children shall be sent to school at five years of age, and be kept there until thirteen or fourteen, or until they have made satisfactory attainments in reading and writing, and *in the knowledge of Christian doctrine*; fix the school hours, requiring six hours a day of instruction in winter and three in summer, and *one hour of cathetical instructions, besides the Sunday's teaching.*”

The Society of Friends maintain their separate schools and receive their school assessments for that purpose. The Romanists do and will maintain their schools without receiving their school assessments.

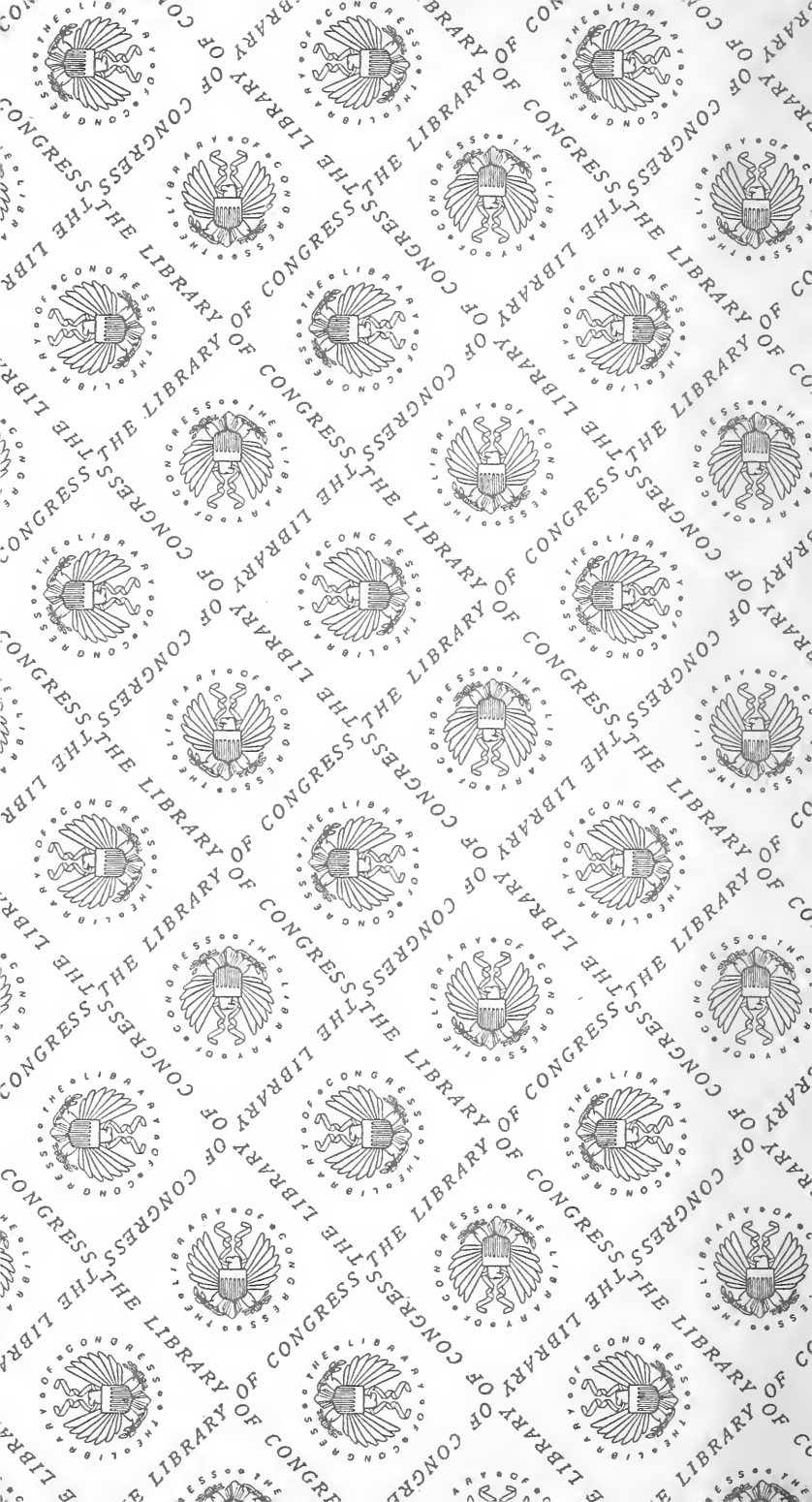
WHY WILL NOT THE METHODISTS, THE EPISCOPALIANS, THE BAPTISTS; WHY WILL NOT ALL DENOMINATIONS OF THE LAND RALLY FOR THEIR CHILDREN ?

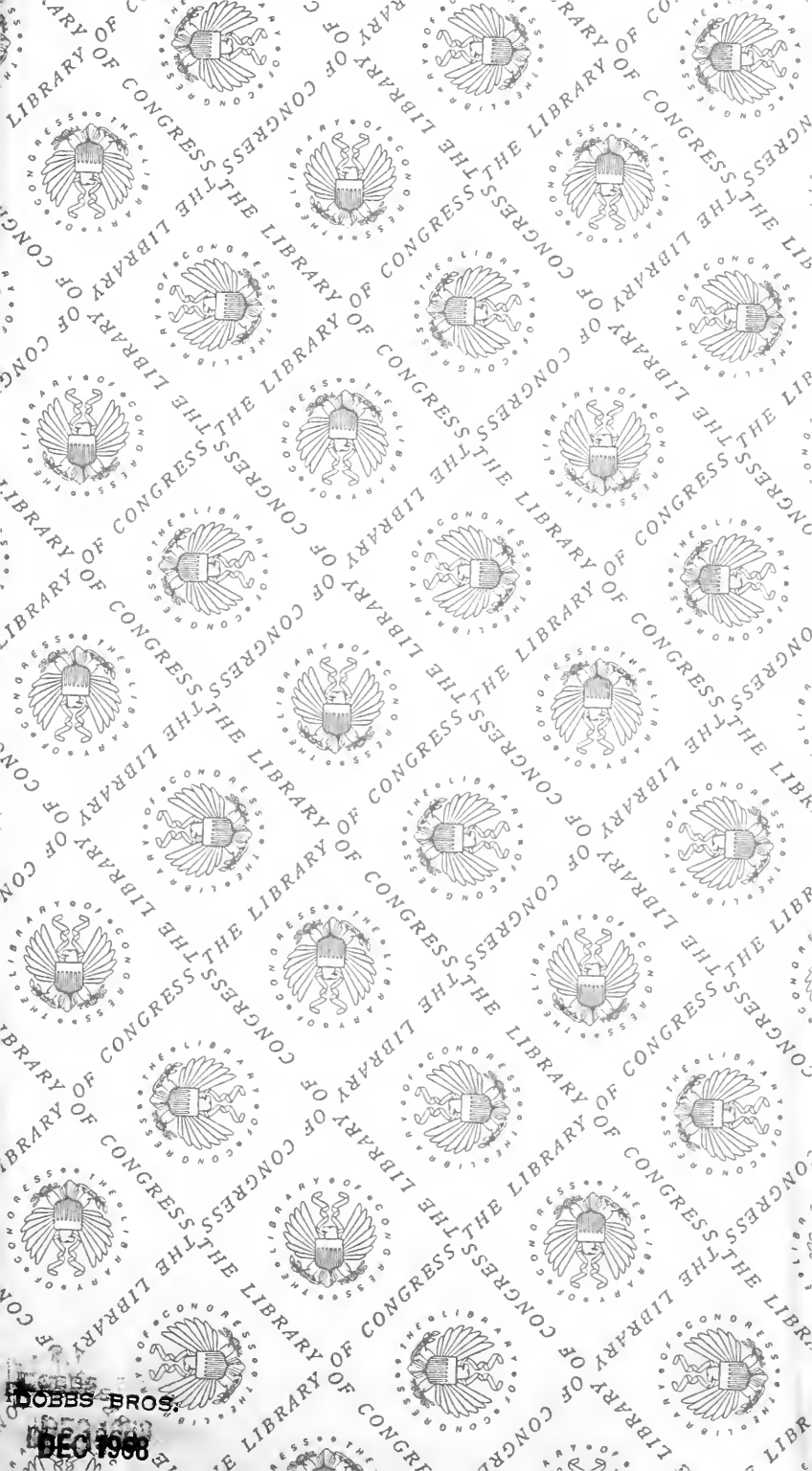
All are, to a certain extent, responsible for the crimes of their children. Every criminal of the next generation will plead at the bar of God against us for not having provided him an early training better calculated to restrain him from vice.

Let all therefore rally and organize their schools on a Christian foundation. This is the issue to which all must come, sooner or

later. Why not do it at once, before we see our land *overrun* by a horde of Goths and Vandals generated in the bosom of our boasted civilization ; before we see our nation forfeiting the very name of Christian ; before we behold our republican institutions,—the glorious heritage purchased by the blood of our fathers,—trodden to the dust by the turbulence of factions and unchristianized millions.







LOBBS BROS.

DEC 1968

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 019 757 431 8