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# S P E E C H

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS,

TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 1836,

IN MOVING FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE TO INQUIRE INTO  
THE OPERATION OF THE COMMISSION FOR

NATIONAL EDUCATION IN IRELAND,

BY

HENRY, LORD BISHOP OF EXETER

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

MDCCCXXXVI.

1836

LONDON:  
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS,  
Stamford Street.

It has been deemed necessary to publish this Speech in a separate form, in consequence of a provision in the New Irish Tithe Bill, taking 50,000*l.* per annum from the Church Property in Ireland, 'to be applied, ' under such regulations as the Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury shall direct, to the moral and ' religious Instruction of all Classes of the People in ' Ireland, without distinction of religious persuasion.'

# Houses of the Oireachtas

It has been necessary to publish this speech in a separate form, in consequence of a provision in the New Irish Title Deeds Act, 1891, which provides that the Church of Ireland, in Ireland, to be applied, under such regulations as the Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury shall direct, to the moral and religious instruction of the people in Ireland, without distinction of religious persuasion.

# S P E E C H,

&c. &c.

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MY LORDS,—In presenting myself to the notice of the House, I beg leave to assure your Lordships, and especially the Noble Lords near me, (his Majesty's Ministers,) that I rise, not for the purpose of proposing any motion in a spirit of hostility to them, or to awaken any angry discussion on the subject to which my motion refers; on the contrary, my intention is—and I trust I shall be found to have realized that intention—so to deal with the subject as to satisfy the Noble Viscount himself, that I have no other feeling than that which his Majesty's Government must have in common with me—I mean, a feeling for the real good of the mass of the population of Ireland, so far as their real good may be affected by the influence of education. In moving, as I shall do, for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the practical results of the operations of the Board of Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, I do that which by no means implies the slightest censure on the Government, though I admit it implies some suspicion that the Commissioners have not conducted this great undertaking in a manner in which it was desirable it should be conducted. Still, My Lords, as his Majesty's Ministers cannot be held responsible for Commissioners acting under the authority of the Crown, more than can any other Noble Lords of this

House, they need not consider a motion of inquiry into the conduct of such Commissioners as in any degree directed against themselves. They are bound, most undoubtedly—and I know they will feel themselves called upon to act accordingly—they are bound to defend all officers acting under the authority of the Crown when they are attacked, if they think the attack unfair, or if there be not such a *primâ facie* case made out as calls on the accused party to answer it.

My Lords, if the charges I am about to make, and if the doubts I am about to express of the fitness and propriety of the continuance of the system in its present state, shall be found to be frivolous and vexatious, then I entreat your Lordships to dismiss it at once. If, on the other hand, it shall appear that I have a grave case of complaint, and that I tender sufficient evidence to support it, I trust, under those circumstances, his Majesty's Government will consider that they, above all the Members of this House, are especially called upon to promote this inquiry. My Lords, I have no right to doubt that such are the intentions of his Majesty's Government; I have no right to doubt that they wish to give all possible publicity to the working of this system. They have always consented to the production of all Returns that have been asked relating to it (with one exception, indeed, when they objected to a Return of the comparative number of Protestant and Roman Catholic children attending these schools); they have always expressed their wish and desire to assist in the development of all its operations; and, believing them to be sincere in the desires and views which they have often expressed on this subject, I will say, in the outset, that I will not call

upon your Lordships for a vote against the Government, if, after I have entered into this inquiry, they disapprove of my motion. I trust this declaration, on my part, will satisfy your Lordships, that I entertain no views hostile to his Majesty's Government, in bringing forward this subject,—that I present myself to you on the present occasion, only because I am convinced that, in doing so, I am discharging my duty as a humble minister of that religion, which it is my bounden duty to advance as far as my poor ability will permit.

In order that Noble Lords may see, that it is not my wish or intention to proceed hostilely, I will beg leave to read the terms of the motion with which I shall conclude. They are these:—“That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire what progress the new system of education in Ireland has made towards effecting the main purpose for which it was established—namely, ‘the combined education of the poorer classes of the community in that country, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, resting upon religious instruction;’ to inquire whether the funds intrusted to the Commissioners have been judiciously administered for the attainment of that object; and whether experience of the practical result of their labours has rendered it safe and advisable to adopt the recommendations contained in their Second Report, for the great extension of the system therein contemplated.”

Your Lordships will perceive, that in the first part of my motion, I have stated the purpose for which this system was established—namely, the combined education of the poorer classes of the community, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, resting on religious instruction. I have done so on the authority of the

Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons of 1828, which Report is expressly stated in Lord Stanley's letter to be the authority on which the present plan is based. It concludes by saying,—

‘It has been the object of your Committee to discover a mode in which the combined education of Protestant and Roman Catholic may be carried on, resting upon religious instruction, but free from the suspicion of proselytism.’

This then, I say, has been the object which has always been avowed; and I think that it will hardly be denied that the time has now arrived for endeavouring to ascertain how far this object has been accomplished. My Lords, when the system was first set on foot, it was avowed, on all sides, to be an experiment; such was the judgment of it, expressed both in this and in the other House of Parliament, and such was the language used, and the opinion stated, by one of the most influential and most distinguished Members of the Commission,—I mean, the Archbishop of Dublin. That Most Reverend Prelate always admitted that the system was an experiment, and he did not hesitate to avow his suspicion that the experiment would not succeed. Well, then, my Lords, there having been no inquiry into the result of this experiment up to the present day, this consideration alone would justify my present motion. But independently of this, I think I shall be enabled to state grounds sufficient, why that inquiry should now take place.

The Second Report of the Commission, which I hold in my hand, and which was laid on your Lordships' Table at the end of the last Session, and printed, I believe, during the recess, contemplates such an enormous extension, both of the means and the sphere of action of

the Commissioners, that it really becomes the bounden duty of your Lordships, and of all who are concerned in giving effect to the recommendation, to pause and weigh well the grounds on which you are called upon to proceed, and the extent to which you are invited to go. It can hardly be necessary for me to remind your Lordships of the enormous extent of the demands made by these Commissioners; they require very large sums of money for nine successive years, and then a perpetual allowance of 200,000*l.* per annum. I do not mean to say,—this is not the place in which any man would say, that the expenditure of that or any other sum would be too large, if it should have the effect of giving religious peace to the people of Ireland, and afford the mass of the population of that country sound religious education. It is because I think that religious peace cannot be obtained,—that sound religious education cannot be afforded,—by a continuance of the system on which the Commissioners have hitherto acted, that I feel it to be my duty, before you come to consider the vote which is to be proposed for carrying on this system, to call upon your Lordships to take a view of the whole case, and by a Select Committee to consider the course which you may deem it necessary to pursue.

Your Lordships are aware that while the Commissioners demand this large sum of money, they avow that their purpose is to take upon themselves the education of the great mass of the population of Ireland. They expressly say—

‘We think that the new system may be gradually extended, through the agency of such teachers as we have contemplated, until its benefits are enjoyed by the great mass of the population.’

Now, my Lords, I must, in the first place, say that I think it hardly possible—although the Report bears the signatures of every member of the Commission—that it could have been unanimously agreed to. It appears to me hardly possible, for instance, that the Most Reverend Prelate (the Archbishop of Dublin) could have assented to that recommendation. And why do I say this? My Lords, it may be in the recollection of your Lordships, that when the system was first proposed, it excited feelings of great apprehension and alarm in the minds of most of the clergy of Ireland, and especially of the clergy of the diocese of Dublin, who addressed their diocesan in terms of respectful but strong remonstrance against it. To this address the Most Reverend Prelate, with firmness and with dignity,—but with the most entire disposition to conciliate every feeling of distrust that might have arisen in their minds,—returned an answer on the 7th of March, 1832, in which he said—

‘ From all that I have been able to learn, I have been convinced that no one description of school can be the best adapted to all parishes alike.’

The Most Reverend Prelate was here addressing himself to the subject of the different circumstances and character of these parishes, and the different religious persuasions of their population. He then goes on to say—

‘ The rector of each parish must be left to judge what system is best suited to his own; and I am very far from wishing that a more imperfect system should be introduced in any place where one intrinsically better can be made available.’

The Most Reverend Prelate considered that in all cases, where it was possible, they ought to afford reli-

gious instruction on the principles of the Church of England; on which subject some doubts appear to have been entertained respecting his views; and he goes on to explain himself thus:—

‘ I never understood that it was intended to substitute such (national) schools for those on a more perfect system in any place where such should have been introduced and found to succeed, but to rescue from hopeless ignorance those who (whether by their own fault or otherwise) could not be brought to avail themselves of any better plan.’\*

That was a very modest expression of opinion in favour of the new system on the part of the Most Reverend Prelate, and I have no doubt he was quite sincere in giving it; I have, also, no doubt he would at that time have been astonished if he had been told that, within a short period, Parliament would be called upon, in part on his authority, to come forward and adopt this as an universal system. I am sure the Most Reverend Prelate would have so felt. Still, however, I admit that if it has been found, by the experience of the last four years, that the system has worked so well as to prove it to be the best plan which can be adopted, then, indeed, there has been no inconsistency in the conduct of the Most Reverend Prelate, even if he has cordially joined in the recent Report. But the question of the success of the system is that which is at issue.

\* The following passage (p. 23) is still more remarkable:—  
 ‘ Where schools on the Kildare Place plan, or on one intrinsically better, are found to work well, and to embrace the great mass of the population, I should be truly sorry to see an inferior one substituted. But in the many districts where the case is otherwise, it does seem to me highly desirable, that at least an attempt should be made to impart *some* useful knowledge to those who would otherwise either be left in hopeless ignorance, or would learn more evil than good, from perhaps some hedge-schoolmasters, who may be secretaries to a band of incendiaries.’

The Report states that there shall be 5000 schools, and as many teachers, in Ireland—that this number is required for the purpose of affording education to the great mass of the population. Now, my Lords, let the House recollect that the establishment of a system of education, resting on *religious* instruction, is that for which the Board was appointed—that *religious* instruction was declared to be the very foundation and basis of the whole plan; and, therefore, if it has failed in that, it has failed at the very root. I entreat your Lordships, then, to observe how the Commissioners have provided for religious instruction in these schools to be established throughout Ireland. There are to be, as I have said, 5000 teachers, and these teachers are to receive a very advanced species of education. I will beg leave to read to your Lordships in what manner, and on what subjects, these schoolmasters are to be instructed:—

‘ In order to secure teachers of skill and intelligence, we propose establishing five professorships in our training institution:—1. Of the Art of Teaching and Conducting Schools. 2. Of Composition, English Literature, History, Geography, and Political Economy. 3. Of Natural History in all its branches. 4. Of Mathematics and Mathematical Science. 5. Of Mental Philosophy, including the elements of Logic and Rhetoric.’

My Lords, these are most important subjects certainly, and cannot be too much encouraged in their proper order. I quarrel not now with the attempt to give this wide circle of knowledge to the schoolmasters of Ireland. I only contend that the main object is not provided for, and that the plan of the Commissioners is not likely to attain that object. For it must be ob-

served that in the Report of the Commissioners, when speaking of the qualification of schoolmasters, there is a total absence of anything like a reference to religion ; for anything that appears to the contrary they may be atheists. No mode is pointed out by which the slightest particle of religious knowledge can be obtained by them. It may, perhaps, be said that they will partake of the general means of religious instruction given by the Board, in all the schools under their control ; but if this be said, I must take leave to deny the correctness of the statement. The only principle on which the Board rests its expectation of adequate religious instruction being given in its schools, is the duty of the several pastors of congregations in the different parishes to attend to the teaching of their respective flocks. But how can such pastors contrive to instruct those who were formerly under their charge, when they are removed to the normal school of Dublin, or of some other great city, or county-town in Ireland ? My Lords, it is impossible. These 5000 schoolmasters will be left to pick up their religion as they can ; and I must say, this is the first time that the people of this country were ever asked to believe, that children can be taught the only truths, which it is really essential for them to know,—true morality, and true religion,—by those who are not deeply imbued with the principles of religion themselves.

But these teachers are not merely to benefit the people of Ireland ‘ through the schools committed to their charge. Identified in interest with the State, and therefore anxious to promote a spirit of obedience to lawful authority, we are confident, (says the Report,) that they would prove a body of the utmost value and importance in promoting civilization and peace.’

My Lords, a higher authority than these Commissioners has commanded a different course to be pursued in training men to loyalty. 'Fear God, and honour the King,' says a book which, whatever the Commissioners may think of it, your Lordships are not so liberal as to discard. My Lords, the 'Fear of God' must go first, for no man will honour the King, no man will be loyal or faithful to his earthly governors, who does not fear God,—who does not honour the King because he fears God. And yet there is not the slightest care taken, I repeat, to teach these teachers their only true lesson of wisdom—nay, there is not the slightest security taken against the appointment of the most godless youths in Ireland to be teachers in these schools.

It is singular enough, but it does so happen, that about the time when the Report of the Commissioners was presented to this House, the Minister of Public instruction in France directed a circular letter to be addressed to the rectors of the academies in that country; and it is not a little mortifying to observe, how much more importance the French Minister attaches to religion as an essential part of education, than has been ascribed to it by these Commissioners. Yet this was not wont to be the case. This country was not wont to be inferior to France in reverence for religion, nor in zeal for the promotion of its sacred cause. My Lords, M. Guizot says—

'It has been sometimes thought, that to succeed in  
'securing to families of different creeds the reality and  
'the freedom of religious instruction, it was sufficient  
'to substitute for the special lessons and practices of the  
'several religious denominations, some lessons and prac-  
'tices susceptible in appearance of being applied to all  
'religions. Such measures would not answer the real  
'wish either of families or of the law. They would

‘tend to banish all positive and effective religious instruction from the schools, in order to substitute one that is merely vague and abstract.’

Such are the observations of M. Guizot on the subject of a generalized religious instruction in schools. But then follows a passage of greater importance, tending to show the feeling which the French minister entertains, as to the absolute necessity of giving a sound religious education to those whose duty it will be to instruct others,—a point upon which the Commissioners, I grieve to say, are altogether silent. The passage runs thus—

‘If the reality and the freedom of the religious instruction of the children ought to be thus secured, in all schools, and for all creeds, with still stronger reason ought the same care to be taken for the religious instruction of the teachers themselves, who are to be placed at the head of these schools.’

My Lords, I should be glad to hear any Noble Lord get up, and say, he has found a passage like this in any part of the Report of these Commissioners. Alas! there is not a single syllable in it of the kind. I am sure, therefore, that your Lordships will feel that the recommendation of these Commissioners, as far as concerns one great and essential particular, the religious instruction of the teachers, is not only defective, (that would be to say little), but positively vicious. Without religion, all other knowledge can only lead, as it always has led, the corrupt nature of man to a more frightful excess of wickedness. In short, my Lords, by omitting to provide for the effective religious instruction of the teachers, the Commissioners have neglected their first and most obvious duty.

On looking to the grounds on which the Commis-

sioners confidently rest their demands for a great accession to their funds, and the extension of their sphere of action, I find them declaring

‘ That the system has already been very generally adopted under the auspices both of Protestant and Roman Catholic clergymen, and of Protestant and Roman Catholic laymen. . . . That it has proved generally beneficial and acceptable to Protestants and Roman Catholics according to their respective wants.’

They state, in particular, that no fewer than 140 clergymen of the Established Church, 180 of the Presbyterian persuasion, and 1397 Roman Catholic clergymen have been among the applicants for their aid in the establishment of new schools. Now I have taken the trouble to investigate this matter, and I find by the Returns which have been laid before the House, that with respect to the 140 persons described as clergymen of the Established Church who have given in their adhesion to the plan of the Commissioners, there are, in fact, only 80.\* If your Lordships look to the Return which was obtained with great difficulty at the end of the last Session, and then only so obtained in consequence of something very like a threat, which was held out by a Noble Baron not now in this country,—that it would be necessary to make the authority of this House felt, if the Return was any longer withheld—your Lordships will find that instead of their being 140 applicants from among clergymen of the Established Church, there are in fact only 80. The same persons are registered over and over again in consequence of their having applied for more than one school. There

\* Eighty-eight names are given in the return. But eight of these do not apply to any of the schools specified in the other return previously made, and are, all of them, open to objection.

are two clergymen (I do not mention the fact to their disparagement, for I have no right to suppose them to be not sincere and zealous in the cause,) but there are two clergymen belonging to a parish in the diocese of Derry, who have applied for so many schools, that their names are reckoned as thirteen—nearly a tenth of the whole number! And these individuals are the rector and curate of a parish in which there is by no means a large Protestant population. I wish most heartily that the case stopped here, but it does not. I am quite sure that there will be in this House no special pleading in justification of the statement of the Commissioners, on the ground of their speaking of 140 signatures, and of there being, in fact, 140 signatures of clergymen, though not of 140 clergymen. I am quite sure, I repeat, that such a subterfuge would be spurned by every one of your Lordships. I am quite sure the Noble Duke at the head of the Commission would not wish that such an answer should be made to the charge; but if it be made, I can then, in reply, refer to another part of the very same Report. My Lords, if you will turn to the Abstract of the Table No. 1, at the end of the Report, you will find a statement of the number of persons, clerical and lay, who have signed applications for aid in founding those schools. Out of the applicants for 1106 schools at present in operation, it is expressly and in terms stated, that there are 117 clergymen of the Established Church; and that for the 191 not yet in operation, but building, 23 of the applicants are clergymen of the Established Church. Now, these numbers of 117 and 23, make up exactly 140. This, then, is the number of clerical applicants stated by the Board, though there are in truth only 80, the signatures of the

same persons, in many instances, being counted over and over again. I repeat, therefore, that this statement by the Commissioners, of the number of Protestant clergymen under whose auspices the system is said to have been adopted, is not only not true, but contrary to the truth.

But, my Lords, even here the matter does not rest. I have something still to say, which I think your Lordships will consider far more surprising. Your Lordships, I am sure, will bear in mind what took place when this system was originally introduced. I hold in my hand Lord Stanley's letter, which was the foundation of the system, and which contains the principles laid down for the guidance of the Commissioners. That Noble Lord says:—

‘As one of the main objects must be to unite in one system children of different creeds, and as much must depend upon the co-operation of the resident clergy, the Board will probably look with peculiar favour upon applications proceeding either from—1st. The Protestant and Roman Catholic clergy of the parish; or 2nd. One of the clergymen, and a certain number of parishioners professing the opposite creed; or 3rd. Parishioners of both denominations.’

Now, these are three different classes, and as the Commissioners present three classes of applicants in their Report, we are bound to suppose that they intend their classes to be the same as Lord Stanley's; strictly the same; the first class being of schools for which application was made by the resident parochial clergymen of the different denominations. The Commissioners state that the number of applicants of the first class is 140; I have reduced them to 80, and I shall now proceed to reduce them a little more.

My Lords, circumstances occurred which excited in my mind a strong suspicion of the inaccuracy of the Board in this particular, and I was induced to take some pains in corresponding not only with friends in Ireland, but also with other most respectable individuals to whom I was before a stranger, in order to ascertain the real facts of the case. The results of that investigation I will now take the liberty of stating to your Lordships.

I find that several of the clergymen stated, in the Report of the 25th of March of last year, to be applicants to the Board, have been dead these two or three years,—that several others have withdrawn,—that several others have ceased to have any connexion with the parishes with which they were concerned when the schools were established,—that many had never any connexion with the parishes at all,—and that of the existence of at least one no traces can be found;—in short, I pledge myself, if your Lordships will grant me this Committee, to show by incontrovertible evidence, that the number of 140 will dwindle down to 40 at most. From one clergyman I have received a letter, stating that on seeing the name of an individual printed among the applicants for a school in the parish of which the writer was rector, he wrote to him, inquiring how he came to apply for the erection of a school in a parish with which he had nothing whatever to do? The answer was,—

‘ I happened to be visiting in your parish, and put my name to the application on being told that my doing so did not imply any connexion with the place, or impose any future responsibility. I signed it merely

‘ as an individual, and not as the clergyman of, or belonging to, the parish.’

This shows the sort of artifices to which recourse has been had, I do not say by the Commissioners, but by partisans of the system.

I will not weary your Lordships by going into many cases in remote parts of the country, of which there is a great variety, and some of which are very extraordinary. In one instance the individual described as a clergyman had discarded not only the dress, but the address, of a clergyman; he registered his vote for the county as an esquire, and lost his vote for the false description. My Lords, this worthy applicant to the Board is counted three times, having applied for three schools. He is 3 of the 140. Noble Lords may testify surprise; but if the Noble Viscount will grant me the Committee, I will prove everything I have stated. Meanwhile I will say that I find this person, once a clergyman, now a layman, styled an esquire in the Report of the Commission for inquiring into the State of the Poor of Ireland in the last year. I do not wish to mention the name of this person publicly, but if the Noble Viscount asks me for it, I will give it him, whether he grants me the Committee or not.— There is another person in the Return, who I will not say lost his gown, but who had been removed from his cure, twenty years ago, for some act of great misconduct, and afterwards, on endeavouring to thrust himself into active ministry, was removed by the bishop. That person has applied for two schools, and he is 2 of the 140. In some other cases the names put down are gross forgeries.

But, my Lords, there is one case peculiarly worthy of remark. For where did it occur? In a remote part of Ireland? No, my Lords, in the city of Dublin itself. The name of Robertson, a supposed clergyman, is given in an application of the first class for the establishment of a school in the parish of St. Peter's, which is part of the corps of the archdeaconry of Dublin. Now, the archdeacon himself has written to me, stating not only that there is no such clergyman among his curates, or connected with him, but that he absolutely does not know the name—and another friend informs me, that he has inquired diligently, but inquired in vain—for no one knows of the existence of such a person. Can this have been a mistake on the part of the Commissioners? I have no doubt they thought this person belonged to Dublin—but did they believe he was a resident clergyman in the parish for which he applied? The very circumstance of their not having ascertained the fact is, to my mind, a clear and manifest proof that they do not take the trouble to make the inquiries which they ought to deem necessary. Their not having done so in this case, in which the proofs lay at their own door, shows that they have not considered it to be a part of their duty to do so at all;—in short, my Lords, I say, confidently, that as the Commissioners have not thought proper to ascertain the authenticity of the signatures to these applications, they have neglected their most obvious duty—nay, they have pursued a course which was manifestly likely to provoke, and has, in fact, provoked, very disgusting fraud.

My Lords, the case which I have just mentioned occurred, I repeat, within the city of Dublin, within the jurisdiction, therefore, and under the eye, of one of

the Commissioners—the Archbishop of Dublin—who had it in his power most easily, by merely looking into his Diocese Book, to ascertain,—and I should have thought he would have felt it to be his duty to ascertain—whether the application for this school in Dublin, professing to be made by a clergyman of the Church of England, was really made by the clergyman of the parish, before he permitted his own name to be affixed to this Report ; much more, before he came to Parliament, claiming increased means for the extension of the system, and founding his claim on the alleged number of clergymen of the Church of England who support it.

But this has not been confined to the city of Dublin. Within the very same diocese, in a parish very near the country residence of a Noble and Learned Lord (Lord Plunket), the parish of Delgany, a similar case has occurred. Two clergymen of the Church of England are stated as applicants for a national school there. My Lords, I have the happiness of being acquainted with the clergyman of that parish (the Reverend Mr. Cleaver), and believing that he was ardently opposed to this unscriptural plan of education, I requested a common friend to inquire of him how it happened that two of his curates had applied for a national school to be established in his parish? ‘Two of my curates!’ said this gentleman, ‘it is impossible. I know nothing of any such school;’ and then came an explanation. The names of those two applicants were Colbourne and Morrison. Mr. Cleaver assured my friend that they had nothing whatever to do with his parish. One of them, indeed, had no pastoral connexion with any parish at all, and the other was resident on his living

in a distant part of Ireland, coming to the neighbourhood of Delgany only as an occasional visitor. But the case does not end here. Mr. Morrison, finding that his name had been put forth as one of the applicants for this school, immediately wrote to Mr. Cleaver, assuring him that he never had signed any such application, and that he wondered who it was that had had the audacity to put his name to such a document. The other gentleman is now in Italy, and, therefore, whether his name was forged or not, cannot be ascertained. Be this as it may, it is enough for my argument that neither he nor Mr. Morrison had any connexion with the parish of Delgany. Yet their names are made to swell the list of clerical applicants to the Board, and that, too, on account of a parish in the diocese of Dublin, though the Archbishop of Dublin must have known that they had nothing whatever to do either with the parish or with the diocese, and had no right whatever, therefore, to appear as applicants of the first class in this Report.

So much for the clerical applicants of the Established Church. The number of Presbyterian clergymen stated to be applicants is 180. My Lords, I have taken the trouble of examining, and I find that though the number of applications is 180, the number of applicants is about 90. But this is not all. I wrote to a distinguished minister of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland—a man of very high character; and from him I have received a report, by which it appears that many of these names are of persons not Presbyterians—in short, he reduced the number to about 70. Without, however, taking this into account, and without any evidence in Committee, but upon the mere showing of these Returns, instead of 180 clerical applicants of the

Presbyterian Church, there are, in truth, only 90. Now, these misstatements—this, at least, will not be deemed too strong a term to apply to them,—are not merely otiose and inoperative declarations; for the Commissioners who make them say, that it is because they have 140 applicants, who are clergymen of the Church of England; and because they have 180 applicants, who are clergymen of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, that they are justified in saying that their system has been ‘very generally adopted under the auspices of Protestant as well as Roman Catholic clergymen;’ nay, to ‘have been found generally beneficial, and acceptable to Protestants and Roman Catholics according to their respective wants.’ Will your Lordships allow them any longer to claim this as a ground upon which to rest their demand for an enormous increase of their funds, and an unlimited extension of their operations? Before you do so, I am quite persuaded that when you are solemnly assured, that in Committee I shall be able to prove the facts I have now stated, you will not refuse the inquiry which I ask.

My Lords, I will now trespass upon your Lordships with some statements on another part of the subject,—I will endeavour to show to you, from the disbursement of the funds of the Board, what has been their success in satisfying the people of Ireland, of both churches alike—Protestants and Roman Catholics.

There were, at the time this Report was made, 1106 schools in operation; and your Lordships are told by the Commissioners, that these schools are “found to be generally beneficial and acceptable to the members of the different religious communions in Ireland, according to their respective wants.” Now, it appears that of these 1106 schools, 713 have been applied for by

Roman Catholic priests alone, without any other clerical applicants whatever. The clergy of the Church of England, alone, have applied for 19; but of these, 9 only are applied for by those who are resident parochial clergy of the parish. Your Lordships will therefore perceive that as 713 to 9, such is the comparative approbation of the Roman Catholic priests and clergy of the Church of England of this system. The Roman Catholic priests have received 5525*l.* 18*s.* 3½*d.* for building; the resident parochial clergy of the Church of England have received, under this head, nothing. The Roman Catholic clergy have received for fittings-up 4571*l.* 0*s.* 3*d.*; those of the Church of England 29*l.* 5*s.* 10*d.* The Roman Catholic priests have received in salaries to teachers 6587*l.*; the parochial resident clergy of the Church of England have received only 66*l.* The Roman Catholic priests have received for school requisites 2586*l.* The parochial resident clergy of the Church of England, 26*l.* The Presbyterian clergy alone have applied for 36 schools, and have obtained 145*l.* for building, 155*l.* 8*s.* for fittings-up, and 292*l.* for salaries.

But it does appear that in some instances the clergy of the Church of England have applied in conjunction with the Roman Catholic priests. There are 124 schools for which the clergy of the two churches have joined in their applications. These have received 811*l.* for building; 502*l.* for fittings-up; 1286*l.* for salaries; and 334*l.* for school requisites. But of these, 56 only have been applied for by the resident parochial clergy of the Church—those whose co-operation is deemed, in Lord Stanley's letter, necessary for the perfect carrying on of the system. These have re-

ceived for building 206*l.*, for fittings-up 336*l.*, for salaries 719*l.*, and something for school requisites.—There are 110 schools, for which Presbyterian clergymen have joined in application with Roman Catholic priests; receiving for building 725*l.* 19*s.* 2*d.*, for fittings-up 624*l.* 10*s.* From these, however, deductions should be made on account of those who have withdrawn from connexion with the Board, or who are not really Presbyterian clergymen; the exact number of these is not known.—There are 57 schools in operation, for which Roman Catholic priests have been joined by Roman Catholic laymen only; receiving for building 220*l.*, for fittings-up 384*l.* 4*s.* 11*d.*—There are 24 schools under the superintendence of nunneries, monasteries, or religious houses; receiving for building 517*l.*, for fittings-up 389*l.* 6*s.* 10*d.*

So much for the schools already in operation. But there are 191 cases of schools now building, and not yet in operation, in which the difference in favour of the Roman Catholics is far more inordinate than in the others. The applicants for these 191 schools have received for building 18,343*l.* 15*s.* 5*d.*; 132 have been applied for by Roman Catholic priests without any other clerical applicants, and have received for building 13,341*l.* 8*s.* 4*d.*; two have been applied for by clergymen of the Church without other clerical applicants, and have received for building 199*l.*; in neither case was the applicant the resident Minister of the parish. Three have been applied for by Presbyterian clergymen without other clerical applicants, and have received for building 56*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* There are 18 for which clergymen of the Church have joined Roman Catholic priests, and received for building 1227*l.* 7*s.*; of these, 10 only

have been applied for by the resident parochial ministers, and have received for building 707*l.* 7*s.* There are 13 for which Presbyterian clergymen have joined with Roman Catholic priests, and received for building 1214*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* There are 15 for which Presbyterian and Roman Catholic laymen have applied and received for building 1558*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.*; there have been 3 applied for by Protestant laymen alone, and have received for building 212*l.* 18*s.* 8*d.*; there have been 5 applied for by Roman Catholic laymen alone, and have received for building 544*l.* 1*s.* 8*d.*

So much for the distribution of the funds of the Board—so much for the proof thence derived of the system being generally beneficial, and acceptable to Protestants and Roman Catholics alike, in proportion to their respective numbers and wants.

But I must not rest this part of my case here. It may be said that this is only a proof that the clergy of one persuasion are well disposed towards the system, while those of the other persuasion are determined against it.

The DUKE of LEINSTER—Hear! Hear!

The BISHOP of EXETER.—I am not surprised to hear that cheer; it is very natural, coming from the Noble Duke; but I must state that the scheme was not originally introduced merely as suiting the inclinations of one party in preference to those of the other, but it was avowedly introduced as a scheme intended and designed to be equally beneficial and equally satisfactory to both. My Lords, this it is which makes the acceptance of the scheme by the different parties to be the fair test of its success. A scheme set on foot professedly favourable to persons of one religious persuasion, will,

of course, have applicants only or chiefly on that one side, and that in proportion to the degree in which the persons of that persuasion consider it to be favourable to them. But this system of education in Ireland professes to be a national system; it is maintained by the national purse, and undertakes to meet the wants and the wishes of a whole nation. When, therefore, it is thus repudiated by one great and important section of that nation, it is manifest that the scheme has failed.

It may, however, be said that there is a violent and unreasonable prejudice against it on the part of the Protestant clergy. Nay, the Noble Viscount at the head of his Majesty's Government, the other night, expressly charged the Protestant clergy with bigotry or fanaticism for rejecting the system. 'If the bigotry or fanaticism of one party,' said the Noble Lord, 'made them refuse to avail themselves of the scheme offered to them, that was no reason why the benefit of it should not be extended to others.' But, in order to enable the Noble Viscount to make that statement, he must show, first, that the real tendency of the system is beneficial to both—fair and equal to both. Now, my Lords, it is notorious that this scheme, in its very outset, started with a declaration that the Bible must be excluded from the schools at the time of united instruction. Why? Because the Roman Catholic clergy did not like it; because, on conscientious grounds, they objected to a scriptural education being attempted to be given to Roman Catholic children. This was expressly called 'a vital defect' in the former systems of instruction, supported by the public funds. But, my Lords, is it not very conceivable that conscientious men on the other side may entertain objections—and I am bigot and fanatic

enough to avow that they appear to me very reasonable objections—to the system actually set on foot, because the Bible is not included? Surely it is a little hard for them to be condemned and branded with the reproach of bigotry and fanaticism,—very awkward and unpopular phrases, in these times especially,—for adhering to their consciences, in spite, I will say, of a degree of temptation to the contrary, which has rarely been met with equal resistance. For, allow me, my Lords, to ask the Noble Viscount, what but conscience could have induced the Protestant clergy of Ireland to abstain from gratifying, at once, the Government and the Roman Catholic people, and sparing their own miserably impoverished purse, by applying to the National Board for assistance in support of their schools? My Lords, it is quite notorious that this was a sure and adequate means to obtain the favour of Government in Ireland. When, therefore, persecution in the fiercest form was directed against the clergy of that country, and when they did not take this easy and gainful course to check it in its full career, it is impossible that anything but the most exemplary and conscientious adherence to their own sense of their own duty could have influenced them. My Lords, I honour that venerable body, the clergy of Ireland, more than I can express; but scarcely for anything do I honour them more, than for their conscientious adherence to what they believe, whether rightly or not, to be sound religious objections to this system. But I return to my proper subject.

My Lords, in looking to the operations of the Board I find one class of cases, to which I request your particular attention. It appears by the Return made to your Lordships, that of the number of schools in ope-

ration, twenty-four are under the superintendence of nunneries, monasteries, or other religious bodies, and that these schools have received more aid from the Board than all the aid given to the applications from the parochial clergy of the Established Church alone. Now I will venture to put this matter to the candour of the Noble Viscount and his friends; for I am perfectly sure that their liberality does not go so far, as to expect the clergy of the Established Church, or the laity of that Church, to send Protestant children to be taught by monks, and nuns, in these schools. I am quite sure that they must see that the very circumstance of these schools being under such managers, is, in effect, an exclusion of Protestant children from them. I put it, therefore, to their candour, whether a single instance of this sort would not be a violation of the principle upon which this system professes to proceed; yet we have seen that the Board admits no fewer than twenty-four such instances; and I here promise, if the Noble Duke who cheered me a little while ago, will prevail upon his Noble Friend to grant this Committee, that I will undertake to double the number of those twenty-four exhibited in the Return. My Lords, I am ready to produce an individual of high character, integrity, and accurate observation, who has himself ascertained the existence of nine others not included in the Return, and is willing to testify to that effect, on his oath, before any Committee which your Lordships may appoint. Nor is this a solitary instance. I will produce other witnesses ready to prove other cases of the same kind. I also pledge myself to prove, by the sworn testimony of several persons of the highest respectability, who may defy contradiction, that in those schools

under the direction of religious communities, into which two or three stray Protestant children may find their way, there is exhibited to their view that which Protestants are taught to consider—and on the soundest principles consider—the grossest idolatry.

If the Committee shall be granted, I am prepared with evidence to show, that in one of the schools under the superintendence of a monk, there has been erected an altar; that for more than two years the service of the mass has been performed there during school-hours, and in the presence of the half-dozen Protestant children who may have been induced to attend the school. The clergyman of the parish in which this took place brought it to the attention of one of the Commissioners of Public Instruction, who undertook to represent it to the Board. No doubt that gentleman fulfilled his undertaking, for subsequently an order came down from the Board to remove this altar. But, my Lords, it is necessary for me to state that, before this representation was made to the Board, one or other of the inspectors had been frequently there: and, if he had inspected anything, he must have seen this altar, and, if he had inquired about anything, he must have been informed of its use. Be this as it may, after the representation to the Commissioners of Public Instruction, an order came down for the removal of this altar; but some time afterwards the curate of the parish, to his utter surprise, saw the altar still continue, notwithstanding its prohibition, and on asking the superintendent "How comes this?" he was told by the leading monk, that he had got the special permission of the Board to keep the altar in the school till the new Roman Catholic chapel, then building in the

same parish, should be ready to receive it, the outer walls of which were only at this time erected.

I can produce another case in which, on the Board having granted a considerable sum for the fitting up of a national school for boys, under the management of a monastic establishment, the money had been applied in discharge of the expenses of building a nunnery; and, in another instance, I can prove, on the testimony of Commissioners of Public Instruction—of those who are thought worthy of the confidence of his Majesty's Ministers—and that, too, in a case in which a Roman Catholic Bishop was concerned,—that the sum of 100*l.*, granted by the Board for the purposes of a school, was abstracted from the uses for which it had been granted, and applied towards the building of a Roman Catholic chapel.

My Lords, your Lordships will not imagine that I mention these facts, now, as instances of the carelessness of the Board in dispensing the money intrusted to their care. The money-consideration is the smallest part of the case; for, let it be remembered that money cannot be misapplied in this case without leading to far worse consequences than mere waste.

But these schools have not only been instruments of extorting funds for promoting the purposes of the Roman Catholic religion, but they have also been made the theatres of the coarsest and fiercest Roman Catholic agitation. I can prove, that, in one of these places, a dinner was given to a person whose very presence implies agitation—to Mr. O'Connell. In another of these schools, a dinner was given to the arch-agitator of the West—I mean the so-called Archbishop of Tuam, Dr. M'Hale. In another parish, the master of the

national school went forth at the head of an organized body—organized by him—in honour of this same Dr. M'Hale, and met him with banners, on which were inscribed the words "Liberty and Religion." Your Lordships will understand what was meant by the word—"Liberty," when you bear in mind that this took place immediately after Dr. M'Hale came fresh—I had almost said reeking—from the dinner of agitation at Tuam,—a dinner at which speeches were delivered, which in other times,—I will leave to your Lordships to say whether better times,—would have excited some curiosity on the part of his Majesty's Attorney-General.

My Lords, a clergyman residing in the parish, where the procession took place under the direction of the national schoolmaster, felt it his duty to make a representation on the subject to the Board; and he received an assurance that the matter should be inquired into. No inquiry, however, having been instituted, after an interval of several weeks, this gentleman renewed his remonstrance. After this second application, the Board, without the slightest notice to the clergyman, sent down an inspector; but unhappily, for want of notice, no witnesses were forthcoming,—those who could have proved the case were absent, and so off went the inspector, and no further notice was taken of the affair. Another complaint, on account of another act of misconduct, was made against the same schoolmaster; in reference to which the clergyman received from the Board a simple intimation, that there had been an inquiry by their inspector, and that they were satisfied. The clergyman did that which he felt due to himself, and to common justice,—he requested that he

might see the Report made to them by the inspector; but the Commissioners refused to comply with this very reasonable demand. My Lords, on this case I must add one further particular. The complainant stated to the Board, that the schoolmaster charged with these offences was a man who had been dismissed from another employment for using treasonable, or at least seditious, language to the coast-guards. He referred them to proof of this fact also; but to this they thought proper to pay no attention whatsoever.

I now proceed to a case which I am sure will appear to the House to be of a grave character, and one which makes me confident that I shall obtain the assistance of the Noble Marquess near me (the Marquess of Lansdowne) in obtaining this Committee which I ask. I am assured, and I believe I can prove the fact, that in a national school built on the property of that noble Marquess, and under the patronage of the Noble Marquess's agent, the boys, just after the execution of certain persons who had been tried and condemned by the special commission in Queen's County, were found writing these words as their copy,—of course set them by the master,—‘God be with the poor fellows that were hanged at Maryborough.’

A NOBLE LORD.—This might be a charitable wish.

The BISHOP of EXETER.—My Lords, I hear that this might have been only a kind and charitable wish. Now will the Noble Lord who so loudly whispers this, or will any one of your Lordships gravely get up in his place and tell me, with a firm countenance, that he thinks it was so intended? Is there any one of your Lordships who is not sure that those words were put before those children to imbue their infant minds with

feelings of disaffection to the law, to make them honour the men, who had justly suffered for their crimes, as martyrs, to teach them, from their earliest infancy, to side with the violators of the law, to sympathize with them, and to regard the law itself as a system of tyranny and oppression?

My Lords, I will not trespass on your patience with any more particular cases, though many more I have, which I reserve for the Committee. The main point, after all, is this,—whether this system carries into effect the principle on which it professes to be founded,—whether, as is the declared object in the Report of the Committee of 1828, which Lord Stanley's letter directs the Commissioners to follow up,—the main question, I say, is, whether these schools give to the children of Ireland a combined education of Roman Catholics and Protestants, resting on religious instruction? My Lords, in proof of the affirmative, it is stated that certain lessons, extracted from the Scriptures, are constantly used in the schools. On a former occasion, I, and those who view this matter as I do, were reproached for not ascribing sufficient importance to these Scripture extracts, as part of the instruction of the Board's schools; but, my Lords, be the value of these extracts what it may (of that I shall say something presently), they are not commanded, but merely recommended to be used. And how far this recommendation is likely to avail, may be guessed from the declared opinion of Roman Catholic prelates respecting Scriptural education. I recollect that Dr. Doyle declared to Parliament, that the use of Scripture in the instruction of children is radically wrong, and mischievous in itself. The united judgment of the Irish

Roman Catholic Bishops, proclaimed to Parliament in their petition of 1824, is to the same effect. After this, your Lordships will judge whether it is probable that Dr. Murray, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, will very earnestly, or very sincerely recommend the use of these Scripture extracts. So far from being constantly used, the truth is, that in a large proportion of the country they are not used at all. They are kept to be shown to such strangers as may manifest any curiosity about the matter; but those who have examined them will tell you, that the very appearance of the books is a proof that in many instances they are not used. In Dublin, at one of the national schools, a monk, who was the manager, told a very respectable individual whom I am ready to produce, that they rejected these extracts with scorn. Nay, I go further: I am ready to show, that in schools under the immediate patronage of Dr. Murray, who professes to join in this recommendation, the Scripture lessons are not used.

And here, my Lords, I am reminded, that a few weeks ago, a Noble and Learned Lord (Lord Plunket) was pleased to reproach me with being a false prophet, because, at the commencement of the Board's proceedings, I ventured to predict that no Scripture extracts would be ever used in these schools. My Lords, I plead guilty to the Noble and Learned Lord's charge. I certainly did make the prediction with which he now taunts me; but for making it I am not altogether without what the Noble and Learned Lord, at least, may consider something of an excuse. I ventured upon that prediction on the authority of the Noble and Learned Lord himself.

My Lords, I well remember, and your Lordships in general will not have forgotten, the eloquent and triumphant speech in which, some years ago, the Noble and Learned Lord called on this House, more especially on the Reverend Prelates, who were seated on this Bench, to have confidence in Roman Catholics, so far at least to have confidence in them, as to believe them on their oaths. Now, when I ventured on that prediction, with the falsehood of which the Noble and Learned Lord reproaches me, I did what he called on your Lordships to do—I believed the declaration of a Roman Catholic Archbishop made upon his oath. In doing so, I own that I was wrong; I own that I have justly subjected myself to the taunt of the Noble and Learned Lord, and I promise him that I never again will offend in like manner. But true it is, my Lords, that I said, in 1832, that no Scripture extracts could be agreed upon by the different members of the Board. I said this, because I was sure that the Protestant Commissioners could not consent wholly to abandon the Protestant version of the Scripture, and adopt the Doway version in its place. On the other hand, I believed that the Roman Catholic Commissioners would admit of nothing but the Doway version; therefore I said that no Scripture extracts could be agreed upon. I believed this, and ventured to predict it accordingly, because I knew, (I forget whether I then stated such to be the ground of my belief,) that Dr. Murray had so sworn before the Commissioners of Irish Education Inquiry in the year 1824. I have the Report of these Commissioners before me, and will read an extract from the evidence of Dr. Murray upon which I founded my prediction. He was asked, ‘Supposing that por-

‘ tions of Scripture should be extracted in the words of  
 ‘ the Protestant authorized version for instance, would  
 ‘ there be any objection to their being used equally by  
 ‘ Protestant and Roman Catholic children?’ Dr. Murray’s answer upon his oath, was this:—

‘ I think that if any words attributed to our Saviour  
 ‘ were given in any other form than that which is set  
 ‘ down in the Doway version, an objection would lie  
 ‘ against it. As to extracts, if they are given as Scrip-  
 ‘ ture, it must be remembered that we have all along  
 ‘ said we could not propose to the children anything as  
 ‘ Scripture except what is taken from our own version.’

When Dr. Murray made this declaration, the Commissioners reminded him that, on a former occasion, he had spoken somewhat differently, that he had stated that no difficulty would arise in the arranging of a harmony on the part of the Roman Catholic clergy, and the Commissioners wished to know whether the making it a *sine qua non* that the harmony should be compiled from the Doway version *in omnibus*, appeared to be in accordance with that statement? Dr. Murray’s answer was—

‘ I expressed that as my opinion, without foreseeing  
 ‘ all the difficulties which have since arisen.’

Your Lordships will perceive that Dr. Murray here has positively sworn that after the difficulty had been brought to the attention of himself and the other Roman Catholic Bishops, they felt that they could not adopt the course proposed, because they could not permit anything to be exhibited as Scripture, except in the form in which it appeared in their own version. This, I repeat, he solemnly swore; he swore to the same effect, again and again; and because he did so,

I believed that he would not and could not concur in any sort of Scripture extracts in these schools.

It will not be said that these Scripture extracts do not purport to be Scripture. The volume I hold in my hand is declared to contain the whole Gospel by St. Luke, accompanied by passages from other parts of Scripture.

And here, my Lords, I am compelled to make some remarks on these Scripture extracts, which do not apply to the Roman Catholic Commissioners alone.

My Lords, I repeat, and your Lordships will find it worthy of your notice, that the preface declares that this volume contains the whole Gospel of St. Luke. And yet, my Lords, I had not gone through three pages before I found a very considerable chasm, not in size but in importance, extending to ten verses only, I admit,—to ten verses of the 1st chapter of St. Luke, the 28th to the 37th inclusive. But this is a passage of the greatest importance in the estimation of all Christians—aye, my Lords, in the estimation of all who call themselves Christians. Even those persons who thought fit to set forth a book, some years ago, which they facetiously entitled “An improved Version of the New Testament,” even they felt the importance of this passage very strongly, and they showed how strongly they felt it, by leaving it out altogether. They left out the whole of the 1st and 2nd chapters of St. Luke, and the 1st and 2nd chapters of St. Matthew, because they thought proper to disbelieve the great doctrine contained in them. Now, my Lords, I have no hesitation in saying that this part of the 1st chapter of St. Luke, which the Commissioners have left out, is one of the most important passages—perhaps I might say the

most important passage—in the Gospel of that Evangelist. It is so in the estimation of our Church, because it gives more fully than is elsewhere given in the Gospels, the account of the incarnation of our blessed Lord. I have already shown, that it is most important in the judgment of the Unitarians also.—My Lords, we are told that one of the Commissioners is an Unitarian, and it has been suggested that this was a concession to his peculiar feelings, which perhaps coincided with those of the authors of the improved translation. For one, I do not believe it. I do not believe that that gentleman sought or wished such a concession. I will not believe that the Unitarian Commissioner is one who maintains all the absurdities and wickedness which some other Unitarians may maintain. But this having been suggested as a probable reason for the omission, I notice it merely in order to declare that I do not believe it.—To the Roman Catholics it is a passage, of all others, the most venerated. It is a passage on which they found, and by which they justify, the worship offered up by them to the Virgin Mary, which worship is set forth in the books sanctioned by the Roman Catholic members of the Board, in terms, I need not say, of the highest and most solemn import.—In short, my Lords, it is certain, and undeniable, that, in the eyes of all these Commissioners, this is a most important passage, and yet they left it out. Why was this? My Lords, the reason is not very difficult to be discovered. It is simply and merely, because it was impossible for the Protestant and Roman Catholic Commissioners to agree in translating one leading word in the passage;—the word addressed by the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, which the Ro-

man Catholics render "full of grace," and found upon it, I repeat, that worship of the Virgin which we deem idolatrous. The Protestants, on the other hand, reject that translation, both because it is not faithful to the original, and also because the phrase "full of grace" is applied in Scripture only to our Lord himself. They could not, therefore, adopt it instead of their own literal version of the word, "highly-favoured." And as neither party could give way, the difficulty was got rid of by the very obvious, though, considering the declaration in the preface, the not very honest, expedient, of striking out the whole passage, and substituting an unauthorized summary of four lines in its place.

My Lords, I need not trouble your Lordships or myself with any argument to prove, that the omission of this passage amounts to a mutilation of the Scriptures; but if I required authority for such a judgment, I should find it in the emphatic words of one of the Commissioners themselves, in the answer of the Most Reverend Prelate, the Archbishop of Dublin, to an address of the clergy of his diocese in the year 1832, in which they had deemed it necessary to remonstrate with him on the proposed Scriptural extracts, then much the subject of discussion as mutilations of Scripture. The passage of the answer to which I refer is in these words:—

' A mutilated book means, according to all the usage of language hitherto, one which professes to be entire when it is not; as for instance, when any one strikes out as spurious (which some have done) the opening chapters of Matthew or Luke, and then presents the book to us as the New Testament, we should rightly term this a mutilation.'

My Lords, I willingly adopt this very accurate definition with the happy illustration which accompanies it, and now I leave it to your Lordships to decide whether this little volume which I hold in my hands, the whole Gospel of St. Luke, according to the Commissioners, be, or be not, a mutilation of Scripture?\*

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\* It is proper to remark—and I hope the remark may call forth some explanation—that the Archbishop of Dublin, in an elaborate speech which he delivered in the House of Lords on Tuesday, March 19, 1833, in justification of himself and his Brother-Commissioners, not only repeated the definition which I have cited above, saying ‘As to a mutilation of the Scriptures, I have always understood that to be, the publication of what professed to be a book, which it is not,’ but actually referred in the following terms to this ‘2nd number of Scriptural Lessons, taken from the New Testament, which is not yet published, though the whole is now completed (March 1833), with the exception of half of one sheet. *This number contains the whole of the Gospel of St. Luke—that “mutilated” portion of the Scriptures, —the entire Gospel of St. Luke!*’—MIRROR OF PARL. 1833.

When the most Rev. Prelate made this declaration, and made it in so exulting a tone, he was either cognizant of the ‘mutilation’ which has been here exposed, or not cognizant. If cognizant, he will admit that those whom he thus addressed have a right to ask for some explanation. If he was not cognizant of it—if the thing was done without his consent, and even without his knowledge—he will probably consider it due to himself—it certainly is due to the country—that so extraordinary an occurrence should be traced to its proper source.

The mention of explanation suggests the fitness of another inquiry. One of the most unhappy particulars in the History of the Board was its abandoning the regulation originally laid down, that copies of the New Testament should be supplied to all the schools, to be read by all the children, at the times of separate religious instruction,—the authorized Version for the Protestant scholars, and the Douay Version, an edition of which had been prepared expressly for this purpose, on the requisition of the Commissioners of 1824, by the Roman Catholic Prelates, for the children of that communion. This regulation, which had been first made by the Commissioners of 1824, was adopted by the Committee of the House of Commons in 1828,—in deference to that great principle, which no true Protestant can ever relinquish, that the Word of God being the foundation of all true religion, access to it is the indefeasible right, and acquaintance with it the indispensable duty, of every Christian. Accordingly, when it was known that this important regulation had been aban-

My Lords, I will not, on the present occasion, enter into further minute examination of these Scripture ex-

done, no one doubted that this had been done in concession to the Roman Catholics. But a paper, laid before Parliament last year, entitled 'Extract of Correspondence between Sir Henry Hardinge and the Board of Education in Ireland, dated January, 1835,' has thrown a new light on the subject. It is there stated, that the Protestant, not the Roman Catholic, Commissioners were the authors of this lamented change—a change, which has done more to give a Popish character to the whole system, than anything or everything, besides. The following is the account of it:—

'It may be right here to observe, that this Committee of the 'House of Commons recommended' (rather, it was a main part of the system of this Committee, as it had been a main part of the system of the Commissioners of 1824) 'that copies of the New Testament according to the Protestant authorized Version should be supplied to the different schools for Protestants, and according to the Roman Catholic Version, to which notes are appended, for the Roman Catholics. But when Mr. Stanley communicated with the intended Members of the present Board, before it was finally instituted, difficulties were expressed by the Protestant Ecclesiastics as to their circulating the Roman Catholic Version of the New Testament.' The paper proceeds to state, that this scruple was suffered to prevail, and that the regulation was given up.

The Archbishop of Dublin here says, that he had felt and 'expressed difficulties, as to circulating the Roman Catholic Version'—in other words, as to putting that Version into the hands of the Roman Catholic children, although the alternative manifestly was, that those children should have no Version of the Scriptures whatsoever—nay, that the New Testament, in every Version, should cease to be a necessary school-book, under this national system of education, even at the time of separate religious instruction, whether for Protestants, or for Roman Catholics. The reasons must have been cogent which compelled a Protestant Archbishop to insist on an objection leading, of necessity, to such a result—still more, which prevailed with him, to continue the sanction of his high authority and co-operation to a system which could not be carried on without a sacrifice so distressing to his feelings, and so much at variance with his principles. Be this as it may, I have too much respect for a conscientious scruple, especially a religious scruple, to inquire very rigidly into its reasonableness—I ask not, therefore, what were the reasons for the scruple;—I only ask how the scruple itself can be reconciled with the following passage of an answer, written about the same time, to a remonstrance of his Clergy against the use of the intended Scripture extracts, 'because such a Volume, to be accept-

tracts, because I feel that your Lordships' House is not the proper place for a discussion of that nature, a Committee being, in my judgment, much more suitable to such a purpose. There are one or two observations, however, which I cannot refrain from making. It will, probably, be recollected, that the Noble and Learned Lord, the last time this subject was before the House, defied me to lay my hands upon any passage of the books in question, to which exception could fairly be taken. To that challenge I now reply, that I am perfectly ready and anxious to go into a Committee with the Noble and Learned Lord, and that I undertake to prove, if your Lordships will give me an opportunity, several gross corruptions of the truth in that volume, which professes to form the scriptural part of the education of the people of Ireland—all those corruptions tending to favour the erroneous doctrines of the Church of Rome. Indeed, in the Committee I could prove, that almost all the proceedings of the Board, under this system, have a tendency to promote the Roman Catholic faith at the expense of what Protestants believe to be the true religion.

My Lords, I make no further observations at present on these boasted Scripture extracts. But there are other books used in these schools at the time of the separate religious instruction of Roman Catholics, and recommended by the Commissioners, which would war-

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able to the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, must be in the language of the Douay and Rheims Version of the Scriptures.'

'The Douay Version,' says the Archbishop, 'is permitted to be used under the Kildare Place system'—'and I agree with them' (the promoters of the Kildare Place schools) '*in thinking, that there is no translation of the Bible extant, which is not better than none, when that is the alternative.*'—REPLY OF ABP. OF DUBLIN, p. 21.

rant some remarks, if I were not afraid of abusing your Lordships' patience. Let me only state, that in one of them the children are taught, that the worship of God in the Protestant Church is rejected by Him as impious and sacrilegious, that our translation of the Word of God is false and corrupt, and that the state of the Protestant people in Ireland is most dangerous and deplorable; because they have put into their hands, instead of the Word of God, only corrupt translations, which present them with a mortal poison instead of the food of life. But I will not say more. I hope I have already laid sufficient ground to justify me in asking for this inquiry. I hope, too, that your Lordships are of this opinion—still more I hope, that the Noble Lords near me will feel it to be their especial duty to permit a Committee to be appointed. I say their especial duty, for, most undoubtedly, I have made out a *primâ facie* case, charging great culpability on the Commissioners; and if the Ministers of the Crown screen them from the inquiry which is demanded, I shall then think that Ministers are—what I do not now consider them to be—responsible for the misconduct of those Commissioners. But, my Lords, if there are among your Lordships any who have friends among the Commissioners, to them, above all, I confidently address myself: they will, I am sure, do what the Commissioners themselves, if they were present,—and what the Noble Duke who is present (the Duke of Leinster), must be anxious to do—they will earnestly join me in conjuring your Lordships to permit this inquiry.

In seeking a Committee, I can assure your Lordships that I have no intention of proposing the destruction of the (so called) national system of education. I never

disguised my opinion of that system in its origin, and I never will. But it is a very different thing to look at a system before it is established and afterwards. I do not think it right to make away with established institutions, even if they are dangerous or mischievous, provided that they can be made tolerable; and this system, I think, may be made at least tolerable, by introducing into it two easy, but important, temperaments. I will state to your Lordships the two particulars which, in my opinion, would go very far indeed to remove the objections to the system; and, then, all that would be necessary would be, that the system, so amended, should be fairly and firmly carried into execution.

One change which I would suggest is founded upon the demand made by the Synod of Ulster, to which Lord Grey assented,—namely, that during school hours there should be a regular Scripture lesson every day—that the children should then read from the Holy Scriptures themselves for a certain time; at which lesson, however, it should not be necessary that all the children should attend, nor, indeed, that any child should attend whose parents objected to it.

Another great point, and one which, in my opinion, it is the bounden duty of the British Legislature to secure, is—the protection of the Roman Catholics of Ireland from the tyranny of their priesthood, by insisting that that priesthood shall not do that which all of your Lordships must feel to be in absolute defiance of God's Word, and an act of most unjustifiable tyranny,—I mean, that they should no longer be permitted to exclude their people from access to the word of God. My Lords, in order to effect this great, this paramount

object, I would propose nothing of which the Roman Catholic priests themselves could justly complain,—I would be satisfied with requiring that to which Dr. Murray said there could be no possible objection.

The Commissioners, in 1824 and 1825, feeling the absolute necessity of insisting on an adequate exhibition of the Word of God to all the children who were going through a course of Christian education, under the sanction and at the charge of a Christian government, required the Roman Catholic Bishops to produce a translation of the New Testament, with such notes as they might think fit to put into the hands of Roman Catholic children in all the schools which the State should support. Having done this, and having obtained from the prelates such a Testament, they asked Dr. Murray whether there would be any objection to the Protestant and Roman Catholic children reading the New Testament in the same class, at the time of united instruction, each out of their own version? To this Dr. Murray observed that serious difficulties would exist in the way of such an arrangement; and in lieu of it proposed that a Harmony of the Gospels should be used in the common education of Roman Catholic and Protestant children, and that the Holy Scriptures themselves should be used only at the time of separate religious instruction; at which time, he said, there could be no possible objection to the Roman Catholic children reading out of the Sacred Volume, the Gospels, and Epistles of the Week. These, in the Roman Breviary, are far more numerous than in our Prayer Book, and include a large portion of the New Testament.

My Lords, I hope and believe that if this and the other suggestion, which I have made, were adopted, they would go very far to remedy the great evils of this system, at present complained of by so many of the best Protestants of all denominations in England, in Scotland, and in Ireland. Surely this is not asking much: it is asking only, on the one hand, for the observance of that rule which the Commissioners themselves have said might be properly adopted; and, on the other, it is asking only that that should be insisted upon, which Dr. Murray himself proposed, and to which he said there could be no objection. On the authority, then, of Dr. Murray, I ask this from your Lordships—I ask, that you will give the children of Ireland access to the Holy Volume, for the reading of those portions, at least, of the Scripture, which Dr. Murray said might be read with propriety. The great mischief of all in Ireland is, that the mass of the people in that country do not really know what the Holy Volume is. They never see it; they know nothing of it. That which we, as Protestants, are most anxious to obtain is, that the Roman Catholics should be allowed to see the Holy Volume,—that they should become familiar with it,—that they should be taught to know that it contains the Word of God and of truth.

My Lords, I have done; I hope that I have avoided, as I have sincerely intended to avoid, even the appearance of pressing this motion in any way that should give to it the character of hostility to the Government. I assure his Majesty's Ministers that I do not look upon this question as one of party feeling. Far from it—it is a matter which interests all, infinitely

more than the most important party question that ever was proposed. My Lords, I say this from the regard which is due to your feelings, no less than to my own. I am sure, that every one whom I address must feel, that a question which involves the religious principles, the most solemn duties, the everlasting interests, of all the poorer classes of our fellow-subjects in Ireland, Protestant as well as Roman Catholic, is one which, more imperatively than any other, demands that in the discussion of it everything like party feeling should be cast aside. I assure your Lordships, that I should, with much greater pleasure, have risen to express my confidence in the continued well-doing of the system which has been established, if I could have done so with truth; and I deeply regret that a most imperative sense of duty has compelled me to avow before your Lordships my utter distrust of it. My Lords, I shall sit down entreating his Majesty's Ministers, if they think that I have made out a case for further inquiry, to grant the Committee, for the appointment of which I shall conclude by moving. In their hands, after the statement I have made, I leave the whole question. I will not ask your Lordships to divide with me, if his Majesty's Ministers state that they will oppose my motion. My Lords, I move 'That a Select Committee  
' e appointed to inquire into the progress which the  
' new system of education in Ireland has made in effect-  
' ing the main purpose for which it was established,—  
' namely, the combined education of the poorer classes  
' of the community of that country, Protestant as well  
' as Catholic, resting upon religious instruction; to in-  
' quire whether the funds intrusted to the Commissioners

‘ have been judiciously administered towards the attain-  
 ‘ ment of that object ; and whether experience of the  
 ‘ practical result of their labours renders it safe and  
 ‘ advisable to adopt the recommendations contained in  
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