

T H O U G H T S
ON THE
NATIONAL IMPORTANCE
OF OUR
PROTESTANT CHARTER SCHOOLS.

With such proposed improvements therein; as tend in a superior degree, to the advancement of health, morals, and public weal. And including an outline of national education more immediately applicable to these Schools: and calculated to ensure the future peace, and prosperity of Ireland. To which is subjoined, an Appendix, being remarks on the Baggot-street Charter School lately established.

By CHARLES FLETCHER, M. D.

The education of youth more especially, is a national concern: inasmuch as they are the seeds of empires, kingdoms, corporations and families: and that the good of all, so materially depends upon them.

ARISTOTLE.

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D U B L I N:

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Houses of the Oireachtas

To

His Excellency the Right Hon.
EARL HARDWICKE, as President of the
Incorporated Society; and to the Society at
large: these Thoughts on the National Import-
ance of the Charter Schools of Ireland; with
some proposed Improvements therein: are,
with all respect, submitted by their most
obedient, and most humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

Houses of the Oireachtas

Thoughts, &c.

OUR Protestant Charter Schools are perhaps one of our greatest national concerns! and yet the writings of Lord Kaimes in particular, should seem to contradict the assertion. —“ Charity Schools (says he) might have been proper, when few could read, and fewer write: but these arts are now so common, that in most families children may be taught at home, or to write in a private School at little expence.” But surely if Lord Kaimes had for a moment reflected on the number of families, who so far from being able to afford the slightest education to their children, that they might not even be in a condition to support them in the common necessaries of life; he would probably have altered his opinion, and the Charter Schools accordingly, are intended as a provision for such: as well as to form them into useful members of Society.

In some parishes in England where there are more children than the parents can support by their industry, and where the mother in particular from the number of them, cannot add to the stock of income or livelihood; in that case, they are either provided for at home, out of the poor rate, or the deficiency from labor, is otherwise remedied, by binding one, two, or more children apprentices, or putting them to school, as age, or circumstances may admit. These, are most excellent modes of relief! and
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our present *Charter Schools*, go to the fulfilling of them.* Lord Kaimes then, goes on thus—"Charity Schools in general, are more hurtful than beneficial; young persons who continue there so long as to read and write fluently, become too delicate for hard labor, and too proud for ordinary labor. Knowledge is a dangerous acquisition to the laboring poor: the more of it that is possessed by a shepherd, a ploughman or a drudge; the less fitted is he to labor with content." Now all this might be true, did the education in these Schools run either into the dead languages, or the more abstruse branches of mathematics, &c. but confined as they are to the ordinary course of reading, writing, and casting up of accounts, such as might be thought useful to them, either in the sphere of husbandmen, manufacturers, school masters, clerks of parish churches; as also for the purpose of communicating at a distance with their friends or relations (with other important uses in life) their utility must be admitted: without Lord Kaimes means to say, that a state of absolute ignorance among the peasantry or lower orders is to be preferred! if indeed, such education could be supposed to pervert their judgment from the duty they owe to themselves, or society; then might it become a species of cruelty to draw them out of their state of ignorance—but so far from this being the case, that I believe it to be an established idea, and that from ample experience; that whether in mutinies on board, or rebellions on shore; or whatever in short, may be the nature of the commotions of states, yet, that the most ignorant, will be found not only to be among the first to run into these commotions; but among the last to perpetuate them likewise, and that, by the most tyrannical, atrocious, and merciless means. This has been the case in all ages, has been the case in France; and the late disturbances here, are a notable illustration of the fact; having terminated in a banditti, and

* Among the number of national advantages resulting to society from these, and similar charities may be mentioned one; and that not among the least important: which is—that they tend to diminish the sum of Mendicity not only in the metropolis, but in the country throughout wherever they are established.

and those among the dregs of the people, too contemptible to excite any serious alarm. It is at the same time true, that the more ignorant poor may not only be an useful and necessary part of the community; and equally the care of that providence “*Who fills, who bounds, connects, and equals all*” but what I contend is, that the poison of sedition and immorality, will operate more violently on that class of people than the others; and which poison, though they cannot read, may be variously communicated. And here, we cannot too much extol, the care and attention, of the *Association for promoting Religion and Virtue*, in their endeavours to counteract the baleful influence arising from those vulgar ballads, and papers, hawked in among the lower orders; and not only unedifying, but too often fraught with sedition and vice. But as their mode of doing which likewise, is no less praise worthy; and cannot be sufficiently made public, I shall add—that after selecting from among the number of works, which all ages so abundantly furnish them with, such as seem the best calculated for the purpose, then after compressing them, (and in a stile fitted for the capacity of such) they are either sold at the low rate of pence a piece, or distributed *gratis*. This admirable scheme must prove a considerable check upon profligacy of manners; and I think, that when they come to be rather more diversified, and more extensively circulated; they will have a still better effect. For not only the Charter Schools, but those other institutions herein cursorily mentioned should be liberally supplied with them.

As to the *Marine School*, that admirable institution! I think that the readings best suited to it, should be selected chiefly from among those various maritime occurrences, which the relations of voyages, courts-martials, for contumacy, mutiny, &c. as also executiondock cases, and biographical sketches of eminent men, so amply afford; and which seem in a peculiar manner adapted to the
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turn of thought of the *foremast man*, or youth intended for the navy, or sea service*.

We once more return to the objections that Lord *Kaimes* would throw in the way of these Schools. "The only plausible argument I find for Charity Schools is, that children of the laboring poor, are taught there, the principles of religion and morality, which they cannot acquire at home. This argument would be invincible, if without education, we could have no knowledge of those principles; but providence has not left man in a state so imperfect; the principles of theology and morality being stamped on his heart: and none can be ignorant of them, who attend to their own perceptions." So far Lord *Kaimes*, and it will be readily acceded, that mankind have this intuitive sense of morals, and of the Deity: but how few attend to those perceptions in an uncultivated, or uneducated state? And, if even the brute nature can be improved by education, and that of vegetables by culture; how much more the rational? Education therefore, is to the human mind, what polish is to a *gem*; it brings forward that lustre, which would otherwise lie hid. Would we see the result of inattention to these matters, we need only penetrate those regions where nature holds her primitive reign; where scarce a shadow of government does seem to exist. Where a scene of consummate ignorance, and mere unaccommodated nature, does every where present itself. Where the mind, like an untilled piece of ground, lies fallow. Where they must be continually upon the watch, not only against the incursions of wild beasts; but against those of their own species: in their bodies naked, and defenceless. In their habitations unsheltered, and exposed to all vicissitudes: their passions unstayed by reason, their vengeance untempered by mercy; and

* It has been a practice with some of our naval commanders, to get down packets of those books from the Society in London and distribute them, particularly in the *Sick BERTH*, for the amusement of those poor fellows! but it does not appear that a selection of subjects to the above extent has been made. The hint however may be useful.

and their religion, if any, sanguinary, and superstitious. Such the result, between which state, and a mind enlightened by education, and principles of virtue as taught in these schools, there is as much difference *cæteris paribus*, as between the mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam.

It is at the same time true, that if in these Schools they were taught, or inducted into a religion at once sanguinary, uncharitable, intolerant; then might there besome plea of reason against them; but the Protestant Religion as taught there, being of a very different complexion, being not only the best regulator of conscience, but the best calculated to constitute a state of happiness in society; that plea will not hold. And that these impressions may not be obscured by vicious habits, some laudable employment, such as may be best suited to the genius and inclination of the boy, should be chosen for him; labor being appointed the best guard of virtue. And accordingly we find, that at a fit age, and after having completed their education there; they are put out to apprenticeships. Having premised thus much, it becomes necessary according to my original design, to enter more minutely into the internal management of the institution: and in doing so, the *Nurseries*, of which there are three principal ones, do claim the first attention; and that in Charlemont-Street, shall be selected for remark.

The period of admission here is from four to six years and the continuance till ten. All the supposed children of Roman Catholic parents*. The house appropriated to this benevolent and national purpose, is situated in one of the wholsomest outlets of the city; and every way adapted to the convenience of its young inhabitants: the rooms being airy, and so adjusted, as not to admit of many beds. And by which arrangement those inconveniences arising from large wards are obviated. The Rooms likewise, appear exactly clean, are sanded, and the windows well adapted for the purpose of *ventilation*: while the beds and bedding, I likewise with equal satisfaction observed, were in all respects proper,

* And other orphans liable to be misled in principles of education and loyalty.

proper, and decently supplied with *sheets*, and the children also who were dressed in brown uniform appeared in general healthy.

During one period of the disturbances, there was a pressure upon the house, of numbers beyond a due accommodation: but a returning state of tranquillity has removed that pressure, and the house at present is once more reduced to its usual complement of ninety children of both sexes. And as it appears by the books, that ten thousand children, have in the space of fifty years, passed through the house to the respective schools: and those generally taken, either out of the streets of Dublin, or from the *lap* of indigence; the importance of the institution, may be thence deduced. And here it may be thought unnecessary to go into further detail as if a part be found eligible, it is a presumptive proof, that the *whole* is so also. And some writers, contenting themselves with such superficial inspection, stopping thus as it were upon the threshold, have not seldom from this idea, committed themselves. It is at the same time true, that such accounts may have their use in attracting the attention of strangers to our Charities: and may consequently be well calculated for a place in a *gazetteer* for the purpose of public encouragement: yet I should hold it as departing from my design of giving a true statement of those institutions, with such improvements in the course of my enquiry, as may occur to thought; and which in the sequel, may render them still more worthy the attention of the legislature and the public. To proceed then—from the youth being sent up to the Nursery in Charlemont-Street, from the respective Schools for the purpose of indenting; or of being otherwise disposed of; it becomes an object one would think, not only of daily, but hourly attention. And that the appointment of Physician, Surgeon and Apothecary is not only necessary and accordingly the case, but in whose instructions also it should be made a part, that they attend once a *day*, or oftener if the case required.

And

And though the nursery aforesaid, may be situated in one of the wholesomest outlets of the city; yet as populous cities, are the graves of the human species, from contaminated air, &c. It accordingly appears, that whatever might have been the case formerly; a most religious care is at present taken, that no sick, or disordered youth of either sex, is sent to said nursery; either from the schools of Santry, the Strand, or elsewhere. Every thing which tends to weaken the spring of the fibres, will not fail to aggravate the prevailing acrimony; and the nursery likewise, from being more immediately in the city, however advantageously situated there, as also from its being a receptacle for children in a state of poverty, and consequently on their commencement, often in a state of rags and filth; must necessarily retard the cure. That most disorders of the nursery in question therefore, should on the other hand be sent to the School on the strand seems more congenial with health. This much is certain, that the glandular swellings, the tetters, the atrophy or Hectic of that age and the debility after measles, &c. would be bettered by such change: the superior purity of the air, with the benefit of the salt water; being chiefly indicated in such complaints.

In the Infirmary pertaining to the Nursery, was one small-pox case of the natural kind, and the smell, as might be expected, was highly offensive! this however, is not the only reason for a general inoculation from *cow-pock*. It should likewise be adverted to, that many of these young people, soon or late, find their way into the army and navy: and may of course, be thrown into situations where the small-pox, from its mortality is considered as a plague; and where ships, suspected of having it, are obliged to ride quarantine.

Let us now suppose one of these to be seized with this disorder in such a situation ; how fatal the effect !—Let the first question therefore, to the friend, or parent of the child upon admission, be, whether he has had the small pox ? and if not, that it be immediately inoculated with the cow pox.* The children admitted here, being only such, we are informed, as are of sound health and limbs ; it would be a pity, that any disorders, should be superadded, in consequence of any *mismanagement*, and though, under every possible care, they will be liable to the complaints *mentioned*, yet it is no less certain, that inattention to combing their hair, and cleanliness, will render them still more liable to disorders of the head. As want of due recreation and exercise, will subject them to weakness and glandular swellings : and that a thin vapid diet, will be productive of declines, &c. I do not say, that this is absolutely the case ; but assuredly too much attention cannot be paid to these matters—the well being through life, so very much depending upon them. And it should ever be had in remembrance, that our soldiers, our sailors, our manufacturers, and artizans ; are composed from these !

They should occasionally, as the weather permits, be taken a mile or two, into the country ; and in summer time their

* Which when genuine, (for there is a spurious, or bastard kind) is never accompanied with any other eruption, than that occasioned by the inoculating matter at the place of insertion ; creates no sickness : consequently requires no confinement—and what is still more important in the history of this discovery is, that the person so inoculated, may be thrown into the most perilous situations, where small-pox rages with the greatest virulence, without his catching the disorder—And from which superior advantages redounding to society it is to be hoped, that not only these seminaries under consideration, but all others of whatever description ; will adopt this salutary practice !

their walks should be directed towards the *Strand*: where sea bathing should be enjoined if nothing contradicates. And such little works studied for them, as at the same time that they imparted vigour to their system; might be likewise productive.

And here on the subject of labor may be mentioned the case of a boy, as related by himself, who had come up to Dublin from a country working school (not in the Society's care) for the purpose of being indented. This boy, though otherwise healthful, had contracted a lameness in the joint of his knee, in consequence of spinning at the Cotton Wheel. And as there appeared no characteristic mark of *Evil* upon the joint; I had every reason to believe the relation true.

The attitude here, being nearly that of fencing, but with this difference, that there is in this case, an almost constant strain upon the left ham: and there being only half an hour in the day allotted for play, or recreation; the employment at this work was protracted it should seem, not only to the detriment of health; but of education also. This malady of the joint I was informed, nearly pervaded the whole: of fifty boys at that School, few of them escaping.

In order then, to obviate this malady, they should be taught to spin with either hand alike; by which the posture would be changed occasionally: and the strain on the left joint, of course diminished. This mode of spinning, together with a longer period of recreation, as likewise for School hours; would prevent this fatal error! for however we might wish to see them inured to laudable employment, and that it should be made a part of their education, even from the nursery; yet should it have special reference to *health*, in lieu of laying the foundation for a state of decrepitude for life.

Notwithstanding the above case, and that some masters of schools from a principle of avidity will be induced to push labor into fatigue, or even at the expense of health.

health. Yet I humbly conceive, that under proper restrictions a general establishment of Manufactures in our Charter Schools, might be advantageous.

As by such arrangement, the boys disposition would be thereby consulted, and by being thus, early inducted into the mystery of the art, he would consequently excel, while the fee likewise, usually given to strangers, would be retained under the guardianship of the house; and the manufacture in process of time, be productive.* It is now time to return to the nursery.—The person in care of the house, has four pence per day each, allowed him for the maintenance of the children or six pounds per annum. How far this sum is competent at the present time to that purpose, I shall not † *here* determine. But with respect to the dietary arrangement, I would in the mean time submit, that whereas, a breakfast of bread and milk is ordered for Sunday and *Stirabout* the remainder; that this latter, as not only more wholesome and satisfactory, but during the present diminished state of the loaf, more easily procured: should, without variation be given. And that for supper, and for a like reason; potatoes and milk should stand throughout the whole. And that in lieu of *water*, as permitted to be mixed with the milk; that *buttermilk*, as more palatable as well as salutary, should be substituted.

And here, the necessity of daily accurate *inspection*, is so obvious, so connected with the prosperity of such an institution; that I shall suppose it: the office of governor, or inspector; it is a solemn, a serious trust indeed! for from the moment he enters upon it, he puts himself into a state of requisition for the due performance of it; both to God, and

* In the Maynooth School, when boys were in it, the business of *Shoe Making* was carried on under the auspices of the Society; who indented the boys so to be employed to the Master: and the fee of course centered there. And in speaking of this school it is but justice to say, that whether as to Master, to Catechist, to care in all respects: it is one of the best conducted Schools in the Society's care.

† See *appendix*, wherein likewise are some remarks as to dinner arrangement.

and to society: the prosperity or adversity of the institution, so very much depending on it. In the one case, accompanied with judgment and fidelity, it will flourish. In the other, of neglect, or inattention, it will become the abode of that pain and misery it was meant to relieve! The duties too, are extensive. For whatever relates to diet, to cleanliness in person, cloaths and bedding; to labor and recreation; to health, as well as education &c; are all, his concern.

And from these considerations it is, that I have often thought the establishment of *Governesses*, in conjunction with the governors, as at the Foundling Hospital; might be attended with the happiest effect!* There are for instance, many little attentions, which at this age, in the *nurseries* more especially are more familiar to females, more their province too, than men. They can make more minute enquiry into the state of cleanliness pertaining to children than men.

The tenderness peculiar to the sex, will likewise often lead them to the *Infirmary*, where the numerous little wants of these young creatures, laboring under complaint; will not escape their scrutinizing eye; while their rank and consequence, will secure attention to their representations. They seem better calculated too than men, to pay a more patient hearing to the progress of learning of this age, as
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* There are women it appears, in the local committees; but not to the extent as above mentioned; and more particularly in the *country*, where an establishment of them would be still more necessary. The above remarks however, on the importance of such an arrangement, with the honors attaching to the female character from such humane attentions as therein stated; will not be without their effect, where these papers may be read! And as one step towards obviating the difficulties attendant on forming local country committees in general; might not some eligible person or persons be deputed from the Society, to make two annual circuits among the Schools, for the purpose of inspecting, reporting, and otherwise by aiding and assisting, to be eventually instrumental in doing away said difficulties?

also to the direction of it. And by being daily amongst them, the *manners* of these young people, would be better formed: and that deference and subjection due to their superiors, be thereby established for life. And this consideration alone methinks, is worthy of all attention; as it would be striking at the root of that contumely and insurrection, but too frequent of late among the lower orders. And the ladies thus laudably employed, to take it so, that the returns to each, might not be more than one month in the year; the duty would become easy. And surely, there is no sphere of action, in which ladies of distinction can appear to greater advantage than in such condescending attentions to their inferiors! They become by such offices, the objects of admiration and esteem among men: at the same time that they entitle themselves to that superior rank hereafter, the meed, of merit such as theirs!

And as to the idea of *contagion*, let them as the best preservative against it, reflect, that they are laudably endeavouring to prevent, or dispel it, by their attentions to the various means of health herein mentioned: and by imparting a consequent serenity of mind, and cheerfulness arising from those comforts*.

The Charter Schools as yet, have only been the subject of cursory remark. But from their great importance, there being no fewer of *them* than *forty* throughout the kingdom; and said, even so far back as the year 1796, to have contained 1468 children in the societies care; demand a more particular

* The author of these pages, might here observe with regard to himself; that he has often been thrown into the most perilous situations abroad, from contagions of various kinds; and particularly at Bassora, on the banks of the Euphrates: where 1400 in the day, have perished by the plague. And where he has personally administered to the sick laboring under that complaint, without having caught the infection. And this he ascribes under providence, to a total absence of all apprehension,—and to the consideration, that if he had fallen a sacrifice to the disorder, he would have fallen in the act of a relative duty: in the cause of humanity.

particular notice here. It has been said that two boys may sleep in one bed provided they are sound in health. But if this should not be the case; if one should be disordered and the other not, the most *fatal* effects may ensue! and that, where they are least expected. As in the case of *evil* itself: instances of which having been known. And which should be a caution to Masters of Schools in general, how they act in this important concern of health. And this only serves to confirm my former opinions on the force and extent of *contagion*: and hence its application to almost all the disorders to which they are subject, must be obvious. On the subject of *contagion* therefore, to which these schools are so liable, and in such a variety of shapes; we cannot be too particular, too pointed in our remarks.

That fatal fever, which swept off the half of the children at the Munster Haven School some few years back, is a melancholy proof of its influence. What therefore has been said on the regulations as to air, cleanliness, labor and recreation, &c. for the *nurseries*; will equally hold here: and are to be considered as among the *chief* preventitives of infectious complaints*.

And here, as a corrector of infectious *miasm*, may be mentioned the fumigation arising from nitre with vitriolic acid, as recommended by *Dr. Carmichael Smyth*, and which proved so very successful in the jail of *Winchester* in checking the progress of a most virulent fever, attended with great mortality.

These things premised, the next important object of attention is *education*. Not that alone, which in the common acceptation is confined to reading, writing, &c. but which
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* Infection may be variously inbibed; the *lungs* may inhale it, the *stomach* may receive it in the saliva, and it may be taken up by the absorbent pores by capillary attraction, and thence conveyed into the circulating mass. And as to the variety of infections, they are detailed at length in a work of the author entitled, "A Maritime State considered as to the Health of Seamen, &c."

in a broader sense of the word, comprehends a sense of religion, moral conduct and *manners* : and which last, if not really and literally morals ; is something which bears great affinity to them. They are at least, the guard, or mound of *virtue*, which when once broke down, a corruption of morals must soon follow : and what degree of guilt may then enter the heart, is uncertain.

Seeing then, that education is so extensive, the choice of *preceptor*, is no less important than that of governor. All these duties enumerated, being submitted to his care. He should not only be perfect in those things he professes to teach ; but he should be possessed likewise, of a physical *acumen* or precision of constitution, and disposition, as they relate to aptitude for learning ; that he may know the measure of, or when and how, to apply coercion and reward ; or censure and applause. And if he believes with some writers, that the principles of shame, and consciousness of right and wrong in the breast, if properly applied to, might be sufficient to keep, even the world itself in order without coercion : and which should seem to derive sanction, from the power of gentleness, over irrational natures, in the degree of docility to which it can lead them, he will, upon all possible occasions, lean to that side.

This likewise, is the way, to impress a sense of gratitude on the boy through life, and which will express itself after this manner—to *him* I owe infinitely more, than my English grammar : it was he, who taught me the grammar of *virtue* ! It was this most excellent person, who first instilled into my mind, the principles of *religion* : and softened down my nature, to that sympathy for another's distress, which my own, so abundantly required, and met with !

It has been said, that industry, or suitable employment should constitute a part of the education of this class of youth, and accordingly we find, that in Holland, it would be a prodigy to see any thing above five years old, unemployed.

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And so Mr. *Locke*, in his treatise on education remarks, "that its chief business consists, not only in settling in the minds of youth, good habits, and the principles of virtue, and wisdom; but by giving them by little and little, a view of mankind, and in working them into a love of what is excellent, and praise worthy: and in the prosecution of which, to give them vigor, activity, and *industry*." And which mode of education, even in the most depraved natures, (admitting no defect in the organization or intellect) will bid fair to restore the balance of the mind; and in the end, make it preponderate on the side of *virtue*.

One thing yet remains to be mentioned, which is, that previous to his leaving the School for his apprenticeship something in the way of *exhortation*, should be openly read to him: in which the obligations he lies under to his benefactors through life, for the care taken of him, should be stated. That had he not been so educated, so incorporated, with the advantages, among other things, of going in regular procession to divine service on Sundays: he might, long before this, have been found, either begging in the streets, or in the acts of swearing, pilfering, &c. And bearing up with him at the same time, the seeds of disobedience and *revolt*. That an apprentice fee being likewise given with him; he is still to consider himself as a pensioner on the bounty of the state; as the child of its adoption: and the special care of providence, which he should be most sedulous, not to forfeit!

But as he is now about to enter upon a wider field of action; to become a member of society on a broader scale: those duties, would not only be more forcibly impressed, but their necessity better understood, by imparting to him, a brief view of *man* in a state of *society**.

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* See a pamphlet of the author on this subject, entitled, serious reflections on the late, and continued disturbances in Ireland, addressed to the people at large, by a citizen of the world, from which, the necessity of enforcing the above doctrine will appear.

He should be told, that society being the ordination of nature, inasmuch as men are drawn thereto for the purpose of mutual wants and imbecilities, which could not singly, or in a state of solitude be supplied; that such society is best supported, by mutual acts, of amity, and good-will.

That the inequalities observable in life, are no less of divine origin: corporeal strength, beauty, and symmetry of parts, with mental abilities, being not shared alike to all, any more than property or riches. And for the wise purpose of cementing mankind, or society, in mutual aid and support.

And with regard to property, it may be observed to him, that the occupier, proving his claim thereto, whether as the first occupier, or as having succeeded thereto by purchase, by services to society, &c; has a consequent title to the free enjoyment of that property. And that hence, those *levellers*, who would have all property in common; would not only violate the laws of nature and morals; which inculcate the lesson, of doing as we would be done by: but such procedure would be, in the highest degree absurd too; as *inequality in property*, would be the almost *immediate* result, of such equal division.

And hence, the *origin of laws*, to restrain men from infringing those rights of men in society; and which rights, do consequently include that of life and *character*. And to which, *all* have an equal right, save those only, who forfeit their claim thereto, by infractions on the laws, and order of society.

With respect to property, it may likewise be still further observed to him; that if it could possibly remain equal among all; how would those natural virtues of the soul, such as generosity, charity, sympathy, &c. have place? Or if there were not objects upon whom to exercise them; what would become of the natural affections of gratitude, or sense of obligation, &c. That these inequalities therefore,
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in property, are the order of the universe, and providentially so, for the general good! And that for the same reason, the clay built cottage, the thread-bare coat, with other symbols of poverty, must necessarily have place in all states: but with this consolation, that by a diligent discharge of their duty, in their respective spheres; by obedience and subjection to the laws; they are equally entitled with the most exalted, to the appellation, of the friend of man, the approved of Heaven.

By setting things before him in this point of view; he will, in lieu of being awakened to a sense of covetousness or envy, at the effects of grandeur, of turning pale at another's prosperity, reflect, that by honest industry, he may one day himself, succeed to a like good fortune. There being daily instances of people, who without the smallest prospect in their outset, having by their assiduity and merit rose high in office; and even to grandeur. Or if they should not be altogether so successful, such reflections, will beget at least contentment. It will likewise occur to him, that while these men may be harrassed with cares and anxieties attendant on the failure of events, of unsuccessful issues; or tide of popular discontent: that these storms, while they burst over these men; are unfelt by, or pass inoffensively, over the cottages of the *poor!* and so, reducing the various conditions of life, more upon a *level* than those disorganizers of society would have them think.

The late attempts likewise, to annihilate *talent*; as well as property: makes it equally necessary to observe to him. That as in property, so in talent, is this diversity conspicuous: and for the same gracious purpose of general good! —Were all for instance, possessed of the same talent, and that talent leading to the same pursuit; suppose the defence of their country: what, in that case, would become of rural employment? Or were all directed to *agriculture*, what would become of the various arts; subservient to the various purposes of life: from that which quarries the stone, or forms it, to that which erects a cathedral in honor of the deity, or a ship of war for the purpose of defence? Or should any one of these professions, or arts in life be extinguished

guished from the highest professional walk to the lowest ; how must society suffer by such dereliction ? And hence likewise the wickedness, as well as absurdity of those who would fly in the face of nature, under colour of asserting the rights of man, by attempting to level superior talent. And so, depriving the human mind, of one of its best rights and properties !

The necessity also of *government*, with the superiority of his own over any other ; in affording to him a greater share of protection, of freedom and happiness ; should be carefully impressed on his mind : that his love and gratitude to his country, may, upon any emergency, warm him to a sense of its defence,

And he should be no less forewarned of those seducers, whose views in life being blasted by every other means ; throw off their allegiance, their ties to their country ; in order to erect to themselves a ladder of the backs of the people, by which to ascend to that power, their ambition would lead them to : and then destroy those very engines by which they had been so raised. Men, on whose souls, the ghosts of all those slain by their means must sit heavy ! A recital however of those events falls not within the precincts of these pages. Events—which in the recital, “ would cleave the general ear with horrid speech ! make mad the guilty, and appal the free !”

Events, whose influence crept, even into our *naval* lines. And by which, our trade and commerce were almost annihilated : the war protracted, an accumulation of taxes necessarily incurred, with a consequent rise on the articles of life.

Events—which not stopping at life and private property, went likewise to the demolition of publick works, of *Charter Schools*, &c. and from which, even mothers were compelled to fly for protection, with their children in their arms, to those similar Institutions in town, of which I am treating.

If disaffection then was able to work to such ends; if it was sufficiently powerful to throw such a film over the minds of the lower orders, by setting off a republican form of Government, with all the lures of a golden age, that all remonstrance was shut out: insomuch that to loose their lives for the attainment of those fascinating lures, these golden hopes, became a principle: how necessary to use every means, for preventing a recurrence of such scenes! He should therefore be further admonished; that as the sum of happiness to the people, would not be promoted by any change whatsoever of Government; so, they are the enemies of the *state* who would attempt it.

Every thing in short, should be set before him, which might tend to shew the superiority of his own country over others. Thus the *Spartans*, and other antient states, early inducted their youth of every degree, to a love of their country, their government, their laws; and consequent abhorrence of *revolt*! and thus in like manner has *France* opened public schools for the same purpose. Shall we then be more remiss in this important desideratum than they? Or is our religion, government and laws; our *liberties* also less consequential, less worthy preservation? The beauty likewise of that constitution, which can derive strength and spirit, even from *revolt*; with the absurdity of supposing success from similar attempts, should be established in his mind—with the equal absurdity of supposing, that government would suffer a system of oppression to pervade the lower orders, the peasantry, or working poor, who, by their industry, add strength to a state: and without whom, it could not possibly exist! (and whose *interests* are consequently inseparable from it) these are the means to *bind* him to the existing government, to the true interest of his country.

But it may be said, is not the *decalogue* before him, to teach him in the way of life? tis true it is, and though heads of families, teachers, and others capable of reflection, may see all the causes for what is therein enjoined, or prohibited; and to whom, the purity of it may be self evident:
yet

yet, as all the effects of the moral principle do not unfold themselves in some, till by fatal experience they are taught : or in others even to “ the last syllable of recording time : ” and who through life, may be said to be in a state of infancy, in many matters, more particularly relating to the *social compact* not as yet sufficiently *broke into it* ; (the complexion of the times likewise rendering every auxiliary necessary) the above exhortation therefore, cloathed in a dress suited to his capacity, should be printed on an half, or within the compass of an whole sheet ; and delivered to him *gratis* upon his leaving the school. While it should be made a part of his Indentures, that he shall have the benefit of appearing at some stated church on Sundays, in order to keep alive his instructions. So will those baleful impressions be eradicated from the minds of those who may have imbibed them ; and the rising generation established in their principles, without fluctuation or change, from every puff of doctrine from the seditious — so would they escape the contagion of it. — Tranquility would then be assured ; and virtue and industry perpetuate it. It has been said, that previous to his leaving the school for his apprenticeship, this exhortation should be openly read, and delivered to him. But after all, why *this* mode of apprenticeship ? though all possible care is taken to investigate the character of the master with whom the boy is to be put ; why this mode of disposing of him ? Is it, that a better cannot be devised ? if this is really the case ; there the matter rests, and things go on in their usual course. — If otherwise, it then becomes a matter of the most serious import, to discover it ! and as to say, that we have arrived at the *acmè* of what relates to most of the affairs of life, is only to clog the wheels of invention or improvement : so therefore, it becomes a question here, whether the youth of these schools, cannot be disposed of more to their own welfare, and the national advantage ; than by the present mode of indenting ? In order then to an enquiry of this kind, it becomes necessary in the first place, to state the obligations to which the present mode of indenting is liable. The first objection then, which presents itself here is, that the boy is sent up to town, it may be, fifty, sixty, or more miles from the

the interior of the Kingdom, with a florid countenance, and *stamen*, a simplicity of manners too, to breathe the vitiated, the tainted air of the metropolis; and to be employed, perhaps in some sedentary avocation of life, which may still further *deteriorate*, still further operate to the undermining of his constitution and health. But this is not all, his *morals*, a far more weighty consideration, are also liable to be vitiated. Neither is this, the whole of the evil, Manufacturers in populous cities more especially, are, from a variety of causes, liable to fail, and become impoverished. They may fail from the increased number of them—they may fail, from the whims and fluctuations of fashions, from intemperance, from sickness, from the price of labor not keeping pace with the articles of life, or subsistence. And lastly they may fail, from the failure of their employers themselves, in consequence of bankruptcies as the result of war, or intestine commotions affecting trade and commerce. One or all of these causes combined may throw this class of people out of employment, more especially in populous cities: as witness, the distress some few years back among our weavers, more particularly; when some hundreds of those poor people were compelled to turn out in our streets, in the shape of *mendicants*. And when their *apprentices* must, more or less, have shared in the general calamity of the times!

But it may be alledged, that were it not for this periodical recruit from the country by this means of the Charter Schools; there would be a probable dearth of hands in the city. To this, it may be replied, that so long as the numerous parochial schools, &c. in this metropolis and its vicinage exist; this scarcity of hands, can hardly be supposed.

Another objection to the sending up these boys thus to the metropolis may be adduced.—The masters of works finding a ready fee with the boy, from the society; will consequently be induced to give it a preference, to the exclusion of the numerous citizens: who having large families, and some of whom they would wish to put out to trades, could they but command, as in the above case an
immediate

immediate fee : and hence these youths thus rejected, unable to dig, to beg ashamed, become idle and profligate, to the detriment of themselves and the public, and this I believe will be admitted as no uncommon case from the above cause. And which, a cessation of it, would tend of course to diminish.

Seeing then, that so many objections lie to the present mode of apprenticing ; it now only remains to be shown, what more eligible means can be adopted ; more consonant with health, moral conduct, and public weal.

For the fulfilling then, of these important national intentions, I would propose ; that there should be an establishment of four provincial schools, under the signature of, *the four provincial working academies*, wherein the various implements of husbandry and huswifery in general use, should be deposited, where masters of respective works should be appointed with adequate salaries (after having been duly approved) and the fee usually given to strangers, to center here.

And in order to make this institution, as extensively useful as possible ; some acres of land should be attached, and augmented according to circumstances ; or in proportion as these infant colonies matured : so as to render such extension expedient. Where all the arts subservient to life, might, in process of time be exercised. Where the leather trade in all its branches would there find place. Where the linen manufacture through all the different stages of that business as likewise those of the woollen and cotton, would be there established.

But in an especial manner, should agriculture or husbandry, be there attended to : and that there may be scope for improvement, in this valuable line ; the land should consist of variety of soil : whether for the purpose of reclaiming, or otherwise, while the most approved modes of tillage, with whatever relates to the nature of composts, as suited to the different soils ; as likewise planting, pruning, grafting, draining, &c. should be there adopted. Care likewise should

should be taken, that the land should lie in the vicinity of some navigable river. Or be intersected by canals, leading to some capital trading town, but more especially to the *metropolis*, for the more easy conveyance of the various products of the institution: as well as for the purpose of returns, and other communications.

And that this last, or agricultural branch; may become a real, and national good: it should derive every aid and assistance, and be more immediately under the Society's care. Who, by premiums, by imparting the latest improvements in every thing relating to the art; and even by *lectures* at stated times; it might become a model of perfection in its way: diffusing its benign influence as from so many central points not only throughout the kingdom; but to foreign marts. This salutary arrangement also, would be instrumental in recovering this part of the British empire, from that opprobrium which at present it labors under, of want of due attention to this important concern of life. Here, the boys, would be early inducted into the mysteries of this most useful of sciences: a science, almost coeval with life itself. Here too, youth would acquire a robustness of constitution; here, in process of time, they would *intermarry**, and by that means, the Protestant religion, with those moral sentiments which were early inculcated among them; would be extended to their offspring.

And lastly—they could be here trained to *arms*, also, and from a love of their country, in consequence of such paternal care and attention; they would with alacrity, turn out upon any emergency, either against any hostile attempt of the enemy from without: or when threatened with commotions from within.

And as a still further motive of encouragement to this national undertaking; and in order to obviate any difficulties which might throw themselves in the way of it; it should be held as an agricultural *axium*; that there is no spot

* The marriage portion usual on such occasions would also centre here.

spot be it ever so sterile, so unpromising in itself; which may not admit of improvement from proper culture.

As witness the cape of *Good Hope*, which was little more than a barren promontory, 'till the *Dutch* made it what it is; *the garden of the world*: if a place where exotics from every part of the globe are made to flourish, as in their natural soil, can be called so.

Not that the *Dutch* understand these matters better than we. Nor that they are even more industriously inclined; but that there is an emulation among them in this way; kept up, and supported by their government; and impressed upon them as the greatest national good—and that patient and persevering industry, can accomplish it.

And can it be doubted but that *Ireland* which enjoys so many superior advantages over the *Cape*, or over the unwholesome fens of *Amboyna*; where they have colonized: can it be doubted, but that by an equal attention, it might become still more productive? It surely might! And it is no exaggeration to say, that in such case, that is, when those millions of *acres*, now either totally neglected, or but poorly cultivated, shall, by such means have attained their due degree of improvement: that then, the kingdom will proportionably rise in the scale of importance, and in wealth. And such might be the final result of an establishment of the kind I have here proposed—but to return.—The boys, after the term of their apprenticeship shall have expired here, and who are supposed to remain in the academy or institution; should be duly supported, should have certain rights and immunities, 'till they can support themselves, or by their joint labor, in their respective spheres of action not only to *reimburse* the *state*, for this last expence; but in due time, even to add to its *support*! Such, is the outline of a scheme, which professing as it does, to embrace such variety of objects: the wisdom of the *legislature* can best consult the means for fulfilling—to myself, it appears of the utmost import! and if it should be considered in the same point of view by government; the next great question then is,—whence the funds, which are to support it?—

To

To this I answer— that in the first stage of the business more especially ; recourse must necessarily be had partly to parliamentary aid, and partly to voluntary contribution. And where can the public money be better applied ; or private donation more happily, and judiciously directed ? But in process of time, as the institution grew into repute ; and became productive, as with care and attention, it could not fail to do : then it might derive still further aid, from the sale of *debentures* upon the credit of it. Each holder, to receive a dividend in proportion to the sum paid : and arising out of the sale of the produce. A liberal price having been first deducted for labor, or manufacture : together with other contingent expences—this, if any thing, would give the institution celebrity !

But in order to its more full, and perfect establishment ; there remains another source of support to be mentioned.

It is I believe, well understood, and a circumstance much to be lamented ; that there are at this day, many institutions or seminaries with large endowments, and which however well meant or judiciously intended in the commencement ; yet, from the lapse of time since their establishment such variety of circumstances might have intervened, as to render them at the present time unprofitable, or even useless. There are others again, whose original purity may have been so sullied by various abuses and neglects ; as not only to call aloud for re-establishment upon the original design, or spirit with which they were instituted ; but for an account of those sums, or revenues, broke in upon and diminished, by those, through whose hands they have been permitted to pass. And from such important investigation, pursued with zeal and judgment ; such new, and unexpected funds might arise, as would go, not only to the reinstating of those institutions on their former footing : but from the *surplus*, a fund itself might be produced, towards the completion of others still more congenial with the times and more useful !

But it may be alledged, that such alienation of *bequest*, which might have been made with the most pious design, should

should not be infringed, or altered. And yet, how often do men through life, change their idea of the same subject? how often do the most eminent writers, in their various editions of the same work, find it necessary to alter their former statements which they had then held as incontrovertible? and so also of wills, testaments, and *bequests*—how many revisions and alterations may they not have undergone during the life of the testator? and as in works of criticism, the man who rescues such passages of a respectable writer from that misrepresentation to which from lapse of time or otherwise they may be liable, and sets them in the fairest point of view; is doing what the author himself, would, most probably have accomplished had he lived; and if alive, would have commanded his best thanks; so likewise here—the donor, or institutor would consider such change, not so much in the light of alienation, as an extension or improvement of it according with the exigencies of the times: and which, the legislature is best qualified to effect. In this case of emergency, it officiates as *legatee* and there can be no doubt of its competency so to do, for the general good.

APPENDIX.

THE Baggot-Street Charter School lately established, is intended to contain sixty GIRLS, from thirteen to fifteen; and even occasionally, up to twenty—in order as said, to be perfected there. The house is most judiciously chosen, having rather the appearance of a nobleman's residence; and situated without the city on the Blackrock road, with a most diversified and commanding prospect.

I found these girls, in general healthy, and with florid, and chearful countenances. One of them apprehensive that I went there for the purpose of removing her from the house, seemed much affected. The best criterion this, of the treatment there.

This girl curtailed of her growth, and otherwise distorted says, that she contracted the complaint at the school of *Inneschar* county of Cork; occasioned by the master having sold her cloaths, and confined her in bed for the space of a year under colour of sickness. And this relation only tends further to confirm my foregoing remarks on the necessity of accurate inspection.

The above school, it is to be observed, was broke up in consequence of this, and other flagrant instances of mismanagement.

The master and mistress however, of the school we are now treating of; seem on the other hand, a contrast to the above: being apparently discreet, conscientious, and in all respects adapted to the important charge they have undertaken.
And

And here it may be observed, that when the allowance of four pence per day was first established; the price of subsistence was then considerably below the present standard: and rendering it doubtful, whether at the present time, it is competent to furnish the articles of life, in due quantity and quality: according to the established *dietary*. And if not, that the circumstance must bear hard, either on the master, or on those working girls, grown up as many of them are, to state of womanhood. And there being no ground annexed to this school, *not even a garden*, the master must necessarily go to market for every vegetable required—where even a cabbage cannot be procured under *three pence*; and where is a proportionable rise on every other article of the *dietary*. With regard to this dietary, and in addition to what has been said in a former part of this work, it may be further observed: that not a few upon looking into it, and perceiving *five Banian* days out of *seven*; or in which, are only two meat days in the week; have thence concluded, that this arrangement cannot be altogether consistent with health. And that for the more working, and grown up people of the institution more especially, there should be *three* meat days in lieu.

But however such a change in diet might be better received by them; or more conducive to health: and that consequently, we might wish the establishment of it: yet as the faculty would term it, there may be a *contraindication* here, for would the funds of the society it may be asked admit of an additional expence of the kind? As supposing the difference between a meat dinner and one of bread and milk, to be five shillings per week for every fifty: there would be a consequent increase of annual demand on the funds, of two hundred and fifty pounds.

All then perhaps which can be done towards giving relief in this case is—1st, To adopt the alterations in the dietary as formerly proposed; and secondly, for girls of the above description, as likewise boys; thrown too into situations such as this, where is an increased advance on the necessaries of life; for such, I would submit, that an *Ox Head* be allowed once a week in addition to the broth
of

of the day and when it is seriously considered, that the bones from thirty or forty pounds of meat, can but ill afford a substantial broth for sixty grown up persons; this amendment, must be every way satisfactory*. And what recommends it to further notice is, that the residue next day, will go so far, to supply the *infirmary* while the annual expence for all the schools, would not amount to more than one half the above sum.

And this, with the addition of *garden*, would be some compensation likewise, to the master, for the variations in the prices of things.

* As to the children of the respective *nurseries*, the above alterations may not be altogether so necessary: but the *schools* for the reasons mentioned, would I think require a diet *something* more substantial. And here may be mentioned a circumstance as to diet, which is said to have happened some years back at the Bluecoat Hospital from dispensing the same quantity indiscriminately where children and grown up persons were put: and which being below the standard of sufficiency for these latter; the result was, that they made up the deficiency from the others at the expence of health and even life, before the cause was found out.

F I N I S

Houses of the Oireachtas