

REMARKS
ON
SCHOOL RATES
IN
ENGLAND AND AMERICA.

BY THE VENERABLE

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"To establish a School Rate is a very serious measure; for if the rate becomes unpopular, what are you to do? Voluntary subscriptions will in the mean time have died out, and thus you may be stranded altogether."

Henry late Marquis of Lansdowne, Lord President, &c.

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PREFACE.

THE following Remarks were originally printed as a Letter to Earl Granville, then President of the Committee of Council on Education. The author, having afterwards corrected and enlarged them, published two editions in the form of a Charge to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Middlesex. It is hoped that a fourth edition, not addressed exclusively to the Clergy, may be useful in the approaching crisis of National Education.

VICARAGE, KENSINGTON,
15th February, 1867.

Houses of the Oireachtas

REMARKS ON SCHOOL RATES.

WHILE the Committee of Council are urgently enforcing, and the promoters of Church education throughout the country are strenuously resisting, the insertion of Conscience Clauses in the trust deeds of Church schools, a movement is in progress, which, if successful, would ultimately remove this ground of quarrel altogether, by superseding the present system of elementary education. I refer to the movement in favour of school rates.

A school rate, although dangerous in any form, is not always equally alarming to the ratepayers. Its promoters, therefore, will propose it under the modifications best adapted to conciliate favour and to disarm opposition. Those among them who are at all inspired with the wisdom of this world will say to one another, "We must not attempt at once to abolish school fees and voluntary contributions, and to impose the whole burden of educating nearly two millions of children upon the rateable property of the country. Such a scheme would have no prospect of success. It would be immediately set aside. We must proceed more plausibly and warily. Our bill must be *permissive* only; it must sanction the imposition of a rate only in parishes or districts where the majority of the ratepayers are in favour of the measure; for many will not perceive that a merely permissive bill will not effect the object in view, and that to make education universal, compulsory legislation is indispensable. Again, we must confine our proposal to a *subsidiary* rate in aid of voluntary contributions; for not a few will fail to discover, before it is too late, that if once a school rate is established, voluntary efforts will decline; and the rate required will not

amount to thousands merely, but to millions. And further, we must propose that, in order to secure *religious teaching*, the ratepayers shall be excluded from the management of the schools assisted. For the religious world, not being remarkable for sagacity, will not at once discover that such a scheme is nothing more than a "devout imagination," and that those who pay for the support of schools cannot be prevented from controlling the expenditure^m of their own money.

Such is the kind of rating bill which the wisdom of this world would naturally suggest. For my own part, I entirely concur in the opinion ably stated by the late Vice-President, that to demand money from the ratepayers, and, at the same time, to withhold from them all control over the outlay, is unreasonable and impracticable. The result is obvious. Since the ratepayers hold contradictory religious opinions, dissensions on this new ground of quarrel must arise in nearly all the parishes of the kingdom—dissensions far more intolerable than those produced by Church rates—dissensions only to be appeased by the entire withdrawal of religion from the curriculum of elementary schools in England, as is the case in America. *Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.**

I am well aware that the idea of any Government proposing, or of any Parliament acceding to a school rate in any form, is looked upon by many as a mere phantasy. The religious bodies, it is alleged, would unite in opposing it as dangerous to religion. The rate-payers, we are assured, would resist it as nothing less than an enormous confiscation of rateable property.

* When I was in the United States, I visited a school in which all the apparatus was of the most costly description, and the proficiency of the children, in all the ordinary branches of secular knowledge, was unexceptionable. Having complimented the master on his success, I inquired what course he took with reference to religion. His answer was to this effect: "On my appointment to the school, I resolved to give religious knowledge along with secular teaching; but I found it would not do. I got snubbed for my pains. Our managers belong to various denominations. One took me to task, and then another, until at last I gave in." "Do you then," I asked, "give no religious instruction at all?" He replied: "What I do is this: when any boy is guilty of a fault, I give him a good jobation; I can do that with perfect safety."

I suspect, however, that the danger is more serious than the supporters of the present system generally imagine. Indeed, their false security is in itself a source of peril. It leads them, not only to do nothing themselves, but to discourage others from doing anything to avert the threatened mischief.

The first attempt to introduce a rating system in this country was made by Sir James Graham in the Factories Regulation Bill of 1842. Since that time no fewer than five measures of the same kind have been proposed—viz., the Manchester Bill, the Borough Bill of 1852, and the three bills of Lord John Russell, Sir John Pakington, and Mr. Cobden in 1855. Recently preparation has been made for the introduction of a seventh school-rate bill in the next session of Parliament. The meeting for that purpose was held at Manchester on the 10th of December, 1866, under the presidency of the Mayor, when the following resolution was carried by a large majority:—"That in the opinion of this meeting it is desirable to make complete provision for the primary instruction of the children of the poorer classes, by means of local rates, under local administration, with legal power, in cases of neglect, to enforce attendance at school." On this occasion there were present representatives of both the educational parties known, respectively, in Manchester for many years past as the supporters of the merely secular plan, and as promoters of the Manchester and Salford scheme for uniting secular teaching with religious education; both parties now assenting to the agency of local rates.

To these advocates of a rating system must be added the Royal Commissioners, appointed to inquire into the state of popular education, who in their Report presented to her Majesty in 1861, recommend the establishment of a school rate. They advise, however, that it should not be levied on parishes, but form part of the county rate, in the fond hope of thus preventing the interference of the ratepayers with the expenditure of their own money.

I have next to mention the great body of Radical Reformers who openly declare, that among the chief benefits to be derived

by the working classes from their admission, in preponderating numbers, to the franchise, is the substitution of a "just, sound, and truly national system of education" for the "miserable compromise," the "tentative," "provisional," and "preliminary" arrangements, the "pretence," the "sham," the "makeshift," now palmed upon the country by the Committee of Council and the religious bodies. These views, promulgated by Mr. Bright, Mr. Stuart Mill, Mr. Milner Gibson, Professor Fawcett, Mr. Ernest Jones, and many others, deserve more consideration from Conservative statesmen and legislators than they have hitherto received.*

It is a startling fact, which we learn from the evidence given before the Royal Commissioners and Sir John Pakington's Committee, that many of the authorities at the Privy Council Office, both past and present, including even their able Secretary himself, have acknowledged their aversion to the system which they are appointed to administer, and their readiness to supersede it by school rates.

I must not overlook a very numerous body who advocate school rates as the only remedy for the evils caused by Trades Unions. They dwell on the impracticability of the rules which Trades Unions are endeavouring to establish, on the ignorance which those rules betray of the very alphabet of political economy, and on the prevalence of wanton and ruinous strikes: and they contend that it is only by a better system of national education that the ruin of trade in this country can be arrested. In vain do we remind these hasty reasoners that in Scotland strikes are more frequent and more obstinate than in England and Wales, although Scotland has for centuries enjoyed a system of education which used to be held up as an example to

* Mr. Gibson, addressing his constituents at Ashton-under-Lyne, on the 29th of January, 1867, said, "If he were asked what were the advantages to be gained by Reform, he should answer that there were many important questions that could be better dealt with by a reformed Parliament than by the present House of Commons—amongst others, the question of national education. If we had a system of national education supported by all, it should be one from which all could derive advantage, and therefore it should be devised by a Parliament in which all were fairly represented."

this country. In vain do we remind them, that Trades Unions are thoroughly organised in the United States of America, in spite of the highly-lauded common-school system, and that according to recent advices, "there has been a perfect mania at New York and Brooklyn on the subject of strikes. The painters, the harness-makers, musicians, lightermen, longshoremen, carpenters, masons, plasterers, plumbers, all sorts and conditions of men, followed the example of the car-drivers, and generally attained the same measure of ill luck for themselves and their wives and children. The community would be startled," says the 'New York Times,' "if they knew the vast numbers of unemployed men, the sick-hearted women, the hungry, shivering children that are at this time in the City of New York." But the strongest evidence of blindness in the parties I refer to, is that we in vain appeal to the experience of England itself, to demonstrate the inefficiency of intellectual culture as a preventive of strikes. The Amalgamated Engineers are intellectually as well instructed as the working classes are likely to become under any educational system; and yet by their turbulence, their impracticability, and their repeated strikes, they have succeeded in depriving themselves of the monopoly which they recently enjoyed of their own branch of industry—a monopoly never to be re-established; they are rapidly transferring their trade to foreign lands, and yet so incorrigible is their infatuation, so completely are they enslaved by demagogues and agitators, that even now, at the eleventh hour, they are as turbulent and unruly as ever. It is to no purpose that we adduce this accumulated evidence. There are persons so completely demonstration proof as to insist, notwithstanding, that the only remedy for the suicidal policy of our working classes is to sweep away our existing educational arrangements, and to indoctrinate our artizans in early life, under a rating system, with the principles of Quesnel and Adam Smith.

I have only now to add that many persons are disposed to look upon a school rate with favour, in consequence of having been led to believe that the number of parishes in which there

is no school receiving a Government grant, amounts to 11,024. The basis of this startling statement is the Report of the Committee of Council for 1863-4. And it is a statement held up to us as of unquestionable authority. It has formed the groundwork, as regards statistics, of Mr. Walter's motion on education, of numerous speeches by members of both Houses of Parliament, of leading articles in leading newspapers, of printed letters without end, of reference by the House of Commons on the appointment of Sir John Pakington's Committee, as well as of a draft report by the Chairman himself. But the statement is founded on a gross mistake committed at the Council Office. By "Parishes" we should naturally understand parishes or ecclesiastical districts which might be expected to have separate schools. But, strange to say, the word "Parish" in the Report means a Poor-law division or township, of which there are 14,877, that is, 1114 more than the whole number of parishes and ecclesiastical districts. To this fundamental error must be added other mistakes which I have no room fully to expose.* When, however, it is stated that there are 11,024 parishes which are not, but ought to be, assisted by Government, we have to deduct 405 parishes, consisting of five houses or even fewer; also parishes in which the school is endowed; parishes in which a wealthy proprietor is jealous of State interference; parishes in which a competent master carries on an adventure school; and parishes so near each other that one school supplies the wants of two or three. Happily the erroneous statistics of the Council Office will be corrected by the decennial enquiry which will be completed this year by the National Society. As this enquiry is conducted by secretaries of great ability and experience in statistics, its results will be deserving of entire confidence. I rejoice to state that the returns already obtained

* There are, for instance, no fewer than 4347 out of the whole number of township parishes, which do not coincide in respect of area or population with the ecclesiastical parishes, and on account of which, therefore, a large deduction must be made. See two very able letters published in the 'Standard' newspaper of December 25, 1866, and January 7, 1867, by the Rev. C. A. Stevens, incumbent of All Saints', Blackheath, and lately Secretary of the United Education Committee.

are highly satisfactory; and since a case of supposed neglect on the part of the landowners and Clergy of the County of Berks has recently called forth a burst of indignation from a prominent Reformer, I hope it will restore his mental equilibrium to be informed that, according to the returns just obtained, the whole Diocese of Oxford, including not only Berkshire, but Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, contains only 54 parishes unprovided with Church schools, and of these only 13 are in Berkshire.*

The readiness with which many persons allow themselves to be prejudiced against the present educational system is the more surprising when we consider how the system originated, and how many conflicting recommendations it most happily combines. It was not devised in its present form by any party in the State or in the Church. It has been gradually developed; it is the result of much discussion, controversy, and negotiation; the rival interests of Churchmen and Dissenters, of Protestants and Romanists, were to be reconciled; intellectual was to be combined with spiritual progress; secular with religious instruction. The system thus gradually elicited, although, no doubt, susceptible of improvement, combines the most important requisites by which a national system could be recommended. It makes a very moderate demand on the national resources; it acts fairly towards all Christian communions, helping all in proportion as they are willing to help themselves; it is conducted by the very persons, whether Churchmen or Dissenters, who take the greatest share of interest in the intellectual and spiritual advancement of the people; it is making rapid progress in the extent and efficiency of its operations; and, if liberally and judiciously encouraged by the State, would gradually supply the wants of our whole population.

The total number of children in England and Wales, between three and fifteen years of age, was in 1851, 4,908,696, and may be assumed, on the authority of the Registrar-General, to have

* Of the 54 parishes, 9 are returned as being united with others for school purposes; and in many of the remaining parishes the population is too small to require schools or any beyond private adventure "dames' schools."

increased since the census of that year to 5,350,000. Making all necessary deductions, we may estimate the whole number who ought to be in attendance at National and other elementary schools at 1,800,000. According to the returns made to the National Society in 1856-7, the number of week-day scholars in Church schools alone was 1,187,086. And it appeared that the increase, during the ten preceding years, was 955,865, or at the rate of $19\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.*

Under these circumstances, it might have been hoped that statesmen and legislators, and still more that clergymen, would be entirely satisfied. It might have been hoped that, to the best of their judgment and ability, they would endeavour to uphold and advance these auspicious arrangements, and be prepared to put aside at once, as mischievous and delusive, any proposed measure calculated to supersede them. But unhappily this is not the case. Our present system, as we have seen, has many powerful assailants. The proportions, certainly, of the edifice are not critically symmetrical. Being the result of compromise and concession among the several builders, it presents, of necessity, great anomalies. Being not compulsory, but allowing free scope to all parties, it falls short of theoretical perfection. Enthusiasts, therefore, and severe disciplinarians, disparage and despise it.† They look down upon it as a homely,

* The progress of education in this country has been most rapid. In 1803 the proportion of scholars to the total population was 1 to $17\frac{1}{2}$; in 1818 it was 1 to $17\frac{1}{4}$; in 1833 it was 1 to $11\frac{1}{4}$; in 1851, at the time of the census, it was 1 to 8.36; and the recent Statistical Inquiry of the Education Commission proves that in 1858 the proportion had become 1 to 7.7.

Compared with the educational statistics of Prussia, Holland, and France, those of our own country cannot be pronounced unsatisfactory. In England the proportion of scholars to the population is, as stated above, 1 to 7.7; in Holland it is 1 to 8.11; in France it is 1 to 9; in Prussia it is rather higher than in England, namely, 1 to 6.27; but in Prussia education is compulsory. The progress of Church education in particular has been remarkably rapid. During the period between 1837 and 1857, the number of scholars in Church Week-day Schools had risen from 558,180 to 1,187,086. The greatest number of children likely to attend National Schools and other elementary schools of a similar class is 1,800,000.

† Mr. Bright, addressing his fellow townsmen at Rochdale, on the 30th of January, 1867, said, "Take the education question. You will hardly talk to a man in the House of Commons who will not tell you that education is a great

native production, twisted into conformity with our national character and social peculiarities ; and would give the preference to some magnificent exotic, transplanted full-grown from the neighbouring continent or from America.

Among the chief arguments in favour of school rates is the often-repeated assertion that the wisdom of our brethren on the other side of the Atlantic has solved the great problem which hitherto has baffled us on this side ;—that schools for the use of all, or “common schools,” should be placed under local management and supported by local rates ; that since the ratepayers are of different religious persuasions, the instruction of the children should be restricted to secular matters ; and that religious education, if given at all, should be given at extra hours, or on Sundays, or by the parents at home.

As the common schools of the United States are seldom mentioned or alluded to in England, except by persons who hold them up as models for our imitation, a notion widely prevails that the system is almost universally approved of in America ; that not a single voice worth attending to is raised against it ; that the secular instruction is admirable ; and that the want of religious teaching on week days is abundantly supplied on Sundays or at home.

1. My first remark, therefore, on the American common schools is, that the secular instruction they afford deserves to a great extent the commendation it receives. I admire the liberality with which school-rooms, class-rooms, salaries, books, and school apparatus of all kinds are supplied. It forms a noble contrast to the miserable parsimony which too frequently betrays itself in the provisions we, of this country, are content to make for the education of the poor. The legislatures of many States, especially in New England, seem determined that no child shall grow up without opportunity to acquire the

question, and admit that very little has been done, and that what has been done has been done awkwardly and expensively, and that something more is required. But I do not believe that it is in the power of any Government to pass any decent or satisfactory measure through that House.”

key of knowledge. I do not affirm that all children, even in New England, do actually acquire it; but only that to a large extent they have the opportunity. For it would be a grievous error to suppose that there are not in America, as in England and Wales, many parents, especially immigrants from Europe, who from indifference, from cupidity, or from indigence, cannot be prevailed upon to send their children regularly to school. There are also many, who, as I shall presently have occasion to show, would not expose their children to the contaminating influence of schools from which religion is excluded.

2. Another admission which I feel compelled to make, is the *necessity* of the common-school system in the country of its birth. Under the peculiar circumstances of the United States, I do not see how the system could be dispensed with. The attempt to establish denominational schools throughout the length and breadth of a vast territory, where there is no ecclesiastical establishment, and where the population is divided into an endless multiplicity of sects, the chief of which are almost equally balanced in numbers and influence, would be obviously impracticable. But the people must be educated. Universal suffrage renders universal education imperative. Every individual voter must be able to read and write, and must possess sufficient intelligence to be entrusted with the elective franchise. It is also to be seriously considered, that not only English, but Irish and German, not to mention Scandinavian immigrants, are known to settle in large numbers on the American continent. Now these different nations must be fused together into one homogeneous people; and the great medium for such fusion is the common school, in which children of various tongues and races may be educated together.

A nation dwelling in the midst of another nation, with which it has no social sympathies, but is utterly alien in habits, language, and religion, presents one of the most intolerable evils with which a country can be afflicted. We have a lamentable example of this evil at no great distance from us. If the common schools had done nothing more than lessen the in-

fluence of the Romish priesthood over the Irish immigrants, and prepared the children of Ireland to become American citizens, they would have conferred a priceless benefit on America. Among the evils with which that great republic has to contend, there is none that more seriously imperils all its best institutions than the turbulence, the corruption, and the spirit of lawless combination, characteristic of the Irish Romanists in the more populous cities of the American Union. It is generally admitted that but for the common schools that dangerous class would have been more numerous and formidable than it is by many hundred thousands, whose combined strength would have been well nigh overwhelming.*

3. My next remark is, that our American brethren did not spontaneously and all at once adopt the common-school system in its present non-religious form. It was forced upon them. They tried at first to reconcile a school rate with religious education. And if it had been possible they would have succeeded; for they are *a wise and understanding people*.† But when rates were established, the ratepayers of course insisted on a share of the disposal of their own money, and in the management of schools supported at their expense. A question arose as to the religious teaching to be given; then followed endless jealousies and dissensions: various schemes of compromise were tried. These invariably failed. The only method of restoring peace was to remove entirely the source of quarrel, and to exile religion altogether from the common school. I have myself

* The above remarks may be illustrated by the following apostrophe to Roman Catholics in the Anniversary Address appended to the 29th Report of the American Sunday School Union (p. 82). "You know, and we know, that what you dread is not so much the Bible in the school, or the godlessness of the common school, as its *pure American spirit*. Confess, Gentlemen, confess, that the shoe pinches just there. But I insist that the children of your flocks shall attend as American children. I know no Irishman; I know no German; I know nothing here but American. Let the children of your enslaved and prejudiced people mingle with those of freemen, study with them, read history with them, catch their tone of manliness and their sense of personal existence, personal rights, and personal responsibility; and you may shut up your confessionals, and extinguish your wax tapers around your altars, for soon there will be no one to want them to see the sunlight with.

† Deut. iv. 6.

received from an eminent ecclesiastic of Connecticut, in a letter dated the 2nd of January, 1855, the following account of this lamentable falling off: "In this State," he says, "it was once the custom to teach in the ordinary schools the Westminster Confession to the children of Congregationalists, and the Church Catechism to those of Churchmen. The divisions of the Congregationalists, however, and the fact that many of them became Methodists and Baptists, and sectaries of other names, resulted in so wide-spread an indifference to matters of religion as to put an end to this. So that now the only relic of this 'thing of old' is the reading of the Bible, as an exercise in *reading out* merely in the schools."

In the 'Church Journal' of New York, a paper conducted by clerical editors of the highest respectability and intelligence, the impossibility of teaching religion in schools supported by rates is very forcibly illustrated. "We now further state," says the Journal, "that this neglect of moral and religious instruction is a necessary consequence of a system where there are so many persuasions participating in the instruction, all of whose varying opinions must be respected. Each party is taxed for the support of the system; and each, however small, provided it be at all in earnest, pleads by the sacred rights of conscience, for liberty of opinion, for protection from religious bias: and thus every positive element of Christianity must be sedulously excluded from common-school instruction. Is it not so? Consider for one moment. How is it possible to avoid the questions of adult or infant baptism, predestination, grace and good works, the corporeal or spiritual resurrection of the dead, the sacraments, free-will, and necessity? And yet these, and perhaps more important points, must be avoided. To teach that Jesus Christ was a *mere Man*, would not be endured by the Presbyterians, Baptists, &c.; and to instruct the school that he was *God-Man*, and that he made atonement for sin on the cross would not be endured by Unitarians; for they not only pay their taxes, but they live under institutions which sacredly guard their freedom of opinion. To teach that there

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

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

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

“Now if a judgment and future retribution are to be ignored; if the resurrection of the body, and human responsibility, and the sacredness of a judicial oath, and the observation of a day of holy rest are to be unrecognised; if the truth of the very Scriptures is not to be affirmed; how much of Christianity, worthy of the name, remains which can be taught in our schools? *Nay, God himself is as unknown, in the majority of them, as He was in Athens when Paul visited Mars’ Hill.* It is said, that moral precepts can be inculcated in our schools. But what are precepts without the sanctions of religion? What are mere prudential rules before the gusts of passion, or when assailed by strong temptation? What is chaff before a tempest?

“This divorcement of religion from education was unknown to our fathers. Washington’s dying injunction was, ‘Never allow education to be divorced from religion.’”

Thus far the New York Journal. Are we then to expect our own statesmen to be more successful than those of all the

numerous States of North America in devising a scheme by which school rates may be reconciled with religious education? I think he will be a bold politician who pretends to accomplish this, and they will be simple-minded auditors who should put their trust in his pretensions.

It appears to me that Mr. James Simpson, an enthusiast for exclusively secular instruction, evinced a praiseworthy consistency in his evidence some years ago before a Committee of the House of Commons, when he gravely stated that to him it was a matter of indifference to what religious persuasion the teachers of elementary schools belonged; they might be Christians or infidels, Jews or Mahommedans; for he would establish a rule that any teacher who should so far forget his duty as to utter a single word either for or against religion, should be liable to immediate dismissal.

4. This leads me to my next remark, namely, the difficulty of obtaining evidence against the common-school system of the United States. Many Americans, who acknowledge its deficiencies and dangers, insist notwithstanding on its necessity. "We cannot," say they, "supersede it if we would, and we should hesitate if we could. Serious as the evil is, the evils resulting from its removal would be more serious still." A northern Bishop, to whom I had applied for information, writes to me: "I have had to *work* rather than to *write* against this state of things. Hence there is less to be found in the way of pamphlets and essays than might be imagined." A similar remark was made to me by a Bishop whom I visited in one of the Border States. At a meeting of the Diocesan Convention of New Jersey, in 1858, the late able and energetic Bishop of that diocese, Dr. Doane, gave this warning to his clergy: "There are serious objections against taking the ground of hostility to the common-school system. *We cannot upset it.*" Such is the opinion expressed by an authority, who would be the very last to recommend without necessity a neutral attitude in religion. Why should any American citizen, lay or clerical, decry an institution which he neither can nor would *upset*? If

I were myself an American I should probably be altogether silent on the subject. I may add that, as a British subject, I should at this moment be silent, if I did not know that silence would be dangerous, and that our statesmen, under most erroneous impressions, may be led unadvisedly to introduce this transatlantic institution into England and Wales, thereby upsetting and destroying the admirable system which now prevails.

If any countryman of mine took up a prejudice against some British institution,—the Poor Law, for example,—and began to tell me that it is a great social evil, that it destroys all habits of forethought and frugality among the working classes, and that it would be a better course to abolish the whole system, and relieve the poor by parliamentary grants in aid of voluntary contribution, I should remind this theoretical objector, that the Poor Law is an established institution of the land; that he cannot *upset* it; and that his only course is to make the best of it. I should tell him, that if a question were to arise as to the expediency of introducing for the first time a poor law into France, Germany, or America, his general objections to the principle of the measure might possibly command respect, but that in England they come too late, and are altogether out of place.

5. The next point I would suggest for consideration is, that the want of religious teaching in the common schools of America on week days is not compensated by religious teaching upon Sundays. On this point I may quote a very able work on the United States, published in 1852, in London, by Hugh Seymour Tremenhare, Esq., Her Majesty's Inspector of Mines. The prepossessions of this intelligent observer were all in favour of the common-school system; but the following propositions are the result of much observation and inquiry. One proposition is, that ten, twenty, thirty, forty, and in some places even fifty per cent. of the children who attend the common schools on week days, do not attend a Sunday school, and consequently do not receive religious instruction in school at all. His other

proposition is that "religious instruction given in Sunday schools by persons unaccustomed to teach, and usually not trained to deal with the subject in the manner most capable of presenting it in all its parts to the minds of children," is often utterly ineffective.

Among the chief agencies in the United States for supplying the deficiencies of the common-school system is the American Sunday School Union, which labours with much energy and ability in the cause. But the Reports of this Society contain the bitterest lamentations over the increasing vice and irreligion which it is in vain endeavouring to combat. In the 29th Report I find the following appeal:—"There must be more money, thoughts, pains, and prayers bestowed upon the children, or we shall find ignorance and irreligion will have the upper hand."* And again, "It is one of the unsolved, perhaps unsolvable problems of our time, that there should be such a general conviction of the importance of the early training of children, and, co-existent with it, such a general indifference at least to one of the most effective means of accomplishing it."†

6. I pass on to remark next on the pernicious influence which the professed neutrality of the common-school system must exert upon the minds of children. On this subject I may quote a valuable article in the 'Mercersburg Quarterly Review' for January, 1853. The article forms the substance of a sermon at the meeting of the Synod of the German Reformed Church in October, 1852, at Baltimore, published at the request of that body. It is therefore of high authority, and represents the opinions, not merely of an individual, but of a respectable conclave of divines, — German divines, and therefore among the very last from whom the strong sentiments I am about to quote would be expected. "It is the seemingly distant and careless attitude in which the common-school system stands to the Church in the education of children, which is so powerful in weaning their hearts from her. It is

* Page 30.

† Page 35.

not positive opposition, but negative indifference, which is the root of the evil. It is in this, as in other cases, distance, coldness, and carelessness, more than all else, that alienates the heart from what it ought to love, and would love but for that. A child weaned in early infancy, removed from its mother, brought up among strangers, not permitted to hear her name pronounced, except with the uplifted finger of caution, and hearing that it is almost a crime to praise her virtues,—such a child can never afterwards have all, if any, of the feelings which belong to the relation of a child to its mother. It is just so when we permit our children to be trained out of the Church, where her name is not heard except in a way which implies that she needs to be watched, and that her influence is especially to be deprecated in the nurture of man's intellectual nature. Thus the Church is, in fact, a man of hideous face, looking out upon children from the dark, filling their young spirits with secret dread, and causing them to go as far as possible the other way, for fear of hidden evil; and just as those superstitious fears which are awakened in the confiding heart of childhood by thoughtless parents or injudicious nurses, can be removed by neither reason nor philosophy,—so the feeling of fear and jealousy toward religion which this false system of education inspires, will present its repulsive images before the spirit, in spite of its better judgment, to the latest hour of life! He that—or any system that—instils in the heart of a child any fear but the fear of God, or raises any doubt or dread but for that which is evil, has made wrong what he can never make right. . . .”

It might well be expected that the practical result of thus estranging children from religion would be disastrous. Accordingly, the German Preacher thus proceeds:—“Already there are many parents who decline sending their children to the common schools on account of the profanity, vulgarity, and rudeness which are found to reign there.” And again: “Children learn from example before they can understand the grounds and reasons of moral obligation: hence the injury they

receive from the bad examples which are constantly before them in common schools." The Preacher afterwards informs us that in 1816 a Committee was appointed in Philadelphia to inquire into the weak points of the system. "They report," he says, "that many children do not attend at all during the year, though 22,000 dollars were spent to educate them. But this is not the worst; so bad was the character of these schools that, 'Such as were absent suffered less by their inattention than many of those whose morals have been thus undesignedly injured at the county expense.' But worse yet remains. 'For,' proceeds the Report, 'in every view of the existing plan of public education, with which your Committee are furnished, they are reluctantly and sorrowfully compelled to declare, that from its first establishment to the present time, it has, in their opinion, been not only injurious to the character of the rising generation, but a benevolent fraud upon the public bounty.'"

"The patrons of this system," observes the German Preacher, "forgot that educated mind without religion is educated vice; and that mind can only be stimulated to seek its improvement by something higher, deeper, and more earnest than itself. Of this truth they are reminded by the failure of the experiment." Let us contrast with this lamentable picture the noble description given in the same sermon of the kind of school education which both himself and the Synod he was addressing desired to see established. "Hear then the conclusion of the whole matter, and the sum of what we need and ask. Give us Christian schools, schools which have a God, a Saviour, a Holy Spirit, a Bible, a hymn-book, a catechism and prayer, a pastor and pious school-teacher—a school between the family and the Church,—a school which will carry forward the education of children in the same spirit in which it was commenced by pious parents—a school that will be a nursery to the Church—a school so entirely under the control of the Church, that it may carry out the spirit of its great commission in reference to its own children, '*Feed my lambs.*'"

I trust that in these words the great body of the clergy will

recognize a description of their own schools ; and that there is no sacrifice which they will not be prepared to make, of time, of labour, or of expense, rather than permit them to degenerate into seminaries of mere worldly knowledge.

But it must not be imagined that the German Lutheran Synod of Baltimore is my sole authority. I proceed to members of our own communion ; and I begin with an extract from a speech delivered before our University of Oxford, in 1852, by the Right Rev. S. A. M'Coskry, D.D., Bishop of Michigan. "In behalf, then, of the American Church, I heartily thank you for your kind expression of esteem ; and permit me to say, that one of the greatest comforts for the present and the future, with regard to yourselves, is the connection which I see everywhere in England between religion and education. It is this which is the security, and will be the security of your land. Dissever them,—I believe it was the remark of an eminent individual in your land, whose name is always remembered with gratitude, the Duke of Wellington. I believe it was he who said, 'Dissever religion and education, and you only make men clever devils!' It has always been so, and if there be any one thing in our land which we deeply deplore, and with respect to which we look to the future with forebodings of disaster, it is that severance."

A New England Clergyman writes to me as follows:—"An instance or two will illustrate more strikingly the condition to which our Congregationalists have come, than pages of ordinary statement. In one of our towns, a missionary who had gone thither to establish the Church, was made one of a committee to visit the schools. In only one district of all did he find *any* children who knew the Ten Commandments ; and that district was the one in which his field of labour lay ; while the children were those that attended his own Sunday school. In another case, a clergyman in a school in which there were no Church children, could not find one who knew the Lord's Prayer. And still again, in the case of a very intelligent person, who came to

be examined for a teachership, it was found that although well instructed in other matters, he could not even tell the names of the first books in the Old Testament."

Equally painful statements will be found in the Reports of the American Sunday School Union. Thus, with respect to Western Ohio, a Home Missionary writes as follows:—"A dark cloud of ignorance rests on this whole region, the like of which I did not expect to find in any part of our land."* Another missionary makes the following pious ejaculation with respect to his field of labour: "Would that I had the power to portray to the minds of our fellow citizens in the East in all its living reality the bright intelligent faces of the thousands of the dear children in Northern Illinois! And then if I could draw aside the veil that covers their mind from human view, and show the deep moral darkness that broods over them, and on which not a single ray of light from the blessed Bible has ever shone! In one daily school that I visited, of twenty or twenty-five children I found only one that could tell what Jesus Christ came into the world for. And this is only a specimen of thousands that are growing up to manhood in this great valley. What are dollars and cents when compared with the value of these precious souls? But how can they be saved without instruction?"† I shall only add a passage in the Report of the Society with reference to two considerable towns in the State of Maine. "No religious organisation; no sabbaths; no preaching. In these two towns there are about one thousand children growing up under such influences as will draw them to intemperate habits as soon as they are old enough to lift a glass to their lips; and they are entirely without any religious instruction or restraint. 'I have seen,' says a colporteur, 'children not over ten years old lying beastly drunk.'"

7. My next subject of remark is the inefficacy of the common-school system in repressing crime. It might be expected that

* Page 31.

† Page 32.

in our old and densely-peopled land, presenting great contrasts of wealth and indigence, crime would be frequent: whereas we should not anticipate the same result in a new country, boundless in extent, and affording full employment, with cheap food and high wages, to the whole body of the people. But I find numerous and bitter complaints that, owing to the want of religious education, crime is rapidly on the increase, and that the common schools, if they do not engender depravity, certainly do not prevent it.

The New York Church Journal of December 4, 1856, quotes the following remarkable statement made by Ex-Governor Clifford of Massachusetts:—"I have a general impression, derived from a long familiarity with the prosecution of crime, both as District Attorney and Attorney-General, that the merely intellectual education of our schools, in the absence of that moral culture and discipline which in my judgment ought to be an essential part of every system of school education, furnishes but a feeble barrier to the assaults of temptation and the prevalence of crime; indeed without this sanctifying element, I am by no means certain that the mere cultivation of intellect does not increase the exposure to crime by enlarging the sphere of man's capacity to minister through its agency to his sensual and corrupt desires. I can safely say, as a general inference drawn from my own somewhat extensive observation of crime and criminals, that as flagrant cases and as depraved characters have been exhibited among a class of persons who have enjoyed the ordinary elementary instruction of our New England schools, and in some instances of the higher institutions of learning, as could be found by the most diligent investigation among the convicts of Norfolk Island or of Botany Bay."

A recent Report of the Inspectors of Prisons in the State of New York, gives the following statement:—"Of the convicts in the Auburn Prison, 468 had received no religious or moral instruction, and 512 had never read the Bible or attended Divine Service."

The Chaplain of another prison makes in his Report the following startling announcement:—"Of 631 prisoners, 2 only were familiar with the Scriptures, and had been well instructed in Christian doctrine. 204 of them were ignorant of the Saviour's name, and could not repeat the Lord's Prayer."

Another Chaplain states that—"Of 3000 prisoners, he found 1583 so destitute of religious instruction, that to speak to them of virtue, vice, iniquity or holiness, was to speak to them in an unknown tongue." *

The Ex-Mayor of Boston, Mr. Bigelow, publicly made the following statement:—"At the rate with which violence and crime have recently increased, our jails, like our almshouses, will scarcely be adequate to the imperious requirements of society."

The Inspectors of Prisons in New Jersey made the following report to the Legislature of that State in 1856:—"We regret to have to say, that in our opinion the violation of law by the commission of crime is largely on the increase in our State, and, as a necessary consequence, our prisons are full to overflowing."

The Rev. Dr. Townley, of Toronto, quotes the following statement from a journalist in the United States, addicted to liberal opinions:—"Everybody knows that the most depraved beings in our country are among those upon whom most is expended for their education; also that thieves, midnight assassins, and incendiaries have come from our schools by hundreds and thousands." †

In the autumn of 1855 a remarkable meeting was held at New York, including "Presidents and Professors of Colleges, and Directors of County and City High Schools from different parts of the Union, to consider of the best measures for the improvement of education." The following is from the printed

* Crime increasing, &c. Church Journal, p. 230. Aug. 12, 1857.

† Seven Letters, by the Rev. Adam Townley, D.D., on the Non-religious Common-School System of Canada and the United States. Letter VI. p. 42.

account of the speeches on that occasion:—"The venerable editor for several years of the Massachusetts Journal of Education, with great fervour, insisted that 'a great change must be adopted in our educational system, for, from the midst of our schools depravity is growing up; and from them the Schuylers and Tuckermans have their origin.' 'He had been,' he said, 'in an official capacity, brought in contact with five or six thousand of the teachers of New England, many of whom were morally unfit for their work, and he was persuaded that the State must be shaken to ruins under the present training of American youths.' Before he left the hall he said that there was not one in ten of the teachers of New England to whom he would entrust the moral training of his child.

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

"Professor Pierce, of Harvard College, said, 'We must have daily religious culture in our schools; separating religion from the daily work of a child, and confining it to the Church, is like taking all the salt that should be mingled with our daily food, and eating it alone before breakfast. If religion could not be taught in schools without sectarianism, then let sectarianism be taught. As for myself, I would much prefer my children to be instructed in sectarianism, than be sent to schools where there is an indifference to religion.'

"Alexander Bache, the retiring president of the association, concluded his address upon the improvements our system needs, with these significant words:—"I have reserved the most important thing for the last, that which must be at the bottom of our whole system, *religious education*. The religious man

is everything; the intellectual man without religion is nothing.'” *

8. The next point for consideration is, that our brethren in America show their disapproval of the common-school system, by endeavouring at a great expense to establish *parochial* schools, or, as we might call them, national schools, in order to give the children a religious education. On this point I had an interesting conversation with one of the most learned Bishops in America. He was denouncing the common-school system in strong terms. I inquired whether he had ever delivered a Charge or published a Pamphlet on the subject. “No,” he said, “I must not let it be possible to represent me as an enemy to the enlightenment of the people. What I do is to encourage to the utmost of my power the establishment of parochial schools in all parts of my diocese.” In reply I ventured this remonstrance: “How can you expect your clergy to undertake the task of building and maintaining schools,—not where there are no other means of education,—but in opposition to common schools supported by contributions from the public treasury at the rate of 2*l.* a year for each scholar?” The Bishop answered: “The extreme urgency of the case compels me; and I may add, that I receive great encouragement, not only from my clergy, but from the laity. They see the magnitude of the evil impending over us.”

The Diocesan Synod of New Jersey, at a meeting held in 1858, took into consideration the Report of a Committee on Church schools and the common-school system. The Committee recommended that the Church should “give every aid and encouragement in its power to the establishment of schools, affording not only intellectual culture, but also such special instruction in religion as accords with the sober and Scriptural discipline of the Church.” The Committee at the same time could not avoid expressing serious apprehensions on the subject of pecuniary support, because the members of the Church were

* New York Church Journal, Dec. 11, 1856.

already taxed, and some of them to the utmost of their ability, for the educational expenses of the common schools. Notwithstanding this difficulty, resolutions were actually adopted in favour of parochial schools as tending "to check the rapid increase of juvenile immorality, to raise up a generation of good citizens and good Christians, and supply a serious and constantly increasing demand for well-trained teachers of the young, as well as able ministers of the Gospel."

The desire to establish parochial schools is not confined to the members of our sister Church in America. It is strongly felt, as I have already shown, by the German Lutheran Synod; and from a statement published by the General Assembly in 1849, it appears that the Presbyterians had succeeded in establishing no less than eighty-two schools of this description.

When I first printed my Remarks on the common-school system some years ago, I sent a copy to my celebrated parishioner, the late Lord Macaulay. In acknowledging the pamphlet, his Lordship said, that he had read it with deep interest; that it had made a great impression upon his mind; but that the impression would have been greater, if he had not perceived all my authorities to be *ecclesiastics*. My answer to this objection is, that ecclesiastics are not bad authorities on a question of fact, with which they are especially conversant; that my authorities are not all ecclesiastics; that some of them belong to the American laity; and that the laity must sympathise entirely with the clergy on this point, otherwise, after having paid a heavy rate to support their common schools, they would not come forward with voluntary subscriptions for parochial schools.

9. The next particular to which I wish to draw attention is, the great importance attached by intelligent educationists in America to the religious element, as the only means of permanently infusing life and energy into a school, and of prevailing upon all parties, whether managers, parents, teachers, or scholars, perseveringly to do their duty. We all know, from painful experience, that in this country the chief obstacle to the education of the poor, is the early age at which children are withdrawn

from school, notwithstanding the wholesome rivalry of different religious bodies, each desirous to educate the rising generation in its own religious principles, namely, those which it considers best adapted both for time and for eternity.

In 1857 some of the leading promoters of education in this country resolved to hold a Conference on this subject. The Prince Consort was Chairman, the Rev. Canon Moseley was Secretary, and I acted as Treasurer. The result of long-continued deliberations, not only among the members of the conference collectively, but by separate sections, to each of whom a separate branch of the subject had been assigned, was far from satisfactory. After several days' discussion, it appeared that no effective mode could be devised of retaining children in our elementary schools for the poor. The melancholy reflection immediately suggested itself—to what hopeless inefficiency would not our schools be reduced if the stimulus of religion, to which they owe their whole vitality, were utterly removed, or even seriously diminished.*

But there is no such religious stimulus to animate the common school in America, and the want of it is keenly felt. In the already-quoted sermon printed at Baltimore, by request of the German Lutheran Synod, I find some most interesting observations on this subject. "We hear without end," says the preacher, "of the sluggishness of directors and parents, and of the carelessness and unfitness of teachers." He then complains that

* The Prince Consort in his inaugural address gave the following summary of the argument against any compulsory measure to secure the attendance of children at elementary schools:—"What measures can be brought to bear upon the other root of the evil is a more delicate question, and will require the nicest care in handling, for then you cut into the very quick of the working man's condition. His children are not only his offspring, to be reared for a future independent position, but they constitute part of his productive powers, and work with him for the staff of life. The daughters especially are the handmaids of the house, the assistants of the mother, the nurses of the younger children, the aged, and the sick. To deprive the labouring family of their help would be almost to paralyse its domestic existence." For further remarks on the subject of the compulsory attendance of children, see Appendix B.

the advocates of the common-school system most unfairly attributed these evils to the apathy of the ministers of religion. "They allege," he says, "that the ministers of the Gospel could exert an influence which might reach every fireside, opening the eyes of the blind and unstopping the ears of the deaf, on the subject of rational and moral education." To this charge he indignantly replies: "So they might, and so they would, were not they, in their capacity of ministers, virtually shut out from the schools. If parents are sluggish in sending their children, how can they be moved to duty except by the higher '*driving power*' of religion? But this is contraband in the system. Shall ministers be expected to manifest zeal for the education of immortal beings for this world merely? The common-school system can never, in its present form, gain the confidence of the Church and ministry; even if the system did not itself virtually exclude their influence, the false principles which it involves are too radical, and in their practical workings too disastrous, to receive either favour or toleration." In another place he continues: "The reports complain abundantly that many parents do not send their children. This will ever be so; it rests upon the deep principle, that religion alone can foster the education of mind, and that educational interests are only sustained where religion underlies them. Where this is not the case, the '*driving power*' is wanting; and any educational system that has not religion for its soul, cannot enlist sufficient interest in itself to sustain itself in existence."

These just and noble sentiments are the deliberate opinions of a German Preacher, and a German Synod. If therefore any politician or theoretical educationist should venture to disparage them, as the extravagances of some arrogant Church of England ecclesiastic, let us remind him that the words I have quoted are not the words of Englishmen—not the language of Episcopalians, but of German immigrants to America, whose fatherland was the birthplace of rationalism, and is now the stronghold of infidelity.

10. I now proceed to my last remark upon the common-

school system. I refer to its *expensiveness*. On this point I may again advert to the valuable work of Mr. Tremenheere. He gives a table, showing that the cost of maintaining schools in the United States is at the rate of about 2*l.* a year for each child.

Cost of Education per Child in the Public Schools of—

	Dols.	Cents.		Dols.	Cents.
St. Louis	9	50	Philadelphia	7	33
New York	10	62	Baltimore	10	54
Boston	15	42	Cincinnati	6	37

In England and Wales the number of children for whom provision ought to be made in elementary schools is, as I have already stated, about 1,800,000, and the annual cost, at the above rate of 2*l.* a scholar, would be about 3,600,000*l.*; in which estimate I do not include the building of school-rooms, nor the maintenance of training institutions. At three per cent. 3,600,000*l.* a year would represent a capital of about 120,000,000*l.* Are the owners, let me ask, of rateable property prepared for so enormous a confiscation? The parliamentary grant of 780,000*l.* a year for education was cut down under the Revised Code as too formidable an item in the miscellaneous estimates—although it was voted from the Consolidated Fund, a fund levied on 550,000,000*l.* of property; how severe then would be the pressure of 3,600,000*l.* a year upon rateable property, which amounts to only 86,000,000*l.*, and the owners of which are no more bound than any other class of proprietors to educate the people!

No doubt the promoters of school rates will produce a lower estimate than that which I have given. But I do not think it likely that they will be able to do the work more cheaply than their American fellow-labourers.*

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, it may be said, will be relieved from a heavy burden. But who cares to relieve him?

* The estimate of the Royal Commissioners, as well as of the Committee of Council, is 30*s.* a scholar; but they forgot that to support a system by rates is far more expensive than by voluntary contributions.

If I am compelled to pay a certain contribution, what is the difference to me whether I pay it in the shape of a tax or of a rate? I consider the rate-collector quite as formidable a personage as the tax-gatherer, and in one respect more formidable. For taxes are in general voted from year to year, but a school rate once voted by Parliament is imposed for ever.

The evidence I have now adduced at considerable length against the common-school system of the United States is entirely that of Americans themselves. I have advanced nothing as the result of my own personal experiences. I have entered on the subject with reluctance, and only from the motive of preventing our possible adoption of school rates in this country under a false impression that they have succeeded in America. I heartily wish they had succeeded there, or could be made to succeed. No man on this side of the Atlantic desires more earnestly than I do the welfare of the United States. No man takes a deeper interest in the magnificent experiment they are attempting for the first time in all history of federal institutions on a great scale. No man admires more than I admire their unsparing liberality, not only in the cause of education, but of Home and Foreign Missions. I regard their common-school system as having been, in their circumstances, an unavoidable expedient, but at the same time as among the most alarming sources of social danger to which they are exposed.

The remarks I have offered on the common-school system of the United States have now extended to a considerable length. I must, however, observe that the advocates of school rates, on being driven from the great American republic, are apt to cross the St. Lawrence, and take refuge in our own provinces. They insist that if the Americans have failed in uniting school rates with religious teaching, the Canadians have succeeded, and that we ought to profit by Canadian wisdom. But these are not the views entertained by

the members of our Church in the North American provinces. On the contrary, in 1851, at a conference of the Bishops of Quebec, Toronto, Newfoundland, Fredericton, and Montreal, held at Quebec, a general declaration was unanimously agreed to, strongly condemning the entire exclusion of religious instruction from the common schools as "a manifest depravation" of the religious principles of the scholars and "a crying injustice to the Church of England." The assembled Bishops further resolved, "That all lawful and honourable methods should be adopted to move the colonial legislatures to make grants to the Church of England as well as to the Roman Catholics and other religious bodies, as they require it, and according to their numbers respectively, for the education of the members of their own communion." The clergy and laity of Toronto in the same year, at a semi-synodical meeting, voted resolutions and petitions to the same effect; and on the 18th of June, 1857, at a regular synodical meeting, they held a remarkable discussion, to which I would especially request attention. In the report of that discussion I find it stated that "great masses" of the Canadian population were "brought up in total ignorance of Christianity;" that the common schools were filling all Canada with a "moral pestilence;" that the lecture-rooms of the Canadian schools and colleges were crowded with "unruly youths, and the streets defiled with their profane language;" that "children born in sin are sent to schools in which the education they receive only fits them for carrying out more thoroughly the works of depravity;" that the common-school system in Canada is "an utter failure;" that its utter failure is "triumphantly proved by the Annual Reports of the General Superintendent of Education himself;" that "from the first establishment of the system there had been continual complaints from the local superintendents of inefficiency in the teachers and irregularity in attendance of children;" that in proportion as the schools deteriorated, "the expense was more enormously increased;" that "in Upper Canada alone there were 3235

schools, of which only 374 had regularly trained teachers ;” that out of 1318 students admitted into the Normal school, 800 or 900 had received certificates, of which number no less than 500 had deserted their vocation ; that in the city of Toronto, out of 8884 children who ought to be in the common schools, only 1570 were actually in attendance ; that “totally illiterate young men and women were received into the Normal school, and in ten months turned out again, with first-class certificates, as competent to teach anything”—the whole curriculum of knowledge ; and that each of these so-called teachers draws not less than 72*l*. from the provincial treasury for this defective education.

A number of Clergymen then stated in succession, that they had “weighed the school system of the country throughout its practical bearings and found it miserably wanting.”

A local superintendent declared at the same meeting that “in one school within his district there are not ten children, beyond those of the Church of England, who can say the Ten Commandments ;” that in another school, the teacher was a Unitarian, and spent his time on Sundays in preaching in accordance with his views to the children under his care ; that in a third school “only one child knew the Commandments ;” that on a certain occasion when he, the local superintendent, discovering that “not one out of one hundred children had ever heard of the Ten Commandments,” endeavoured to impress on parents the importance of the Decalogue, he was indignantly denounced as “a Puseyite and a Romanist !”

Another intelligent local superintendent, who, according to his own statement, had approached the Canadian school system with “very favourable impressions,” confessed that in doing so he had betrayed “extreme and gross ignorance” of the subject ; he appealed to all practical men whether it would be possible for a minister to obtain permission from the trustees of a school to misapply in “mere Christian teaching” any portion of that pre-

cious time which ought to be employed in "the noble work of sharpening the intellect"?

Another local superintendent of great experience stated, that although prayers are directed to be said in the common schools, they are not required; the consequence of which neglect is that this injunction is constantly evaded; so much so, that "out of fifteen schools in his jurisdiction prayer is never heard in ten of them;" that "in the schools throughout his jurisdiction the Bible is unknown;" that when in his visits he has tried to teach from it, he has been "prevented by Papists and Dissenters;" that so far from prayers being heard in the schools, "he dare not ask the teachers to read them, for they are too ungodly, too intemperate, too wicked." He bitterly complained that the trustees are "reckless in choosing persons to act as teachers—granting certificates to most shameless vagabonds."

A parochial Clergyman on the same occasion alleged that the present school system gave to Romanists a privilege which was denied to Protestants. In his own district one of the common schools was held in a Roman Catholic College, and was used as "a primary department of that institution."

I conclude with the evidence of Mr. Justice Hagarty, who said that during his short experience of one year and a half in the administration of justice, "the most humiliating, sorrowful, and heartrending spectacle he had met with had been to see child after child brought up for felony. Can nothing," he asked, "be done to prevent such melancholy exhibitions? Can neither the State nor the Church make provision for them, and for the hundreds whose training may lead to similar results?"

The learned judge affirmed that while these were the results of the common-school system in Canada, the annual cost of maintaining that system in Toronto was an intolerable burden.*

* Those who would hold out the Common School system of Canada as an example to England, or who empirically imagine it an easy task to devise a sound system of national education, would do well to consider carefully the following

Here the question arises, What is to be done? What practical suggestions arise to us from the train of thought which I have been suggesting? The obvious answer is, we must resist to the utmost the imposition of a school rate; we must resist also any such diminution of the parliamentary grant for education as would require a school rate to supply the void. And if we show to religious men the unavoidable mischiefs of such an impost to the cause of religion, and exhibit at the same time to ratepayers its unfair and intolerable pressure on their property, I confidently think that our resistance will be effectual. I do not see how any Government, however bold, could venture to propose a measure so certain to be generally and strenuously opposed.

I have already remarked, that the rules for distribution of the annual parliamentary grant adopted by the Committee of Privy Council on Education might be improved. This is not the place, however, for explaining the measures which appear to me desirable for that purpose.

weighty words of that eminently wise and good man, Chief Justice Robinson, of Upper Canada:—

“There is, we all know, a difficulty which has met at the threshold those who have been influential in establishing systems of national education; I mean that which arises from the number of religious sects into which the population is divided. This is not the occasion for entering into any discussion upon that painfully interesting question. Whatever difficulty it has occasioned in England or Ireland must be expected to be found here, applying with at least equal, if not more than equal force. I should be unwilling to suppose that any doubt could exist as to my own opinion on this question; and scarcely less unwilling to be thought so unjust and uncandid as not to acknowledge and make allowance for the difficulties which surround it. They are such, I believe, as no person can fully estimate, until he has been called upon to deal with them, under the responsibility which the duties of government impose. In the mean time, resting assured as we may, that no general system of instruction can be permanently successful which has not the confidence and cordial approval of the sincerely religious portions of the community—that portion, I mean, who will think it worse than folly to aim at being wise above that which is written—we must wait with hope and patience for the solution which this difficulty, to which I allude, may receive in other countries more competent to grapple with it—trusting that what may ultimately be found to be the safe and satisfactory course may, by the wisdom and good feeling of the majority, be adopted among ourselves.”—*Speech of Chief Justice Robinson, at the opening of the Provincial Normal School, Nov. 24th, 1852.*

As regards the members of the Church, whether Clergy or Laity, no effort must be wanting on our part to make the present system a success and not a failure. We must not, by negligence or inactivity, allow the advocates of school rates, and of an American or Prussian discipline, to get the better of us. We must not give them occasion for alleging, that voluntary efforts, aided by a moderate parliamentary grant, are incapable of educating the people. It is a weighty responsibility that is imposed upon us; all our other efforts will be vain if we fail in this—all our plans of church-building—all our home and foreign missions—all our multifarious schemes for averting social evil, and for doing social good, will be hopelessly inefficient, if we do not succeed in implanting religious principle in the minds and hearts of our population.

And while we are zealous, let us also be conciliatory. Let us be united. So far from discouraging the co-operation of the lay brethren, let the Clergy do all they can to call it forth, and to enlist their sympathies in the cause. Let us avoid all needless offence to Non-conformists. Need I remark, that a single act of indiscretion with reference to the management of an endowed school, has in a recent instance been very nearly fatal to the cause of Church education among the middle classes; and has rendered concessions necessary, which may prove embarrassing, and which would not otherwise have been demanded?

I shall only add, that our best security for the maintenance of our existing educational system is to make the most of scanty opportunities. In spite of all the "driving power" we can exert, the period during which we shall be able to retain under our tuition the children of the poor will, no doubt, as heretofore, continue limited to a few uncertain years. Those years are precious. They are all in all to an immortal being. We must make the most of them. We must apply the whole of them to the essentials of education. Above all things a good foundation is indispensable. We must teach our young charge not only to read, but to understand; not only to hear, but, as

far as is possible, "to learn and inwardly digest." Their own language is the key of knowledge. With this key they will be competent more or less to unlock for themselves not only the treasures of the Bible and the Liturgy, but the stores of English literature and science. Without this key they can do nothing. Without acquaintance with their own language, all the miscellaneous particulars we may laboriously accumulate in their memories, under the abused name of useful information, will be only so much pedantic lumber utterly unavailing for any practicable purpose.

A P P E N D I X.

N O T E A.

THE first occasion on which Conscience Clauses and the compulsory attendance of children at elementary schools were brought under the consideration of the Committee of the National Society, was in 1840. The Act 3 & 4 William IV., c. 103, provided that "children should not be allowed to labour in mills or factories unless a voucher were produced by them on every Monday morning, to certify that two hours in each working day in the preceding week had been devoted to the purposes of education." A proposal was made, that in the special case of children attending school under the provisions of an Act of Parliament the Society should relax its rule requiring them to learn the Church Catechism. It was strongly urged that by refusing this concession the Society would forego the opportunity of giving instruction in Church principles to many thousand children, whose parents and guardians were anxious they should receive it. In the first instance a resolution favourable to the concession was adopted. At a subsequent meeting it was agreed to obtain further information. A fortnight afterwards a final meeting, the Archbishop of Canterbury in the chair, was held. The following members of the Board were present:—His Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; the Lord Bishops of London, Durham, Winchester, Bangor, Chester, Chichester, Ely, Hereford, Lichfield, Lincoln, Norwich, Ripon, Rochester, Salisbury; the Right Hon. the Lord Kenyon; the Right Hon. the Lord Ashley, M.P.; the Lord Sandon, M.P.; T. D. Acland, Esq., M.P.; Rev. H. H. Norris; Rev. H. H. Milman; Rev. John Jennings; William Davis, Esq.; G. F. Mathison, Esq.; Richard Twining, Esq.; Joshua Watson, Esq.; Samuel F. Wood, Esq.

Letter after letter was read from clergymen of all parties in the Church, and throughout all the manufacturing districts, urgently remonstrating against the proposed concession. Among them were the Rev. Dr. Hook, Vicar of Leeds, now Dean of Chichester; the Rev. C. Musgrave, Vicar of Halifax, now Archdeacon of Craven; the

Rev. John Bull, Incumbent of St. Thomas, Birmingham; the Rev. J. Slade, Vicar of Bolton; the Rev. G. Hornby, Rector of Bury, Lancashire; the Rev. J. S. Master, Rector of Chorley; the Rev. Cecil Wray, of Liverpool; the Rev. Dr. Scoresby, Vicar of Bradford; the Rev. John Rushton, now Vicar of Blackburn; and many others. The school fees of the factory children would in many poor districts have been a valuable assistance to the clergy in meeting the expenses of their schools. But they repudiated all such considerations, and urged the Society at all hazards to maintain inviolate the religious character of National Schools. The result was that the proposal to relax the terms of union was rejected by a large majority.

NOTE B.

The following passage occurs in the Report of the Royal Commissioners, pp. 197-201 :—

“ Among the persons to whom we addressed our circular of questions, and whom we selected as fair exponents of general opinion, the great majority of those who have touched upon this point declare themselves against a general system of compulsory education. We may refer to the evidence, among others, of Mr. Blakesley, the Rev. R. Brown, Miss Carpenter, the Rev. T. W. Davids, the Rev. S. Earnshaw, the Rev. Canon Guthrie, Miss Hope, the Rev. C. E. R. Keene, the Bishop of St. David's, the Hon. and Rev. W. H. Scott, Mr. H. S. Skeats, and Mr. John Snell; the evidence of Mr. Ackroyd, the Hon. and Rev. Samuel Best, and the Dean of Carlisle tends in the other direction. The evidence contains indications that the current of opinion is setting away from general compulsory measures. Lord Lyttelton advocated direct compulsory education in his ‘Thoughts on National Education,’ proposing that ‘it should be made a punishable offence for any parent or guardian not to send to school, and keep there, any child of a given age; that they should be required to pay a certain sum for the schooling of such children, and that they should be allowed to choose freely what school it should be.’ He now says: ‘I am still of opinion that what I have there proposed is practicable, would involve fewer difficulties than most other plans, and would be to a great extent effectual. But I must admit that since its publication, not only have I seen no considerable signs of adhesion to that particular plan, but the course of public opinion has seemed to tend away from the prin-

ciple of compulsion rather than towards it.' The Hon. and Rev. W. H. Scott says: 'I long thought that nothing short of compulsory attendance, and imposing a penalty on employers hiring children under a certain age, would make it possible to educate the children of the labouring classes; but on mature consideration, I am satisfied that the difficulties attending such a law would be insurmountable, and that before we could impose compulsory attendance on rate-paid schools, we must, in each ratepaying district, have as many schools as there were differences of religious belief among the inhabitants. In short, the disadvantages arising from an educational rate, or from compulsory attendance in rural districts, would far outweigh any benefits.' Mr. John Snell also says: 'I was long of opinion that nothing short of compulsory education would answer. I am not now of that opinion. The educational movement is already progressing, and will hardly require so violent a measure. English sentiment is unmistakeably opposed to compulsion; and the means of evasion are so numerous that a law to this effect would probably fail from unsuitableness and want of popular sympathy. Still, a species of indirect or negative compulsion, requiring school attendance as a condition securing privileges, situations, &c., such as suggested in preceding answer, might be resorted to. The education of certain classes might also be compulsory, as of paupers in workhouses, criminals in gaols; but in the latter case it should be confined to moral, religious, and industrial, as anything tending to sharpen their wits would probably be productive of greater mischief than ignorance itself.'

"It does not appear, therefore, that the Government would be seconded by public opinion in instituting and maintaining the minute system of supervision, registration, detection of defaulters, and enforcement of penalties, which would be requisite in order to carry into effect a general system of compulsory education. The administrators would be brought into collision with the constitution of English society and the habits and feelings of the people. There is a material difference, in reference to such questions, between the political and social circumstances of our own country and those of countries where the central administration wields great power over a people but recently emancipated, habituated to the control of a searching police, and subjected to the direct action of the Government without the interposition of a numerous landed gentry and a multitude of great employers of labour; or where social equality renders possible and democratic opinion enforces a general resort to common schools, the heritage of an ancient Puritan community or the pride of a modern republic.

"The conviction entertained by many persons, and embodied in the

protests to which we have referred, that Government compulsion is wrong not only in policy but in principle, whether well founded in itself or not, would compel the Legislature to place the compulsory system on a clear moral basis by making it bear equally on all classes, which it would probably be very difficult to do.

“ Even as regards the operation of the Factory Acts, Mr. Winder says :* ‘ I satisfied myself by repeated questions to individual children, and by an inspection of school registers, both at Rochdale and Bradford, that on the average half-time children at the commencement of their work have been a shorter time previously at school than day-scholars of the same age.’ ‘ I am afraid,’ he adds, ‘ that it is the prospect of compulsory education which is at the bottom of this exceptional neglect, and this I found to be the opinion of those best qualified to judge. The knowledge that a child must go to school at a later period of life makes its parents more careless during its earlier years.’ Canon Girdlestone, also speaking from an experience of twenty-five years in Lancashire, states that great numbers of children do not attend school till the age arrives at which they are compelled by the Factory Act to do so.†

“ The existing schools belong to private managers. But the Government, in adopting a general measure of compulsory education, could scarcely refrain from undertaking to some extent, the management of the schools. If it compels parents to send their children to school, it is bound to see that there is a school to which they can conveniently, profitably, and conscientiously resort. Difficulties might then arise between the Government and the managers with regard, amongst other things, to the religious instruction, especially in country parishes, where there is generally but one school ; and scruples which ordinarily lie dormant, or yield to more important considerations, are apt, when the State becomes a party, to be insisted on as a matter of right.

“ A system of education tests, in the shape of examinations or certificates of school attendance, has been proposed as a simpler and more practicable plan than a system of compulsory school attendance actually overlooked and enforced by the State. The verification of the certificates would probably be little less difficult, and liable to fraudulent evasion, than the supervision of school attendance, especially in the case of the more migratory portions of the population, whose children are frequently removed from school to school. Both tests would alike require some supplementary provision for the case of

* Report, p. 229.

† Appendix to Mr. Cumin's Report. p. 159.

children who, through the fault of their parents, or their own stupidity or truancy, failed to satisfy the test, and who would thus, on arriving at the age of labour, be excluded from all honest callings.

“The State could not compel the parents by law to do more than their moral duty in each case requires. The moral duty of labourers, mechanics, and small tradesmen, as to the amount of education to be given to their children varies greatly according to the nature of their employment and the amount of their wages. Either a variable scale of the greatest complexity must be constructed to meet these differences of obligation, or the minimum must be accepted as the standard, in which case little would be gained.

“That which the State compels it must also enable men to do. It must therefore take on itself in the last resort the obligation of assisting those who are too poor to pay the whole sum for the education of their children; an obligation now acknowledged and discharged by social duty, but which, when it legally rests upon the State, social duty will perhaps cease to acknowledge and discharge.

“The state and prospects of education in this country, as displayed by our evidence and returns, do not seem to us to warrant the recommendation of a measure which would entail so much difficulty and danger, and give so great a shock to our educational and social system.

“The same social organisation which repels State compulsion also to a great extent renders it needless. Active and rightminded employers, landowners, clergymen, and other persons of local influence, may and frequently do exercise a moral pressure on their poorer neighbours in the matter of education, the practical force of which is probably at least as great as that of State compulsion in the countries where it prevails, and which, combined as it is with charitable assistance, must be far superior in its influence on the relations between classes and on the character of the people.”