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THE FAILURE OF THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES.

1859

Just published,
ON FREEDOM OF EDUCATION:

An Essay, read at the Meeting of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, at Liverpool, October, 1858.

By HENRY HENNESSY, F.R.S.

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THE FAILURE
OF
THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES,
AND OF
MIXED EDUCATION IN IRELAND.

BY
JOHN POPE HENNESSY,
OF THE INNER TEMPLE.

LONDON:
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1859.

THE FAILURE OF THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES.

FOR some years past various attempts have been made to induce the public and the Government to believe that the Queen's Colleges have been successful. Annual reports have been presented to Her Majesty and to Parliament, in which the success of these institutions is boldly asserted. These reports have been read with astonishment and pain by all who know the real state of the case, and who feel a genuine interest in the progress of education. What was, perhaps, in the first instance only a pardonable species of puffing and exaggeration, has lately grown into direct and unequivocal misstatements of fact. No friend of Irish academical instruction can any longer remain silent. The time appears to have arrived when the truth should be made known.

For ten years has the experiment of Mixed Education been tried in these Irish Colleges. The experiment has failed. Nor is the failure an indication simply of the past. It is a failure which has about it ample evidences of the hopeless nature of the future. It is, in fact, a failure, total and complete.

Sir James Graham brought in the bill establishing the colleges in May, 1845. Its rejection was moved by a distinguished member of the present Cabinet; but the measure was supported by nearly all the followers of Sir Robert Peel, as well as by those of Lord John Russell, and it received the royal assent in July. The letters patent by which the collegiate statutes were confirmed are dated in December, 1849, and the colleges were opened with great *éclat* in the same year. The Queen's University in Ireland was founded in 1850, for granting degrees in the Faculties of Arts, Medicine, and Law, to students who should have completed, in one or other of the three Queen's Colleges, the prescribed courses of education; and the first Examination for Degrees was held in October, 1851.

Like the cost of many other institutions, the outlay on the Colleges has exceeded the estimate. In introducing the Colleges Bill, Sir James Graham, having gone through the details of the expenditure, said: "Thus the total expense for the three Colleges will be 100,000*l.*, as the capital sunk in the first instance for building and establishing, and an annual sum of 18,000*l.* for salaries and the other expenses."*

Within the last fortnight, a "Statement," which was printed on behalf of the College authorities for private circulation, and which has not been published, was placed in the hands of the Government. In this statement it is asserted that "no addition has been made to the original endowment." That assertion is hardly accurate. A very short time after the original endow-

* Hansard, vol. lxxx., p. 355.

ment was announced in Parliament it was raised to 21,000*l.* In the year 1849 it was represented to the Government that the sum of 100,000*l.* and the increased endowment were insufficient. A vote was accordingly taken of 4000*l.* to each College, an addition, on the whole, of 12,000*l.* In 1851 a further vote was taken of 2539*l.* In 1852 a further sum of 684*l.* was granted. In 1853 two votes were taken of 1777*l.* and 707*l.* In 1854 an additional sum of 859*l.* was passed. In 1855, 1856, and 1857, similar additional items of expense were, respectively, 1910*l.*, 2533*l.*, and 2245*l.* But this is not all. It is provided by the Charter that the College Council shall receive from the Bursar all fees paid by students on behalf of the College, and shall apply the funds so obtained in defraying the expenses of heating, lighting, cleansing, and otherwise maintaining the condition of the Lecture-rooms, Museums, Libraries, Official Residences, and other portions of the College buildings and grounds, and also of preserving in proper condition and augmenting the books, apparatus, and collections of the College.

It was found, however, that the Act of Parliament contemplated in this case an impossibility. That the fees paid by the students on behalf of the Colleges should be sufficient to defray the several items of expense, to which, according to the Charter, such fees were to be devoted, would be very natural in successful Institutions. Such incidental expenses were properly estimated, in the first instance, at something under 5000*l.* a year. Population tables and statistics of various kinds were quoted by Sir Robert Peel as evidence of the large numbers that

would enter the Colleges. During the debates it was mentioned, by the present permanent Secretary of the Treasury, that fifteen hundred under-graduates were instructed by the twenty-three Junior Fellows of Trinity College, Dublin. Sir James Graham, and the other sanguine and well-intentioned promoters of the Colleges, might be fairly excused for having anticipated that the number of students in attendance would be so great as to amply provide, by their College and matriculation fees, for the annual sum necessary to defray such expenses. Instead, however, of amounting to 5000*l.*, it was found—on account of the small numbers in attendance—that these fees did not in the aggregate reach one-fifth of that sum. In the session, 1852-53, the total of such fees in the three Colleges was only 836*l.* The total number of students entering the three Colleges in that year was only eighty-four, being an average of twenty-eight to each College. In the next session, the students having become still smaller in number, these fees only amounted to 759*l.* Under such circumstances it was found that the museums, libraries, official residences, &c., were not properly maintained. The College authorities accordingly applied again to the Treasury. Their application was skilfully framed. Instead of telling the Secretary of the Treasury that the absence of students entailed an absence of fees, it was represented to Sir Charles Trevelyan that it was desirable, on educational grounds, to reduce these College fees, and that a sum of public money ought to be provided to meet this reduction. Without any further investigation the Treasury endorsed this statement, and since the year 1854 an annual sum

of 4800*l.* has been voted by Parliament to meet these incidental expenses. The matriculation fees were reduced from 3*l.* to 10*s.*, and the College fees from 2*l.* to 5*s.* In the session 1854-55, the total sum derived from these sources amounted in the three colleges to 142*l.* Before the reduction, they had amounted in the preceding year to 759*l.* The additional grant which Parliament gives is avowedly to meet the difference between these two sums; it is, actually, eight hundred per cent. greater. In the House of Commons Paper, setting forth the Education Estimates, certain explanatory notes are appended to various items—to this annual item of 4800*l.*, the following note is annexed:—

Note.—The Fees payable by the Students having been greatly reduced in order to extend the benefits of Education, it has become necessary to provide for the incidental expenses formerly defrayed from those Fees.

It thus appears that the annual sum appropriated to the Colleges, which Sir James Graham estimated in his opening speech at 18,000*l.*, has risen to 25,800*l.*; and the original outlay on the buildings of 100,000*l.*, which he anticipated would leave a large margin, has been followed up by votes amounting to 25,257*l.* It is to be regretted that, in the face of such facts as these, any privately printed statement, such as that lately circulated amongst the members of the Government, should contain the assertion that “no addition has been made to the original endowment.” That it is an important assertion the authorities of the Colleges appear to be aware, for they have printed it in italics.

The officers of the Colleges consist of Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Professors, Librarians, Registrars, Bursars, Scholars, Deans of Residence, and Visitors. The

two last are unpaid officers; and the Scholars have only a term of office from year to year. On the whole, the total number of gentlemen holding office in the three Colleges in any one year is about two hundred and sixty.

If the success of the Colleges were to be estimated by the amount of public money spent upon them, and by the number of paid officials, it would be indeed distinct and unequivocal. The element of success, however, for which the public will look, is neither the financial nor the official element, but simply the number of *bonâ fide* students. It may be gathered, from what has been already said, that the anticipations on this head of the founders of the Colleges have not been fulfilled. Before entering into the details of this portion of the subject, it will be found convenient to consider the nature of the inducements held out to students. These consist of Scholarships, Prizes, and Certificates of Honour. Assuming that there were students enough to take all the Scholarships, one hundred and twenty-nine, of the value of 30*l.* each, were awarded at the opening of the Colleges for the session 1849-50, exclusive of those for Civil Engineering and Agriculture; of these sixty-nine were allocated to the Literary Division, and sixty to the Science Division of the Faculty of Arts. Nine of the successful candidates for Scholarships were permitted to pass to the Faculty of Medicine, and six to the Faculty of Law. Six Scholarships, of the value of 30*l.* each, were awarded to students in Civil Engineering; and six Scholarships, of the value of 25*l.* each, to students in Agriculture. In the following year, one hundred and forty-four Scholarships, of the value of

24*l*. each, were awarded at the commencement of the session to students of the Faculty of Arts, exclusive of those for Civil Engineering and Agriculture; twelve Scholarships, of the value of 20*l*. each, were awarded to students of the Faculty of Medicine; six Scholarships, of the value of 20*l*. each, were awarded to students of the Faculty of Law; six Scholarships, of the value of 20*l*. each, were awarded to students of Civil Engineering; twelve scholarships, of the value of 15*l*. each, were awarded to students of Agriculture. In the session of 1851-52, the Scholarships were distributed on a similar principle. At present, in each of the three Colleges, there are founded thirty Junior Scholarships in the Faculty of Arts, of the value of 24*l*. each, exclusive of two Scholarships in the Department of Engineering, of the value of 20*l*. each, and four in the Department of Agriculture, of the value of 15*l*. each, these Departments being included in the Faculty of Arts. Of the thirty Junior Scholarships in the Faculty of Arts, ten are awarded to Matriculated Arts Students of the First year, ten to those of the Second year, and ten to those of the Third year. There is, however, a division in the subjects, in which each year's Scholarships are awarded, five of the ten Scholarships of each year being appropriated to the Literary Division of the Faculty of Arts, including the Languages, History, and Literature, and five to the Science Division of the Faculty of Arts, including the Mathematical and Natural Sciences, and Logics and Metaphysics. Of the two Scholarships in Civil Engineering, one is awarded to a student of the First year, and one to a student of the Second year. Of

the four Agricultural Scholarships, two are awarded to Agricultural students of the First year, and two to those of the Second year. In the Faculty of Medicine there are founded in each of the Colleges, six Junior Scholarships of the value of 20*l.* each, which are awarded—two to Matriculated students of the First year; two to those of the Second year; and two to those of the Third year. In the Faculty of Law there are founded in each of the Colleges three Junior Scholarships of the value of 20*l.* a-year each, which are awarded—one to a First year, one to a Second year, and one to a Third year Matriculated Law Student.

In addition to these, twenty-one Senior Scholarships, of the value of 40*l.* each, have been founded in the three Colleges in the Faculty of Arts, together with six in the Faculty of Medicine and three in the Faculty of Law. The total number of Scholarships distributed every year is therefore one hundred and sixty-five.

The statutes declare that the Scholarships are for “the most distinguished students.” The duties of these officers are also defined by the statutes. The Junior Scholars in the several Faculties are bound to take charge of the rolls of the classes, to register the attendance of the students at lecture, and to assist the Professors in the arrangements for the lectures, under such regulations as the College Councils shall prescribe.

Sir Robert Kane speaks of the Senior Scholars as Supplemental Professors; and the Royal Commissioners in their late report state that “the Senior Scholars are bound to assist the Professors in the Matriculation and Class Examinations, and in conducting the business of the

special departments of Literature and Science to which their Scholarships severally belong. The position therefore contemplated by the statutes for the Senior Scholars is that of Assistants to the Professors."

The prizes and the certificates of honour are allocated to each Professor's class; there being one or two prizes, worth from 1*l.* 10*s.* to 3*l.*, placed at the disposal of each Professor, and certificates of honour to the number usually of four or five.

With reference to the Scholarships, the following evidence is very important:—The President of Queen's College, Belfast, is asked: * "There appears, however, to be no competition for most of these Senior Scholarships." He replies: "That is the fact."

Professor Reichel, of Belfast, says: † "So far as my experience and knowledge go, there never has been any competition whatever. There never has been any competition for the Latin and Greek Scholarships, but there may have been in the case of the other Scholarships."

The Vice-President of Queen's College, Belfast, says: ‡ "We find, in point of fact, instead of this system of Scholarships encouraging, as we might expect, special excellence in particular branches, that the students arrange, as it were, amongst themselves to whom the Scholarships shall be given; and the result is, that, generally speaking, there is very little competition—very frequently not more than one student appearing for each of the Senior Scholarships."

Sir Robert Kane, the President of Queen's College,

* Evidence given before the Royal Commission, 1858, p. 67.

† Ibid. p. 20.

‡ Ibid. p. 8.

Cork, says:* “As the matter has been hitherto managed, the Senior Scholars have been left loose fish—floating about—attached to no particular class, but holding their Scholarships whilst away elsewhere; and *they have been rather a complication and an embarrassment than an aid* to the College, which it was the original intention they should be.”

With reference to the competition for these honours, Sir Robert Kane is asked: “Do not these seven Senior Scholarships necessitate there being seven B.As., therefore, to take them?”—“Yes; but I do not think that the entire of the seven Senior Scholarships in Arts have ever been filled.”

“Have you ever had the entire number of the Senior Scholarships filled in any one year?”—“My impression is that they were never all filled. There were six out of ten filled this year; and last year, as I have stated in my Report, of seven Senior Scholarships in the Faculty of Arts, five were awarded; of the two Senior Scholarships in the Faculty of Medicine, one was awarded, and one in the Faculty of Law.”

“Are you enabled to state how many competitors there were for each of these Scholarships last year?”—“I could not state, absolutely, without referring to the books; but *my impression is that there has been seldom more than one or two who came forward as candidates for Senior Scholarships.*”

Professor Murphy says, with reference to the Agricultural Scholarships: “The result of this system is, that this year there was a gentleman who took a Scholarship whom I never saw.”

* Evidence given before the Royal Commission, 1858, p. 133.

Mr. Price said: "Then the system works in this way, that a person may enter for Agricultural Scholarship and obtain it without the slightest intention of going on to Agriculture?"—Professor Murphy: "Such is the fact, and such has been the result and the practice."

"For all Agricultural purposes the Scholarship is no use to him?"—"No use."

Mr. Berwick, the President of Queen's College, Galway,* is asked: "Are you satisfied with the arrangements regulating the Senior Scholarships?"—"Yes."

"They are allotted to specific branches of study?"—"Yes."

"Is there much competition for these Senior Scholarships?"—"No."

With reference to the satisfaction expressed by Mr. Berwick, the Vice-President said,—"I would wish to make some few observations with respect to the Senior Scholars; but as so much has been said about them in the examination of the President, perhaps it would not be right for me to take up the time of the Commissioners further."

Chairman.—"The Commissioners will be happy to hear whether or not you coincide in the views of the President in this respect?"—"Unfortunately my opinion does not exactly coincide with what I have heard. I do not think it right that our Senior Scholarships should be given away as they are now. It is a curious thing that according to the Statutes, I believe, a young man, after taking his Degree of Bachelor of Arts in the Queen's University, may remain seven years here, and get a Senior Scholarship in every one of the seven years; and

* Evidence given before the Royal Commission, 1858, p. 243.

I am not perfectly sure if he may not begin again, so that he might stay here until doomsday, if he lived so long, by beginning a septennial course. I own I do not think it is creditable to the institution, nor useful to the individual himself, that he should be allowed to remain in the College in that kind of way, doing nothing. There are seven Senior Scholarships, and, though the case which I have supposed has not occurred yet, some highly respectable young men have taken two or three Senior Scholarships, and may probably take two or three more."

Mr. Gibson.—"The Scholarships may be taken in each subject successively?"—"That is our practice."

The Commissioners state that the total number of students who entered the Colleges, since their opening in 1849 to 1858, is

1209.

This number is incorrect. The Commissioners have overrated the number of students in every session except the first.* Assuming, however, for the present, that it is accurate, let us contrast with it the total number of Scholarships and prizes for which these students competed.

The total number of Scholarships offered to these students during the same period is

1326.

These students were also presented, in addition to the Scholarships, with over 1000 class prizes.

The year the Colleges opened was the most successful as regards numbers. In that year, the forty-five students attending the Faculty of Arts in Queen's

* See pages 26-31.

College, Belfast, competed for forty-three Scholarships, worth 30*l.* each.

On six different occasions in the same College (Belfast), there was only one student to take the Law Scholarship. On several occasions in Queen's College, Cork, and Galway, there was not even one student to take the vacant Scholarships in the Faculty of Law. Indeed, as regards the Faculty of Law, a few lines from the evidence of Professor Mills, the Dean of that Faculty in Queen's College, Cork, and a gentleman of high standing at the Irish Bar, appears conclusive. The Commissioners said to him: "Your proposition amounts then to the abolition of the Faculty of Law?" He replied: "It does amount to the abolition of the Faculty of Law, but it does not amount to the abolition of Legal instruction. *It may be considered rather bold for a Professor, who is himself engaged in the Law School, to be the advocate of such a proposition; but I am bound to be so, because I have found no students.**"

The following tables show the number of Matriculated Students at Queen's College, Galway, in the Faculty of Arts, and at Queen's College, Cork, in the Faculty of Law, in the second, third, and fourth years of each session since the commencement, and the number of Scholarships placed at their disposal. The numbers (as regards the students) are taken from the appendix to the Commissioners' late Report. The Commissioners' tables are not, however, correct, the numbers in almost every case being overstated. The number of Scholarships are taken from another part of the same Report. When

* Report of the Queen's Colleges Commission, p. 229.

thus placed in juxtaposition, the preponderance of the official element is clearly seen.

| Session. | Students and Scholarships. | Faculty of Arts, Galway. | | | Faculty of Law, Cork. | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | | Second Year. | Third Year. | Fourth Year. | Second Year. | Third Year. | Fourth Year. |
| 1850-1 { | Students | 26 | — | — | 0 | — | — |
| | Scholarships | 24 | — | — | 1 | — | — |
| 1851-2 { | Students | 10 | 12 | — | 2 | 0 | — |
| | Scholarships | 15 | 15 | — | 1 | 1 | — |
| 1852-3 { | Students | 10 | 10 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| | Scholarships | 10 | 10 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1853-4 { | Students | 10 | 10 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | Scholarships | 10 | 10 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1854-5 { | Students | 8 | 11 | 9 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Scholarships | 10 | 10 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1855-6 { | Students | 9 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | Scholarships | 10 | 10 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1856-7 { | Students | 7 | 8 | 9 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| | Scholarships | 10 | 10 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1857-8 { | Students | 8 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| | Scholarships | 10 | 10 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Total No. of Students..... | | 88 | 66 | 39 | 7 | 7 | 1 |
| Total No. of Scholarships... | | 99 | 75 | 42 | 8 | 7 | 6 |

It thus appears, assuming that every student was presented with a Scholarship, that there were still left in this case twenty-nine Scholarships which could not be filled up, simply for want of persons to take them.

With reference to the effect which Mixed Education produces on some minds, I have often been struck by the remarkable contrast presented by certain friends of mine who were educated in the Queen's Colleges to others who were educated at Oxford and Cambridge. As a general rule, I have noticed that the former entertain very little

veneration for the past; that they identify themselves with the utilitarian school, and are destitute of that spirit of faith and those generous impulses with which youth is usually associated. On the other hand, with very few exceptions, the alumni of the older Universities are ever ready to appeal to History and the traditions of the country in discussing public questions, and they never indulge in any flippant sneers at the past. I would not have mentioned an apparently trifling fact of this kind but for the confirmation it offers of the opinions expressed in 1845 by Lord John Manners. He said, in moving the rejection of the Queen's Colleges Bill: "I have heard, and have seen it written in books sanctioned by honourable and right honourable gentlemen opposite, that one effect we should endeavour to attain by enlightened and liberal government in these days is to win over and to alienate the Roman Catholic population from that Church with which they are connected. But this is not the view I take. I think the Government would make a very bad exchange of a faithful and believing people for those who possessed a mere mass of secular learning. You may give the people of Ireland secular instruction, but in doing so you will deprive them of their old habits of faith and veneration."

As I have referred to this part of the question, I may add, in illustration of the impossibility there exists in any scheme of Mixed Education, of avoiding attacks on religious belief, that I once heard a student of the Queen's Colleges asserting that the doctrine of Church-Infallibility was a mere fallacy, and in support of this view he quoted a portion of the text-book used by his fellow

students. The book in which this attack on the doctrine of the Church occurs appears to be still used as one of the regular class books.*

The passage in the text-book begins thus: "Whatever the Romanists may pretend, there never was a time when the power of the Pope, of a Council, or of any other human governors, &c.;" and the author (a distinguished officer of the Queen's University and Colleges) concludes by requesting the student to see his work "on the Errors of Romanism, c. iv."

But probably the strongest evidence that the objections of the Catholic prelates to Mixed Education were not ill founded will be seen in the evidence of one of the ablest officers connected with the Colleges, in that of my learned friend the Vice-President of Queen's College, Galway. That gentleman, in his examination before the Royal Commissioners, said: "A great object would be gained if we had the co-operation of the Roman Catholic prelates, whose objections, I took the liberty of hinting before, are not altogether ill founded."

"In what respect do you think that they are well founded?"—"What I mean to say is this, that there are certain chairs in the lectures from which the Professors, have opportunities of throwing out certain hints and innuendoes respecting the truth of Revealed Religion, as connected with the progress of Science."

"As before stated in the evidence, the Statutes do contain strong provisions against any Professorial lecture injurious to Revealed Religion?"—"Certainly: but they will not do at all. Revealed Religion can still be attacked in its most vital parts."

* Report of the Queen's Colleges Commission, p. 196.

The case of the University is, if possible, worse than that of the Colleges. It appears that each graduate costs the country over 1000*l.* per annum; that (according to the tables published by the Royal Commissioners) in the Faculty of Law the total number of graduates (Bachelors of Law) for the ten years the Colleges have been at work, is not equal to the number of professors and examiners appropriated in one year to that faculty; and that the number of gold medals and money exhibitions given at the University in the Faculty of Arts is greater than the number of competitors for those honours.

That such an unprecedented prostitution of University honours is not sufficient to keep the system alive appears evident from the numerical tables. I shall not, however, go into these details, being content to leave the failure of the University to be estimated by the following statement, which was made to the Commissioners by the Vice-President of Queen's College, Belfast*:—"We observe this remarkable fact, that the number of Graduates proceeding from these Colleges *has been diminishing for the last three years, and is much below what it ought to be*; and, therefore, it shows, that the stimulus afforded by these honours is not sufficiently great to induce the young men to go forward." In his treatise on a Liberal Education, Dr. Whewell appears to have anticipated a case of this sort. At page 166, he speaks of a University being degraded into a mere prize-awarding body; which, he remarks, would be "entirely adverse to the progress of intellectual education."

The failure of the University and Colleges has not been through any lack of zeal on the part of the officers

* Report, &c., p. 9.

of these institutions. The Clarendon Building at Queen's College, Cork, testifies to the interest the Chancellor of the University has taken in their welfare. Nor has he permitted the arduous labours of the Foreign Office, or his public business as a Parliamentary leader, to sever his practical connexion with the University. Not long since, he presented nominations for certain appointments of a consular or diplomatic character to students selected by the College authorities. Of the Vice-Chancellor it is not too much to say that, though an unpaid officer, he has expended as much time and labour in attempting to uphold the University as many men would in promoting some undertaking on which the success of their whole private fortunes depended. However much people may differ about the morality or expediency of Mixed Education, all must agree in recognising the honest zeal of the Vice-Chancellor. As one of the most distinguished ornaments of the Irish Bench, and as a Judge whose friends and admirers are to be found in every party and in every creed, the full force of his influence in promoting the University can hardly be overrated. Of the three Presidents of the Colleges, I have had the happiness of being for many years personally acquainted with one, and I have had a fair opportunity of estimating the labours of the others. The perfect accuracy of what Sir Robert Peel said, with reference to the great ability and high character of the President of Queen's College, Cork, has long been felt, not only by his colleagues, but by the humblest student under his charge. Though Sir Robert Kane and the other Presidents have fought the battle of Mixed Education in vain, they have certainly

fought it manfully, and the failure of the system cannot be laid to their charge. I am sure no academical institutions in the United Kingdom possess a staff of Professors more faithful or zealous in the discharge of their duties, more learned or more able, than the gentlemen who so worthily fill the collegiate chairs at Cork, Belfast, and Galway. I would not have presumed to offer any opinion about these gentlemen were it not that some supporters of Mixed Education, and, I am sorry to say, some graduates of the University, have attributed the failure of the Colleges to dissensions and misconduct within their walls. No charge could be more unfair. The failure is owing, not to the dissensions of collegiate officers, but to the demerits of the educational system; not to the want of unanimity and zeal, but to the want of moral and religious teaching.

Deeply is it to be deplored that a dangerous system of irreligious education should have been so long permitted to keep the lecture-halls of such men empty. How painful it must be for the erudite and eloquent Professor of Metaphysics at Queen's College, Cork, to find his class, which in the year 1851 only amounted to seven, now composed of only four students. He must be well aware that his lectures are worthy of an audience one hundred times that number. The ablest Professor of History and English Literature in the three Colleges has now only five students in his class. The well-known Professor of Jurisprudence at Queen's College, Galway, has only two students listening to lectures at which, if the system were a sound one, two hundred would be present. The Professor of the Practice of Medicine in

the same College has five students, and the learned Professor of Law and Equity has three. Even in those subjects which most attract the largest number of the non-matriculated students, the falling off from year to year in the attendance is very striking. The first year the college opened, fifty students attended the class of English Language at Queen's College, Cork. The next year only thirty; the second next year only twenty-one; and, according to the last returns, only twenty attend at present. In the session 1849-50, the Professor of Greek at the same College had a class of fifty-six; next year it fell to forty-eight; and now it only amounts to twenty-seven. In the same way the Professor of Latin has now actually in his classes less than half the number of students that attended his lectures in the first instance. Some of the Professors are left altogether without students. On the whole, a vast amount of professorial skill of the highest order is almost totally wasted.

These pages would be imperfect without a clear statement of the principle on which public money should be given for Public Education. That principle is well known in England. It is a principle which has been practically acted on since the year 1830, and which has been embodied in all the Minutes of the Committee of Council since 1839. I do not know that it can be better expressed than in the words of the present Minister of Education. In a speech he delivered a few months ago, Mr. Adderley said:—"The principle to be adopted in the distribution of the Educational grant is that of rendering assistance to the voluntary efforts of all recognised religious denominations." In opposing the Queen's Colleges Bill, in 1845, Mr. Adderley also appealed to the

principle of religious education. He said:—"I voted for the Maynooth Bill, because it recognised the duty of the State to provide for the religious instruction of the majority of the people; and I shall vote for the amendment because the Government proposition is a retreat from that principle." (Hansard, vol. lxxxii., p. 115.)

In this country, the Government grant has been expended only in supporting voluntary efforts. It is employed to supplement and assist local organisation. Compared with the voluntary system which it aids, it must be regarded merely as a subsidiary agent. To this its success in England is due. The practical working of this principle may be witnessed in the Training Colleges. The National Society's Training College at Chelsea cost 32,578*l.*, whilst the Government grant was only 7242*l.*, leaving 25,336*l.* to be supplied from voluntary and local sources. The Training College of the British and Foreign School Society, in the Borough-road, cost over 20,000*l.*, and the voluntary subscriptions amounted to 16,433*l.* The Wesleyan Colleges are still stronger instances. They cost 38,150*l.*; the subscriptions amounted to 33,101*l.*; and the Government grant to 5049*l.* The Catholic Training College at Hammersmith was built for 13,530*l.*; and this sum was met by voluntary contributions amounting to 9630*l.*, and a Government grant of 3900*l.* The total sum granted by the Education Department for building or improvements to all the Training Colleges in Great Britain amounts to 108,295*l.*; the total sum derived from private sources amounts to 245,988*l.* With reference to the provision of elementary schools, it is only necessary to remember that the Minute of the 2nd of April, 1853, confines the grant to certain

limits, one of which is the total amount of the local contributions. A similar principle applies to the payment of the Lecturers in the Colleges, and of the Certificated Teachers in the Schools. The sum granted out of the Parliamentary Fund towards the augmentation of a teacher's income cannot exceed one-third of the total salary; the remaining two-thirds being raised from fees and from other contributions.

Mr. Disraeli is the first Chancellor of the Exchequer who has taken a comprehensive and thoroughly practical view of the Education Question. His estimate of the probable cost of public instruction in Great Britain and Ireland is well deserving of grave consideration. The total annual grant may now be set down at 1,000,000*l.*, including the expenses of the National Board and Queen's Colleges in Ireland. He estimates its future at three times that sum. That he is fully justified in doing so, no one can deny. The history of the Parliamentary vote, and the other data submitted to the House of Commons in the last Budget, are conclusive evidence that, in a few years, if something is not done to check it, the grant for Education will be 3,000,000*l.* Under such circumstances, it is certainly desirable that the financial state of the Queen's Colleges should be carefully considered.

I deeply regret that I cannot leave this subject without calling attention to the mistakes into which the Royal Commissioners have fallen. The Report of the Commission is signed by the three gentlemen who drew it up, the Marquis of Kildare, Sir Thomas Redington, and Mr. James Gibson. The fourth Commissioner, Mr. Bonamy Price, was precluded by ill health from taking any part

in the preparation of the Report. It would be a somewhat disagreeable task to point out that the views of the Commissioners on what are called matters of opinion are erroneous, and are not borne out by the evidence. It would be a still more disagreeable task to show that, with reference to some practically unimportant matters of fact, the Commissioners had made an incorrect statement. Such an error, even though it were only in relation to some comparatively trifling detail, would, as an error of fact, be a subject of regret. To have to pass far beyond this, and to indicate grave mistakes in the most important paragraph of the Commissioners' Report—grave mistakes as to plain matters of fact—is indeed a most unpleasant duty.

The task which was entrusted by Her Majesty to the Commissioners was one of no ordinary nature. In spite of the official reports usually presented to Parliament, it began, a few years ago, to be very generally rumoured that the Colleges were not progressing. It was whispered abroad that the number of students entering them was very small. It was known that nearly all the authorities of the Church of England, and of the Catholic Church in Ireland, were conscientiously opposed to the mixed system of education. If it were true that the number of students entering the Colleges was much less than what the promoters of these institutions anticipated, and that this number showed no symptoms of an increase, the necessity of some change in the system would become evident. Under these circumstances a Commission was issued. Its object was briefly stated to be "for the purpose of inquiring into the progress and condition of the institutions commonly called the Queen's Colleges, at

Belfast, Cork, and Galway, respectively." The first meeting of the Commissioners was held in Dublin Castle on the 19th of February, 1857, and the Report was signed on the 30th of June, 1858. Thirty-two pages of the Report are devoted to describing the condition of the Colleges, and four or five pages are appropriated to the more important subject of the inquiry—the progress of the Colleges.

The essence of the subject is in the following table, which appears at page 33 of the Report:

"The total number of Students, Matriculated and Non-Matriculated, who have entered the Queen's Colleges since their opening, are as follows :

| | Matriculated Students. | Non-Matriculated Students. | Total. |
|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|
| In 1849-50, . . . | 223 | 152 | 375 |
| „ 1850-51, . . . | 152 | 65 | 217 |
| „ 1851-52, . . . | 136 | 62 | 198 |
| „ 1852-53, . . . | 102 | 35 | 137 |
| „ 1853-54, . . . | 117 | 44 | 161 |
| „ 1854-55, . . . | 113 | 65 | 178 |
| „ 1855-56, . . . | 138 | 41 | 179 |
| „ 1856-57, . . . | 119 | 49 | 168 |
| „ 1857-58, . . . | 109 | 46 | 155 |
| Total | 1209 | 559 | 1768** |

Thus the Commissioners state, that 1209 individuals entered the Colleges as Matriculated Students, besides 477 as Non-Matriculated Students; making a total of 1686 Students. This statement is totally erroneous. I have now before me ample evidence that the Commissioners have overstated the numbers in every year except 1849-50. Every one of the eight numbers given to the several sessions from 1850 to 1858 is wrong. In every instance the number given by the Commissioners is larger than the real number.

* "This number represents 1686 individuals, as 82 Non-Matriculated Students subsequently entered as Matriculated Students."

In proceeding to prove that such is the case, it is necessary to inquire how the Commissioners obtained these numbers. They state that they are taken from tables in the Appendix to the Report, pages 364 and 365. The first and most important of these tables professes to show the number of Matriculated and Non-Matriculated Students entering and attending the Queen's Colleges in each session since their opening.

The following is a specimen of the table for two sessions:

| College. | Number of Students. Entering 1851-52. | | | Number of Students. Entering 1852-53. | | |
|------------|--|-------------------|--------|--|-------------------|--------|
| | Matriculated. | Non-Matriculated. | Total. | Matriculated. | Non-Matriculated. | Total. |
| Belfast... | 51 | 40 | 91 | 36 | 23 | 59 |
| Cork..... | 53 | 17 | 70 | 44 | 10 | 54 |
| Galway... | 32 | 5 | 37 | 22 | 2 | 24 |
| Total... | 136 | 62 | 198 | 102 | 35 | 137 |

The figures given in the Report, and the accuracy of which I venture to challenge, are to be found in this table; they are the figures expressing the total number of students entering the three colleges in each year. For instance, the Commissioners state that in the year 1851-52, 136 Matriculated Students entered; being 51 to Belfast, 53 to Cork, and 32 to Galway. The moment I saw these numbers published by the Commissioners, I knew that at least one of them was wrong. To my own knowledge, 53 Matriculated Students did not enter at Queen's College, Cork, in 1851-52. I have since ascertained the correct number, and I have also discovered that the numbers for Belfast and Galway are incorrect. I have found that not more than 34 Matriculated Students

entered at Cork in that year, 43 at Belfast, and 28 at Galway. One of the 34 students had previously entered at Galway, and was counted by the Commissioners in the total for 1850-51; so that, on the whole, the total number entering in 1851-52 was 104, and not, as the Commissioners say, 136. The Commissioners state that 102 students entered in 1852-53. I am prepared to prove that only 86 students entered in that year; 33 to Belfast, 34 to Cork, and 19 to Galway. In a very large number of instances the same students are set down as having entered the College in two different years, and every one of these students is counted by the Commissioners as two separate individuals. In some cases the same person is counted as three distinct students in the total of the number entering. The Commissioners call marked attention to the number of students attending the College since the opening. That number is given, at page 365, as 2759. I have in my possession unequivocal evidence that *in this grand total the same individual students have been counted by the Commissioners seven and eight times over*. The temptation of a large number of Scholarships may be regarded as the ultimate cause of this statistical fallacy. The same students have been dropping from year to year, and changing from faculty to faculty, to seize these valuable prizes. Like the small army of the Grand-Duke in the "Unequal Match," they have been manœuvered at different points of the same road. Similar serious mistakes are made in the other cases; in fact, every table of numbers in the Report is incorrect. I have been at some pains to ascertain and to verify these facts; and, as the subject is one which will doubtless entail a careful scrutiny by the

Government, I do not think it necessary to discuss it further at present. My honourable friend the member for Waterford, proposes asking for a Select Committee of the House of Commons to inquire into the Colleges and Queen's University. An investigation into the figures and statements of the Royal Commissioners would certainly form a useful part of such an inquiry. I cannot leave this subject without expressing my conviction that the Secretary of the Royal Commission is not the person answerable for these grave mistakes. I have every reason to know that he is a gentleman who would never publish what he believed to be misstatements of facts of the most trivial kind, and, of course, still less that he could knowingly publish misstatements of this sort, which touch the very essence of the Report, and which render it, as a State paper, worse than useless.

It may, perhaps, be said that this *exposé* of the Colleges ought not to have come from my pen. It may be said that one who has spent five years within the walls of these institutions, who completed an undergraduate course in two Faculties, and who received an unusually large share of Prizes and Scholarships, might have been content to hold his honours and be silent. It may be said that one who has been placed under obligations to the highest officers of the University, who has been honoured with the friendship of many of the College Professors, and who, on leaving the College, received a special mark of high distinction from the College Council, might have fairly sacrificed his honest convictions to his personal feelings. If such remarks be made, my answer to them is simple: I have only done my duty. I have only done that which every honest

man who knew the facts of the case was called upon to do. To every student of Science, in spite of temporary passions, the cause of Truth will ever be the strongest motive to action. It is, indeed, a motive which no personal feelings can withstand. There are other motives, not much less powerful, which urged me to this task. The failure of these institutions is a practical vindication of the policy enunciated by the Prelates of every Church, and by the most enlightened statesmen, nearly fifteen years ago; it is a vindication of the course adopted at that time by the leaders of the Young England Party, as well as by Mr. O'Connell and his friends in Ireland, and it is another proof of the prescient judgment of those solemn councils in which the Bishops prophesied the non-success of Mixed Education.

I most earnestly hope to see the day when the lecture-halls of these Colleges will be no longer empty, when the Libraries and Museums which the liberality of Parliament has endowed will be no longer deserted, and when these young institutions can fairly compete with the distinguished University of Dublin. I look forward to this result with certainty; but I know it will not be seen till the system of Mixed Education is swept away, and (in the words of Lord John Manners*) "a Protestant College be maintained for the members of the Church of England, a Presbyterian College for the Presbyterians, and a Catholic College for the Catholics."

* Hansard, vol. lxxxii. p. 1141.