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# ERASMUS SMITH'S SCHOOLS:

THEIR HISTORY AND OBJECTS.

BY

THE REV. WILLIAM GIBSON,

PROFESSOR OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS IN THE PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, BELFAST.

BELFAST:

C. AITCHISON; AND WM. M<sup>c</sup>COMB.

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Houses of the Oireachtas



## PREFATORY NOTE.

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THE statements in the following pages were submitted to the Belfast Presbytery, at its meeting on the 4th instant, when the important subject of Intermediate Education was under the consideration of that reverend court. The interest attaching to the general question, and especially to the original indenture by which Erasmus Smith founded the trust that bears his name, has induced the author to issue the narrative in the present revised form.

That the disclosures here made have already attracted public attention is attested by the fact that, at a meeting of the General Assembly's Committee on Intermediate Education since held, the Committee, while laying down a comprehensive basis of future action, adopted a resolution in which they "earnestly direct the attention of Government, the Legislature, and an enlightened public, to the gross abuse and misappropriation of endowments for educational purposes in Ireland, as clearly brought to light in the 'Report of her Majesty's Commissioners of Inquiry into the Endowed Schools of Ireland;' and in particular, they cannot help cherishing the confident hope that Parliament will no longer permit the princely endowment of Erasmus Smith's foundation to be *culpably squandered on objects alien alike to the known will of the founder and the pressing educational wants of the Irish people.*"

BELFAST, May 22, 1858.

# Houses of the Oireachtas



## ERASMUS SMITH'S SCHOOLS, &c.

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I AM desirous of addressing the Presbytery on an important department of the general question now under its consideration. In doing so, permit me in a sentence to refer to the peculiar position which I occupy in reference to intermediate education in this country.

It is, doubtless, known to you that, about twelve months ago, a vacancy having occurred in the Clare Street Board, through the demise of one of the Irish Bishops, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland resolved to nominate to the Commissionership a member of our General Assembly, and that, through the favour of his Excellency, I had the honour of receiving the appointment. The distinction thus gracefully conferred I regarded it my duty to accept, as, irrespective of the individual on whom it fell, it bore upon it the indication of a more comprehensive and generous policy,—no member of our Church having been similarly recognised for upwards of two hundred years. The late Commission of Inquiry has so far ratified that policy that it has pronounced the Royal and Diocesan Schools, in charge of the Board in Clare Street, essentially non-exclusive, and therefore open to all classes in the community. An attempt has indeed been made by Mr. Stephens, one of the dissentient Commissioners, to show

that the schools in question should remain under the exclusive superintendence and control of the Established Church, on the ground that they were originally placed under such management. The statutes passed in the second and twelfth years of Elizabeth, which he quotes in support of this view, had reference, however, to a very different order of things from that to which he would apply them, and were designed to bear exclusively on the adherents of the Romish faith, and to secure the re-establishment in Ireland of the Protestant religion, after its overthrow in the reign of Mary. When these laws were framed, not a single Diocesan or Royal School was in existence, and no steps were taken towards their re-establishment till 1570. In that year the Diocesan Schools were projected, and thirty-eight years afterwards, or in 1608, the Royal Schools were erected by King James the First. It was not long after till Presbyterian ministers from Scotland were encouraged by the State to settle in Ulster, and that too under circumstances which rendered them eligible to places of trust in any of the educational institutions of the country ; for they were not only inducted into the livings of the Establishment, and into all the emolumentary advantages therewith associated, but, as I shall have occasion to state more fully afterwards, were competent to be chosen to the very highest offices in our National University itself.

Since the period of my appointment, I have attended the meetings of the Commissioners of Education as frequently as a regard to other engagements would allow, and



to some limited extent have become acquainted with the system. Although an entire stranger, and of another religious denomination, I owe it to the distinguished individuals with whom I am associated to bear this testimony, that I have been treated with every mark of courtesy and respect; and that, so far as I have had an opportunity of judging, they are individually and collectively desirous of promoting, to the utmost, the efficiency of the institution committed to their charge. The Commission of Inquiry, which has just reported to the Legislature, has, no doubt, advised their dissolution, and placed on record many grave and weighty censures on the mode in which they have fulfilled their trust; but the abuses of which complaint is made are, in my judgment, more to be attributed to the defects inherent in the system than to the negligence of those by whom it is administered. Indeed, if the mind of the Clare Street Board may be collected from the statements of their estimable and efficient secretary, none can be more sensible than they themselves of the necessity for a reconstruction of its entire machinery. In the evidence of that gentleman, he brings under the notice of the Commission the desirableness of various and important reforms. He urges, for example, an entire change in the allocation of the patronage, and especially in the mode in which the teachers are appointed—he recommends the adoption of a system of school inspection by persons duly qualified and paid—he suggests the great advantage of enlarging the course of education, by introducing into it instruction in natural and applied science—he shows the impossibility



of an efficient transaction of the business by a governing body constituted as the present, the attendance of whose members is so irregular and uncertain, and who are occupied with other public duties—and he approves of the appointment of a central Board, with ample funds supplied out of the national resources, for the administration, on a large scale, of a scheme of higher education, for the benefit of the whole community. On various other matters connected with the management of the existing trusts, the secretary of the Board offers valuable suggestions to the Commission. He presses on their attention the necessity of a provision for the superannuation and promotion of teachers—the propriety of abolishing the monopoly of exhibitions by particular schools, and throwing them open to general competition, and the great advantage that would be secured by a limitation of the number of boarders in the Royal Schools, and their adaptation in other respects to the circumstances of the middle classes. Nothing can be more explicit than the statements of Dr. Kyle on these and kindred topics, although some of the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry, doubtless, extend much farther and involve more sweeping changes.\* Nor has this been

\* It is satisfactory to find that the late Commission of Inquiry, both individually and collectively, have borne their testimony to the efficiency of Dr. Kyle as secretary to the Board in Clare Street. In p. 247 of their report they have thus recorded their estimate of his qualifications:—"In case our suggestion for the discontinuance of the Commissioners of Education be adopted, the office of secretary to the Board under these circumstances will cease. We feel bound to state, that we have received full information and great facilities from Dr. Kyle during our inquiries, and that he appears to us to have discharged his duties as



the first occasion on which the secretary of the Commissioners of Education has borne such testimony. By a reference to the report of a Committee of the House of Commons, generally known as Mr. Wyse's Committee, and whose inquiries constituted the ground-work of the erection of the Queen's Colleges, I find that he offered precisely similar suggestions more than twenty years ago. That Committee, however, while they passed a resolution complimentary to Dr. Kyle for the efficient manner in which he discharged his duties, and for the important evidence which he had submitted, placed this statement upon record regarding the statutory powers of the Clare Street Board:—"The Commissioners have no power to appoint or to salary inspectors, under the existing statutes, and it is doubtful whether they have power to vary the courses of instruction;" while among their recommendations to Parliament they proposed the passing of a bill "dissolving the present Board of Commissioners intrusted with the management of the Diocesan, Royal, and other schools of public foundation," and constituting a Board of National

secretary to the Board, for a period of upwards of twenty years, in such a manner as to entitle him to compensation equal to the full amount of his present salary and emoluments." In the course of his evidence they took occasion to compliment him on the mode in which his accounts were kept, as in these terms—"Dr. Kyle, your accounts are upon a better system *than any that have been laid before us, and reflect great credit on your office.*" In their examination also of Mr. Stubbs, a gentleman officially connected with the Incorporated Society, they elicit from his evidence a striking contrast between the accounts of that society and those of the Clare Street Board, greatly to the advantage of the latter.



Education on broader principles, and with more adequate and extensive powers.

And now, after this prefatory statement, let me bring under the notice of the Presbytery (for I do not feel in the least degree precluded by my peculiar position from discussing the subject in all its bearings) another most important department of the educational apparatus of the country, and one whose origin and object have not, so far as I am aware, as yet been opened up in their full significance—I mean the munificent foundation with which is associated a name not unfamiliar to our ears—the name of Erasmus Smith. The board under whose superintendence his schools are placed is, I may mention, a wholly different one from that to which I have just referred, and with which I have the honour of being connected. Of the personal history of its founder almost nothing has been known, except that he was an alderman of London, who died in the 17th century, and it would seem as if no documentary evidence of any kind respecting his intentions, with the exception of the charter granted by Charles II., together with the rules drawn up by the founder himself for the government of the schools, had been before the late Commission until after they had agreed on their draft report, at the very close of the investigation—a circumstance much to be regretted, as the particulars which I am about to mention might have led to farther disclosures and to important modifications of the report itself.

The clue to the information which is now to be supplied is furnished in a note to the report (p. 64), which states



that a copy of the original indenture by which Erasmus Smith made over certain of his estates for educational purposes, was at length discovered—doubtless through the exertions of the indefatigable secretary, Dr. Hancock, and that it was made on the 1st December, 1657, in the time of the Protectorate. The time of the Protectorate! That stormy time, when the strong will of him whose hand then grasped the British sceptre communicated kindred impulses, and stirred the men of his generation to energetic deeds. It was then that a devoted adherent, as he turns out to be, of the Lord Protector, in the Common Council of London, who had obtained extensive grants in the settlement of Ireland, resolved to allocate a portion of them to the intellectual and moral amelioration of the country in whose soil he had obtained a footing, affixing in this form his seal to the sacredness of the duties, as well as the rights, of property. It is interesting to remark that it was under the same regime, and by the promoting of like sentiments, that the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts—the first great missionary institute in Great Britain, and the outbirth of the Puritanism of the age—was formed; a society whose presidential chair was early graced and dignified by one of the most illustrious names, whether for judicial eminence or devoted piety—the good Sir Matthew Hale, not long before a member of the Westminster Assembly. The state of Ireland at that period was one demanding peculiar sympathy on the part of every true philanthropist and patriot. The iron grasp of the invader was upon it, and, swept by the death-hail of battle, it lay



prostrate as a subjugated kingdom. No wonder that the minds of earnest men were bent towards it with deep solicitude, seeking to devise liberal things on behalf of its unhappy population. What were the beneficent intentions of Erasmus Smith, of London, will best be gathered from the original indenture referred to by the Commission of Inquiry, but not formally brought under their consideration. On examination lately made in the metropolis, I was enabled to find, in the Birmingham Tower of Dublin Castle, the document referred to in the note to the report, and through the courtesy of Sir Bernard Burke, the keeper of the records, to transcribe it entire. As it has not as yet been made public, and as it is of great importance that the declaration of trust should be fully known to all whom it may concern, I shall now read it to the Presbytery.

“An indenture made 1st December, 1657, between Erasmus Smith, of London, Esq., on the one part, Henry Jones, D.D., Samuel Winter, D.D., Thomas Harrison, D.D., Henry Wooton, Samuel Mather, Robert Chambers, Clkes, William Basil, Esq., his Highness's Attorney-General of Ireland, John Bysse, Esq., Recorder of the city of Dublin; Thomas Herbert, Esq., Clerk of the Council of Ireland; Colonel Jerome Sanckey, Colonel John Bridges, Major Anthony Morgan, Edward Roberts, Esq., Auditor-General of Ireland; James Standish, Esq., Receiver-General of Ireland; Daniel Hutchinson, John Preston, Richard Tygh, and Thomas Hooke, aldermen of the city of Dublin, on the other part. Whereas, most of the sins which in former times have reigned in this nation have proceeded chiefly of lacke of the bringing up of the youth of this realm, either



in publique or private schooles, whereby, through good discipline, they might be principled in literature and good manners, and so learn to loathe those haynous and manifold offences which, when they come to years, they daily perpetrate and commit. Now, this indenture witnesseth, that the said Erasmus Smith, for the great and ardent desire which he hath that the poor children inhabiting upon any part of his lands in Ireland, as hereafter is expressed, should be brought up in the fear of God and good literature, and to speak the English tongue, and for other good ends in and by these presents hereafter declared, hath hereby sold and bargained to the said parties and their heirs:—County Roscommon (in or near the town and lands of Athlone), 403A. 1R., plantation measure. In the Isles of Arran, 1,467A. County Galway or town of Galway (in or near the town and fields of Galway), 1,011A. 1R. (excepting 5A. 1R. near adjoining on the said town of Galway, and marked (o), and said 2R. adjoining on said town, and marked No. (i.), as in the book of reference and plott appearing in the Surveyor-General's office; with all boggs, woods, barren mountains, and other unprofitable lands thereunto allotted, cast in and allowed, to hold to the use of the said Erasmus Smith, for the term of forty-one years, from 1st May next ensuing, yielding for and out of the same £300 sterling on 1st November and May yearly during the said term, and of the reversion of the premisses, together with the said rent in trust, to the intent that out of the rents, issues, and profits thereof the said trustees, their heirs, and assignes, shall (in case the said Erasmus Smith do it not) procure and defray the charge of passing an Act of Parliament for the settling of the said lands and premisses, according to the intent and meaning of these Presents, or otherwise to obtain license from his



Highness the Lord Protector, under the Great Seal of England, for incorporating themselves in succession, and to retain the said lands and premisses to them and their successors, notwithstanding the statute of Mortmain, to the intent that out of the annual Profits the said Trustees shall cause five school-houses, for the teaching of grammar and the original Tongues, and to write, read, and cast accompts, to be built in the places following, viz.—One in the town of Sligo; one upon his lands about Galway; one upon his lands in the Barony of Clanwilliam, County Tipperary; one upon his lands in the Barony of Dunluce, County Antrim; and one where his lands that are deficient (which is £2,700) shall be fixed; each schoolmaster to be allowed £40 a-year sterling, and not under, on 1st November and 1st May, for teaching the poor inhabitants upon the premisses to read, write, and cast accompts, and grammar, as they shall be found capable, without any other allowance for the same. A Clerk or Register to attend the said Trustees, with a salary not exceeding £10 a-year. And that such other tenants on the lands, their children, as shall be made fit for the University, or Trinity College, near Dublin, shall have towards their maintenance £10 a-year a-piece, for the first four years after their entrance, and not longer; and for want of such, for the relief of such other poor scholars as the said Trustees or seven of them shall hold fit to receive the same. Saving to the said Erasmus Smith and his heirs, all eyries of hawks, great and small, in the isles of Arran, to be delivered to him or his agent in Dublin, when they shall be reasonably demanded by him or his heirs; also, liberty of digging, cutting, polishing, and carrying away of stone out of the marble quarries in the Isles of Arran. Acknowledged 12 January, and inrolled 16 March, 1657.”

Such, then, is this important indenture, and such the unequivocal declaration of its trusts. In the document before us we have the spontaneous emanation of a large and enlightened spirit, the product of a mind imbued with the characteristic faith and piety of that manly and religious age. The tone in which this venerable deed returns upon us from the past is unmistakably Cromwellian, the echo of those sterner utterances in which the Protector himself was wont to launch forth his thunderbolts against the reigning crimes and superstitions, yet not unmingled with a softer breathing of good-will to man, and of a suppliant appeal to the ear of covenanted mercy. But our main object with this resuscitated document is to interpret it; and as it is a universally recognised maxim of law and equity that the intention of the donor should be the governing principle in the execution of any trust, let us try to gather from the terms of the deed itself the nature of that purpose which Erasmus Smith cherished when he set apart the lands in question for the patriotic and pious uses therein enunciated. A glance at the personal history, opinions, and public conduct of the trustees whom he nominated, will relieve us of all difficulty in settling that question.

Turning to the names—six being those of ministers and twelve of laymen—let us scrutinise them in the order of their enrolment in the deed. Dr. Henry Jones, the first mentioned, was a well-known leader among the Independents, and, in a public document of the day, we find him associated with those of other two of the trustees—



namely, William Basil, Attorney-General in Ireland for the Commonwealth, and Colonel Jerome Sanckey, one of Cromwell's generals, and several more, in a still weightier trust delegated to them by the Parliament in 1650, their office being to carry out the provisions of a bill then passed, "for the better advancement of the Gospel and learning in Ireland;" and what was the design of that important measure? Why, nothing less than the confiscation of the episcopal and archiepiscopal revenues of Meath and Dublin, with those of the Dean and Chapter of St. Patrick's Cathedral, by their application to "the uses of Trinity College, the erection of a second college in the metropolis, the support of professors in the university, and the maintenance of a free school;" and such was the sweeping character of the changes then passing over the nation, that, on the same day, as Dr. Reid informs us, on which this Act was passed, the Parliament entered into resolutions to abolish the hierarchy, and, along with it, the use of the Book of Common Prayer in Ireland, and "to send over six able ministers to dispense the Gospel in the city of Dublin." Of these six, Jones was one, while the remainder were the other five clerical trustees of Erasmus Smith. Enough for him, it would appear, that Cromwell and the Parliament had already delegated to them the work of demolition and reconstruction in another department, to warrant his selection of them, as the men pre-eminently competent, in his judgment, to be entrusted with the execution of his mind and will respecting the educational system which he was about to found. They



were his master's choice for the higher and more arduous duty, and that was sufficient qualification for the discharge of any inferior responsibility. But, apart from this imprimatur enstamped upon them, they were individually men of note under the Protectorate. Winter, the next in order, had been originally a minister in the same communion, in Yorkshire. On being transferred from his rural charge to the Irish metropolis, he became the chaplain of the Commissioners, in whom were vested the powers of the Executive in Ireland, and was soon after elevated to the dignity of Provost of Trinity College, where he continued to reside till he was ejected at the Restoration. Dr. Thomas Harrison, the third-named trustee, was also a leading Independent minister, officiating in Christ Church Cathedral. Wooton, the fourth, was settled in Dublin, and in the civil list for 1655 he is set down for an allowance of £200 a-year. The name of Mather is that of an illustrious family of Puritan divines, some of whom are still conspicuous in the religious literature of Nonconformity. When but a youth, Samuel had quitted the parent country, with his father—his pilgrim father, Richard, when he united with that noble and intrepid band who sought, on the New England shore, a refuge from the storms of persecution, and bore with them to the Western Continent those principles of religious truth which to this day constitute its glory and strength. After receiving his education at Harvard College, the younger Mather returned under better auspices to England, in 1650, and, on his settlement in Dublin, became not only colleague to Winter, in St.

Nicholas's, but fellow of the same college of which his brother minister was the head. The only remaining name of the six clerical trustees is that of Robert Chambers, who officiated in St. Patrick's, and who, as well as Harrison, was in receipt from the State of £200 annually—a salary, I may add, which, on the lowest computation, should be multiplied by three to exhibit its present value.

Having thus accounted for the ministers, there is no great need to enter into any lengthened statement regarding the non-clerical members of the Board created by Erasmus Smith. Their respective designations in the deed sufficiently attest that they were men after Cromwell's own heart, chosen by himself to the highest offices in the Executive, enjoying his fullest confidence, and prepared to carry out his measures, whether regarding the demolition of the monarchy, or the overthrow of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. There is an interesting incident illustrative of the confidence reposed in certain of the trustees by the Lord Protector, in connexion with one of those imperial edicts issued by him during his memorable career. It is well known that when, in 1655, the tidings of the Waldensian persecution by the bloody Piedmontese were borne to England, they deeply stirred the great heart of its ruler, and led him, among other energetic measures, to enjoin upon the authorities that a collection should be made throughout the kingdom "on behalf of the poor distressed Protestants in the valleys." The order came to this country, and in the account of the receipts of moneys so raised, the sum of £1,097 6s. 3d. is acknowledged, and



the parties sending it are these three of our twelve trustees—"Thomas Hooke, lately Mayor of the city of Dublin, and Daniel Hutchinson and John Preston, aldermen of the said city, and treasurers appointed for the receiving of all moneys collected in the realm of Ireland for the distressed Protestants of Savoy." There is another interesting notice of two of these names in a document given at length by Sylvester in his life of Baxter, in which they are subscribed to a communication sent in answer to an appeal from that eminent Presbyterian himself, on the subject of union among Protestants, and where it is worthy of note that they sign themselves, Daniel Hutchinson and Thomas Hooke, "Elders of the Church in Dublin." This question of peace and union among the churches largely engaged the attention of the leading minds among the Independents and Presbyterians of that period, and to such an extent had it proceeded, that in 1658 the ministers of Dublin and its vicinity formed themselves into an association, and agreed upon a declaration of their faith, worship, and government, with the avowed object of combining the principles of Presbytery and Independency into one system.

Thus much for our trustees. They were Cromwellians out and out, about whose religious profession and high standing in the Commonwealth there can be no possible doubt or misconception. Read in the light thus cast upon it, we can account for that which had been otherwise inexplicable—namely the founding of scholarships, and such like, in connection with Trinity College, by one who

was himself a zealous Puritan. Our national university had in its early history been conducted in no narrow or sectarian spirit. Its first elected fellows were Scottish Presbyterians, one of whom was subsequently tutor to the illustrious Ussher, while a succession of its earlier fellows and some of its Professors of Divinity were men conspicuous in the ranks of Presbyterianism. Cromwell, when he assumed the province of chief ruler in the kingdom, resolved to restore the constitution of Trinity College to the primitive model, and to break down the barriers which had been raised around it by the intolerant canons of Laud; and the designation of such men as Winter and Mather to its highest honours was a sufficient guarantee for the comprehensive character of its administration. And now, can there be any reasonable question as to the intentions of Erasmus Smith when he placed his schools upon the basis of a deed, which, on the very face of it, so unmistakably proclaims himself and all his confreres to have been Nonconformists of the straitest sect, the staunch and trusty followers of the merciless antagonist of hierarchical authority and power? Or can we for a moment doubt what he designed when, in the deed itself, he antedated its ratification by legal enactment, "according to the true intent and meaning of these presents," with the sanction of "his Highness the Lord Protector, under the great seal of England?" That he was himself a Nonconformist, even apart from the evidence now supplied, there is a strong circumstantial proof in the fact which I have ascertained, through the kind offices of a friend in London,



who has searched the records of the Corporation of Aldermen, in the library of Guildhall, and by the courtesy of the librarian has obtained the following extract:—"1657, 9th year of the Commonwealth (a period, be it remembered, when the Independents were in all their glory), 28th of April, Erasmus Smith elected alderman of the ward of Billingsgate. 5th of May, Erasmus Smith, lately elected alderman of the ward of Billingsgate, was this day sworn for the due execution of the said office."

And now Erasmus Smith, the alderman of London, "citizen and grocer," as he is also styled in the corporate records, has signed the indenture of his own devising, and had it duly registered among the archives of the kingdom, and he is waiting for a favourable opportunity of obtaining the desired charter. But vain are his anticipations, for the greatest of men are mortal, and in a few short months the scene is changed, and Oliver Cromwell girds on his armour for his death-battle, and takes his leave of England and Nonconformity for ever. Puritanism without its king is kingless, and falls into anarchy, and back returns upon it the reign of chaos and old night. "King, defender of the Puritan faith," as Carlyle has it, "there can now none be found; and nothing is left but to recal the old disowned Defender, and put up with that as best we may." All things in the realm are once more out of course, and Parliaments are found (Stuart Parliaments) of pliant mould enough, who pass all sorts of persecuting acts—acts of uniformity, conventicle acts, and five-mile acts, against poor English Nonconformists, while they send their men

of blood to hunt our Scottish forefathers, as partridges upon the mountains, for eight and twenty years. Dark days for liberty in England, when the Commons pass, without a division, enactments consigning her noblest sons to penalty and exile; violently interposing between faithful shepherds and their flocks—driving the former into banishment, and leaving the latter for a prey to hypocrites and hirelings! What was the future of our six clerical trustees we need not inquire; but this we know, that not a man of them, being a Nonconformist, might meet his congregation for public worship on British soil, or show his face within five miles of a corporate town or city—"a cold-blooded persecution," says Hallam, "to which no severity perpetrated by the late powers is comparable, even though inflicted in the ferment and fury of a civil war." The other portion of the governing board are *ipso facto* disbanded, and are no more heard of, either in the administration of this or any other trust. Some twelve years after, indeed, the Crown and Parliament grant a charter, but its powers and privileges are vested in far different hands; uniformity is now the order of the day in all departments, and instead of the Trinity College of the Commonwealth, standing with open doors inviting all of every evangelical creed to enter, the Trinity College of Laudean memory re-appears upon the scene, with all its revived exclusiveness. There is no help for it, however, and our venerable founder must submit to the provisions of the Stuart charter with what grace he may, for the Royal sanction has been granted to it on the 26th of March,



1669. It contains enactments against which all remonstrance, doubtless, would have been in vain; as, for example, that every schoolmaster and usher in these schools should be approved of by the archbishop or bishop of the diocese in which they lived, on their subscribing the first two canons of the Church of Ireland as agreed on in the twentieth year of King Charles the First; and also that a Hebrew or other lectureship should be founded in connexion with Trinity College. The religion of the founder being proscribed, the trustees, as a matter of course, must be of the established faith, and all other things arranged accordingly! There is one important provision, however, respecting religious instruction incorporated in it—namely, “that the masters shall once a week, on each Lord’s-day, catechise their scholars, and for that purpose shall make use of the Catechism set out by the late most reverend father in God, James Ussher, Lord Archbishop of Armagh, Lord Primate of all Ireland, and shall spend some time in expounding some part unto them.” One is disposed to think that the recognition of this symbol must have been *per incuriam*, or that the Parliament, not much given to such studies, must have accepted it simply on the ground that it was the production of a “Lord Archbishop” and “Lord Primate” of the Church. The Catechism referred to, as those who have looked into it are aware, is *toto cælo* different from that of the Church of England, ignoring godfathers and godmothers in baptism, as well as the rite of confirmation; repudiating baptismal regeneration and consubstantiation,

and being, in general structure and theological statement, almost a counterpart of the Shorter Catechism itself. There is another most important proviso in the charter, forbidding the existing governors or their successors to make or appoint any laws or regulations that shall interfere with those of Erasmus Smith himself, to whom some amount of privilege was still conceded, "which are always to remain in full force for the governing and ordering of said schools and works of charity." Notwithstanding these stringent enactments, the governors would seem at a very early period to have followed their own inventions, for we find the founder, who survived till 1691, addressing them in a tone which shows how keenly sensible he was that the instruction he had laid down were in their estimate of little account. Writing on the 6th of June, 1682, in a tone as loud as he might assume in the altered circumstances of the time, he thus addresses and admonishes, in the old Puritan fashion:—"My Lords and Gentlemen,—My end in founding the three schooles was to propagate the Protestant faith, according to the Scriptures, avoiding all superstition, as the charter and the by-laws and rules established doe direct. Therefore it is the command of His Majesty to catechize the children out of Primate Ussher's Catechism, and expound the same unto them, which I humbly desire may be observed, upon the penalty of forfeiting their places. . . . I desire the charter may be abstracted, as to what doth concerne the duty and priviledge both of masters and scholars, and the lawes and rules added thereto, and that a



table may be fairely written thereof, and hung up in the most publique place in every schoole, that neither master nor scholar may pretend ignorance. My Lords, my designe is not to reflect upon any, onely I give my judgment why those schooles are so consumptive, which was, and is, and will be (if not prevented), the many Popish schooles, their neighbours, which, as succers, do starve the tree. If parents will exclude their children because prayers, catechisme, and exposition is commanded, I cannot help it, for to remove that barre is to make them seminaries of Popery. Therefore, I beseech you to command him that shall be presented or approoved by your honours, to observe them that decline those duties, and expell them, which will oblige, my lords and gentlemen, your most humble servant,—Erasmus Smith."

The charter had not been in operation more than fifty years till a legislative measure was passed, justifying many wide departures from the intentions of the founder, as originally set forth. It appears that in the year 1709, a petition was presented to the House of Commons by his son, Samuel Smith, praying that the surplus rents of the estates might be appropriated to the support of a mathematical school in Dublin, and it would seem that a draft bill for carrying the suggestion into effect had been at one time approved by the governors themselves. This design, however, was not accomplished, but in the opinion of the Commision of Inquiry it may have constituted the basis of the provisions of the very important enactment now to be mentioned. Finding a surplus in their hands, the gover-



nors had commenced the practice of granting exhibitions to poor scholars of Trinity College; and the surplus having largely increased, they obtained an act, in 1723, authorising the application of such funds to charitable uses, empowering them to found two lectureships and three fellowships in Trinity College, also to erect buildings there for those holding their exhibitions, ratifying an agreement into which they had entered with the Blue Coat Hospital for the maintenance of twenty boys, and giving authority to the governors to apply the surplus funds towards some public work in Trinity College or the Blue Coat Hospital, or (greater latitude still) to send poor children to school, or put them out as apprentices. In 1791, the income—originally only £300 a-year—had risen to upwards of £4,200, leaving a surplus over the annual disbursements of more than £1,400. Sixteen years later, and the surplus amounted to £35,000. The present letting value of the estates, I may here observe, is estimated at £9,500, leaving a net income, after all deductions, of about £8,000. But the lands are of great extent, amounting to above 13,000 acres, and there is little doubt that they will still further increase in value. A curious instance of under-letting is thus stated by the Inspector of Estates:—On the Limerick property, which, he observes, seems let about the fair value, there is a holding of above 34 acres, plantation measure, occupied by the incumbent of the parish of Grean, for which he pays only about twelve guineas per annum, or 7s. 6d. an acre, whereas “it is valued,” adds the inspector, “by Mr. Byrne at £3. 8s. per acre; so that he holds it at £102



per annum below its value. I do not find anything in their charter which warrants the governors in letting this part of the estate so far below its value ; and the agent was not able to give any reason for it."

In glancing however cursorily at the administration of these funds, it is impossible not to be struck by multiplied instances of misapplication, even although under sanction of law, of the original trust as laid down in the charter itself. The founder manifestly designed to establish an order of seminaries adapted to the middle ranks in the community—intermediate schools, in short, of a high character, in which the sons of his tenants might qualify themselves, by familiarity with Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, as well as other rudimentary instruction, for the university, and for occupying a distinguished position there. By a free education in the schools, and by pecuniary assistance when at college, he sought to raise the youth on his estates to the very highest place which a university education would enable them to attain ; and as the revenue out of his lands increased, he contemplated a proportionate extension of his beneficent scheme. But, mark how these intentions have been carried out. The legislative enactment above referred to has been interpreted, whether justly or not I cannot say, as a virtual prohibition to the governors against increasing the number of the grammar schools, insomuch that, when in 1773 they proceeded to erect such a school at Ennis, they are represented by the Commission of Inquiry as exceeding their proper powers. However this may be, they were still left free to provide to the

fullest extent for the efficiency of the schools brought into existence by the founder himself. And how have they discharged this important trust? They have neglected to this hour to exercise (except in a few isolated cases) their privilege to nominate free pupils; nor have they so much as made known to their tenantry the existence of their children's right to a free admission. Their grammar school instruction, so far from being free, is of the most expensive kind, the charge being in one case as high as forty guineas a-year for boarders, and ten guineas for day pupils. They have applied their accumulated funds to every object rather than that to which they were set apart. Sustained in this course by their act obtained in 1723, they expended on Trinity College—itsself munificently endowed—as much as £900 or £1,000 a year, although, latterly, the extra provision sanctioned by the act for this object has been withdrawn, while they built an examination hall in connexion with that university at a cost of £2,500, and presented the college with a library at an expense of £9,000! During all this period, as shown by a return to the House of Commons in 1854, they have allowed their exhibitions to remain at the small sum of £6 and £8 a year, while out of fifty exhibitions that might be obtained by pupils in ten years, only fourteen had been awarded to pupils of their grammar schools on entering Trinity College, and none whatever in three of the four years immediately preceding the return—"thus defeating," says the Commission of Inquiry, the intention of the founder, of "having the pupils, as far as they were capable,



instructed in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew tongues, and fitted for the university." Occasionally a trifling annuity is left by some private individual to one of their grammar schools. Take the following as an illustrative specimen of the care they take of such encouragements to learning:—Dr. King, the head master of Ennis School, when under examination, states that when he entered on his charge, about twenty-five years ago, he had put into his hand a transcript of a will of Chief Justice Pattison, who had left £10 a year to the school. Dr. King applied in vain respecting it to the representative of the deceased, but in the books of his predecessor in the school he saw an entry that excited his curiosity, to this effect:—"Agent allowed Thomas Steele £10 yearly of the Pattison charity, for the horse Strongbow." One of the commissioners, continuing the examination, says—"He exchanged it for the horse?"—"Yes," says Dr. King, "the £10 a year. I addressed the Board on the subject, and they referred it to their law adviser; and the answer I received, after a length of time, and one, two, or three applications, was, that the matter was involved in inextricable mystery, although I sent them a transcript of the will." So much for the £10 a year for the encouragement of literature at Ennis, and so much for the horse Strongbow, who seems to have distanced all competitors for the distinction. Mark, however, how handsomely they deal by other objects, pertaining to the encouragement neither of grammar school nor college. They regularly allocate a large amount—often as large as £700 or £800 a year—to the maintenance of boys in

the Blue Coat Hospital, in which, although the act limits the number so maintained to 20, they have frequently been supporting nearly half as many more. And, in addition to all this, they commenced about half a century ago to stud the country, north and south, with English schools, a class of seminaries never for a moment contemplated either in the original indenture or in the charter. To this last-named object they applied the £35,000 in hand in 1807; and as there seems to be an annual overplus at present of about £3,000, and as the accumulating process is continually going on, they have at all times a large available amount for any of those cherished projects, on which they lavish the munificent resources thus placed at their command.

And now, what is the relative proportion between the number of their grammar and English schools and the amount expended on these respectively? Here is the official return: 4 grammar schools, in Ennis, Tipperary, Drogheda, and Galway, with an attendance of 161, maintained at an annual outlay of some £700, the masters being miserably endowed, each with £100 a-year, and being, at the same time, frequently obliged to undertake and execute required improvements in the school-houses, though this is a duty necessarily devolving on the governors, and ought to have early priority out of the surplus,—that surplus being eleven-twelfths of the annual revenue out of the estates committed to their charge! Through their neglect, “the condition of the grammar schools,” say the Commission of Inquiry, “is, in respect of proper school furni-



ture, *very discreditable*." "We were told that the governors made occasional grants towards the repair of the school-houses, in aid of the sums disbursed by the masters; but it was apparent that the governors are much indisposed to contributing in this way towards the maintenance of the school premises, and *have not recognized their obligation to fulfil this primary and chartered trust of the foundation*." Then there are no less than 119 common English schools, with an attendance of 5,380 children, and an expenditure of about £2,500 a-year. Nor does it seem possible to make the governing body understand that there is anything requiring in the least degree to be rectified in this appropriation. On the contrary, when their chairman and treasurer, Wm. Barlow, Esq., a highly influential gentleman, and a governor of the Bank of Ireland, is reminded, when under examination, that there is no provision in the charter for English schools, and when he is further reminded of the great extension of the benefits of such schools by the National Board, and of the urgent need of intermediate education, and is pressed to say whether, under these circumstances, the Board are doing what is either right or "perfectly legal" in devoting so large an amount to the objects of primary instruction, he very coolly answers, "I would rather, if I could, increase the usefulness of our English schools." The examiner promptly rejoins, "Although you must admit that the establishment of grammar schools is the primary object indicated by the charter, which makes no mention of English schools?" Indeed, the governors

have uniformly shown a total insensibility to the duty of extending the system of grammar school instruction. When a Special Commission, appointed by the Parliament, in 1791, finding that their surplus income at that time amounted to about £2,000 a-year, recommended that a professional academy of a high class should therewith be founded and endowed in Dublin—an academy which should furnish instruction suitable for all the professions; preparing, also, soldiers, seamen, and merchants for the business of their several departments, and that 100 eleemosynary pupils should be admitted to a participation of the benefits it should confer on the community at large, and that boys should be promoted from the grammar schools to this higher educational platform—the suggestion, although emanating from such a quarter, fell still-born, and judging by the issue, elicited no response whatever. And no wonder, if the governors of that day were of the same mind with their chairman of the present, who states in evidence, that he regards the grammar schools very much as private institutions subsidized by the Board, rather than as public schools belonging to the governors, and to be administered by them for the public good.

In no respect, however, have the intentions of the venerable founder been more completely frustrated than with regard to the religious instruction of the pupils in his schools. The requirement of the charter, that all the pupils should be indoctrinated in the Catechism of Archbishop Ussher, has in every case been systematically violated. Nor is this violation to be wondered at, as the



masters have been left in utter ignorance of the chartered rules upon the subject, although these were returned to Parliament in 1854, as the "only rules in existence." The master of the school in Drogheda states accordingly, that when he gives religious instruction he allows the Roman Catholics to absent themselves, and that many of the day pupils of other persuasions do not arrive until after the termination of the religious instruction, which takes place at a very early hour. At Ennis there is no religious instruction of a nature to interfere with the attendance of any class of persons whatsoever, although of the day pupils five are Roman Catholics, and of the boarders one. The master states, with reference to the pupils of this persuasion, "I never interfere with their creed in any one point or way." In Galway it appears that at an early period some compromise upon the subject was adopted, through the instrumentality of the Archbishop of Tuam, after which Roman Catholic children attended the school, and an usher was on one occasion dismissed for interfering with the distinctive tenets of their faith!

That the founder himself attached a special value to the provision in the charter on the subject of religious teaching, is evident by the pains which he has taken to reiterate it in the "laws and directions" which he was allowed the liberty of making under seal. The following are sufficiently stringent on the subject:—"The school-master, and in his absence the usher, shall publicly, every morning, read a chapter out of the canonical Scripture, and then pray, concluding at night also with prayer. This to

be done in the English tongue, that all may be edified ; they are to urge the children frequently to read the Scriptures, and att convenient times to require some account of what they read, according to their capacitie ; and that the meanest of them be able readily to give an account how many bookes, and the order in which they stand, as also the number of chapters in each book both of the Old and New Testaments. The weakness of children is such that many times varietie of Catechisms confounds their understandings, and the Lord Primate Ussher's Catechisme ining specially commended to those schools in the Charter, the masters *are diligently and constantly* to catechise them be that forme. And on the Lord's-day, before or after publicke worship, to expound the same or part thereof, unto them, as also att other convenient times." Though nothing can be more specific or imperative than these requirements, we find that but a short period elapsed till they were superseded by another set of regulations of a very different complexion ; for in 1712 the governors enacted that the manual of religious instruction should be, not Ussher's, but Dr. Mann's Catechism, and instead of the free prayer, manifestly contemplated by the founder, they ordained, " That prayers be *read, morning and evening, out of the liturgy by law established*, at which every youth shall be obliged duly to attend." These enactments were accompanied by others to the effect that every pupil should, on pain of expulsion, attend the service in *the Parish Church* every Lord's-day, and " such other time as the master or usher shall appoint ;" and that " every person so educated, when he



is sufficiently instructed in the aforesaid Catechism, shall be *brought by the master or the usher to the bishop, to be confirmed.*" The founder had decreed that none should "be admitted schoolmasters of the said schools but such as are of the *Protestant religion*"; succeeding governors have decreed that the masters must be "members and communicants of the *Church of England*." It is somewhat significant that the Commissioners in vain endeavoured to procure a copy of the original rules, during the progress of their inquiry. "These were not returned by us," they say, "*in answer to our requisition, or brought forward or referred to by the Governors or their officers, at any of our courts.*" After our public inquiries were completed, the governors issued rules to the masters, founded upon them; we then applied for them, and they are annexed hereto."

Although the governors of 1712 had adopted Dr. Mann's Catechism, as a substitute for that of Ussher, their successors of a later date seem to have altered that arrangement, and to have made it a stipulation that "no other Catechism shall be taught or admitted into the school but that of the Church of England." Within the last twenty years, however, another change has been effected to meet a special case—a change which places the question of religious instruction on a wholly different basis, making no provision for the catechising of the children in any formulary whatsoever. Of the hundred and nineteen English schools, it appears that fifty-two were called into existence immediately after the founding of the Church Education Society for Ireland; and into their leases has been introduced a

clause, indicating the close connexion between the principles of the two bodies, to the effect that "the children shall be *instructed according to the regulations of the governors*, the Holy Scriptures being read, and all the children therein instructed." The regulations of the governors!—whatever the complexion of their religious sympathies—whether High Church or Low Church, Arminian or Calvinistic, Puseyite or Evangelical! This is the only guarantee for a sound religious teaching in these schools, in the room of the often enjoined but discarded catechism of the good Archbishop of Armagh; and all to meet the requirements of the connexion with a society whose system and teachers the late Commission have declared to be so miserably and, in some instances, even ludicrously inefficient!

As for the supervision, whether of the grammar or English schools of Erasmus Smith, it is no better than a name. The masters of the former are left perfectly uncontrolled, the schools are never inspected, the terms for pupils are not defined, no course of education is prescribed, and there is nothing, says one of the assistant-Commissioners, to distinguish these from private seminaries, except the receipt of a considerable salary and the use of large and commodious houses and grounds—giving to the master such advantages over private teachers as to put down all competition. The masters themselves being thus independent, are in a position to act in every respect as they please, and to do many things which private teachers could not dare to do. The Rev. Hugh Hamilton, who, as regis-



trar, receives a salary of some £200 a-year, is, indeed, supposed to discharge the duties of inspector also; but it is manifestly impossible that he, or any single individual, can fulfil such an important office. Let me quote an amusing passage from his evidence on this head. He is thus interrogated by Mr. Stephens.—“If I understand you aright, there is no inspection exercised over the four grammar schools of Galway, Drogheda, Ennis, and Tipperary?—There is no regular inspection of them, but the governors are in constant communication with the masters. If there is any complaint it is investigated immediately; but there is no periodical visitation or inspection. Can you refer to any visitation of the Tipperary School?—There was, some years ago. Can you refer me to the evidence of that visitation?—No. Was there an investigation?—Dean Cotton held one. How many years ago?—In 1835, I think. Has there been any other investigation into the Tipperary School?—Not that I heard of. Has there been any visitation or investigation of the Ennis School?—I never heard of any. Was there any other kind of supervision?—I know I wrote to Dr. King (the master) to explain away a complaint that he had no teacher of French. There was a long correspondence on the subject, and I do not recollect anything else. Has there been any visitation of the school at Galway?—You have the case. Answer my question.—None, except that which has been alluded to. What case was that?—The case of Mr. Eaton. A visitation was threatened if he did not resign, and he did resign. [And I may add, they gave him a pension of £50

a-year, after constraining him to resign, though he had been head-master for only ten years.] With that exception, has there been any interference with Galway School?—None. Has there been any visitation of the school at Drogheda?—I know that the governors went to see the repairs. So far as regards these four grammar schools, have you any means of ascertaining whether the boys are badly or well taught?—I have no means of ascertaining. Are you not the sole inspector? I am.” The inspector necessarily passes once a-year through three of the four towns in which the grammar schools are situate, but he has never been directed to inspect them; neither have the masters, according to the report, ever received a copy of the charter, or any instructions to enable them to follow its provisions. And this is the style of inspection instituted by that Board, who, in the first instance, and till they were compelled by Act of Parliament, refused to submit to any inquiry, on the plea that to themselves alone of right belonged the visitation of the schools. One knows not whether so much to be amused at the ridiculous exhibition, or indignant at the glaring disregard of great public interests. Nor is the inspection of the English schools much better provided for, though these are manifestly the pet schools of the Board. With reference to them, the governors, it is manifest, have not the sole management and visitation which they claim. One master gets a gratuity from the Incorporated Society; another is inspected by the secretary of a Diocesan Society; and several schools are in apparent connexion with the Church Education Society, by



which they are inspected, and the very forms of which are used by the masters in keeping their rolls. Although the English schools have been in operation only about fifty years, no less than six of these, on which a grand total of £7,144 was expended, have been discontinued, and the money so expended lost—a loss which the solicitor himself declares would not have taken place if the leases had been drawn according to the charter. “Thus have the governors,” say the Commissioners of Inquiry, “not only neglected the primary trust of the grammar schools, but have not managed prudently the secondary trust of English schools, which they have developed to an extent disproportionate to their resources.”

On the subject of accounts, for which the governors are so severely dealt with in the report, I cannot enter. Enough to say, that though there are no less than four officers in the Board connected with them, neither individually nor collectively do these gentlemen hold themselves responsible for their accuracy. The solicitor never looks into them, unless some question arises with regard to special items. The registrar, on his own showing, is only accountable for the moneys actually placed in his hands. The registrar's assistant, who neither understands the meaning of the term assets, or what is intended by double entry, denies the statement of his chief that he has charge of the book-keeping department; while the treasurer begs to set the registrar right regarding his responsibility, for the governors do hold him responsible for the accounts. And so the ball of responsibility is set a rolling; each, as it

indicates a tendency to rest with him, giving it a lusty hitch in the direction of his neighbour. From the returns of their solicitor, it appears that he performs many of the duties that properly belong to the registrar, and others belonging to the agent, attending all the meetings of the governors, and furnishing voluminous bills of costs, which have never been subjected to taxation, except on one occasion, when the Board were represented by his son, who is in the same office. The aggregate of six bills of costs, from 1835 to 1856, was £3,412. The only check on the accounts is the audit of the chairman and treasurer, which is confined to vouching the actual receipt and expenditure of money, but never tests either their form or accuracy, or their conformity to rule or charter; as a sample of which, there is a column of figures on the last page of the registrar's account, signed by the chairman and treasurer as auditor, containing a reference to the folios of a ledger only half-posted, and never balanced! And when informed that these figures do refer to such folios, that gentleman replies, with the utmost *nonchalance*, "I know nothing of it, as I never looked into the ledger in my life. I am not an accountant; I am not a book-keeper; and if I did look to it, I dare say I would not be much wiser than I am at present. I am glad to have the opportunity of saying I never looked into a page of it." Happy auditor! contented in his blissful ignorance, and deprecating any disturbance of his rare felicity.

Of the mismanagement which has so long existed in all departments, I cannot but think that a principal share is to



be attributed to the constitution of the governing Board itself. The Commission of Inquiry have, indeed, placed on record a similar judgment. The members who compose that body are, no doubt, gentlemen of the highest honour, as they are of high social standing; but, as their chairman once and again indicates in his testimony, they have been guided in all things rather by precedent than settled rule—satisfied with doing in every case as their predecessors had done before them. It is on this ground that the existing governors have been to a large extent exonerated by the Commission of Inquiry, in these terms, which it is only fair to quote from their report:—"Whilst we have thus observed on the course of proceeding of the governors in the management of their schools and the administration of the affairs of the charity, we feel it is due to those who at present hold the office of governors, to state that no malversation or actual loss of money appears to have accrued from the defects in their accounts, and that many of the objectionable arrangements which we have noticed seem to have gradually grown up, and to be attributable to a system of routine, resting on the authority of persons of dignity and influence, who had been active governors in past times, and whose acquaintance with the affairs of the charity and the trusts of the foundation, was supposed to be extensive and accurate." The Commission further record the judgment that, however inexpedient, the founding of the English schools was not illegal, "being sanctioned by *the letter* of the Act of 1723, and by the approval of the Commissioners of 1827." According to the chairman,

there are thirty five, and according to the registrar, (for they are not alike informed upon the point) there are twenty-six governors. In point of fact, however, neither is correct, for the actual number provided by charter is thirty-two, of whom seven are *ex officio*, and four belong to the Blue Coat Hospital—the same charity on which so large a sum is annually expended—while the remainder are self-elected, the existing Board filling up vacancies as they arise—a constitution which, by inevitable necessity, must prove the fruitful parent of abuse. Of the governors, several, as may be readily supposed, never attend the meetings; and no member on the Board, says an intelligent witness, has any local connexion with the places in which the schools are situated, or any knowledge whatever of their discipline, progress, or management. The entire control and conduct of the system, indeed, is left in the hands of a standing committee, the Board itself not being convened oftener than once or twice a-year. It is abundantly manifest that a governing body so defective in its constitution and so anomalous in its working, is wholly inadequate to discharge the responsibilities of such an arduous and important trust.

I have thus, in the most summary manner, glanced at the origin, objects, and working of the schools in question, omitting many topics of collateral interest. On reviewing the whole system, and looking at the suggestions of the Commission of Inquiry with respect to it, one cannot but feel surprise that, with the information before them, even though not fully cognisant of the original intentions of



the venerable founder, they did not urge the adoption of more decided measures of reform. On this account, the public generally will agree with Mr. Stephens, who seems to have been prepared to go much further in that direction than his fellow-Commissioners ; for, with reference to these schools, and some others of a like description, that gentleman, justly says that, "with the exception of providing for an official audit, and the registration of title-deeds, and offering some advice to the governors, which they are at liberty to follow or neglect, as they may be disposed, the majority of the Commissioners have made no recommendation with a view to the superintendence and improvement of these schools, and the removal of the evils which our inquiries have brought to light." For Erasmus Smith himself, I cannot but think a different feeling will henceforward be cherished after such disclosures as have been made, and instead of being regarded as the originator, as Mr. Stephens has it, of the most exclusive *Church* schools in Ireland," he will be viewed, at least by those who take the trouble to inquire into his history, as one of the most earnest, and, taking into account the day in which he lived, enlightened, of Christian philanthropists. That the foundation which he laid was, in the strictest sense, "exclusive," as regards the element of *doctrine* is unquestionable, but the *Church* element on which he founded was broadly catholic, and unsectarian. And, as justice will be rendered to his memory, so let us hope that it will be also done to his intentions. In the moral government of the world, such justice, though it often tarries long, is sooner or later



accorded, in the cycle of revolving eras, to the true men of the earth. Their character and deeds may be unknown and unappreciated for many generations, but some new turn of the wheels of Providence eventually sets them in their proper place again. Thus it has been with England's Puritans and Scotland's Covenanters. Thus it has been, too, with Cromwell himself, the great uncrowned of Puritanism. But if the men of other times owe it to such benefactors of their race as the individual whose name we have so often had occasion in this statement to refer to, to place their benefactions in their true light before the world, they owe it to themselves to demand, under the highest sanction, by a regard to the requirements of the living and the memories of the dead, that the educational edifice originally designed by Erasmus Smith, the staunch and sturdy Puritan of the Commonwealth, shall be reconstructed upon its primitive foundation—not for denominational aggrandizement, but for the advantage of our common Protestantism; and that, as the Legislature and the Crown, by their repeated interpositions, have dealt with the system which bears his name according to their views of public utility, they shall be required to interpose once more to render it available for the now pressing objects on behalf of which an intermediate education is required, and thus to rectify the wrong that has been done both to the founder and the community by the mismanagement and mal-appropriation of two hundred years.