

Notes on the new reformation in Germany : and on national education, and the common schools of Massachusetts / By George Combe.

Contributors

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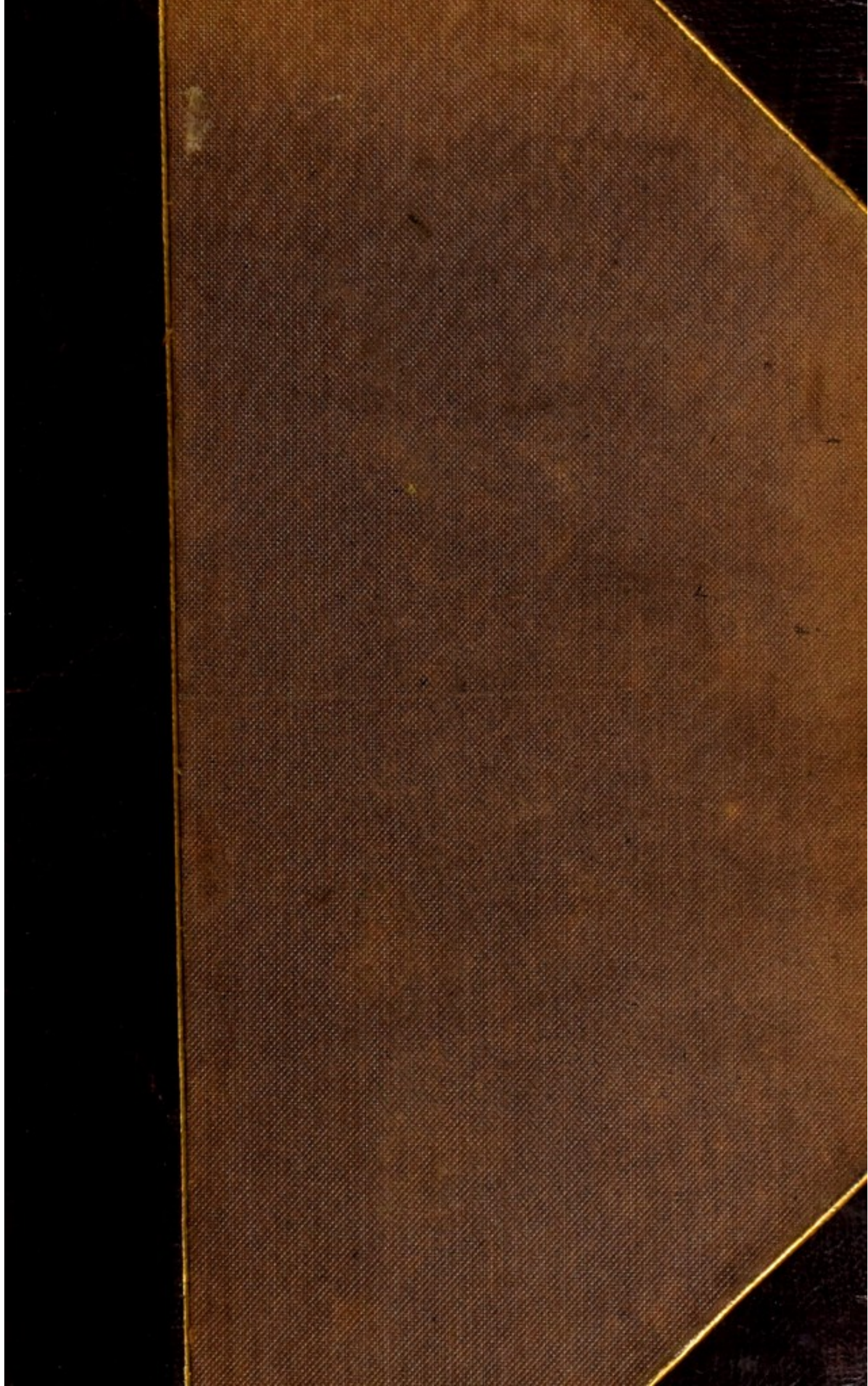
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NOTES

ON THE

NEW REFORMATION IN GERMANY,

AND ON

NATIONAL EDUCATION, AND THE COMMON
SCHOOLS OF MASSACHUSETTS.

BY

GEORGE COMBE.

A straw will shew how the wind blows.—OLD PROVERB.

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* The following Notes were written for, and originally published in, the *Scotsman* newspaper. They are reprinted in consequence of a demand for them in a more connected form.

*Published probably about the year
1846.*

NOTES ON GERMANY.

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### SECT. I.—THE NEW ROMAN CATHOLIC REFORMATION.

To enable our readers correctly to appreciate the nature and importance of the religious movement which is now agitating Germany, a few preliminary observations may be useful.

The Teutonic, or German race, although slow, is distinguished by great vigour, earnestness, and solidity of character. They are profound and intrepid thinkers, but not practical; they are full of deep and serious emotion, but it too often evaporates in enthusiastic ebullitions of poetry or song, without leading to any ulterior result. When excited, they are terrible in passion; but they are slow to anger, and are generally mild, considerate, and compassionate. They are the most upright, consistent, and honest people in Europe. A phrenologist would describe them as having large brains; a good deal of the lymphatic, combined with the sanguine, bilious, and nervous temperaments; large organs of the animal propensities, large organs of the moral sentiments—those of benevolence and conscientiousness predominating; also large organs of reflection, but with moderate or small organs of the observing and practical faculties.

During the last thirty years, education has not only been provided for the people, but enforced on them by the Governments of most of the states of Germany; and the instruction has been solid and valuable. The subjects taught in the higher schools, have embraced the elements of science; and the teaching has, in many instances, roused the understandings, and awakened the moral sentiments, of the pupils. The young generation, therefore, in the towns and densely peopled districts, is distinguished for intelligence and mental activity; and printing and publication flourish to an extent surpassed only in Great Britain and the United States of North America. In the rural districts, however, in which the peasantry are, in general, the owners of their farms, which they cultivate with their own hands, the process of

thinking is much circumscribed by toil ; and the people are less speculative, but more practical.

When Europe was settled by the treaty of Vienna, after the final expulsion of Napoleon, the politicians thought nothing about religion, but combined states from purely political motives. In several of them, by a strange coincidence, they nearly balanced the Roman Catholic and Protestant populations. Prussia, for example, which was formerly the bulwark of German Protestantism, acquired so many Roman Catholic provinces, that it is no longer a Protestant monarchy ; Bavaria, a strong pillar of Catholicism, received so many Protestant subjects, that it is no longer a Catholic kingdom. Even Geneva, the focus and fountain of Calvinism, acquired so many Catholic subjects from Sardinia, that the State Council is no longer exclusively Protestant. The consequence has been, that each great party holds the other in check, and sectarian legislation in matters of religion has become impracticable, and is no longer advocated. In Geneva, the advantages of abolishing all state support of religion, and adopting the voluntary system, have been seriously discussed. The personal relations of some of the sovereigns tend also to mitigate religious rancour. The King of Saxony, for example, although ruling over a Protestant country, is a Roman Catholic ; and the King of Bavaria, a Catholic, is married to a Protestant Princess, who continues attached to her own creed, and serves as the pledge of protection and safety to her Protestant subjects. The heir-apparent of Bavaria, also, for the same reason, has recently married a Protestant. Protestant and Catholic institutions receive equal support from the public purse. In Baden, one of the universities, that of Heidelberg, is Protestant, and the other, that of Freiburg, is Catholic. In all of these countries Protestants and Catholics are equally eligible to every civil and military employment.

These circumstances have greatly mitigated the dissensions between Protestants and Catholics ; but recently a new religious movement has taken place in society. The rulers of Germany have long and strenuously restrained the political press of that country ; but as their subjects experienced a necessity for speculation and thinking, they left open to them three safety-valves for the escape of the national mental power. These were, poetry and romance ; metaphysics ; and religion. And the German mind did not fail to avail itself of the freedom vouchsafed to it in these departments of thought. Before the battle of Jena (14th October 1806), the imme-

diate precursor of the German social revolution, Rationalism, or that system of Christian theology which is coincident with natural religion, was the prevalent creed of the German clergy. After that event, there was a reaction towards evangelical opinions. But the war of controversy proceeded; and, in the universities and higher seminaries of education, a new generation sprang up, which adopted the opinions of the philosopher Hegel\*—that Christianity is not necessary to the welfare of society; and they not only discarded Rationalism, but threw even Strauss and his *Life of Jesus* overboard, as too deeply tinctured with theology, and took their stand on philosophy alone, as the foundation of morals and religion. The state of opinion on this subject is well recorded in the *Deutsche Jahr-Buecher* for 1842, a scientific and literary periodical, edited by Arnold Ruge, and in his "Anekdoten zur neuesten deutschen Philosophie und Publicistik," published in 1843. In these works Ludwig Feuerbach, a man of unimpeachable morality and great talent, wrote against Christianity, and proposed to substitute Hegel's philosophy in its place. The censor at Leipzig refused to allow this essay to be printed. Dr Ruge, the editor, appealed to the Minister of the Interior in Dresden, who confirmed the sentence of exclusion. He states his reason to be, that the essay was not confined to an attack on the opinions or tenets of any particular sect, but was directed against Christianity itself, as irreconcilable with science, philosophy, and civil government. The books now mentioned were both prohibited; but they continue to be sold and extensively read in many parts of Germany.

We have endeavoured in vain to comprehend Hegel's philosophy. It is an occult science in which the ideas are so abstruse, the distinctions so fine, and the relations so inappreciable, that peculiar talents and a special study appear to be necessary to understand it. It is impossible to render parts of it into English, because our language has no terms expressive of many of the combinations of ideas which abound in it.† To propose to substitute such a system for Christianity was pure philosophical fanaticism. Nevertheless, the delusion spread, and seriously alarmed the Governments. The rulers of Germany are not yet so enlightened

\* Born 1770 at Stuttgart, died 1831 as Professor of Philosophy in the University of Berlin.

† A sketch of this system is to be found in Menzel's *German Literature*, translated by Thomas Gordon, minister of Newbattle, vol. i.

as to comprehend that Christianity itself, law, justice, and social order, rest secure on the basis of the innate faculties of man, and that religion has no more need of state support to maintain its existence and efficiency, than has astronomy or chemistry. They regard Christianity as the only sure basis of civil authority; and state-paid priests and state-made creeds as the only stable foundations of Christianity. They therefore seriously proceeded to counteract the diffusion of these philosophical errors. The King of Prussia became the patron of evangelical opinions; he enforced a more rigid observance of the Sunday, and encouraged Sunday schools, and evangelical religious societies. The press, meanwhile, so far as the censors would allow, made war against these innovations, and the public mind was kept alive by religious discussions. To refute the Hegelites, that monarch invited Professor Schelling of Munich to come to Berlin; and in 1842, the Professor delivered a full course of lectures on Christian Philosophy. He was listened to by a large and intelligent audience, backed by the whole moral and political influence of the Government. He assumed the Bible to be revelation, gave to its dicta the same authority which is allowed to natural facts in physical science, and on its basis reared a Christian Philosophy. He made an impression on some of his hearers; but the general tendency of the best educated young men in Germany continued to lean towards the Hegelian views.

While the Protestant powers were thus employed, the Roman Catholic authorities were not idle. They endeavoured to heighten the influence of the priests over the minds of the young;—the priests themselves became more active, tried to obtain the command of education, and, unfortunately for themselves, instead of advancing with the public mind, they attempted to turn back the hand of time, and to reintroduce the superstitions of departed ages. Among other appeals to the blind devotion of that portion of the German people (chiefly the agricultural) who continued strongly attached to the Roman Catholic faith, the Bishop of Trêves, on the Moselle, exhibited, in the autumn of 1844, in the cathedral of that city, a vestment woven without a seam, which tradition and a bull of Pope Leo X. certified to be the coat worn by the Saviour at his crucifixion, and for which the soldiers cast lots. Evidence was published out of pretended records, proving that Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, had made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and obtained this and other precious relics, and had bestowed the coat on the

cathedral of Trêves. It was exhibited daily during six weeks—visited by (according to report) about a million of the devout, who, after confession and repentance of their sins, and making gifts to the cathedral, each according to his means, received absolution and indulgences; and, moreover, many of the afflicted were miraculously healed of their diseases by looking on the coat in the spirit of penitence and faith.\*

The newspapers of Germany, Protestant as well as Catholic, reported each day's ceremonies, and the latter celebrated in ardent terms the wonders performed by the holy coat. This was too much for the educated portion of the German people, and at length Johannes Ronge (pronounced Wrong-gé, the g hard and the e accented), a priest of Silesia, raised the standard of revolt, denounced the tunic as a scandalous imposture, renounced all connection with the Church of Rome, and called on his countrymen to follow him and assert their spiritual independence equally of the Pope, the Bishops, and the State. This call has been enthusiastically answered in Prussia, Saxony, the Free Cities, Baden, Würtemberg, and, indeed, in every state in which the Government has not forcibly interfered to arrest the movement. Other priests have followed Ronge, and in numerous localities in the countries now named, large and influential congregations have been formed, and the excitement is still in full blaze. Some of the Governments at first partially encouraged it, then became alarmed, and tried to restrain it. They threatened, vacillated, and in some instances retracted; and altogether they have manifested much uneasiness, without being able hitherto to discover what course they should systematically follow. The Reformers are already too numerous and influential to render it safe to attempt to put them down by open force; while the spirit of freedom, self-reliance, and self-action, with which they are animated, threatens to extend into politics, and to produce still farther important social results.

\* A detailed account of these proceedings, and of the subsequent events up to May 1845, will be found in a pamphlet, entitled "John Ronge, the Holy Coat of Trêves, and the new German Catholic Church;" Nelson, Edinburgh and London.

## SECT. II.—THE NEW REFORMATION—RONGE'S OPINIONS.

The attendance of the people on public worship affords, perhaps, the safest criterion by which a stranger can judge of the state of religious feeling in a foreign country which he visits ; and, tried by this test, the external indications of religious sentiment in Germany corresponded closely with the representations which we presented in our last notice. In the rural districts, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, the churches were filled—in some places crowded—at a very early hour in the morning (in summer from 6 to 9 o'clock), with the peasant population of both sexes. They dined at twelve o'clock, and spent the afternoon in shooting at targets, dancing, smoking, drinking beer, or other amusements. In the towns, nearly nine-tenths of the congregations of Roman Catholic Churches were women, and the few males present were, generally speaking, old men and boys. In the Protestant churches, the males might amount to two-tenths of the congregations, and among them might be seen a few more individuals in middle life ; but, generally speaking, the active, intelligent, middle-aged men, were not frequenters of the churches of either sect, in any adequate proportion to their numbers. These facts indicated that the educated public mind of Germany had forsaken the external forms of religion, as taught in the established churches of the country, while it had not embodied itself in any other forms or institutions.

In this state of things Johannes Ronge published his "Call" to a new reformation, and, so far as he has hitherto proceeded, he has thrown himself on the German mind in its actual condition. He has not announced new articles of faith,\* or new forms of church government, but simply preached freedom for religious opinions from all lay and clerical domination. He casts the pope, the bishops, and the state, equally overboard, and proposes to place religious power in the hands of the people. But to convey the spirit of his address, we shall allow him to speak for himself. In his "Call"† he

\* In the pamphlet, "John Ronge and the Holy Coat of Treves" (Nelson, Edinburgh and London), a confession of faith, adopted by the congregation of Schneidemühl, is printed ; but this proceeded apparently from the Priest Czerski, and, as is correctly stated in the pamphlet itself, "there has been no time to draw up a full and authorised confession of faith for the general body of reformed Catholics."

† Zuruf von Johannes Ronge, Dessau, 1845, Drück and Verlag v. H. Reubürger.

says—" Only a few months ago, a dense cloud of darkness overshadowed our minds, which became ever deeper and deeper. It appeared as if the mental attainments of the preceding century were destined to be buried in the tomb of the nineteenth ; as if the civilization of Europe should sink under the load of religious hypocrisy and barbarism, the offspring of Jesuitry and Pietism ;\* as if the spirit of Christianity itself should be extinguished by the heathenism and priestcraft of Rome. Many who were capable of casting a look into the future became dispirited, and gave themselves up to lamentation ; yet those who viewed history as a record, not of accidental occurrences, but of the grand acts of Providence in human affairs ; who had penetrated deeply into the drift of the hierarchies of the land, and appreciated correctly the power of the German public mind, never, even in this their midnight gloom, lost courage or yielded to despair. They perceived that the fabric of Romish tyranny, founded on falsehood and hypocrisy, would, sooner or later, be shattered to pieces by the Christian spirit of the age. And the event has justified their anticipations. In point of fact, as the pretensions of Rome, and the insolence of Jesuitism exceeded all bounds, and as a portion of the pietistical-Protestant clergy vied with Jesuitism itself in hierarchical encroachments, recommending and striving to introduce auricular confession, family *espionage*, and other abuses, the deeply oppressed Christian soul of man awakened with wrathful energy ; the spirit of the age burst its degrading fetters, and tore to shreds the veil of hypocritical sanctity which covered the bald heads of the modern sinful pharisees." \* \* \* \* " Wider and wider, and with stormy power, the excitement spread abroad, ' Save us ! ' cried thousands of voices ; ' we thank thee, God, that we have lived to see this day ! ' exclaimed grey-headed men, who, animated by the purest patriotism, had, in the years 1813 and 1814, risked their lives in the trenches and in the field for freedom.

" Rome and her slaves lost no time in bringing this holy enthusiasm under suspicion as dangerous to the state, as socialistic, and so forth ; they betook themselves to their old sin against the Holy Ghost, to bringing *mind* under suspicion ; *they suspected and continued to suspect the Spirit of God in man, and to brand that Spirit as criminal*—they calumniated the patriotism and love of freedom of the German nation, as

\* " Pietismus " is a word invented in Germany to express that un-social and intolerant spirit which, in this country, would be regarded as the abuse or extravagance of evangelical religion, mixed with a good deal of hypocrisy.



high treason. For a brief space the movement was misunderstood, partly because at first the enthusiasm appeared too general and strong, partly because from differences in the reports of the events at Schneidemühl\* and Breslau, the victory of the nineteenth century seemed still undecided. But when the union of the congregations† took place; when it was clearly perceived that the nineteenth century would no longer quarrel (hadern) about this or that article of belief; that the new age cast from it all hatred founded on differences of faith, and that now, at least, the kingdom of Christian love was about to begin; when, above all, the shout of welcome arose from the greater portion of the Protestant population—then awoke not only the priestly spirit of Rome, but also that of corrupt Pietismus. Few ventured to attack our cause itself, for it is so clear and simple, that every child may understand it. They sought for terms with which to calumniate it, and bring it under suspicion,—*modern heathenism*, want of positive articles of faith, want of scientific foundation—these are the taunts with which they seek to put down the new Reformation.” He then retorts on the Romish clergy, and accuses them of heathenism, of substituting saints and relics, popes, bishops, jesuits, monks and nuns, as objects of reverence and imitation in place of God Almighty and Jesus Christ. “Hypocrisy, lies, and idolatry,” he continues, “are the precepts and the fruits of Popery, and the devil is the bugbear (Popanz) with which you drive unhappy christendom into your sheepfolds. With you, fear takes the place of love in the Gospel! Only believe firmly in the devil! This personage is of great importance to you; and what do you call science? Is it your incomprehensible dogmas, with which, like dolls, you have been taught to play from your earliest infancy? The highest science is truly this—to understand our time; and the most powerful logic is that which, from historical premises, draws practical conclusions to advance the well-being and dignity of humanity, the salvation and happiness of our father-land!”

“But is it only the priests of Rome who utter these accusations? No. There are clergymen called Protestant,

\* J. Czerski, a Roman Catholic priest at Schneidemühl, openly renounced his connection with Rome, and carried his people with him.

† In German the word is Gemeinde, which signifies commonality, community, congregation, parish, or church, according to circumstances. In the present case we translate it “congregation,” because the union of worshippers closely resemble those of the Free Church of Scotland. They are generally collected from a circumscribed locality, but they do not always or rigidly correspond to a parish.

who scruple not to take open part with Rome, because (as some of them have candidly avowed) their worldly interests are endangered. A traitorous priesthood everywhere sells Christ for silver and gold; but this Protestant hierarchy and priesthood is far more despicable than that of Rome, because its guilt is double. Oh! would the world believe it, if conviction were not forced on it by facts, that so-called Protestant preachers and religious instructors more willingly give the hand of fellowship to jesuitism and popery than come out of their corrupt limbo of affected sanctity and of hierarchical conceit—that German men and fathers prefer surrendering their names and their children to hierarchy (Rome) and Cossack barbarism (Russia), rather than exchange their tithes and official fees for an honourable maintenance? But the true spirit of Protestantism neither can nor will forgive such conduct. Already has it pronounced a strict and righteous judgment upon many of these pietistical abettors of jesuitism and priestcraft, and the others will not escape. Woe to you who mock and scorn the spirit of true Christianity! Your tongues shall become dumb, and your hands shall become paralyzed! See how the flame flashes brighter and brighter in the really Protestant church! Woe to you who dare to arrest the wheel of the world's history: it will crush us to atoms."

Another address to the "Catholic schoolmasters" of Germany, dated "Laurahütte, October 1843," was published by Ronge, even before the Holy Coat of Treves was exhibited; and we have before us also a list of several other "calls" and "addresses" from himself and the priests who have joined him, all breathing a spirit similar to that embodied in the above extract. They are reprinted everywhere, and sold for a few pence, and their circulation is very extensive.

If we were to judge by British standards, we should conclude that the new reformation is merely an extravagant outburst of German enthusiasm, which will speedily exhaust itself and die; but viewed in relation to the mind and circumstances of Germany, it appears in a different light. The national mind of Germany does not miss the positive and practical in these addresses, or it hopes to supply them hereafter. Thirty years of the boldest speculation in religion have (whether right or wrong) convinced the people that neither Popery nor Protestantism, as now established in that country, meets the wants of the age, and with headlong zeal they proceed to shake themselves free from both. What

they shall substitute in their place, they reserve for the subject of future deliberation.

On the 15th of September 1845, a meeting was held at Stuttgart, at which Ronge was present. Twenty-four delegates from distant congregations, and a large assemblage, not only of resident members, but of distinguished and influential men from different German States, attended. The south-west of Germany was constituted a province of the new church. The votes were taken by congregations, and the right of independent women to vote was carried by 43 to 11. All the congregations have the right of managing their own affairs according to their local habits, manners, and interests, and the organization of the congregations was reserved for another meeting. Nearly two hundred congregations have already been organized, and their constitutions will probably be followed in Wirtemberg. A *Concilium* is to be held at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, and a Synod annually, to manage the business of the body.

Austria and Bavaria prohibit meetings and gag the press, by the strong arm of power, in order to resist the movement; but in all other parts of Germany the flame spreads like wild-fire. Ronge enters cities in triumphant processions, his carriage is decorated with flowers, dinners are given to him, and serenades are performed beneath his windows, while the public authorities are constantly warning and watching, but have never yet had the courage to arrest his career.

We were anxious to discover what class of the population took part in these demonstrations, and, in September last, attended an ordinary Sunday meeting of the Reformed Catholic congregation of Frankfort-on-the-Maine. It was held in the great hall of the Hotel de Hollande, and presented an extraordinary spectacle to one accustomed to observe ordinary German churches. We were informed by the members that it consisted of above six hundred souls, of whom we saw more than five hundred actually present, and of these *about four-fifths were men between the ages of twenty-five and fifty*, the remainder were women and old men, and a few young lads. Their dress and appearance indicated that they did not belong to the aristocratic nor to the poorer classes, but to the middle class of Frankfort citizens in all its grades; and we have been assured, that the composition of the congregations in other localities is more or less similar. The whole of what we call the mummery of the Roman Catholic worship was dropped, and prayer, praise, and preaching, formed the exercises of the day. If this portion of the people continue to adhere to the cause, it is clear that the new reformation wants

nothing but organization and positive principles in accordance with the public mind, to render it at once stable and important.

While these movements are proceeding in the Roman Catholic Church, the Protestant Church is divided into three great sections and deeply agitated.

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### SECT. III.—STATE OF PROTESTANTISM.

While the events mentioned in our last notice were proceeding in the Roman Catholic Church, a great movement simultaneously occurred among the adherents of the Protestant faith. Protestantism in Germany is at present divided into three great sections,—the “Pietists,” the “Friends of Light,” and a middle section, which has taken up ground between these two, but has not yet received a distinctive appellation.

The “Pietists” are the old evangelical or orthodox party revived. At their head are the King of Prussia, some of the leading men of his Government, and a great many civil and ecclesiastical functionaries, and members of the nobility. The two principal theological leaders of this section are Professor Hengstenberg of Berlin, editor of the *Evangelische Kirchen Zeitung*, the chief organ of the party, and Professor Tholuck of Halle, well known as an oriental scholar. In Prussia this party is all powerful. It adheres strictly to the letter of the “Confessions” adopted by the early Reformers, and believes also in the inspiration of the letter of the Scriptures. It presents itself as the antagonist of Rationalism, and of all other modifications of Christianity which limit or deny its supernatural elements.

This party, unlike the Methodists in England, or the Free Church in Scotland, has not emanated from the deep convictions of the people, but been called into existence and fostered by the hand of power, partly for political objects. In consequence, some of its adherents have never received credit from the public of Germany for sincerity, and many of their acts have given too much countenance to the suspicions entertained of them. For instance, on Advent Sunday in 1841, thirty-four Protestant evangelical clergymen of Berlin preached sermons on a becoming consecration of the Sunday; but they were prohibited by the Government from printing and publishing an appeal to their flocks, calling on them to give effect to their views. The superior authorities foresaw that this appeal

would be answered, that a controversy would be generated, and they suppressed the document. Afterwards, however, a pamphlet was distributed at the doors of the churches of Berlin, consisting of texts of Scripture bearing on the observance of the Sabbath, and of extracts from the writings of the Christian Fathers on the same subject. This looked like inconsistency or timidity, or both. Again, on the day after Christmas, which, previously to that year, had been celebrated in Berlin with balls, music, and dancing, none of those festivities were allowed; and all dancing and music on Saturday evenings were ordered to cease at twelve o'clock. A society for the reform of female servants, by delivering lectures to them on Sunday evenings, was set on foot, and another for male servants was projected. The people resisted these restrictions on their amusements, and many of them were fined by the police. Nevertheless, during these proceedings, the theatre, an establishment completely under the command of the authorities, was not only in full activity on the Sunday evenings, but the box-office was kept open for the transaction of business during the hours of divine service.

The severe censorship exercised over the press prevented the expression of public opinion on these occurrences in Prussia; but innumerable letters were written from Berlin attacking the Government and evangelical clergy on account of them, and these were published in the newspapers of the neighbouring states, whence they speedily found their way back into Prussia. The Government was so annoyed by this warfare, that, in 1842, they relaxed the censorship, allowed more freedom of discussion; but compelled every newspaper that published statements injurious to the Government or the clergy, to print in its columns a refutation of the attack furnished by the public authorities. It was stated that a Government office was actually instituted in Berlin to prepare these refutations. The first use made of the relaxation was to assail "Pietismus," and to expose the disorders of the finances of the city of Berlin. Next, the budget of the state was attacked. The Government attempted for a time to support itself and the Clergy by "refutations;" but it was encompassed by innumerable controversialists, who, it alleged, resorted to systematic falsehood in order to bring it and evangelical religion into contempt. It, therefore, reimposed the restrictions on the press, and rendered them more severe than ever.

But the spirit of opposition was not to be laid. Saxony was at hand, in which the censorship was less rigid; and, in 1842, a clever pamphlet appeared in Leipzig, attacking the

societies for the observance of the Sabbath, and "Pietistry." It was prohibited in Prussia, on the ground that it assailed the clerical order by vituperation and abuse, and accused the clergy of Berlin of endeavouring to introduce a service conform to the letter of Scripture against its true spirit, and also against their own better convictions; but it was, nevertheless, smuggled into Prussia, and gave rise to fresh discussions in pamphlets and newspapers.

About the same time a new trouble introduced itself into the Protestant Church. The evangelical clergy became dissatisfied with the law of divorce, declaimed against the toleration introduced by Frederick the Great, as the origin of the modern laxity of morals and religion, tried to restore the order of the church on divorce to the state in which it stood in 1573, and objected to re-marrying persons who had been divorced under the existing law, where it differed from the old. The Government, after numerous consultations and long delay, has only recently announced, that when a clergyman cannot reconcile it with his conscience to pronounce a blessing on such marriages, he shall not be compelled to do so. This, of course, casts a stain upon such unions, and has tended to excite still more the public mind.

Although Prussia was the head-quarters of these discussions, they extended into, and greatly interested, all the other states of Germany in which the press was permitted to report them. The opposition to the Prussian evangelical religion did not emanate from low, reckless, and immoral characters, the natural enemies of all serious opinions, but from scholars and men of talent, generally of irreproachable lives, and who were animated with convictions apparently as sincere as those of the clergy whom they attacked. No inconsiderable portion, also, of the Protestant clergy themselves, as we shall subsequently see, favoured and abetted the opposition.

Things continued in this condition until the appearance of John Ronge in 1844. As mentioned in our last notice, he did not throw himself into the ranks of the evangelical party, but joined the liberals, denounced "Pietismus" as opposed to the spirit of the age, and avoided the profession of any specific articles of faith. His appeal excited intense interest among the Protestants of Germany, and the following events have recently taken place.

In Saxony the chief clerical authority over the Protestant church is wielded by a commission, which originated in the following circumstances. In the year 1697, when the Elector Frederick Augustus the First renounced Protestantism, in

order to qualify himself for the crown of Poland, he pledged himself never to abridge the liberties of the Protestant Church. In the year 1706, and again in 1717, when the Crown Prince also forsook Protestantism, this assurance was renewed; and afterwards, to give effect to the pledge, the Princes of Saxony made over to their privy counsellors all their rights as sovereigns over the Protestant church, discharging them, at the same time, in all matters regarding that church, from their oath of allegiance to the crown. This is the origin of the commission "*In Evangelicis*." It was confirmed when Saxony received a constitution and became a representative monarchy.

On the 17th July 1845, the Minister at the head of this commission issued an ordinance, intimating, that as he is bound by his oath of office to uphold the Augsburg Confession of Faith, he will oppose, by every means in his power, all attempts at forming societies and holding meetings directed to the object "of calling in question or attacking" that Confession, and he prohibited them accordingly. On the 19th of July the Minister of the Interior fortified this document by his authority, and required the officers of Government to carry it into execution. On the 31st July, however, Messrs Klette and Bloede, two of the commissioners of police of Dresden, whose duty it was to execute the ordinance, published a protest against it, as being "illegal and unconstitutional," and announced their intention of disregarding it. They were speedily dismissed from office by the Minister of the Interior; but these occurrences strongly excited the public mind; and while they were still recent, Prince John, the heir-apparent to the throne of Saxony, a man of talent, but strongly attached to the Catholic faith, visited Leipzig in order to review the militia. After he had retired to dinner, the people assembled before his hotel, expressed by cries, their dissatisfaction with the late prohibitory ordinances of the government, and some of the rabble also threw stones and broke the windows of the house. The military were called out, and fired, and several lives were lost. This led to fresh meetings of the people, in which political and religious subjects were freely discussed, and resolutions were proposed, adopted, and published, in favour of the popular movement towards a new reformation. These resolutions were presented to the Government; but instead of giving effect to them, the Minister of the Interior, Von Falkenstein, on the 26th of August, again issued a proclamation, denouncing these assemblies as illegal, and thenceforth strictly prohibiting them. This ordinance was again assailed by the press as an

infringement of the constitution, and as an inroad on freedom of religious opinion. The right of meeting was claimed as one of the fundamental privileges of the Saxon people, which no law had ever abridged or abrogated.

In Prussia similar movements took place; and a new religious party, already alluded to, styling itself "The Friends of Light," "Licht Freunde," appeared. It is composed of Rationalists, Hegelians, and men of all shades of latitudinarian opinions in religion. The leading men among them are Wiflicen, a Protestant clergyman in Halle; Uhlich, also a Protestant clergyman; and Dr Dinter at Koenigsberg, a member of the Government Board for Education and Ecclesiastical Affairs. He is the author of the "Bible for Schoolmasters," illustrated according to Rationalist principles, which has been long in use, and had great influence in rearing schoolmasters in the principles maintained by the author. The Government has issued strict orders to the Minister for Ecclesiastical Affairs to prohibit all meetings of this sect, in any form approaching to that of a popular assembly; that is to say, if they are composed of individuals belonging to different classes of society.

A third party, the most influential of them all, has, within the last six weeks, placed itself between the "Pietists" and the "Friends of Light." It professes to adhere to the Scriptures as the foundation of its faith, but declares that the *spirit* and not the *letter* of the Gospel is its rule; and especially, that the letter of the Articles of Faith of the early Protestants (the Augsburg Confession, for example), is by no means binding on the men of the present day. This party has published a declaration of its sentiments, subscribed by ninety distinguished men, at the head of whom stands Bishop Eylert, the primate of Prussia, and Bishop Dräseke of Magdeburg, well known over the whole of Germany for his piety and clerical virtues. It farther includes such men as Dr Jonas of Berlin, one of the first disciples of Schleiermacher, and the Rev. Frederick Sydow, chaplain in ordinary to the King of Prussia, who is well known in Britain, especially in Scotland, as the strenuous advocate of the independence of the Church, and of a constitution similar to that which exists in Scotland. This party has been strongly supported by the magistrates and civic council of Berlin, who have addressed a memorial to the King, charging the "Pietists" with much of the blame of the recent troubles, and calling on his Majesty to convoke an ecclesiastical council from all parts of the kingdom, in order to devise a constitution for the Church



suiting to the spirit of the age, and especially to admit the laity comprising the congregations into a participation in the management of church affairs.

These two documents throw so strong and authentic a light on the present views of the ablest and best men of Prussia—clergy, teachers, public functionaries, and citizens—in regard to religion and the church, that we shall present a translation of them.

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#### SECT. IV.—DEMANDS OF THE PROTESTANTS.

THE declaration published by the *middle* Protestant party of Prussia mentioned in our last notice, dated “Berlin, 15th August 1845,” is to the following effect:—

“In the evangelical church a party has raised itself into importance, which clings obstinately to the forms of Christianity such as they have been handed down to us from the beginning of the reformation. These forms are their Pope. In their estimation, those individuals are true believers who unconditionally embrace them; and all are infidels, and also politically liable to suspicion, who refuse to accept them. The men of this party are zealous, but not according to wisdom: they aim at dominion in the Church. They were the first who, in their common organ, “The Evangelical Church Gazette,” combined, in contravention of the order of the Church, to bring the evangelical faith and freedom of conscience into danger; who made use of excommunication, and who attempted to make an impression by their numbers. Their opponents have felt themselves necessitated, likewise, to form themselves into associations in order to meet numbers with numbers, whereby, unfortunately, extreme opinions in matters of belief have been evoked; and scope and opportunity have been furnished to the most inconsistent elements to come into scandalous collision. In consequence, we observe in our churches, on both sides, the spirit of brotherly conciliation give place more and more to a threatening and tumultuous deportment. There is evident risk that the evangelical church will be split into many sections; and hence arises a call of duty on all its active members to step forward and meet the danger. On this account, and on this alone, the subscribers consider it to be their indispensable obligation to publish their sentiments. They embrace, as their own conviction, the fundamental principle of the Reformation—that Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,

is the only ground of our salvation ; but the forms in which this conviction shall be freely developed in individual minds belongs to the guidance of Christ alone.\* From this conviction they declare it as their opinion that a satisfactory conclusion to the present strife can be attained only when no arbitrary exclusion shall be permitted, when the right of free development shall be conceded to all, and when a constitution of the church shall be brought into operation, which, by the grace of God, and the lively participation of the congregations, may give her a new form and new strength.

Subscribed—

|                                  |                                  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| HEINSIUS, Dr, Professor,         | PISCHON, Dr, Consistorial Coun-  |
| HOSBACH, Dr, Consistorial Coun-  | cillor,                          |
| cillor,                          | DRÆSEKE, Dr, Evangelical Bishop, |
| JONAS, Dr, Minister of the Evan- | EYLERT, Primate of the Prussian  |
| gelical Church,                  | Evangelical Church,              |
| KOEPKE, Dr, Professor,           | KUHLMEYER, Head-President of     |
| LACHMAN, Dr, Professor,          | the Board of Control,            |
| MEINEKE, Rector of the Joachims- | SYDOW, Chaplain to the King,     |
| thal College,                    | WOLFART, Upper Finance-Coun-     |
|                                  | cillor and President,"           |

and by 78 other individuals, mostly employed in education, in medicine, or in the service of the State.

The memorial presented by the Magistrates and Town Council of Berlin to the King of Prussia appeared on the 3d September 1845, and after alluding to recent events, it proceeds as follows :—

“These movements are not of an ephemeral nature, but have a deep foundation in the progress and the development of the people. They may lead to blessed results, if the State undertakes their guidance, and permits the good which they contain to expand itself into practical realities. Two parties stand opposed to each other—the old-historical-literal believers, with their exclusive churchism (exclusiver Kirklichkeit), and the movement party, who will not allow human dicta to be erected into standards of faith, but acknowledge only the spirit of truth as it flows in the original fountains. The majority of the people incline to the latter party. Although they may not yet in every quarter have made conscious movements in this direction, and especially, although much obscurity still prevails in their minds in regard to the arrangements necessary for the Church, nevertheless the Christian

\* The text is, “ Sie gehen von der der Reformation zum Grunde liegenden Ueberzeugung aus, dass JESUS CHRISTUS, GESTERN UND HEUTE UND DERSELBE AUCH IN EWIGKEIT, der alleinige Grund unserer Seligkeit ist, die Lehrformel aber der freien Entwicklung von Christus aus zu Christus hin angehört.

principle of freedom unquestionably lies at the foundation of their efforts. The Reformation has given practical effect to a living opposition to the stability of Rome. The revelation (literally tradition) of the Old and New Testament constitutes the enduring foundation of our faith, but every Christian is bound in duty to form his own opinions of revelation (tradition) after free investigation.\* The Spirit of God cannot be confined in forms. It is not the vessel which contains the faith that constitutes its essential elements, but the spirit of truth, holiness, and love which Jesus proclaimed! This is the foundation-stone of the Church. This conviction has become a living principle in the mind of the age. In opposition to it, however, a party has taken the field which identifies the spirit with the letter of faith—the form with truth; and farther adopts the principle, that on the vessels which contain the faith depends the existence of both Church and State. Belief in the living Jesus is not their only confession of faith. Their Church also is their confession; in fact, it is their religion. All differences of opinion are treated by them with excommunication; and all honourable efforts which appear to threaten danger to their existence, they calumniate. As the Jews acted towards the first converts to Christianity—as the Catholics acted towards the first Reformers—so do they conduct themselves towards the free spirit of the present age. We are far from defending the excesses or extravagances of this spirit, but neither can we deny even to them a deep source. The reclamations which have been made deserve the most serious attention; some of them have been called forth by the conduct of the public authorities themselves, who have sided with the believers in forms. Christianity and the Gospel, however, need no outward support. The contest of the church is a spiritual one, and the field must be left free. Something must be done towards calming the minds of the masses; and the long felt want of a constitution for the Church, in which all lay members shall be allowed to become active fellow-labourers in her edification, must at length be supplied. With these views, the Magistrates and Civic Council present to your Majesty the present dutiful address, praying that you will be pleased to summon a convocation drawn from all the provinces of the State, which may prepare a programme of a constitution for the church, based on the principle of participation by the congregations in the management of its affairs.”

\* Die testamentliche Ueberlieferung bleibt uns beständig Grundlage des Glaubens, aber jeder Christ hat die Pflicht, die Ueberlieferung mit freier Pruefung aufzufassen.

After receiving this address, the King of Prussia summoned the whole body of the magistrates and town-council before him in person, and gave them a severe lecture. He told them that the town-council, during the last thirty years, had shewn very little religious zeal; that there are no more churches in Berlin now, when its population amounts to 350,000, than there were when that capital contained only 70,000 inhabitants, &c.; farther, that they had openly declared in favour of the Rationalists, and attacked a party which, if he as king had to decide, would be that towards which he would lean—a party which was to be blamed only for confining itself too much in its sphere of evangelical activity, &c.

Whilst this article is in the press, we have just learned that the Council met and resolved to communicate his Majesty's address to the Stadtverordnete (a body elected by the citizens, and intrusted with the power of imposing and administering the taxes on the town, and other important functions); and also to publish all the documents connected with the matters in question for the information of the public at large. At the same time, an answer was drawn up to the speech of the King, in which the Council replied, one by one, to the charges brought against them by his Majesty, supporting every contradictory statement by reference to facts generally known to the public. When all these documents were laid before the censors, the permission to print the reply was refused; upon which the Council appealed to the higher tribunal charged with the supervision of the censors, reserving to themselves the final step, if justice should be denied to them, of publishing their answer in the foreign journals, in which the speech of the king, containing the charges against them, had appeared.

It is mentioned at the same time in the German papers that strenuous endeavours are being made to induce the Primate Eylert and the Bishop Dræseke to withdraw their signatures from the protest. It is stated also that the Protestant princes contemplate holding a congress, by representatives, for the purpose of devising measures for the protection of the Protestant religion.

The effects of these movements will probably not be confined to Germany. The elements of discussion are too abundant in this country, and the subject is too momentous and exciting, to allow us to shut our eyes to the chances of an agitation arising here. Will Sir Robert Peel, in the face of this shock to Romanism in Germany, attempt to prop it up in Ireland, by endowing the Irish Roman Catholic Clergy?

Will the Established Churches of the three united kingdoms, in the consciousness of this grand movement of Protestantism in Germany towards freedom from the shackles of state-made creeds and state-paid priests, continue to assert their exclusive right to rule, not only over all ecclesiastical affairs, but also over all public institutions for the education of the people? Will the Puseyites in England, and the followers of the *letter* of Christianity in opposition to its spirit, wherever they are found, continue to assert their own infallibility, and to calumniate as infidels all who entertain opinions more liberal than their own?

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SECT. V.—PRESENT POLITICAL CONDITION OF GERMANY.

Germany, as is well known, consists, politically, of a variety of independent states, of which thirty-four are based on the monarchical, and four on the republican principle. They vary in size from Prussia, with a population of nearly fifteen millions, to principalities of a few thousand inhabitants. The population of Austria amounts to nearly thirty-seven millions, but only a comparatively small portion of its subjects are German. Prussia, therefore, is the leading German power. Bavaria stands next to Prussia in importance, the population of this kingdom amounting to nearly four millions and a half. Hanover, Saxony, and Würtemberg, have each a million and three-quarters of souls, and all the other states contain smaller populations. They are united into a great confederacy, the representatives of the different states composing which sit permanently at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, and are named the Bundestag or Diet. In the meetings of the Diet each state has a certain number of votes corresponding to its population. The consequence is, that the controlling power belongs to a few of the larger kingdoms.

The confederacy assumed its present form in 1815, after the final expulsion of Napoleon. Its constitution (called the "Bundesacte") was printed and published in that year. The sovereigns and princes were then conscious of their obligations to their subjects, and at least professed to respect their rights. The thirteenth article of the act of union declares, that "in every state of the confederation a constitution shall be instituted." But no *time* is mentioned, and only in the smaller states has the provision been carried formally into effect. Austria and Prussia have hitherto delayed giving constitutions to their people; while Bavaria, Saxony, Würtemberg, Baden, Hesse-Darmstadt, Hesse-Cassel, and other minor

states, have conceded them. These constitutions, if they were fairly carried into effect, are, on the whole, liberal, and calculated to satisfy the reasonable wants of the people. They establish not only two legislative chambers, the lower one chosen by the people, but the liberty of the press, freedom from personal arrest except on the warrant of a magistrate, the responsibility of ministers, and other important constitutional rights.

Unfortunately, however, the subjects of Prussia and of Austria proper, to whom the same privileges have been denied, use the same language, and lie in such close communication with the people of these constitutional states, that their liberty operates as a constant cause of discontent and agitation in these monarchies. For many years, there has been a ceaseless effort on the part of the Confederation, or rather of Prussia and Austria, who are all-powerful in its councils, to suppress and circumscribe the effects of the constitutions; while the German people have as strenuously defended them, or struggled to acquire them.

From the peculiar circumstances in which Germany is placed, this contest assumes an aspect at once interesting and instructive. There still remains a certain degree of jealousy between the Governments of the different states, one consequence of which is, that a Bavarian censor will allow a paragraph containing a pretty severe criticism of some act of the Prussian Government to find its way into his press, and *vice versa*; or the press of Baden or Würtemberg will be allowed to publish animadversions on Austria or Bavaria, which could never pass the censors of these countries. These publications, whether pamphlets or newspapers, are introduced openly or clandestinely, and to a greater or less extent, into the states against the rulers of which they are directed, and are eagerly circulated and read by the people. Printed liberal political thought is everywhere contraband in Germany, and there is a constant warfare between the individuals who produce it on the one part, to extend its circulation, and the rulers whom it assails on the other, to suppress it, and arrest its influence. This state of things, however, and its consequences, will be best elucidated by selecting the proceedings of one state as a general example, and the Grand Duchy of Baden is well suited to this purpose.

This state lies on the right bank of the Rhine—extends, in a narrow strip, from the Lake of Constance to the neighbourhood of Hesse-Darmstadt—and contains about thirteen hundred thousand inhabitants. It is commercial and agricultural, and contains two universities, those of Heidelberg

and Friburg. It received a constitution, in virtue of which it enjoys an Upper Chamber, named by the Grand Duke, and a House of Representatives chosen by the people. The suffrage is nearly universal; every man who is a householder, or exercises a profession or trade as a master, has a vote, but not directly. The persons thus qualified choose delegates, who elect the representatives.

The constitution provides for the responsibility of ministers, the liberty of the press, freedom from arrest except on a legal warrant, the right of all judges, professors, schoolmasters, and other public functionaries, to hold their offices *ad vitam aut culpam*, although nominated by the Government. The external conditions of political freedom, accordingly, are here pretty liberally provided. Add to these the fact, that the Grand Duke (and the same holds good in all the states of Germany except Austria) *has no standing army* with which to maintain his own authority or to coerce his people. Here, as in other states, the military force is composed of the young male population, trained for three years to arms, and then returned to the occupations of civil life. In such circumstances, an educated and intelligent people have their destiny in their own hands; and the inhabitants of Baden have made this discovery.

They felt that one great obstacle to their enjoying the benefits of their constitution, was the want of men of sufficient fortune and leisure to be able to devote their time to legislative duties. In this extremity, they, in many instances, elected functionaries, in the pay of Government, as their representatives in the second chamber; and, at first, the ministry pretty generally granted leave of absence from their proper duties to such delegates. But in the progress of events, some encroachments were made by the Government on the rights of the people, and a strong opposition sprang up in that chamber, embracing even some of these delegates, servants of the state. The Baden Ministry could not dismiss these refractory functionaries from office, because they held their appointments for life; but they refused leave of absence from their official stations to all of them of whose opinions they disapproved, and thus nullified their election. This led to a claim on the part of the second chamber and of the people, to leave of absence for all public functionaries from their local stations, *as a right* consequent on election; coupled with an offer to provide, in the annual vote of expenses, a sum sufficient to recompense substitutes for performing their duties during their attendance in the legislative chamber. The Ministry disputed this claim, and dis-

solved the chamber on the question; and in the spring of 1842 a new election took place, in which the Government not only openly required all its servants to support it, but instantly punished those who were refractory by the only means in its power, viz., by removing them from the places in which they were located (as they believed for life), and sending them to exercise the same functions in distant quarters; a change which operated on them practically as a species of banishment. Nevertheless, the liberal party returned so large a number of members, that the minister, Baron Blittersdorf, was forced to resign, and retire into some distant employment. The question itself, however, is not yet finally settled. An election for the fourth part of the members of the Chamber of Deputies who go out by rotation, was completed in October 1845, and the Government lost four votes, instead of gaining, as it had hoped to do. The result was by no means satisfactory to the ministerial party.

The relations of Baden with the German Diet are equally unquiet. Prince Metternich, as the plenipotentiary of Austria, early laid down the rule, that the Diet of the Confederation is the "supreme political power in Germany," and that all acts of the individual states at variance with its provisions, are, *ipso facto*, illegal and inept. Acting on this principle, a congress of ministers deputed by the leading states of Germany assembled at Carlsbad on the 20th of September 1819, adopted the following, among other resolutions:—*1st*, That the universities shall be subjected to a strict superintendence; *2dly*, that no daily or other periodical work, nor any book, unless it shall exceed twenty sheets, shall be published in any state of the union until they have been previously revised and sanctioned by the public authorities; and *3dly*, that a central commission, consisting of seven members, shall sit in Mayence, charged with the suppression of all revolutionary tendencies in the states of the Confederation.

These or similar resolutions inimical to public liberty, were continued or adopted by subsequent acts of the Confederation, dated 16th August 1824, 27th October 1831, 28th June 1832, 5th July 1832, 12th June 1834, and 29th July 1841; and the result has been, that while in the constitutional states political liberty is conferred on the people by their constitution and laws, these are borne to the ground by the resolutions of the Diet, which compels the Governments of those states to act, in many respects, in direct contradiction to their own laws and the rights of their subjects. The principle of moral agitation, however, is perfectly understood and practised by



the injured people and their leaders ; as the following example, again taken from Baden, will illustrate.

M. Gustav von Struve is the son of a German baron, who for many years was employed in the service of Russia ; and he himself, in his younger years, held a subordinate office connected with the German Diet. By this means, he became acquainted with its acts and its spirit. He subsequently was admitted as an advocate in the Supreme Court of Baden, and entered into practice in Mannheim. He is a man of unimpeachable moral character, and of great attainments ; he is capable of reading and writing the French, English, and Italian languages, and is acquainted with the literature and political history of these countries, besides being conversant with constitutional law. He was lately appointed editor of the *Mannheim Journal*, a daily paper, circulating extensively in that and the neighbouring states. He took the side of the people, and was speedily subjected to the most rigorous censorship. This has led to the following occurrences.

About three months ago, he printed a thousand copies of a work, entitled " Correspondence between a former and a present Diplomatist,"\* exceeding twenty sheets in size, and consequently not subject to the censorship. He took his ground on constitutional law, cited the provisions in favour of German liberty contained in the act of Confederation of 1815 ; appealed to the constitutions of his own and other states, guaranteeing the rights of the people ; asserted the responsibility of the ministers of the different states for every act that had been committed in opposition to those concessions ; and charged them boldly and eloquently with being the real destructives, the revolutionists, the subverters of law and order in the German union, and claimed for himself and the constitutionalists the character of Conservatives—of being the true friends of legitimate government, and the supporters of social order. The work was based on documents and facts which were authentic and irrefragable ; and the argument was logical and irresistible. The Confederation, he affirmed, solemnly guaranteed constitutions to all the German States, and then withheld them from the most influential, thus trampling a compact under foot by mere physical force. Austria wields this force, because she has a standing army of 370,000 men, and her dictation cannot be resisted, except at the

\* Briefwechsel zwischen einem ehemaligen und einem jetzigen Diplomaten, von Gustav v. Struve, Mannheim 1845.

hazard of a civil war. When, said he, the constitution of Baden, which the Grand Duke solemnly swore to maintain, provides freedom of the press, and, nevertheless, the Confederation compels this Prince to act in opposition to the guaranteed rights of his subjects, and in violation of his own oath,—what is this but an example of the most reckless disregard of law and right? And if the Confederation and Sovereigns teach the people by their own acts to trample compacts, and constitutions, and vested privileges, in the dust, when it suits their interest and caprice, can they justly be surprised if the people should, in their turn, imitate their example, and, by a great simultaneous exercise of power, deliver themselves at once and for ever from such rulers? Several of the letters are addressed to Prince Metternich, as the minister of Austria responsible for these acts, and they urge home upon him the legal and constitutional argument with great ability, drawing also a sketch of the sentence which posterity will pronounce on his public character and conduct.

Several hundred copies of this work were sent to Prussia, an ample store to Austria, and copies to all the other states, before its existence was even alluded to in Baden. At last, when notice came to the publisher that all these had safely reached their destinations, the work was announced in Mannheim. It excited great and immediate interest, but the Government took no measures against it. At last, a visit from Prince Metternich was announced; and the day before his arrival the police invaded the publisher's shop, and seized the whole impression then on his shelves. This amounted to fifteen copies! for the visit had been anticipated, and provided against. The seizure was reported to the Prince on his arrival. But had the author been prosecuted? It was promised that this should immediately be done. But the law of Baden requires that a criminal process shall be instituted within three days after the seizure; and although one was served on him, this was not done till after the expiry of this period, when it had become unconstitutional and inept! M. Von Struve was prepared, when we saw him in September, to defend himself on these grounds, and feared neither fine, imprisonment, nor any other infliction. In point of fact, we have learned that he has since been acquitted by the Court before which he was tried.

Meantime, he was assailed by ten actions at the instance of the censor, for breaches of the regulations of the press in his daily journal, and he brought before the court of law to whose jurisdiction the censorship belongs, twenty complaints against the censor for illegal suppression of his articles. All

these processes are conducted in writing ; and when we saw M. Von Struve, the proceedings had already exceeded twenty printed sheets in extent, and he was busy printing the whole *verbatim et literatim*, his own words in black ink, and the censor's in red ink ! This collection will be published as a book, for the instruction of the German people concerning the spirit in which the censorship is wielded.

M. Von Struve has been condemned to fines of 5s., 7s. 6d., 25s., and 30s., for sundry offences against the censorship, and refused to pay them, as being illegally imposed. The authorities had not enforced them, but he was expecting a seizure and sale to be made of his household furniture ; which he disregards.

The people are not unconcerned spectators of those events. A public meeting in Mannheim was advertised to support M. Von Struve, by resolutions and an address. The Government sent orders to the police to prevent or disperse it. The warrant or instructions were asked for and provided, and they bore reference to a meeting in a specified place, and at a specified hour. The persons present adjourned to another hall, and before the officers could obtain fresh instructions, liberal resolutions were proposed, seconded, adopted by acclamation, and sent off in the form of a petition to the Grand Duke himself at Carlsruhe !

The press contrives, by some means or other, to communicate those events all over Germany, and the agitation everywhere proceeds. From the circumstance that no state, except Austria, has any standing army, the German Governments feel themselves powerless to resist a movement in which their people generally take part. Hence their hesitations and vacillations, notwithstanding their fear of Ronge and of popular meetings. Hence, also, the enthusiasm with which the new reformation is hailed. The casting off of authority ; the formation of independent congregations ; the luxury of meeting in masses, for any moral object, all recommend the movement to the acceptance of the people ; and unless the enthusiasm now abroad shall speedily exhaust itself, or be checked by force, we may expect a free constitution for Prussia and the fair exercise of the existing constitutions in Germany as no distant results.

# NOTES ON NATIONAL EDUCATION,

AND THE

## COMMON SCHOOLS OF MASSACHUSETTS.

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THE speech of Lord Wharncliffe revived the hopes of the friends of education, which had been much darkened by the educational clauses in the Factory Bill. We regretted that, in resisting these clauses, the Dissenters stopped short in mere opposition. They should have demanded boldly a system of education, free from all sectarianism, for the universal people. Much as the different sects may accomplish, each in educating the children of its own adherents, still a large number of the young will be left uninstructed, until the Government shall undertake the task. In the extent of its uneducated masses Great Britain forms the opprobrium of Europe. There is no Christian country, nearly approaching to her in wealth, science, and industry, which has not established schools for the universal education of its people. We are unwilling to concede that, owing to the power of the Established Churches and the multitude of Dissenters, it is *impossible*, in this country, to accomplish a similar object. Obstacles, nearly equal to any that present themselves here, have been overcome in the United States of North America. Among the citizens of the American Union, may be found the most ardent and zealous sectarians, and the most dogmatic and fiery politicians, each armed with constitutional power, by his votes, to give efficacy to his own will, and to counteract the designs of his neighbours. Nevertheless, in most of the States, the obstacles to public in-

struction have been surmounted; and Jew, Christian, and unbeliever, unite in maintaining schools in which the children of all receive a highly valuable moral, intellectual, and religious education. We say *religious* education; because we have recently received a pamphlet from Massachusetts, which shews that religious instruction is communicated in the common schools of that State; and a brief exposition of the extent to which it is carried will enable our readers to judge whether, compared with the profound ignorance in which so many of the children of our labouring classes are left, the religious teaching in these schools is not a benefit of the highest order to the community; and whether similar schools could not be introduced with advantage into Britain.

The pamphlet is entitled, "The Common School Controversy," and was published in Boston, U. S., in the month of June 1844. It presents, in vivid, and we believe true, colours, a picture of the system of common schools now in operation in that state, and of the obstacles with which it has had to contend.

The discussion to which the pamphlet refers, originated in an attack in the *Christian Witness and Church Advocate*, of 23d February 1844, by the Honourable Edward A. Newton, of Pittsfield, on the Board of Education and its Secretary, for not teaching "orthodox Christianity" in the common schools. This newspaper is the acknowledged organ of the Episcopalians in Massachusetts; the opinions of Mr Newton were espoused and defended by the editor; and were, therefore, regarded as generally entertained by the members of this highly respectable and influential sect. The attack led to a defence of the common schools by the Secretary, a rejoinder by Mr Newton and by the editor of the *Witness*; and subsequently to a very able, temperate, and instructive "controversy" in the public press, by men of all parties and sects, in which the terms and interpretation of the law establishing common schools, the institution of the Board of Education, and the working of the system itself, are pretty fully expounded and very freely discussed. The result is a concurrence of orthodox men, of the highest standing, with Unitarians and other Liberals, in a strong and decided approval of the system of common schools as actually administered; the Episcopalian, Mr Newton, and the *Witness*, standing alone in its condemnation. It is cheering to read the cordial and sincere testimony borne by men of one religious sect to the excellent qualities of individuals of other denominations, who differ from them on the most important points of Christian doctrine; and still more so to see that, amidst all these

differences, the best of men of every sect have found it possible to co-operate in the great cause of public education.

We shall glean a few of the facts and opinions, which, being of general application, may interest our readers; and only regret that the length of the discussion prevents us from presenting the "controversy" entire.

New England was first permanently settled by the "Pilgrim Fathers," on the 20th of December 1620. Although they had left England for the sake of freedom to worship God as they pleased, yet their first act, in their new country, was to exclude "from *civil rights* all who did not believe with them." Nay, "they enforced upon others the adoption of their own creed, by imprisonment, exile, and death." "Nor is it wonderful," says Mr Alfred D. Foster, an orthodox member of the Governor's Council of Massachusetts, "that they all thought themselves justified in taking such ground, after all they had suffered to gain a place in the wilderness. But neither they nor their descendants would take that ground now, for the excellent reason, that persecution can never justify persecution."

The existing law of Massachusetts (Revised Statutes, 1835, title x., chap. 23), ordains that districts containing fifty families shall maintain one school; districts containing one hundred and fifty families shall provide two schools, and so forth, "in which children shall be instructed in geography, arithmetic, and good behaviour, by teachers of competent ability and good morals." Larger districts, again, are required to maintain a school, "in which the history of the United States, book-keeping, surveying, geometry, and algebra, shall be taught." And if the locality shall contain *four* thousand inhabitants, the teacher shall, "in addition to all the branches above enumerated, be competent to instruct in the Latin and Greek languages, general history, rhetoric, and logic." The law requires the inhabitants to raise money by taxing themselves for supporting these schools, and ordains them to appoint committees annually for managing them.*

The grand object of the controversy, however, is, What, in conformity with law, may be taught in these schools in the name of religion? On this point the "constitution" of Massachusetts requires that all children shall be taught "the principles of piety, justice, and a sacred regard to truth, love to their country, humanity, and universal benevolence, so-

* Farther details concerning the machinery by which the schools are managed, and the taxes levied, in Massachusetts, will be found in an article in the *Edinburgh Review* for July 1841, under the title of "Education in America."

briety, industry, and frugality, chastity, moderation, and temperance, and those other virtues which are the ornament of society, and the basis upon which a republican constitution is founded." The "constitution" goes no farther in specifying what things may be taught; but by the laws of the State, the school committees are authorised to prescribe the books which shall be used in the schools, under the restriction imposed by section 23d of the Revised Statutes—that they "shall never direct to be purchased or used in any of the town schools any school-books which are calculated to favour the tenets of any particular sect of Christians." This prohibition was *first* enacted in 1827; but in 1835, when the statutes were revised, it was retained and re-enacted by "an almost unanimous vote in both branches of the Legislature, and was approved of by that orthodox gentleman, Samuel T. Armstrong, then acting Governor of the State." It was the execution of this clause which gave rise to the "controversy."

The Bible is allowed to be read in all, and is actually read in nearly all of the schools, and, of course, whatever *it* teaches is taught. But the editor of the *Witness*, in the name of the orthodox Episcopalians, puts the question, "What says the law? It prohibits the teaching of those things 'which favour the tenets of any particular sect.' Well, of what *particular* sect does it favour the tenets to teach that 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself'—that 'we are by nature children of wrath'—that the 'blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin'—and that 'by grace we are saved through faith?' Are these truths, which are the sum and substance of the Gospel, distinctive of any 'particular sect?' No, thank God, they are the common ground of the great body who profess and call themselves Christians. To teach anything *less* in the name of religion is sectarian, for it must be the tenet of some particular sect, and not of the church universal."—P. 16.

The Honourable Edward A. Newton supports this argument by stating that the orthodox denominations made together "at all times, and now make, *nine-tenths* of the population of the commonwealth."—P. 22.

The Secretary to the Board of Education made a twofold answer to this argument:—*1st*, He presented a numerical statement of the religious denominations, who are all taxed equally to support the schools, and each of which has an equal right with its neighbours to prevent doctrines from being taught in them which it considers to be unsound. "The population of the State," says Mr Mann, "is now about 750,000. One-tenth is 75,000. The Universalists alone are estimated at

nearly or quite this number. The number of Unitarians may be somewhat though not very much less. The *Christ-ians* have between twenty and thirty organised societies. While there are very few orthodox people belonging to Unitarian congregations, it is well known that there is no inconsiderable number of Unitarians who worship with the orthodox. The opinion of some of the best informed men is, that at least *one quarter* of the people of Massachusetts are what is called, by way of distinction, Liberal Christians. Some estimate the numbers at one-third. Then there are the Nothings and Deists, who, taken together, are probably more numerous than either of the above."—P. 25. This statement is made by the Honourable Horace Mann, in a letter, dated 29th May 1844, and is not disputed by any of the subsequent writers in the "controversy."

2d, Mr Mann adds—"You insist that in our public schools, established for the whole, and supported by taxes levied upon the whole, certain scriptural doctrines shall be taught, such as that 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself,' &c. Very well. The Bible is now read in all our schools, almost without exception, and in the great majority of cases it is read by the scholars themselves. These doctrines and declarations being in the Bible, are they not in the schools also?" Farther, "Under the provisions of the constitution and laws, children may be taught to love the Lord their God with all their heart, and their neighbour as themselves; they may be taught to do to others as they would be done by; to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God; they may be taught to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep themselves unspotted from the world; they may be taught to honour father and mother; to keep the Sabbath holy; not to steal; not to kill; not to bear false witness against neighbours; not to covet. Nay, Sir," continues Mr Mann, "I refer you to that awe-inspiring description of the judgment in the 25th chapter of Matthew, and I say that there is not a single *action* or *omission* there mentioned, for which the righteous are to be rewarded and the wicked punished, that may not be taught, inculcated, or warned against, in all our schools. Such, also, I know to be the opinion of the Board of Education. Are all these things, and everything else of a kindred character, which the Scriptures contain, *non-essentials* in Christianity? But perhaps you desire something more for the schools? Perhaps you desire, not only that these passages (those quoted by the *Witness*) should be read, but that certain articles of faith, or formularies, more or less in number, em-

bodying these passages in a manner more acceptable to you than is found in the original texts, should be taught with them?" This is what is prohibited by the law.—P. 12.

Mr Mann continues—"I have now received more than a thousand reports from the school committees of the respective towns (districts) in the state, detailing the condition and wants of the schools. Probably a majority of them were written by clergymen. In these reports, no subject has been more freely discussed than that of moral and religious instruction, and how far the latter might be carried without trenching upon the rights of individuals; and with only two exceptions—less, therefore, than one in five hundred—the voice of these committees has been unanimous in favour of our constitutions and laws on the subject of religious instruction, as they now stand. Every one of these reports, also, was accepted in open town meeting, and, therefore, must have received the sanction of the town whence it came." —P. 13.

Mr Mann mentions a fact which would have appeared to us incredible, if not stated on indubitable authority, viz., that our countrymen, in reprinting American religious books, are guilty of mutilating them to make them support their own peculiar sentiments. "I might fortify these views," says he, "by the opinions of eminent orthodox individuals belonging to other states. Read the excellent chapter on 'Religious influence,' in a work by the Reverend Jacob Abbot, entitled 'The Teacher,' and you will find that his views on this subject exactly coincide with those I have expressed. Let me caution you, however, to read an American, and not the English edition of this work; for, in the latter, the chapter on 'Religious Influence' was *wholly left out*, to suit the meridian of that country"!! We have seen the Americans stigmatised for their low standard of morality in mutilating *English* works to suit them to American prejudices; but here is their own bad example imitated by the nation which points the finger at them for their want of principle, and apparently also by *religious persons* of that nation for religious purposes!

The editor of the *Witness* replied, that the precepts of Scripture cited by Mr Mann, as allowed to be taught, "are very well so far as they go; they are important to the social uprightness and welfare of man; but they leave untouched what we and all orthodox Christians esteem the essentials of Christianity—the way of salvation by Jesus Christ." "We will not be diverted," says he, "from the great question, whether the exclusion of what is distinctive in Christianity, as a way of salvation, from our public schools, be not an un-

christian measure which orthodox Christians ought to observe and think of."—P. 14.

Those quotations contain the substance of the topics brought under discussion in the "controversy," and we shall now cite the opinions of several orthodox men of high consideration on the merits of the question, whether the orthodox views should, or should not, be taught in the common schools.

The condensed summary of the law relative to religious instruction in the common schools of Massachusetts before given, shews that the main feature of the enactments on this subject is the prohibition to "purchase or use in any of the town schools, any school-books which are calculated to favour the tenets of any particular sect of Christians." We proceed to cite the views of this prohibition entertained by some of the first citizens of the state.

The Hon. Alfred D. Foster writes as follows:—"I am, Sir, a decided believer in the doctrines of grace, as held by orthodox evangelical Christians. In them to me are the spirit and life of the Gospel—on their truth rest my hopes of heaven. I must teach them to my children, for, in my opinion, it is through love and obedience to them, that my children, as well as I, must be saved, if saved at all. But have I a right to insist that they shall be taught to my children in a school supported by me only in common with those whose faith is different from mine, and to whom my faith is both a stumbling-block and a foolishness? I say no: and I think the laws and common sense say, and should continue to say, no. My next door neighbour feels a deep interest in the cause of common school education; he is active in promoting it; he pays as much towards it as I do (though this last circumstance is of no consequence); he desires good morals to be taught, and many of the great religious truths which I hold; but the Trinity, man's depravity, the atonement, spiritual regeneration, to me realities of revelation or of consciousness, are to him, not truths but imaginations. I wish we might see eye to eye; I may properly, with kindness, shew him my reasons for my faith, and urge them upon him; but I do not feel any more that I have a right to compel him to have his children taught those doctrines in school, than he has a right to compel me to have my children taught the doctrines of Socinus, which I regard as wholly unsupported by Scripture, and feebly by reasoning. What then can we do? We can meet where the constitution and

the laws allow us, on all common ground. Where we differ, we can peaceably separate and teach our children, or procure them to be taught, what we believe to be religious truth. The means are at hand in our families, in Sunday schools, from the pulpit. This, I think, we ought to do. And when so much is to be done, which all agree in thinking desirable, I regret exceedingly that obstacles should be thrown in the way of doing it, because our own religious views cannot be taught. Such seems to me the effect of a course like that of the *Witness*.

“The Board of Education, and its Secretary, are earnestly endeavouring to do a great and good work for the people, by stirring up the people to work for themselves, wisely and energetically. A debt of gratitude is due to those gentlemen for the results of their labours thus far—seen as those results are, in improved school-houses, in the increased amount of money raised for schools, in the interest felt in them, and *in this very opposition to the course they are pursuing. While the schools were running down in houses, instruction, and morals, who raised an alarm for their orthodoxy?* Now that they are coming up, let us help, not hinder, their progress, and have no fears that sound learning, good morals, or good manners, will lead to heresy or spring from it.”

The same gentleman addresses a letter to the Hon. E. A. Newton (who was the first to lead the attack against the Board of Education), in which he says—“I readily accord to you the purest motives, and really suppose you desire only to contend for truth. I ought to believe this, if I may judge from the very pleasant acquaintance and intercourse I have had with you; and so far as the great doctrines of the Gospel are concerned, I do not suppose that we differ as to what is truth, or its importance. But you or I err greatly as to the manner of advancing the truth, through common schools.

“If you are right, then our common schools must become the battle-ground of warring sects, each fighting to advance its own views, for the reason, that except those views prevail, all that is learned will be useless, if not positively injurious.

“If I am right, then we may find in our common schools one blessed spot which is truly neutral ground, where each sect may lay aside its weapons of offence, and all drink together from fountains of knowledge refreshing to the soul, though they do not sanctify it.

“If you are right, then ignorance is better than knowledge uncombined with our peculiar views of religious doctrine.

“ If I am right, ignorance is never better than knowledge, anywhere, nor with any religious opinions.”

Nothing can surpass the excellence of these sentiments and their beneficial tendency. They breathe the spirit of real Christianity, as well as of philosophy and patriotism. We rejoice to remark that other orthodox men are animated by the same admirable principles.

A letter signed T. P., which is understood to be “ from a gentleman of high standing in this community,” says, “ The Board (of Education) has been selected with great care, and (as it has always been acknowledged) with great impartiality. If the demon of party-politics has knocked at the door, I believe it was never opened to him. Of the secretary himself, I am almost unwilling to speak as I think. *Between him and myself*, as I have already said, *there exists the extreme difference of religious doctrine*; and there is no personal intimacy to affect my opinions; I judge of his character only by his public doings and sayings. But I have observed his career for years.” Here a variety of Mr Mann’s public services are enumerated and eulogised. “ In important public offices, I have witnessed his unsurpassed devotion to duty; and now all his hours and all his faculties are earnestly employed in the great work of public education. He may continue to be assailed from time to time, as he has always been, by those who cannot be willing that the gifts of God should come to man unless they pass through the channels which they suppose themselves to have sounded, and are, therefore, ready to sanction. *But if all men were of this mind and mood, the plague of a greater than Egyptian darkness would be near us.* Happily it is not so; and I hope he will go forward on his way of usefulness, cheered no less by the consciousness of good endeavours than by the evidence of success, and strong in his own excellent purposes, and in the sympathy of all who find in the good he seeks an end which all good men may desire.”—P. 40.

Such sentiments as these, publicly expressed by men entertaining extreme differences of opinion on religious doctrine, are refreshing and highly encouraging to the genuine philanthropist. And what has produced this admirable and truly Christian spirit in a community which exists in a state of habitual and high religious and political excitement? It is the perfect equality of all sects in religious privileges and political power. The pride of domination engendered by national establishments of religion deadens the just and generous affections in all but the highest minds in their communion; while the sense of injustice, oppression, and exclu-

sion, is constantly irritating those who are compelled by conscientious views of truth and duty to separate from the Church established by law. In this country, the necessity of a national and efficient system of education for the universal people is becoming every day more and more apparent and pressing. It will be impossible to realize it, except on principles of equality similar to those in operation in Massachusetts. If the privileges of the Established Churches in the United Kingdom render this impossible, their own existence is in danger; because it will be difficult to persuade the nation, after this fact becomes apparent, deliberately to sacrifice its vital interests for the sake of preserving peculiar privileges to sects which obstruct the general welfare. If the alternative of consenting to universal education or of self-immolation were presented by the public voice to these churches, we believe that they would yield their pretensions to control the education of the entire people rather than surrender their own existence; and that a firm and enlightened ministry, backed by public sentiment, might place this question on its proper basis. If such a system as that of Massachusetts were tried in this country, in which all sects should be taxed equally for the support of schools, all sectarian doctrine should be excluded, and all sects rendered equally influential in the administration of the schools and school funds; then, unless we acknowledge ourselves far inferior indeed, to the Americans in virtue and understanding, the scheme should succeed here as well as there. If the Dissenters, like the "*Witness*" of Massachusetts, should object to this course, and insist on sectarian doctrines being taught in the schools, the cause would be hopeless, and a new reformation in religion, with a political revolution, would present themselves as the apparent alternatives; for no reflecting individual can believe in the permanency of the present state of society in the United Kingdom.

The Massachusetts system is recommended to Government by one great advantage—it executes itself. The law prescribes the number and kinds of schools to be established and kept up, and commands the people to tax themselves for their support, and to appoint committees of their own number to manage them. It prohibits the introduction of sectarian teaching and sectarian works. It establishes a board of education and a secretary to superintend the whole, but gives *them no powers of compulsion. They exercise a moral influence only.* They can neither appoint nor remove teachers, prescribe nor prohibit books, levy one shilling of money, nor do any other act or deed, except require each school

committee of the state to report, in writing, annually, the extent to which it has complied with the law; to circulate information, and to tender advice. The board presents an abstract of these reports annually, accompanied by a report from the secretary, to the Legislature; and the effect has been marvellously great. In almost every district there are individuals sufficiently patriotic and enlightened to enforce the law on those who are indifferent to its execution; in every district there are active members of every sect who watch, denounce, and expel sectarian teaching; the Board of Education is composed of members representing the opinions of all the leading sects, and each serves as a check on all the others. The Board sanctions the publication of school-books, but none can go forth under their auspices, unless it be unanimously approved of; and even when so sanctioned, it is presented to the district school committees under the moral recommendation alone of the Board. The committees may admit or reject it as they see proper. Finally, the wide circulation, at the expense of the state, of the annual school returns, abstracted and commented on by the secretary, informs the whole community concerning the districts which are performing, and those which are neglecting, their duty to the rising generation, and to their country; and public opinion thus enlightened, shames even the most obdurate and insensible individuals into improvement.

The secretary is the only salaried officer of the state connected with education, and he receives L.300 a-year, for which he devotes the whole of his time and energies to the cause. He lately visited this country, when we had an opportunity of forming his acquaintance; and we know that he was by profession a lawyer, has been a senator, and is a man of first-rate talent and high moral worth. His whole soul is devoted to his duties; and he appears to be conferring on his countrymen an incalculable amount of good. If an American democracy can devise and execute such a system of education, how must we hide our diminished heads, if we shall be forced to confess that by selfishness, exclusiveness, and bigotry, we are incapable of rivalling them in such a Christian work.

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REMARKS
ON
NATIONAL EDUCATION.

BY
GEORGE COMBE.

"Sectarianism is not morality. To be zealous for a sect, and to be conscientious in morals, are widely different. To inculcate the peculiarities of a sect, and to teach the fundamental principles of religion and morality, are widely different. Indeed, schools might be named, in which there is the most rigorous inculcation of an exclusive sectarianism, where there is a deplorable absence of the fruits of both religion and morality."—*The Rev. Egerton Ryerson, in his Report on a System of Public Elementary Instruction for Upper Canada.*

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ON NATIONAL EDUCATION.

THE public appear to be now nearly unanimous on the point, that the people *should be educated*; but considerable differences of opinion exist as to *who* should be charged with the duty of educating them,—the state or individuals? also whether combined religious and secular instruction, or secular instruction alone, should be given by the schoolmaster, leaving religious instruction to be supplied by the parent and priest. To communicate my views distinctly on these points, I find it advisable to begin with the very elements of the subject.

In the arguments generally maintained on these questions, certain views of the nature of man; of the origin and objects of society; of the powers and duties of government; and of the connection between practical morality, secular prosperity, and religious belief, are assumed by the various writers as settled doctrines, concerning which their own opinions are unquestionably sound; when, in point of fact, no adequate consideration has been bestowed on these topics either by them or by those to whom they address themselves, and no common views in regard to them are definitely assented to by either. When the postulates of a discussion are thus involved in obscurity, and apprehended differently by different individuals, harmony in the conclusions is impossible. However widely, therefore, the reader may differ from some of the opinions now to be stated, few, I hope, will doubt the advantage of elucidating these fundamental points of the question.

This world, then, appears to me to be a vast theatre constituted for exertion; in which enjoyment is the natural consequence of industry, morality, and intelligence, and suffering

that of ignorance and sloth. The constitution of the world, physical and moral, that of the human mind and body, as well as the relations between them, are fixed and determinate; and man becomes prosperous and happy in proportion to the degree in which his social institutions and personal conduct harmonize with these unchangeable elements of nature. Each individual of the race is born ignorant of every thing; but capacities are bestowed on him to learn all that is essential to his welfare. The mighty machinery of nature, physical and moral, is constantly revolving within him, (in his own mind and body), and around him; and he cannot by possibility avoid experiencing its influence. To be prosperous, he must adjust his conduct and position to its action, and he cannot do so unless he know it: learn, therefore, he must, or suffer. Education means teaching the individual what it concerns him to know relative to his own constitution and that of the moral and physical world in which he is destined to live and act; and it includes *training* him to habits of action suitable to that destination.

The importance of teaching knowledge is evident; but the necessity for *training* is less understood. It arises from the dependence of the mind, in this world, on physical organization for its powers of acting. The brain is the material instrument by means of which the mind acts, and it consists of a variety of parts, each connected with a special mental power. It is subject to the same organic laws as the other parts of the body. If we should confine a man for the first twenty years of his life to a dungeon, without exercise and employment, we should find, on bringing him into the active world of light and life, that he could not see distinctly, could not judge correctly of the distance of objects by their sounds, could not walk steadily, and scarcely could make any exertion with his arms and hands. The cause of his defects would be found in the circumstance, that his organic structure had been left feeble and undeveloped through want of exercise; and that his various senses and muscles (which, although distinct in themselves, are all framed to co-operate and assist in prosecuting general aims) had never been accustomed to act in combination. Such a being, therefore, when first introduced into active life, would be helpless, bewildered, and unhappy.

The uneducated and untrained peasant is in a similar condition in regard to his mental organs. Not only is he ignorant, but his mental organs are dull, feeble, and incapable of continued exertion; and he, therefore, cannot think continuously, or act perseveringly. We may give him instruc-

tion, but it does not penetrate into his inactive brain, and it is not reproductive of thought and action. I have occasionally hired into my service individuals who had not learned to read and write; and the effects were most conspicuous. The ears heard, and the eyes saw, and the understanding appeared to comprehend; but I soon discovered that the comprehension was imperfect and inexact, that the *retention* was momentary, and the power of reproduction, combination, and modification, almost *nil*. I lately conversed with an engineer and machine-maker who employs 120 workmen, and he told me that he had repeatedly taken into his workshop uneducated and untrained labourers with a view to teaching them some simple processes in his trade, but had found that the lesson of yesterday was not retained in the mind till to-day; that no spontaneous suggestion presented itself, even when circumstances rendered it evident to a trained understanding; and that their labour, in consequence, was without value in any skilled department of art. Their muscles had been trained to act, almost without the direction of their brains; and beyond labour which muscles could execute independently of intelligence, they were powerless.

Such is the intellectual condition of uneducated man. But the intellect constitutes only a small, although an important portion of the mind: Man is endowed, besides, with moral sentiments and animal propensities, depending, like his intellect, on cerebral organs for their powers of manifestation. Each organ is more or less capable of action in proportion to its size, temperament, and the *training* which it has received. In a rude and uncultivated condition of the intellect, the moral sentiments are left without stimulus and direction. These sentiments produce the emotions of benevolence and veneration, and the love of justice. Prosperous external circumstances, generally speaking, are favourable to virtue. A man steeped in poverty and pressed by personal want, finds his selfish faculties excited, and lacks both moral and physical means for practising the benevolent virtues. One buried in ignorance cannot exercise a well directed and enlightened veneration; and one in whom all the finer, higher, and disinterested powers of the mind are dormant, cannot be expected to comprehend the dictates of truth, or to practise the principles of justice.

But the third class of faculties, the animal propensities, are not equally quiescent in the uneducated individual; because, on their prompt action, the preservation of life and the supply of our bodily wants has been made by nature immediately to depend. Their external objects, which act as their sti-

mulants, everywhere abound. The struggle for food, raiment, and shelter, in which the uneducated man is, in the general case, constantly engaged, calls forth his Combativeness and Destructiveness, his cunning and his obstinacy, into abiding activity; it *trains them* to vigour, and renders them prompt to action.

Such, then, is uneducated man, in his general condition. I speak, of course, of average individuals, for there are persons born in all ranks of life whose inherent superiority of mind enables them triumphantly to surmount every adventitious obstacle to their development and elevation. These, however, are few in number; and as nature has rendered them, in a great measure, independent of social aid, they do not form the objects of our present consideration.

Let us next consider *society*, and its origin and objects. I regard society as the direct offspring of the inherent faculties of man. Some species of animals are gregarious, that is to say, have received from the God of Nature certain feelings which render the presence of their kind agreeable to them; and to this category belongs man. Many of our faculties have intelligent beings for their direct objects; and all of them are adapted to a condition of social life. Not only so, but also the grand outlines of the social state of man are determined by the fiat of the Creator. Individuals differ *naturally* in bodily strength and in mental energy, and in these differences a foundation is laid for diversities of social rank and condition; for the existence of the rich and the poor, of the governing and the governed. In order correctly to understand human nature, therefore, we must regard man as an *individual* being, seeking his happiness in the gratification of his faculties; but high in the list of these we must place his social powers, which are as certainly inherent parts of his mental constitution as the most important of his selfish feelings.

Government springs from the social faculties. Living in the social state, necessarily implies that there are interests and duties common to all the members of the tribe. Gregarious animals place sentinels to warn the herd or flock of dangers, and choose leaders to guide them. Among men, the ruling power, in its proper form, consists merely of certain members of the associated mass selected by the rest to attend to the common interests of the whole, and to enforce the reciprocal duties incumbent on the individual and the community. General consent of the members selects the Rulers, and lends them the power of the social body to execute their functions. History tells us, indeed, that in many states, strong and energetic individuals have constituted them-

selves masters, and transmitted their power to their descendants, irrespective of the will of the community; whence notions have grown up of the governing power being a right inherent in certain individuals, independently of the will of the people; but these were usurpations disavowed by reason, and such claims are not now made by the rulers of any constitutional state, and certainly not by the Government of England.

In determining what are the rights of individuals, and what the powers of Government, our best guide is the nature of man. Man subsists necessarily as an *individual*: He has received from his Maker certain powers of action and enjoyment, and been placed in a world adapted to his constitution. He has a right, therefore, derived directly from God, (who called him into existence, and provided the world for his reception), to the full enjoyment of all his powers and capacities, but under two restrictions; *1st*, that he shall not transgress the laws which Divine wisdom has established in his own and in external nature for their regulation; and, *2dly*, that he shall not convert his individual enjoyments into sources of annoyance to his fellow-men, who, from the necessity of his and their being, must live with him in society. God, in his government of the world, enforces the first restriction by punishing the individual with loss of health for abuse of his corporeal functions, and by misfortune and misery for neglect or abuse of his mental powers. The *duty* and the *right* of Government is to enforce the second restriction, viz., to see that the individual, in pursuing his own happiness, does not invade that of his neighbours.

These premises enable us to draw certain conclusions regarding the right of our Rulers to interfere in the education of the people. In the first place, it follows from them, that if any man chooses to renounce all connection with and dependence on society, to go forth from the haunts of men, and neither live among them, accept their aid, nor tender them his contributions, physical or mental, he has an undoubted right, so far as society is concerned, to indulge *all* his faculties in his own way, because he commits no offence against society, and causes it no injury. He commits, indeed, a great offence against his own nature, which the Creator expressly designed for social life; but Nature herself, without the interference of man as an avenger, has provided ample punishment for that offence, by the deterioration of his social nature, and the deprivation of all social enjoyments consequent on solitude. Betake himself to what solitude he will, he cannot escape out of the presence of God, or withdraw him-

self from the influence of *His* laws, which are woven into the texture of his body and mind, and inscribed on every breath of air, and every foot of ground. By their means, the Creator will inflict on him the precise kind and degree of punishment which his conduct merits, and which will best serve to recall him to a due estimate of the privileges which he contemns.

But when an individual prefers to avail himself of the advantages of living in society, of the physical protection which other men's skill and courage afford, of the social pleasures which their intelligence and attainments present, and above all, when he claims their sympathy, support, and relief in sickness and in old age—which every man living in society virtually does—he becomes bound to perform his duty to it in return; and society acquires a *right* to enforce the performance of that duty, as the fundamental condition on which it allows him to reap the benefit of its institutions and arrangements.

What, then, are the duties which the individual owes to society? His first duty, in compensation for the advantages it confers on him, is obviously to pursue bodily habits calculated, according to the laws of organization, which neither he nor society can alter, to preserve himself in health, that he may not disable himself for his allotted sphere of action, or diffuse disease by infection around him. It is on this principle that society has the right to enforce the ordinary regulations of police in towns. It ordains every citizen to put forth from his dwelling all refuse and noxious substances, and employs men to collect them and carry them away. This is not done in the country, because there, individuals who neglect this duty injure only themselves and their domestic dependents. The same principle will authorize the enforcement of still higher hygienic regulations in towns; and, in point of fact, the statute 9th and 10th Victoria, c. 96, recently passed, authorizes the magistrates of towns, on receiving a certificate signed by two duly qualified medical practitioners, "of the filthy and unwholesome condition of any dwelling-house or other building," to *compel* the person complained of to abate the nuisance within two days. But I may go further in the same direction. The individual who claims the benefits afforded by an advanced and intelligent state of society, is bound to qualify himself, according to the endowments bestowed on him by Providence, for acting his part in that society well. In a society which is moral, he has no right to continue publicly immoral; because this is not only offensive, but directly injurious to his fellow-men; he is not entitled to remain ignorant

and untrained ; because in that condition he is incapable of performing his due part in the grand social evolutions, the beneficial results of which he claims a right to share. On what principle of reason or justice can any individual say,—“ I decline to undergo the fatigue and discipline necessary to render my brain active, in order to fit myself for skilful labour, and for applying my labour to the best advantage ; I decline to learn to read and write ; I decline to be instructed in, or to conform my conduct to, those conditions in the physical and moral world, which, by the ordination of God, are productive of prosperity and happiness ; and I decline to regulate my conduct by what you call the laws of morality and reason ; all this I decline, because I am a free and independent man, and because it would be irksome to me to submit to such training, instruction, and restraint ;—nevertheless, I claim the right to throw myself with all my incapacity undiminished, all my ignorance unilluminated, and all my passions unregulated and untamed, upon the bosom of society : I insist that its members who *have* cultivated *their* faculties and reaped the natural rewards of that cultivation, in the possession of morality, intelligence, and wealth, shall bear the burden of my incapacity, of my recklessness, and of my follies ; that they shall minister to me when sick, feed me when my unskilled labour, in competition with their skilled labour, does not suffice to supply me with the necessaries of life ; and that they shall provide for my wife and children when I sink into a premature grave.”

This embodies, not a rhetorical, but a *literal* statement of the demand which the untrained and uneducated labourer, who denies the right of society to insist on his being trained and educated, makes on his fellow-men ; and I leave those to defend it who abet him in that denial. The man who claims the benefit of a poor-law, actually demands from society all that I have now mentioned ; and, unquestionably, we are entitled to say, “ Before you claim ignorance as your birth-right, you must shew your emancipation from the laws of God, which connect want with incapacity, misfortune with ignorance, misery with immorality, and disease and premature death with habits of filth, sloth, and intemperance.” If the man admits that he continues a subject of the Divine government (and unless he be mad he will not dispute this point), he cannot, with any show of reason, contest the right of society to train and instruct him to that degree which shall render him a moral and intelligent agent, fit to play his part in the society of which he claims to be a member.

The question here presents itself, *What kind and degree* of knowledge has society a right to insist on its members acquir-

ing? The principle already stated will enable us to answer this question. The individual has a right to the most perfect freedom of thought and action in regard to every thing which does not directly or indirectly affect the welfare of other men. To come at once to the grand point of controversy on the subject of national education—society has a right to insist that he shall be instructed and trained in whatever is necessary to fit him for the discharge of his duties as a member of the community in which he lives; but in all beyond this, the individual has a right to unbounded liberty of self-determination as to what he shall learn and what he shall not learn. He has no right to continue filthy in his habits, because this may induce disease and infect his neighbours; he has no right to continue grossly ignorant, because in this state of mind he is unfit to regulate his passions, to act with a rational regard to his own and the public welfare in the circumstances in which he is placed, and also to apply his natural powers in that kind of labour by which alone he can subsist in a society composed of intelligent and skilful men, on whom he has no right to throw the burden of his incapacity. But he has a perfect title to decline to study poetry, or rhetoric, or painting, or sculpture, if these be distasteful to him; because his remaining ignorant of these accomplishments can carry no direct harm to his fellow-citizens. In the former category—that of things which he is bound to learn, because his ignorance of them is injurious to society—we place a knowledge of moral duties; and in the latter, I rank those religious doctrines, the foundations of which rest *exclusively* on supernatural communications.

I recognize explicitly the importance of *religion* to the welfare of society and to that of the individual. Active religious feelings dispose a man to venerate and submit himself to those moral and physical laws instituted by the Creator, on which his own happiness and that of society depend. They prompt him also to adoration and gratitude, emotions highly influential in the right ordering of human conduct. But under the head of what is generally called religion, are included doctrines and precepts which God has already enforced on our acceptance by the clear order of nature in this world, and other doctrines of which the human understanding, unenlightened by revelation, is incapable of gaining a competent knowledge. In regard to the former, nature and Scripture coincide, and speak one and the same language; whereas nature is silent, or so obscure as not to be practical, in regard to the latter. It appears to me, that government, as a secular institution, has a right to insist that its subjects shall be instructed in every species of knowledge, and trained to

every mode of action, which directly affects the welfare of society, and which is prescribed as a duty, equally by Scripture and by the natural laws of the body, of the mind, and of the external creation.

The laws of health, industry, and morality, are thus enacted by the Creator, and are universally prevalent. In Christian Europe, in Mahomedan Asia, and in Pagan Africa, the individual who neglects cleanliness, who lives in bad air, and indulges in vicious habits, ruins his health, whereby he may become a focus of infection, and incapacitate himself for the discharge of his social duties; he who is ignorant and reckless of the moral law becomes a scourge and affliction to his fellow-men; and he whose intelligence is so limited that he is incapable of acting successfully a part in the social evolutions amidst which he lives, is in constant danger of becoming a burden on their industry, and of throwing on them the evil consequences which God has attached to his ignorance and incapacity.

The religious sentiments are inherent and important elements of the human mind: they act with great energy, and lead to stupendous consequences of good or evil, according as they are well or ill directed. It appears to me that they may with great advantage be directed towards the support and enforcement of God's laws written in the book of creation, as well as of those written in the Bible. This opinion is entitled to the greater weight, when it is considered that no law is laid down to man in the Bible for his guidance in temporal affairs, which is not inscribed as clearly in the book of nature; and that, in point of fact, it is the support which the scriptural precept receives from the agency of nature that renders it practical. The Scripture, for example, commands temperance in all things; and it can be demonstrated that, according to the laws of organization, intemperance in food ruins the health; intemperance in drinking incapacitates the mind; intemperance in ambition blinds the understanding and leads to ruin; intemperance in study exhausts the brain and deranges the mental functions; and so forth. In my work on "the Constitution of Man," I have given illustrations of this doctrine; and in my Lectures on "Moral Philosophy," I have endeavoured to shew that the Ten Commandments are as clearly inscribed in the natural constitution of man, as on the tables of stone delivered to Moses; and these are only examples which might be multiplied to the full extent of scripture-teaching relative to temporal affairs.

The principle now stated, that scripture-precepts regarding temporal duties cannot become practical unless sup-

ported by the order of nature, deserves consideration. It goes deep into the merits of secular and religious education. Suppose, for example, that the order of nature had connected health, mental energy, and temporal prosperity, with *intemperance*, and that the scriptural injunction, "Be temperate in all things," had rested solely on the authority of Scripture, and its only sanction had been the announcement of eternal punishment as the *future* consequence of disregarding it,—what chance would the cause of temperance have had for success in this world? Obviously, very little. This conclusion is supported by the fact, that the plainest precepts of the Bible continue to this day to be utterly disregarded in practice by individuals and nations who believe unhesitatingly in their Divine authority, but whose understandings have not yet discovered that they are supported also by the order of nature. The precept, for example, "Love thy neighbour as thyself,"—"all men are thy neighbours,"—directly involves the principles of free trade; but its practical application was resisted, and continues to be resisted, by individuals and nations who admit its divine authority, but do not yet perceive how its practical application can be rendered compatible with their temporal welfare. The "League" succeeded in carrying this principle into practical effect, only by convincing the English people that the order of nature was such that they might safely obey the precept, not only without temporal injury to themselves, but with positive advantage. Then, and not till then, they yielded obedience to what the Scripture had commanded them to do for eighteen hundred years, but commanded them in vain.

As a contrast, I may notice the Scriptural precepts, "I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also" (Matthew, v., 39, 40). The constitution of the human mind does not sanction these precepts when understood in their literal sense. Nature has bestowed on us a love of life, and a sentiment of self-respect, which render injuries and insults disagreeable; she has added sentiments of Benevolence, Veneration, and Conscientiousness, which proclaim that the infliction of injury and insult is wrong; but as she foresaw that some men might disregard these moral restraining powers and become aggressive, she added combative and destructive propensities to the mind, one of the legitimate uses of which is to repel, by force, unjust attacks on our persons and our rights. The law of nature, therefore, is, that injury and insult *must be restrained*,—

by moral influence if possible, but if not, by physical force,—and accordingly the words of Scripture have been practically thus interpreted, and those sects who have endeavoured to act on their literal meaning have not succeeded in commending their principles of non-resistance to general acceptance.

If the constitution and arrangements of nature in which our secular duties are inscribed, and by means of which they are enforced, were presented to the understandings of the young as Divine institutions, and if their sentiments of Wonder, Veneration, and Conscientiousness, were trained to admire, reverence, and obey them, these duties would, in their minds, become *principles of religion*, as well as of morality and prudence. Their practical efficacy would be increased by the combined forces of the understanding, of the moral sentiments, of the religious sentiments, and of the selfish principles of our nature, all co-operating; for, when all these were satisfied in regard to their Divine authority and practical utility, they would naturally unite towards their enforcement. No doctrines or precepts, relative to secular duties, that rest upon and are addressed to the religious sentiments exclusively, or even chiefly, can operate with an equally powerful and beneficial effect. If they do not satisfy the understanding, or the moral feelings, or the selfish elements of the mind, they lose in practical efficacy in proportion to the faculties which they leave uninterested. The Christian religion abounds in precepts which rest on all these foundations, and hence its practical power. The superstitions of the ancient world, and of modern heathenism (however deeply they may excite and interest the religious sentiments of their votaries), fail to satisfy the understanding, and the moral sentiments, and to promote the temporal happiness of their believers, and hence their practical inefficacy for good. They are disowned by nature, and cannot yield the fruits of purity, prosperity, and peace.

So far, therefore, from the Divine laws in regard to secular rights and duties having their only foundation in Scripture, the proposition should be modified to the effect, that they all have a foundation also in nature, and that it is their conformity to, and enforcement by, the order of nature, which renders them practical; and this seems to authorize the conclusion that the state has a right to teach the practical doctrines of natural religion recognized in Scripture to all.

Let us now consider the question, Has the state a right to educate all the faculties of man? We have already answered that it has a right to train and educate every faculty to the extent to which its action is necessary to enable the individual

to discharge his social duties, and no further. It is entitled to train Veneration, for example, to respect and yield obedience to every natural law which directly affects the welfare of the social body;—but has it a right *to force* men to embrace and venerate any doctrine which has its issues only in a future state of existence? Society, such as we see it, does not exist beyond the grave. Therefore, only individuals in their individual capacities are concerned in matters of eternity; and on this subject, their birthright is entire freedom of opinion and judgment.

The depth and magnitude of that interest is sufficient to secure an extent of teaching of this class of religious doctrines up to the full demands of the faculties; but no amount, however unlimited, of such teaching, necessarily implies or secures instruction in temporal duties. Assuming that the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland have taught their people, during the last century, religious truth sufficient to secure their eternal welfare, it is certain that they have not instructed and trained them, to an equal extent, in that knowledge of this world and its laws, which produces prosperity and happiness. It is this latter species of knowledge which it is the right and the duty of the state to provide for the people; because the absence of it, as we now see and feel in regard to Ireland, aggravates all natural calamities, and impairs all natural blessings, to the great damage not only of the individuals whose training and instruction has been neglected, but of every member of the community who has sympathies to feel for human suffering, or a purse to provide for their removal.

It is often argued, however, that the voluntary efforts of the individual members of society afford a better means for the supply of education for the whole people, than any compulsory arrangements of the State, and hence it is denied that the State has a right to educate its people.

There is a practical fallacy, however, in the manner in which this question is generally submitted to our consideration. In every free country the state is merely the representative of the general power (physical, moral, and intellectual) of the country. It is not a distinct and independent being, that can exist and act in spite of the will of its members. Any system of military defence, of police, of law, and also of *education*, which the state can establish and maintain in this country, must be approved of by the intelligence of the empire. Nobody contends that the government has a right, despite of the will of the people, to seize on public education. All that is maintained is that the government may do the work better than individuals; and our security against

the abuse by government of its delegated powers lies in the control which the individual members of the community are capable of exercising, through the elections and the press, on the conduct of Parliament and the executive. We do not leave the defence of the country and the police of our great towns to the voluntary action of individuals; because the majority of society is agreed that these objects can be better accomplished by committing them to the State. And the case will be the same in regard to education. Its direction cannot be assumed by the Government until the majority of the public become satisfied that it is best fitted to conduct the operations. The capricious or negligent administration of the means of public defence, or of police, would endanger the welfare, not only of those who erected themselves into the voluntary managers of them, but of those who differed from their views, and considered their course of action unwise and detrimental; and it is on this principle alone that Parliament gives to the executive the right to take the administration of these affairs into its own hands. In like manner, whenever the majority of society shall become satisfied that individual teachers, sects, and incorporations, have so neglected or mismanaged public education, as to endanger the welfare of the State, they will, (without limiting the right of individual action in so far as this is compatible with public safety), provide public institutions for the better accomplishment of this important end.

Has such a case actually occurred? In answering this question, it is necessary only to look at the mental condition of the inhabitants of these islands to discover that education has hitherto been grievously neglected and mismanaged. The extent of ignorance, vice, helpless incapacity, crime, and suffering, which abound, and which are more or less referrible to the low physical, moral, intellectual, and religious training and instruction of the people, is a point of too painful certainty to be disputed. This fact itself is sufficient to warrant men of reflection in requesting and empowering the State to try whether it cannot manage education better. But other and solid reasons may be discovered for the failure of the voluntary efforts which have hitherto been made for the education of the people, and which may tend to justify us in committing it in future to the Government.

The kind of instruction which it is the direct interest of society to communicate, is that which relates to God's laws and mode of administration of man's temporal condition. The statesman placed in an elevated position, and entrusted with the welfare of all classes, sects, and individuals, has natural advantages for discovering what these laws are, for appreciating their social importance, and for applying them,

which no private individual, sect, or class, can enjoy. He is in a position to discern, with a keener eye and a surer sagacity, what instruction is equally beneficial to all, than the man in the crowd surrounded by objects which contract his vision, and invaded by interests which bias his judgment. I say that, *cæteris paribus*, the statesman is better able than the individual citizen to direct beneficially this complicated and difficult branch of the public interest. Besides, his ear is open at all times to the admonition of individual wisdom, and his conduct is subject to the unlimited control of the parliamentary constituencies.

I am prepared for the charge being made, that this is a proposal to constitute infidelity the basis of national education; because natural religion, even when coincident with and sanctioned by Christianity, is regarded by some minds as tantamount to infidelity. But I deny that teaching the precepts in which the order of creation and Scripture coincide is infidelity. Those who contend that it is so, forget that in this view God himself would be the author of a great system of infidelity; for the whole Jewish dispensation was one which had its sanctions exclusively in its temporal consequences. No futurity was revealed to the Jews;* but no one proposes to exclude the teaching of the Scripture doctrines relative to eternity. All that is recommended is to provide for the teaching of these to the children of each sect according to the views and wishes of their parents at separate hours, and by separate teachers from those engaged by the State. Let us view the consequences of acting *on different* principles.

Most churches and religious associations avowedly constitute belief in certain religious doctrines, the chief importance of which is their efficacy as means for securing happiness in a future life, as the indispensable conditions on which they will teach that knowledge which relates to this world alone. But as many individuals differ regarding these points, the condition of believing them excludes thousands from their schools, while the State cannot afford to allow any of its children to be barred out from secular instruction. This is one reason why the State should be entrusted with the charge of secular education for the benefit of all.

Again, certain sects regard belief in the dogmas accredited by them as the only stable foundation, not only for religious, but for secular education; and, on this account, claim the exclusive control of schools. If this were the actual fact, their pretensions would be irresistible. But there is an important error in this assumption, because, as already maintained, there

* See note on p. 33.

is no practical precept in the Old or New Testament relating to human conduct in this life, which is not contained also in the book of nature, and enforced by the natural order of Providence ; and I repeat, that it is their conformity to, and enforcement by nature, which really give to scriptural precepts their practical efficacy. Before some sects will receive a child into one of their schools, his parents must consent to their teaching him,—that human nature is disordered by the fall,—that all mankind are liable to eternal perdition in consequence of Adam's first transgression,—that the Godhead consists of three persons,—that Jesus Christ is one of them,—and that he atoned for our sins by suffering in his own person the punishment which was due to them. If the truth and efficacy of all the precepts delivered by Jesus Christ, relating to those portions of human conduct in which society is directly interested, depended exclusively on our believing these views of his character and works, these sects would have reason on their side ; but, on the other hand, if the practical efficacy of these precepts depends on their conformity to the constitution and order of nature, and not on our belief or disbelief in certain interpretations of Scripture, the case is altered, and it becomes pure tyranny in sectarian men to deny instruction in secular knowledge to children whose parents do not embrace their doctrinal views.

They will probably reply that they leave parents who do not approve of these doctrines to open schools for their children on their own principles. This, however, is just one of the evils which the advocates of State education desire to avoid. God's natural laws relative to this world are equally applicable to all sects and to all nations, in all times, and they are expounded as such in the Bible. By adopting them as the basis of general education, the State may succeed in having *all* its people trained *in one set of practical principles*, resting on the common basis of the order of nature, and, therefore, admitting of unanimity and co-operation. While each sect founds its secular instruction on the basis of its own interpretations of Scripture, this advantage cannot be obtained ; and society is, in consequence, not only rent by religious dissensions, but its power of co-operation for practical improvement is greatly paralysed. We see the result of this state of things before us at the present time. While discordant sects dispute whose doctrines shall form the basis of secular education, many of the people are allowed to grow up in heathen ignorance, and too many of those who are educated are fierce partizans of peculiar dogmas. This, therefore, appears to me to be another reason for committing secular education to the charge of the State.

We are told, however, that this proposed separation of secular from religious teaching, is "a gigantic system of godless education." With great deference to the excellent individual who uttered these words, the case appears to me in a different light. Apparently, he and his followers who have adopted this opinion, have looked so long and so intently on the Old and New Testaments, that they have lost sight of, or never attentively studied, the record of God's Natural Providence. If, for instance, we comprehend the structure and functions of the nervous system in man, and the vast amount of enjoyment of which it is the appointed vehicle when duly administered, and the extent of suffering which it entails on him when its laws are neglected or transgressed, and perceive that this is the workmanship of God, and that in this structure and its laws He is addressing our Wonder, calling on us to admire,—our Veneration, desiring us to reverence,—our Conscientiousness, commanding us to obey,—and our Intellect, inviting us to study, prove, and practise, what He has revealed ; and that He rewards us with health, strength, and enjoyment, for obedience, and punishes us with bodily and mental pain and incapacity, and often with death itself, for infringement of his precepts,—THIS IS RELIGION AS WELL AS SCIENCE. How any man of a serious and an enlightened mind can study and comprehend God's natural laws without having his religious sentiments vividly excited, I cannot comprehend. Is it not an abuse of terms to call that education "godless," which refers *all* that it teaches, directly to the power, wisdom, and goodness of God himself ? In no sense of the words is the study of natural knowledge in its practical applications, a "godless education ;" because it cultivates, trains, and enlarges, the self-same faculties, by means of which the grander doctrines relative to man's future destinies must be studied and apprehended.

The opinion that religion and morality are revealed only in the Bible, and that science is "godless," has led to great practical evils. The religious world has, in consequence, too much neglected the teaching of science as the basis of conduct ; and the men of science have too much overlooked the religious element with which all science is imbued. One hears in many pulpits God's terrestrial creation, including man himself as he naturally exists, decried and degraded ; while, in the halls of science, we may study for years without hearing God referred to as the fountain of the truths expounded, or any practical inferences drawn regarding what they teach concerning his will. Many divines are either too intent upon the truths of Scripture to study and appreciate Nature and her record, or they are jealous of her. There

are, indeed, enlightened exceptions to the truth of this remark, but I speak of the general character of pulpit teaching. The man of science, on the other hand, although not ignorant that he is expounding the "doings of the Lord," is yet too little alive to the practical nature of the truths which he unfolds, as guides to human conduct; and he is also afraid of trenching on the domain of the divine, and perhaps of teaching something which the latter might regard as not altogether doctrinally sound. He will thrill our highest faculties by his descriptions of the stupendous magnitude of creation, and demonstrate to us one God, and one law, ruling in every sphere. After having stretched our imaginations to their utmost limits, and deeply excited our wonder and veneration by these solemn gigantic truths, he will direct our attention to the minutest insect, and shew us the same power, wisdom, and skill, employed in combining and regulating the minutest atoms of matter to constitute a living and a sentient being. Our souls expand and glow under such contemplations. But here the man of science too generally leaves us. He either does not perceive, or is afraid to announce, how the truths of science bear a direct relation to the human mind and body, and prescribe certain courses of practical action or restraint. Every function of the body and every faculty of the mind has probably received from the Creator a sphere of action, as certainly defined and as wisely appointed as is the orbit of every planet. Each is liable to aberrations by the disturbing influence of the other powers; but limits are prescribed to its deviations, and counteracting forces are instituted to draw it back into its normal course. Sound expositions of these laws of mind and body constitute at once science, religion, and practical wisdom; yet how rarely are the teachings of science thus applied! Scientific discoveries are employed with promptitude and vigour to increase wealth, to improve the arts of destruction, and to augment our sources of recreation and amusement (all proper in due season and proportion); but they are too much shut out from the school and the pulpit as rules for human conduct, and themes for human devotion.

It is true that in interpreting the Book of Nature, as in construing the Bible, many difficulties will present themselves that are inexplicable in the present state of our knowledge. They perplex our moral sentiments, and confound our understandings. But we should not on this account reject or undervalue such truths as are clearly revealed in either record. The same Divine Intelligence which appointed the order of nature, constituted the human faculties; and as we

meet with no discordant design in those departments of the universe with which we are sufficiently acquainted, we may fairly believe that, in the scheme of creation itself, there is really no incongruity; and that the apparent instances of it which we perceive, will diminish in proportion to our advancing information. The aberrations of the planets from their orbits were at one time considered to be incompatible with the permanence of their revolutions, and the solar system was supposed to contain within itself the elements of its own destruction; but advancing science has demonstrated that these aberrations themselves are exemplifications and fulfilments of the laws which regulate the normal movements of the spheres. A profounder conviction, therefore, of harmony, in the design and revolutions of the heavenly bodies, has taken place of the doubts previously raised by imperfect knowledge. If men could be induced to regard the mundane creation in this disposition of mind, science would no longer be called "godless." If they would believe that when God instituted the external world, and the human mind and body, he adapted the one to the other with the same consistency of design and transcendency of wisdom which we discern in his arrangements of the planetary system, we should consider the Book of Nature as replete with instruction, in regard to the objects and employment of all our faculties; and we should call *that* instruction *religious*.

It is this unfortunate blindness to the essentially religious and moral character of science and its applications, and the fear of infidel consequences, that prompt the Church so doggedly to keep watch over the gates of the universities, and to refuse admission to every man as a teacher, who does not swear to his belief in all her doctrines, not only regarding man's conduct in this life, but in reference to eternity. Nevertheless, a law of faith and practice is written in the constitution of Nature which men may partially, but can never wholly, overlook. Being woven into the texture of their existence, it forces itself upon their attention, and exacts their obedience. In the ordinary affairs of life, Jew and Gentile, High Churchman and Low Churchman, Believer and Infidel, act upon the same principles of prudence and morals; they view any practical measure as good or bad according to its influence on their temporal happiness, irrespective of its relations to the different religious creeds which they severally embrace. They act on what is called the principles of "common sense;" the familiar name given to the practical judgments which we form from all that we know regarding nature, animate and inanimate, and the course of providence

by which this world is governed. This knowledge, traced to its principles, and systematized, is science ; and as mankind, both in their individual and social capacities, practise upon it, without reference to its relations to their religious opinions regarding eternity, it is to be regretted that certain religious sects oppose that systematic teaching of it which would render it much more efficacious for good, unless it be accompanied by their religious tenets which have no *natural* connection with it. They have succeeded in impressing the public mind with the belief that this science, on which, when unsystematized, they themselves and every one else acts, under the name of the “dictates of common sense,” has no solid basis except that which their religious tenets lend to it ; whereas it derives its whole efficiency for good from its foundations being laid in nature ; and it is in virtue of the power which it thence derives, that it controls and gives consistency to human action amidst the wildest conflicts of religious creeds.

The extent to which science is banished from the University of Oxford, (in which belief in the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England is insisted on as the only condition on which her halls can be opened to the student,) may be judged of from the following extract from Mr Lyell’s travels in America, lately published :—“After the year 1839,” says Mr Lyell, “we may consider three-fourths of the sciences still nominally taught at Oxford, to have been virtually exiled from the University. The class-rooms of the Professors were, some of them entirely, others nearly, deserted. Chemistry and Botany attracted, between the years 1840 and 1844, *from three to seven students* ; Geometry, Astronomy, and Experimental Philosophy, scarcely more ; Mineralogy and Geology, still taught by the same Professor who, fifteen years before, had attracted crowded audiences, some *ten to twelve* ; Political Economy still lower ; even Ancient History and Poetry scarcely commanded an audience ; and, strange to say, in a country with whose destinies those of India are so closely bound up, the first of living Asiatic scholars gave lectures to *one or two pupils* ; and these might have been absent, had not the cherished hope of a Boaden scholarship for Sanscrit induced them to attend.” It has been added, that the Geological Professor lectured, during his last course, to a class *of three*. What notions of the relative importance of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and of God’s physical, moral, and intellectual creation, can be entertained by men who place the former so high above the latter in reverence and honour ? It is obvious that the idea that the con-

stitution and laws of creation are addressed to the intellect of man as rules for his practical conduct, and stimulants of his devotional feelings, can scarcely have entered into their imaginations; and still less can they have formed a conception of the fact, that the Christian precepts can become practical in this world only in proportion to their harmony with the constitution of this, in Oxford, despised and neglected nature. Well might Sir Robert Inglis, their representative in Parliament, designate the study of science, apart from the Thirty-nine Articles, a "gigantic scheme of godless education;" for apparently the University considers Nature to be infidel, God's works to be "godless," and only the Thirty-nine Articles and certain kindred studies to constitute religious instruction!

I solicit the attention of the reader to these views, because the present practice is replete with grave injuries to society. The notion that morality and religion rest *exclusively* on the Bible as their basis, has produced something like a divorce, not only between religion and science, but between religion and literature, religion and legislation, religion and history, religion and the drama; and left religion in a kind of ideal desert, from which she issues only to disturb the march of mundane affairs. Generally speaking, a foreigner might peruse the works of many of our standard authors, study our statute-book, and read our plays, without discovering that we possessed any religion at all; except when he met with enactments and controversies, directly relating to the church and the dissenters. He could find no religious principle pervading, animating, blending with, and hallowing, these productions of the human mind. This could scarcely have happened if the constitution of nature and her relations, of which all these works are expositions or applications, had been taught to the nation as of divine origin and enactment. But it is easily accounted for, when we attend to the fact, that a few centuries ago, the knowledge of nature and its laws was even more imperfectly developed than it now is; that at that time classical literature, and theology, relating greatly to a future state of existence and resting for its evidence not on nature, but on acts of supernatural power setting aside its established laws, constituted the chief learning of Europe, and took possession of schools, universities, and the public mind; that this literature and theology have retained their sway over these institutions and society ever since, without cordially inquiring into the moral and religious claims and character of science; without modifying their own tenets into accordance with her increasing lights, without throwing over her the mantle of

their refinement and sanctity for her encouragement and protection ; but that, on the contrary, they have too frequently vilified, opposed, and paralyzed her by every means in their power.

The result could not be other than that which we see ; Science " Godless," although emanating from and teaching most eloquently and impressively the " wisdom of God ;" and Religion, by far too powerless in the secular affairs of the earth, because not acknowledging this world's constitution in its own basis, but substituting in its place doctrines and tenets, the grand object of which is to propitiate an interest in eternity. Religious persons, distressed by the " godless" character of our periodical and other literature, have established rival works, in which they endeavour to blend their doctrinal tenets with secular affairs ; but they do not succeed. In point of fact, they place doctrinal disquisitions in juxtaposition with secular knowledge, without uniting them ; and for the simple reason, that, as they teach them, they are incompatible. The religious world, especially the evangelical sects, must view nature in a light widely different from that in which they now regard it, before they shall be capable of blending religion and mundane interests harmoniously together.

Another evil attending the prevailing views on this subject, is the very inadequate appreciation entertained by the scientific and literary classes of the strength and importance of *the religious sentiments*. Debarred by the present state of theology from combining these emotions with their own studies and teaching, they overlook them altogether, and leave them to be wielded as active powers at discretion by the church and the religious sects, without troubling themselves about the uses which are made of them, except when they are directed against science and themselves. The consequence is, that theology reaps small benefit from science ; and that its stupendous powers are not unfrequently wielded as engines of personal or sectarian aggrandisement by men who retard, instead of advancing the temporal welfare of mankind. By their blind dereliction of the God of nature and his teaching, they occasion a vast waste of mind and physical resources, in so far as regards the reclamation of this world. The men of science see this, yet stand by, timid and inactive. They *feel* a want of social importance and consideration for themselves and their pursuits ; yet so dark are their perceptions of their own splendid position, that instead of going forth in the full confidence and panoply of natural truth, to proclaim the sway of the great God of na-

ture in every department of human affairs, to teach his wisdom, and to instruct men in his ways, they felicitate themselves on the visit of a prince to one of their scientific meetings, as a certain means of commanding that public homage which they are conscious that they have never yet secured by their own influence over the public mind !

They must seek for consideration through other means. The moral and religious sentiments are the grand levers of civilized society. He who commands them is irresistible ; and until science shall discover her own character and vocation,—that she is the messenger of God, speaking directly to these sentiments in strains calculated to thrill and rouse them to the most energetic action—she will never wield her proper influence over society for the promotion of their moral, religious, and physical welfare. Never, until she does so, will she take that place in social esteem and veneration which, as the fountain of Divine wisdom, she is entitled to possess. Let the scientific world consider the gigantic power of the religious sentiments in sustaining a vast priesthood, under every form of obloquy and depression, and amidst the most appalling poverty, in Ireland ; in rearing the fabrics of the dissenting churches in England and Scotland, and supporting a clergy to preach in them ; in maintaining numerous schools for education in their own tenets ; in rearing colleges and endowing professorships ; in distributing Bibles in every land and in every language ; and in sending missionaries to preach in every country of the globe. I honour the men who have made these glorious efforts, and who also, under the guidance of their common sense, have diffused a vast amount of secular knowledge through all ranks of society. Their aim has been pure and elevated, and their means holy, although their knowledge has been imperfect. They have accomplished these mighty ends by wielding the religious sentiments as their lever ; yet these emotions, when systematically dissevered from science, cannot have achieved their mightiest conquests over human folly, ignorance, and suffering. What influence, therefore, might not the men of science wield, and what benefits might they not confer on mankind, if they only knew their own position as the expounders and interpreters of the language which creation is ever addressing to these emotions ! If they saw that every word which they utter in correct interpretation of nature's constitution and course of action carries the efficacy of Divine truth along with it for the advancement of human happiness, how poor would appear the condescending notice of a prince as a means of recommending them to public consideration !

But have they not done injustice to the prince? Did he not come among them merely to pay his respectful homage to the truths of science, and without an idea of gracing science by his presence, or of elevating its professors to a more dignified position in the public estimation by his courtesies? Rather let us believe that Prince Albert came to the British Association as the enlightened admirer of the Creator's wisdom revealed in scientific truth, and esteemed himself honoured by being admitted into the temple of Nature's God, and into the society of the interpreters of His will.

It may be objected that should men of science endeavour to represent nature as the workmanship of God, and to enlist the moral and religious sentiments (Benevolence and Conscientiousness, Wonder, Hope, and Veneration), by giving a living soul and a practical efficacy to their teaching, they might in one year be under the necessity of recalling as human error, views and principles which in the previous season they had taught as Divine truths, and that this would desecrate religion and degrade science. I reply, that penetrating, well-informed, and conscientious men, in interpreting the Book of Nature, would advance as Divine truths only such facts and principles as appeared to them to be fully ascertained; and that, in interpreting the Scriptures, no other or better security against erroneous and presumptuous teaching can be found. When we contrast the conflicting views of Scriptural doctrines which are every day emanating from the press and the pulpit, it is certain that many professors of Christianity are teaching as Divine truths, views which are merely the emanations of their own misguided judgments. But this is an evil inseparable from humanity. In the case of teaching science as Divine truth, there would be the advantage that no sect or college could claim a vested right or prescriptive privilege of interpretation, and that religious teaching would advance *pari passu* with scientific research and discovery. Besides, errors would in time be detected and exposed by their consequences. Difficulties may long embarrass us in natural as well as in revealed religion; but as a general principle it may be stated, that in natural religion every doctrine that is sound leads directly or indirectly to beneficial temporal results, and every error to evil consequences. There is a test therefore in this world, by which to try our interpretations of the Divine will in natural affairs; and this is a great safeguard against continuing in error. In religious teaching concerning the life to come, no such test exists. When one sect denounces the doctrines of another as "soul-destroying errors," we cannot call in ex-

perience to settle their merits until it be too late. From the other world there is no return ; and instead, therefore, of God's sacred name and authority being more liable to be abused in teaching natural than revealed religion, the case is the reverse. In inculcating the latter, human presumption, ignorance, and folly, have a wider range of action than in teaching the former. The Roman Catholics and Protestants respectively reject each other's version of the Bible as spurious ; but Nature speaks one language to all !

Another reason why these views may merit some consideration is, that the Theology which is based exclusively on scripture and rejects the alliance of nature, is actually falling before the progress of science. I have travelled in the United States of North America, in Germany, and Italy, and held converse with men of cultivated minds in these countries, as well as in the three divisions of the United Kingdom, and I venture to say that the popular theology, however vigorous, powerful, and triumphant it may appear externally, is in the course of its decline and fall, as no longer suited to an enlightened age. In Germany, the country in which the Reformation originated and from which it spread, and which has since that epoch cultivated Theology in all its principles and aspects with the deepest research and most unwearied assiduity,—evangelical religion, as it is understood in this country, has already fallen, and is no longer the faith of the majority of the people. This has taken place, not through reckless profanity, as in the case of the French Revolution, but in consequence of long-continued investigation and discussion. This fact is known to, and its significance is appreciated by, large numbers of influential men in the higher, middle, and lower ranks of British society. The masters of the prevalent Theology probably know or suspect this to be the case, but do not correctly estimate the nature and magnitude of the forces which oppose them. They know that, far from receiving cordial support and encouragement from statesmen, men of the world, the press, and men of science, they often meet with cold indifference, plausible apologies, or direct opposition. Will they not look into the cause of this untoward state of things ? Is it not, that science and reason have produced in the minds of these classes, a silent conviction that the prevalent Theology is not a practical system in this world's affairs ? It is something which embarrasses and obstructs their movements, even towards secular good. It is a machinery that is out of order, and cannot be made to work to the advantage of all. Nay, the clergy of the various sects are themselves men ; *their* faculties too have been adapted to

nature's laws and constitution; and when light is abroad, they cannot remain in darkness. The press is daily giving indications that a change is proceeding even in their views; and it is probable that, in a few years hence, only a bold and good spirit will be wanting to shake the theological fabric in this country to the ground, as has already been the case in Germany,—and then it will become the duty of enlightened men to reconcile the religion and morality of nature with that of Scripture, to the infinite advantage of both and of the people. I cordially subscribe to the postulate, that “the Gates of Hell,” or error, will never prevail against the Church; but the “Gates of Heaven,” or higher and purer, more practical, and more universal views of Divine truth, will prevail against all sects and churches which set themselves in opposition to the mighty march of man towards the fulfilment of his moral and social destinies.

An instructive example of the practical results of teaching religious doctrines irrespective of natural science and its applications, is afforded by Ireland; and I shall conclude these remarks by exhibiting a brief outline of the history of her educational efforts and their effects.

The Church of England long wielded the legislative powers of Ireland through the medium of the Irish Parliament, which was composed of Protestants alone, Roman Catholics being rigidly excluded. These legislators apparently embraced literally, and practically acted upon, the Church's views of the nature of man, and held that there could be no beneficial education except that which was based upon religious truth,—and, moreover, that their own Church was the sole depository of that truth. They regarded the Roman Catholic faith as fundamentally erroneous, and therefore incapable of affording a sound basis for secular instruction. Under these convictions, the Government of Ireland, “for nearly the whole of the last century, laboured to promote Protestant education, and tolerated no other. Large grants of public money were voted for having children educated in the Protestant faith, while it was made a transportable offence in a Roman Catholic, (and if the party returned, high treason), to act as a schoolmaster, or assistant to a schoolmaster, or even as a tutor in a private family.* The acts passed for this purpose continued in force from 1709 to 1782. They were then repealed, but Parliament continued to vote money for the support only of schools conducted on principles which were regarded by the great body of the Roman Catholics

* See 8th Anne, c. 3, and 9th William III., c. 1.

as exclusively Protestant, until the present system (the Irish National School System) was established in 1832.”*

These words are quoted from the Sixth Report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, § 10, p. 135, and are deeply instructive. It was a fundamental error in the Protestant Irish Parliament to entertain the view of human nature which lies at the bottom of these enactments. Man does not possess a single power which is essentially and of “its own nature inclined to evil,” as the Church teaches us. On the contrary, there is a legitimate sphere of action for every function of the body and every faculty of the mind; and it is only the abuses of these, through ignorance and unfavourable influences, that constitute error and crime, and lead to misery. There was in man, therefore, from the first, and there is now in him, a capacity for education, by the development and right direction of his natural gifts; and both his own constitution and that of the external world are arranged with reference to that development, to render him prosperous and happy in proportion as he pursues it in a right direction, or miserable if he neglects it, or pursues it in a wrong way. Apparently the Protestant Government of Ireland, being disbelievers in these institutions of Divine Providence, and sincerely convinced that the Protestant religious faith afforded the only basis for a sound education, placed the before-cited enactments on the statute-book; and the consequences are now before us. The diffusion of the Roman Catholic faith in Ireland has not been checked; because sectarian education being in its own nature separable from secular, the priests of that religion continued to instruct their flocks in their own doctrinal tenets, and have reared nearly seven millions of human beings devoted to them in soul and body, and ready to sacrifice every thing that is dear to humanity, including life itself, in their defence. But these statutes effectually prevented the instruction of the Irish people in the great laws of providence on which the acquisition of wealth and temporal prosperity depends; the cultivation of their intellectual powers; and the development of their moral sentiments, on which hang the security of person and property, public tranquillity, and many of the enjoyments and amenities of private life. All this, I say, was deliberately and systematically prevented by Parliament; and we now see a sincerely devotional people, (for no candid observer can doubt that the Irish Roman Catholic peasantry are sincerely and deeply devotional), deplorably deficient in

* See Letter from Lord Stanley to the Duke of Leinster, on the original formation of the National Board; dated London, October 1831.

mental energy and industry, sunk in the lowest depths of helpless poverty, and, under the sufferings engendered by want, turbulent, and murderous, false in covenants, untrue as witnesses, and wild and impulsive in revengeful action. Truly, when viewed in this light, they do seem to realize the orthodox description of human nature; but this is only the dark side of their character. In more favourable circumstances they are kindly, cheerful, affectionate, and respectful to superiors; shewing that they still possess the higher feelings of our nature: But how far may not their fearful aberrations and deficiencies have been aggravated by the imperfections of their training and education? Their qualities as a race may present obstacles to their improvement; but this affords no apology for having denied them, for so many generations, the means of secular education, except at the price of their religious faith. By prohibiting the use of the natural means for drawing forth the human powers in the sphere of virtue, the law has allowed them to luxuriate in that of vice; and in the present condition of Ireland, we read the consequences attached by the Author of nature to the neglect and infringement of his laws. We see the *beau-ideal* of the results of dogmatic teaching, when secular instruction is dissevered from it. In England and Scotland, a higher natural endowment of mind in the people, and more favourable circumstances, have led to the infusion of a certain amount of secular instruction into the schools for religious teaching; but among the Irish peasantry, for many generations, the priest alone was the instructor. Secular knowledge cultivates habits of correct observation of things which exist, of just appreciation of the effects of their qualities and modes of action, and of forethought and consideration regarding the adaptation of our own conduct to their influences. *Purely* doctrinal teaching, that is, the cultivation of Wonder, Hope, and Veneration, as the leading emotions, fills the mind with fearful or sublime contemplations and aspirations, having their issues chiefly in eternity; and as these doctrines appeal to faith more than to reason, they do not cultivate habits of exact observation and reflection on this world's laws and constitution. They do not necessarily direct the attention of the mind to the proper arrangement and administration of secular affairs in conformity with the laws by which they are governed; but divert it away from them, and concentrate it beyond them in regions of eternal misery, or of glory and bliss. Ireland has been taught according to these principles, and her people are embued with them; yet, because this world is an existing reality, instituted and

governed by God according to laws adapted by Him to its present condition, and because man has been fashioned by Him in relation to it, and required by his constitution to act in intelligent accordance with its qualities and agencies, and because much of this department of Divine teaching has been neglected in the education of the people of Ireland,—they present the spectacle of poverty and ignorance, and of crime and misery, which now appals the world. Again, therefore, I venture to repeat, that *an important use of the religious sentiments is to lead men to study, venerate, and obey, God's secular institutions*; and after they have done their duty in this department, they may be legitimately employed in expatiating in the fields of eternity.

In 1832, as already mentioned, the British Government, moved, not by religious teachers of any sect, but by its own secular perceptions, instituted the existing Commission for aiding in a national education of Ireland on different principles. Lord Stanley, then Secretary for Ireland, in his letter to the Duke of Leinster, before referred to, says:—"The commissioners, in 1812, recommended the appointment of a Board to superintend a system of education, from which should be banished even the suspicion of proselytism, and which, admitting children of all religious persuasions, should not interfere with the religious tenets of any. The Government of the day imagined that they had found a superintending body, acting under a system such as was recommended, and entrusted the distribution of the national Grants to the care of the Kildare Street Society. His Majesty's present Government are of opinion, that no private society, deriving a part, however small, of their annual income from private sources, and only made the channel of the munificence of the Legislature, without being subject to any direct responsibility, could adequately and satisfactorily accomplish the end proposed." He proceeds to mention, that this Society, with the purest motives, enforced "the reading of the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment, in all their schools;" and that their efforts to teach the Roman Catholic population proved abortive, because this Church denies, "even to adults, the right of unaided private interpretation of the sacred volume with respect to articles of religious belief." The Roman Catholic clergy "exerted themselves with energy and success" against the system. "The Commissioners of Education, in 1824-5, sensible of the defects of the system, recommended the appointment of two teachers in every school, one Protestant and the other Roman Catholic, to superintend separately the religious education of the children;" "but it

was soon found that these schemes were impracticable," and in 1828, a Committee of the House of Commons "recommended a system to be adopted, which should afford, if possible, a combined literary, and a separate religious education, and should be capable of being so far adapted to the views of the religious persuasions which prevail in Ireland, as to render it, in truth, a system of national education for the poorer classes of the community."

Accordingly, commissioners were appointed, "composed of men of high personal character, including individuals of exalted station in the Church," and "of persons professing different religious opinions;" and Parliament placed funds at their disposal, to execute this beneficent object. The commissioners proceeded to their task in a pure, upright, and enlightened spirit; and their first regulation is, that "the ordinary school business, during which all the children, of whatever denomination they be, are required to attend, and which is expected to embrace a competent number of hours in each day, *is to consist exclusively of instruction in those branches of knowledge which belong to literary and moral education.* Such extracts from the Scriptures *as are prepared under the sanction of the Board* may be used, and are earnestly recommended by the Board to be used during those hours allotted to this ordinary school business." The second regulation is, that "one day in each week (independently of Sunday) is to be set apart for religious instruction of the children; on which day, such pastors or other persons as are approved of by the parents or guardians of the children, shall have access to them for that purpose, whether these pastors have signed the original application (placing the school under the Commissioners) or not." There are still other liberal and judicious regulations for increasing the facilities for separate religious instruction which I need not quote.

Tried by the principles which I have now laid down, these proceedings were essentially sound. That is to say, there is a vast field of knowledge, physical, moral, religious, and intellectual, relating to this world and its administration, which is independent of all notions concerning the best means of securing happiness in a future state, and which Jew, Christian, and Pagan, must equally study, and on which they must equally practise, before they can secure to themselves prosperity on earth; and as the functions of Government are limited to the present world, this field is the only one over which it can legitimately exercise any control. These principles were essentially recognised and acted on by the Legislature, when it appointed the Irish Board of Education.

They did not, indeed, profess to take up this position ; but they approached as near to it as circumstances would permit. The nation consisted of the sects A, B, C, and D, each of which was deeply impressed with the importance of religious instruction, and also of secular education to the young ; but A held certain opinions on points of faith which B, C, and D rejected ; B held some opinions, the soundness of which A, C, and D disputed ; and so with C and D, each of which had its peculiar views,—belief in which it made an indispensable condition of admission to its schools. The consequence of these differences was, that educational effort was paralysed, and schools either did not exist, or were comparatively empty. The British Parliament solved the difficulty, by leaving all sects and individuals to manage their own schools, and teach their own children in secular and religious knowledge, in their own way ; but it proffered a helping hand, in the form of pecuniary aid, to such of them as were willing to open and conduct schools on the principles, secular and religious, in which *all were agreed*. This agreement was secured by placing the schools under commissioners chosen from different sects, each of whom had a veto on teaching any doctrine of which he did not approve. These commissioners were able, liberal, and enlightened men, and speedily discovered a vast field of solid information, both secular and religious, respecting the truth and utility of which they were unanimous ; and they followed out the instructions of Parliament by teaching this to the people. Their books embrace the elements of literature, science, morals, and religion, the latter generally expressed in Scripture language, but they contain few sectarian doctrines.*

What reception did this wise measure meet with from the Church of England and many other religious sects ? It was decried as infidel and godless, misrepresented, abused, and opposed, in the most unscrupulous and unmeasured terms. In the name of the religion of truth, the grossest misrepresentation was resorted to, in order to excite the public indignation against it. But the excellent sense, truly Christian spirit, and calm temper of the Commissioners, with the Archbishop of Dublin and the Roman Catholic Bishop Dr Murray, at their head, meekly sustained and triumphed over every hostile attack ; they persevered in the wise and virtuous measures prescribed by Parliament, and their success has been correspondingly great. The following Table, extracted from their last Report, speaks for itself:—

* Among their books is an excellent little work on the “Evidences” of Christianity, which has obtained the approbation of all the commissioners.

Table shewing the Progressive Increase in the NATIONAL SCHOOLS, and the NUMBER OF CHILDREN in attendance upon them, from the date of the First Report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, to the 31st December 1845.

No. and Date of Report.	No. of Schools in Operation.	No. of Children on the Rolls.
No. 1, Dec. 31, 1833,	789	107,042
... 2, March 31, 1835,	1106	145,521
... 3, ,, 1836,	1181	153,707
... 4, ,, 1837,	1300	166,929
... 5, ,, 1838,	1384	169,548
... 6, Dec. 31, 1839,	1581	192,971
... 7, ,, 1840,	1978	232,560
... 8, ,, 1841,	2337	281,849
... 9, ,, 1842,	2721	319,792
... 10, ,, 1843,	2912	355,320
... 11, ,, 1844,	3153	395,550
... 12, ,, 1845,	3426	432,844

This is a triumphant return, and similar principles have obtained similar success in the United States of North America. Although that country is characterised by the greatest variety of zealous religious sects, yet it has established *state* schools, supported by public taxation, and superintended by state-appointed Boards of Education selected from all sects; in which the elements of secular knowledge and of *universal morality and religion* are taught, but from which all sectarian teaching is excluded, this being furnished by the parents and pastors of the children at separate hours; and *these schools, too, have succeeded*. There also, they have been opposed by sectarian men, and reviled as "infidel and godless;" but nevertheless they have been successful, and are conferring blessings on the rising generation. Here, then, we have three instructive lessons.

Let us, then, briefly re-survey the history of education in the sister kingdom. The Irish Government first left the Roman Catholic population of that country for nearly a century to the influence of religious teaching alone, prohibiting, under the severest penalties, secular instruction from being given to them by the only class of persons from whom they would receive it. Secondly, it tried to connect secular instruction with reading of the Protestant version of the Scriptures, as an indispensable condition; and its efforts on these two principles egregiously failed. Thirdly, The British and American Legislatures have established schools,

supported and controlled by the State, for communicating secular instruction exclusive of all peculiarities of religious faith; and, in spite of violent and powerful opposition, they have been successful. According to my reading of the order of creation, beneficial results are at once the evidence and the reward of the soundness of the principles by which they are reached.

In the preceding pages, I have endeavoured to shew that Government *has a right* even to *compel* its subjects to receive such secular instruction as is necessary to qualify them for the discharge of their social duties; but I am satisfied that no compulsion would be necessary, and I do not advocate it, till all means of moral persuasion and voluntary influence have been tried, and failed. In the United States and in Ireland, there is no compulsion; and entertaining, as I do, the fullest confidence in the might and efficacy of moral means, when honestly and judiciously applied, I am no advocate for the use of physical force to accomplish a moral end. But as the *right and the duty* of the State at all to interfere in education have been contested by men whose opinions are entitled to the greatest respect, I have considered it proper to grapple with the objection, and sift it to the bottom, to the best of my ability.

I have intentionally avoided details, and, consequently, although I may thereby have left my views on many points imperfectly unfolded, still it is hoped that enough has been said to start the questions,—Whether there be, or be not, in the nature of man, and in that of the external world, and in the relations subsisting between them, a fund of instruction emanating from God, enforced by his secular authority, and addressed by Him to the human faculties, calculated to lead us to secular happiness and prosperity, irrespective of every opinion concerning the best means of securing happiness in a future state?—Whether all scriptural precepts, relating to this world and its affairs, do not harmonize with, sanction, and support the rules for human conduct, deducible from the constitution and order of Nature?—And, Whether it be not possible to blend the instruction emanating from these two sources in a system of national education? If the answer be in the affirmative, then national education will be practicable by omitting merely the peculiarities of religious belief;—peculiarities which, after all, relate almost entirely to forms of Church government, and the means of securing happiness in a future life: If not,—national education is now, and will continue to be, impracticable until all our fellow-subjects are agreed in their religious views, both regarding this world

and the next. If the lay members of the community, who concur essentially in the affirmative, will take courage and honestly avow their opinions, they will find that their number is legion, and their power irresistible; and many of the clergy, of all sects, will in their hearts rejoice in the prospect of having the glorious fields of God's natural creation opened up to their people as sources of practical instruction, and of elevating and purifying emotion. All this seems to be attainable under such a scheme of national education as is already in operation in Ireland, and with this every wellwisher of the country may be satisfied.

Note relative to the Jewish Dispensation, noticed on p. 14.

The supernatural portion of the Jewish Dispensation related chiefly to the Nation in its national capacity, and in the opinion of some Christian sects it is continued to the present day. These sects regard the existence of the Jews as a distinct people, unamalgamated with the races among whom they are dispersed, as a standing miracle. But we do not perceive the personal conduct of the individual Jewish men and women whom we know, to be now regulated by supernatural acts of divine administration; and is there reason to believe that even before the dispersion, a miracle was resorted to, in order to reward or punish each private Jew who obeyed or transgressed the commandments? If a future state was not clearly revealed to the Jews, and if their personal conduct was not formerly, and is not now, regularly rewarded or punished by supernatural acts in this life, it seems to follow that, in their individual capacities (when not reached by the statute law,) they were, and are, left under the ordinary administration of the laws of nature; and if so, on what principle can education in these laws be called "godless?"

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