EDUCATION.

TWO LECTURES

BY

THOMAS BINNEY

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EDUCATION.

BY

THOMAS BINNEY.

"A man looketh on his little one as a being of better hope;
In himself ambition is dead, but it hath a resurrection in his son;
That vein is yet untried—and who can tell if it be not golden?"

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TO

THOMAS PIPER, ESQUIRE,

TREASURER OF
THE PROTESTANT DISSENTERS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL, MILL HILL;
TO

THOMAS PRIESTLEY, ESQUIRE,

THE HEAD MASTER;

THE REVEREND SAMUEL S. ENGLAND,

CHAPLAIN;
AND

THE REVEREND A. WELLS,

SECRETARY,
THE FOLLOWING PAGES
ARE INSCRIBED,
AS A TOKEN OF PERSONAL RESPECT, AND AN EXPRESSION OF DEEP
INTEREST IN THE SCHOOL,
BY THEIR FRIEND AND SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE first of the following addresses was delivered at Mill Hill, on the public day in the year 1842;—the second, on the 15th of last month, at the introduction to the chaplaincy of the school, of the Rev. Samuel S. England. The two together, it is thought, have about them a sort of completeness, and the author is willing to hope that those who think so, may not be disappointed in the interest with which, it is supposed, some will peruse them. Though themselves of a very temporary character, they touch on topics of permanent importance, of which readers can hardly be reminded, however imperfectly, without benefit: while the state of public feeling, at this moment, with respect to educational questions, may possibly gain for them a brief audience beyond the limits of the school to which they refer.

Though delivered nearly five years ago, the first address can hardly be said to have been, as yet, *published.* The greater part of it, indeed, appeared in two numbers (some months apart) of a Periodical of limited circulation, and it was printed for private distribution among the boys at the time in the school. In allowing the piece to be now published (properly speaking), the author feels it right to say, that, as nothing beyond one oral delivery was contemplated in the first writing of the address, he is conscious that he adopted a

thought or image, which he met with in his reading at the time, in a manner rather more direct than he would have done,

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except for the passing exercise of a day. They were retained in the more careful transcription after delivery, but he is not quite certain now whose they are, hardly where they are. His impression, however, is, that the image of the bird in page 20 is one, and he greatly fears that the picture of the man between truth and falsehood, page 30, *adapted* by him to the illustration of the spirit of Dissent, is another. Except these, he does not think that there is much in the piece, but what belongs to that common stock of thought which is public property, and which, as raw material, every writer works up in his own way. Figures like the foregoing, however, have an originality, which gives to their authors a proprietorship in them, like the act of taking a trout, or raising a tree.

The author not only thinks that his theology is sound and scriptural (which every man must think of his own), but he also thinks that it is in harmony with the Evangelical system as held by the orthodox sects; lest, however, any of his sentiments or expressions should be deemed inaccurate, he begs to say, that *he* only, and not the committee, or the school, is answerable for them. There is hardly more than one passage, perhaps, at all likely to startle any reader, and even that might easily have been rendered harmless by an ex-planatory clause, but the author's conviction about the subject referred to is such, that he rather prefers leaving his language as he finds it, for the sake of the jog or jar it may, in some, occasion to thought, which, in all of us, is so apt to run in ruts which habit has made as smooth as a "rail."

The letter in the Appendix was written three days before the delivery of the second address, and published in the *Morning Chronicle* two days after it. It can scarcely be necessary to remind any one, that the views contained in it, and in the remarks that succeed, are exclusively the author's, and involve none but himself.

Bladen Lodge, Walworth,
May 3rd, 1847.

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ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT THE

GRAMMAR SCHOOL, MILL HILL,

On the Public Day, June 22nd, 1842.

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I.

ALTHOUGH no systematic provision has been made by the British Government for the universal education of the people, there is, perhaps, no country in which so large an amount of property has been devoted to this object by individual beneficence. The estates left to the English public for educational purposes, would, it is believed, if properly managed, yield an annual revenue of £400,000. The amount actually realized falls far short of this; and its utility is further impaired by the conditions and restrictions under which it is applied.* The great public schools are confined to the children of the higher classes; many of the grammar-schools *are* grammar-schools, and nothing else; they remain what they were on the day of their endowment, though a new world has risen around them, with new pursuits and multiplied demands. Besides this, all these public or local schools are associated and identified with a certain system of religious instruction, and certain established religious institutions, to which many of the people, whether right or wrong, conscientiously object. It might also be added, that these same persons think, that in most of these national seminaries, whatever may be the profession, there is, in fact, but little religious instruction at all; and that great

* See "Encyclopaedia Britannica" p. 529, vol. 21, last edition.

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moral dangers infest them, from the sort of society to which, in some of them, residence would lead.

On these accounts, the existence of an institution like this—The Protestant Dissenters' Grammar School—must appear, to any who consider the matter, neither surprising nor superfluous. Its aim is, to provide for the sons of Dissenters the higher forms of a liberal education, while the course of instruction, including the continental languages, the elements of science, and whatever is necessary for commercial purposes, is adapted to meet the wants of modern society, and to prepare and capacitate for those practical pursuits to which the after-life of the great majority of the pupils must be given. Connected with this, an essential and prominent part of the design is, to watch over and conduct the religious education of the boys with especial care; *so* to inculcate the truths which the Scriptures reveal, and so to cultivate the habits which Christianity requires, as to make this part of the discipline a serious reality, and not merely a profession and a name.

To the friends and supporters of this institution, I have been requested by the committee, to address a few observations this day. In proceeding to discharge the duty I have undertaken, I feel myself encompassed by many difficulties. I am partly perplexed by the multitude of topics on which I might touch. To advert to all, or even to most of them, is next to impossible—yet the task of selection is not easy. Partly, also, I feel the necessarily mixed character of the audience—mixed as to sex, age, taste, and attainment. I shall be as unable to interest and gratify all classes, as to introduce and dilate upon all topics. I will do, however, the best I can. I will not detain you by professions of incompetency,—*that,* I fear, will soon be discovered without my declaring it; nor will I waste time and words by requesting the exercise of your candour and indulgence, for, without

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my request, I am sure I shall have it. I may, perhaps, have erred, in suffering myself to be placed where I now stand; but, if I have, I can only say, that the error originated in a feeling of high personal respect for the

Treasurer, the Secretary, and the members of the Committee of this institution—in deep interest for the success and prosperity of the institution itself—and in a sincere desire to add, if possible, something, however small, to your instruction and pleasure this day. An error so originating, I cannot but think, will not be visited very severely.

II.

I am strongly of opinion, that great advantages may be secured by a course of education in a public school, if properly constituted and vigorously controlled. Whatever may be the benefits of home-education, it is, as a practical thing, with the majority of persons, out of the question. To be liberal and efficient, it requires, not only that the parents should be rich, but, what is much rarer, that they should have enjoyed a thorough education themselves—should have improved this—should be interested in the intellectual training of children, and should thus be capable both of judging of the fitness and seeing to the fidelity of those whom they employ, and of co-operating with them in the conversation and intercourse of domestic life. There may be great evils in great schools; vicious and corrupting boys may be there; there, the timid may be disheartened, and the weak oppressed. But it is also true, that vice and immorality may be learnt anywhere; the innocence of those who are shielded by private and parental vigilance, is sometimes, alas! only apparent, and, sometimes, it springs so much more from the absence of temptation than the love of virtue, that they fall in their first onset with life. Preparation for the world—the real, rough, levelling world,

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into which boys must pass when they become men, cannot certainly be acquired at home so well as where great numbers are thrown together, and the condition and duties of society anticipated. A large school is a little world; and the education that may be got by the influence and collision of its members with each other,

may be as important as any lesson that masters can teach. To many a boy, contact, comparison, and contest with his fellows, in the class and in the play-ground—in serious effort and social intercourse, is of the highest advantage. It discovers to some their secret resources, teaches them a proper confidence in themselves, and excites to achievements which determine and elevate the character for life. In some, it corrects vanity and conceit—revealing to them what others are and can do, of which they had no conception before. Boyish friendships may test all that is true, and call forth all that is heroic, in human nature, by requiring, at times, boldness, generosity, self-sacrifice. Dangers there must be; for where many meet some will be bad. A boy, however, may resist temptation, as well as yield to it; he may prevail and conquer, as well as be vanquished. There always will be around him the virtuous to encourage, as well as the infirm or vicious to betray—the brave and honourable, the manly and industrious, as well as the idle. If properly prepared, by good moral training, before he goes, the probability is that he will actually be improved by the trial of his principles; while, if so, it is positively certain that he will be much better fitted for life, than if he had never been tried at all.

In all public schools, much, doubtless, depends on the vigilance and efficiency of the general discipline; on the care that is taken to prevent evils, to discover and correct them if they arise, and to expel the perpetrators if incurable. A school like this, providing for the parental superintendence of the pupils by a minister of reli-

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gion, in conjunction with the control and influence of the masters, would seem to be constituted in a manner to inspire the confidence of the public. That confidence, I believe, it at once possesses and deserves. Here, the advantages may be secured of a public education, without the hazards which sometimes surround it. In comparison with home, too, another feature of the institution presents itself. Most of the middle classes live

in towns—many of them in confined and crowded situations;—how important for children, instead of residing in such localities, shut out from the pure air and the verdant earth, to be settled here in the very midst of all that is invigorating and beautiful—where there is so much, in the influence and aspect of external nature, to strengthen the frame and purify the heart!

III.

In a grammar-school, whatever else may be included in the course of instruction, Latin and Greek necessarily form an essential part. Very different degrees of importance are attached by different persons to classical studies. Enthusiasts in science constantly harp upon the knowledge of *things,* and of course disparage what they describe as the study of mere words. Others speak, or appear to speak, as if the knowledge of the dead languages, an accurate acquaintance with all the niceties of construction and quantity, was *itself* the thing for which man was made! In cases of extreme opposite opinions, experience will teach us to suspect both. In a world like this, words are often as important as things. Words, in fact, *are* things—especially to youth. Language, too, has its fixed principles and laws as really as any of the sciences, and the study of it may be as useful, as a means of discipline, as an instrument for the development of the mental powers,

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as anything whatever that could be used for the purpose. From the constitution of nature, the learning of a language is made a principal part of the first business of all her pupils, and it deserves to be considered, whether it be not a manifest falling in with *her* plans of education—her theory and practice—to make language the principal study of our early years. We have reason to think we are in the right track, when we seek to lead the mind to the speculative apprehension of the rules and laws of that very thing which it must of necessity acquire and use. The appropriateness, of the

employment promises well for its healthy and beneficial influence on the faculties.

This might be admitted as a just principle, and yet it might be argued that the general rule following from it would be, for each individual to attend to the grammar of his own tongue. We are far from saying that this should not be done, or that it ever can be neglected without injury or without blame; this, however, we do say, that, let a man's vernacular language be what it may—however original, copious, or complicated—there is something for him beyond its reach in the earnest study of another tongue—a superior power to awaken attention, to excite energy, and to develop the general capacities that are in him; and still farther, that this power is felt in the study of Latin and Greek, to a degree which it is very difficult, I think, to exaggerate.

It is not possible, on an occasion like this, to illustrate, in any adequate manner, the power of the study of the learned languages, as an instrument of mental development. The memory is, of course, exercised and improved; a faculty this, of far more importance than many imagine, and far more in their own power, as to its condition and qualities, than their sloth and indolence will suffer them to admit. The *sort* of recollection and possession of the past, which is implied in the

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exercise of the human memory, is something, we imagine, quite different from what appears like it in the lower animals, and, with the power of speech, not only distinguishes man as a rational intelligence, but makes him what he is in acquisition and attainments, and constitutes him a being to whose improvement in knowledge it is difficult to conceive that any limits can be put. *With* memory, it is possible that an individual may not be great, but it is not possible to be distinguished without it; and those studies cannot but be important, whose very first effect is, not only to develop and strengthen this faculty, but to make it quick, nimble, and elastic.

Mental differences between man and man spring often from a difference in the state and properties of the memory; but in a still stronger manner do these differences originate, in the power, or the want of it, of fixing the attention—holding it for a long time to one object—and pursuing a train of prolonged thought, until the mind is in possession of distinct ideas, accurately defined, classed, and discriminated. This habit—a habit of the first importance, is greatly promoted by the process of acquiring the learned languages. The pupil cannot advance a step without the most fixed and vigilant attention—so much depends on minute accuracy. A little mistake in observing the syllables of a word, or even sometimes the quantity of a syllable, will change times, modes, and persons, turn the sublime into the ridiculous, make the plain obscure, and the beautiful absurd. The primary and secondary import of words have to be distinguished—their radical force and accidental applications. Synonymes are to be investigated—the circumstances distinctly and clearly marked in which they weigh differently and alike. The shades and colours, if I may so speak, of terms and expressions, are diversified and delicate; they may be greatly affected

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by the peculiarities of a writer—his education or temperament—his country or office—his special purpose or general habits. All these things must be examined and allowed for. As the pupil advances, matters of this sort multiply upon him; he finds a constant and increasing necessity for elaborate attention to catch the exact spirit of a passage, or for continued and careful research to throw light on some obscure allusion; while, all along, the *everlastingly exacted grammatical analysis* compels him to think—to sift and separate—to reason and judge—to distinguish the different, and recognise the identical.

Without farther pursuing these illustrations, we think it must be manifest, that the study which fosters and matures habits like these cannot but be important,

even if regarded exclusively in the light of an instrument for producing them. We hold, indeed, that the classical pupil, drilled and disciplined in this manner, may reap, through life, advantages from his labour and drudgery as a boy, even though, when a man, he should actually forget every word he had ever learned. His Latin and Greek may evaporate from his brain, as water from the body after a bath; but, from *having* learnt what he has forgotten, his mind may possess quickness and strength—just as a swimmer, after his immersion, is the subject of great physical capacity as the result of the past invigorating exercise.

Two things follow from the view we have thus taken of the study of language as a mere instrument of mental development, the benefits and advantages of it being limited to what is done *in* the youth, altogether apart from what is retained and remembered by him. The *first* is, that, on this ground, it is easy to see that the study is adapted to all boys, whatever may be their ultimate destination in life. The labour and toil of grammar-learning are their own reward. Every effort

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of every day gains or gives its blessings at once. The whole mind grows and strengthens under the discipline, and acquires from the process a general power which fits it for anything it may have to undertake. We gay nothing at present about either the kind or the quantity of knowledge that the classics contain; admit them even to be intrinsically worthless, still, every one may be benefited by learning the languages; for the act of doing so will impart power to enter with ease upon other studies, and confer a capacity of turning them to the best and most advantageous use. The *second* thing is, that this view serves to explain why it may not be thought desirable to make the acquisition of the learned tongues so perfectly easy. Even if it were possible to give to boys this knowledge by some short and royal road, it would yet be a question whether it should be done. The ultimate possession of a power to read the

classic authors is not everything. With great numbers, in fact, of those who learn, perhaps it must be confessed, that this power is not permanently retained and used; yet they have benefited—benefited by the very act and process of learning. This being the case, to smooth too much the labour of acquisition—to prepare a well-rolled gravel-walk—or a nice piece of turf—or stuffed and cushioned baby-carriages—that the pupils may advance without toil through the prosecution of their studies, like so many elegant little gentlemen, whose delicate frames must not be strained by rough work—*this* would be to sacrifice one class of the advantages which the studies include, by destroying the means through which they are conferred. God is constantly teaching us that nothing valuable is ever obtained without labour; and that no labour can be honestly expended without our getting its value in return. *He* is not careful to make everything easy to man. The Bible itself is no light book; human duty no holiday engagement. The grammar

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of deep personal religion, and the grammar of real practical virtue, are not to be learnt by any facile *Hamiltonian* methods. By allowing the pupil to force his way through trials and difficulties, we but follow the example of the Great Teacher and Tutor of mankind, who often sets us anything but easy and pleasant tasks, because he would promote our general improvement, not merely by the substance of his lessons, but by the very act and mode of acquiring them. The following extracts from the early minutes of the proceedings of the founders of this institution—which I did not discover till after the preceding remarks were written—will show how we are sustained by them in what has been said. In one place they appoint " that the *principal* literary pursuit of the pupils shall be the Latin and Greek languages, to be taught in the most accurate method of initiation, and the most strict and efficient plan of securing solid proficiency." And in another place it is thus DECREED—"*No translation of any Greek or Latin author, nor any*

editions of the classics furnished with interpretations, parsing indices, or any similar assistances, shall EVER BE PERMITTED IN THE SCHOOL."

To these remarks on the benefits to be derived from instruction in the classics, considered as a discipline, others might be added respecting their importance and influence as literature. As we have maintained that grammar-learning may be productive of advantage, though the pupil forget the languages acquired by it; so also are we ready to maintain, that a knowledge of the contents of ancient authors is highly valuable, even though it should be true, that they wrote nothing but nonsense and absurdity. Suppose that the speculations of their philosophers on the system of the universe and the nature of man, were not only false, but mean and contemptible; that the themes of their poets, their gods and heroes, battles and mythologies, were wild and

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ridiculous; that for all true thoughts in relation to science, religion, morals, we must look to ages subsequent to the classic, or distinct from them; that, consequently, whatever they said has been rendered valueless, by having been superseded or refuted by their successors; still, it does not follow, that the knowledge of their absurdities is of no use, or not worth the cost at which it must be bought. It is well to be acquainted with what man has now demonstrated, or God revealed to him—our perfect form of knowledge and truth in science and religion; but it is also well to know something of the thinkings and utterances of early times, the babblings, it may be, of an infant species, the blunderings of its ignorance, or the errors and perversions of its passion and pride. You cannot learn, from the classic page, the true idea of God or nature; but you can learn *this*—how it was that the young world thought and felt about this wonderful abode in which it found itself, and the mysterious existence into which it was called; you can learn how the great enigma of being and thought, life and death, was interpreted by

those who lived thus early, and who were left to themselves "to feel after" and find the meaning, as best they could; how they construed the voice and speech, which day unto day and night unto night continually utter; what they conceived of their origin and circumstances, duties and prospects; how they were related to what was above them, connected with or surrounded by what was unseen. The human species is one whole; each of us may be considered as having had a prolonged previous existence in the former developments of our common nature. To peruse the productions of ancient times, is thus like an individual in advanced life looking over the productions of his early years. There may be nothing in them intrinsically valuable, and yet they may be pregnant with deepest interest, and fraught with varied

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instruction too. "Thus and thus," he would say, "at this age I thought and felt; such were my speculations, my hopes, my dreams; in this manner, life shaped itself to me—in this manner, duty and death; here are things which testify to me of enormous errors, follies, and sins; but here, also, are indications of power, buoyancy, and freshness, in the proud play of my then newly acquired and awakened faculties, at which I wonder, even while I condemn." With such emotions, we may now read, and read with advantage, the most absurd things that were thought or sung by past generations. These things, men like ourselves once lived by; they ministered to their inward, spiritual existence, their hope and terror, earnestness and action.

But Latin and Greek contain far more than studies for the curious. In these languages, we have the records of a vast series of *facts,* which constitute the annals of the most distinguished portions of the human race,—the history of the most wonderful of the nations,—the account of institutions and governments which at one time embraced and moulded the world, and which still exert a positive and perceptible influence on ourselves … Human nature has in all ages been made up of the same elements; every-

where it has been capable of the great and the heroic, however little of either it has displayed: among the ancient *historical* characters—men and women who actually lived, there are not wanting forms of greatness, which embellish the periods to which they belong, and are worthy still of study and remembrance ... The elements of poetry, in the objects of nature, the emotions of the heart, and the incidents of existence, were the same then that they are now; while the subjective genius of gifted mind was not only as real, intense, and active, but was first in the field fitted for its exercise, and swept over it, in all its extent, with the freshness and vigour of an angel's wing,.. But the most striking characteristic of the classic

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writers—that which is the secret, I believe, of their permanent power—the influence of which is unquestionable and great, in stimulating and aiding intellectual effort, is the astonishing elaboration with which they planned and perfected their productions. With all their genius, every one of them studied composition as an art. They laboriously endeavoured to embody their thoughts in the best possible outward form. The manner in which they equipped and dismissed them was an object of ambition, as well as the character of the thoughts themselves. Language is the body,—style the dress and decoration of ideas; one is necessary to give them utterance, the other that the utterance may be with power. The ancients were masters in this matter. They made it an object. They spent hours on phrases and sentences. Orators and poets, philosophers and historians, were alike here. The result is, that they have left to the world specimens of the different kinds of writing, which astonish or charm by what they discover of the capabilities of language for the expression of human thought and emotion. In their hands, words embody and render visible, not only the substance of the idea intended to be conveyed, but whatever it possessed, in the mind of the writer, of strength or grace, massiveness or beauty, power or splendour. In one, thought is condensed—the fewest possible terms en-

shrine and convey it: another delights in expansion and copiousness—in vigorous diffusion and elegant redundancy. One has passages which sound like thunder—individual words, that come flashing and flaming forth, as if just struck off from a heart on fire: another breathes over his page the very soul of beauty, makes every line move like music, producing often a mixture of emotions—filling the mind, at the same moment, with tranquil delight and tremulous rapture.

The best thoughts of their best minds being thus preserved in the very best possible manner, gives to the

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dead Greeks and Romans, at this moment, a living power, real, deep, wide, indestructible. Science may exist, and art may be exercised, without books. Knowledge may be possessed by one mind, and imparted to others by uttered speech, or by methods with which at present we have no acquaintance. The highest and most perfect state in which we can conceive men to exist—that of glorious, beatified immortals—is one in which we, of course, suppose the existence of science without literature. This state of things may do for immortals; but in a world like ours, where people die, and nations disappear, it is by literature, and by that alone, that men can extend or perpetuate their influence, reaching the mass of an existing generation, or stretching forward to future times. Without books, the most wonderful people would pass away with hardly a remembrance; the world would be deprived of so much of its own history ds their annals would include, and of the benefit of whatever they had done, discovered, or thought. The ancient Etrurians, we have reason to believe, were a highly improved and remarkable people. To them the Romans were indebted for arts and knowledge, and much that contributed to their growth and greatness. But they had no literature, or next to none, or none that was worthy of permanent preservation. No author, or none that survived, rose among them. The consequence is, that we know comparatively nothing about them, and they can affect us

directly in nothing. The Greeks and Romans, by becoming the laborious makers of books—and such books!—have perpetuated at once their existence and influence—have made themselves familiar to all nations—and will for ever exist as a living and regal power in the midst of them.

The fact is, that, in spite of whatever may be said against it, classical literature will be studied. Men will not consent to be cut off from all acquaintance and

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connexion with these early developments of the mind of the species. It is well-known, too, as a plain fact, that, in modern times, the greatest men, the most influential as thinkers and doers, in all departments of the world and the church, have generally been such as have been trained and equipped by this discipline ... Besides, in almost all books there are tacit allusions to classic authors, or occasional direct quotations from them; so that some acquaintance with their language and sentiments becomes necessary to the full enjoyment of general reading. To be able to appreciate such quotations, to perceive their meaning, force, and appropriateness, is a source often of great interest, and is, of course, additional to whatever else the volume may contain; the pleasure thus produced may be easily understood by those who lose it, by their referring to the emotions of which they are conscious, when passages from the Scriptures (the classics of the multitude) are employed in a religious discourse or book, for illustration or embellishment; especially if the quotation is not a common one, or is applied in a manner altogether new. The effect is sometimes perfectly electric.* ... Most of the terms of science and art are formed from Greek and Latin originals; while many words incorporated with our language, and now forming an essential part of it, are derived immediately from the same source; he, therefore, who understands something of the sources from whence these terms

* If the reader wishes to see a book which contains, among other

excellencies, an unusual number of original and apt quotations from Scripture, throwing about them light and beauty in a most extraordinary way, I refer him to the recent work of the Rev. R. W. Hamilton, on "Missions." I have great pleasure in making this reference, both from my personal regard for Mr. H., and from the circumstance of his having been my colleague in the engagements of the public day at Mill Hill—from his having been a Mill Hill boy—and one, too, whose scholarship would do honour to any institution.

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and words have descended, will be best prepared at once to comprehend, appreciate, and employ them.

Labour bestowed on the investigation of the exact force and significance of a word, is labour really directed to *thought;*—it at once teaches the student how to think, and how others have thought before him. Knowledge—a great deal of real and substantial knowledge, may often be obtained by the careful study of a single term. It may be a word compounded of two or three others, or portions of others; it must be separated into its elements—the force of each must be considered in their original isolation—then, again, in their united capacity, and in the mode and degree in which they are mutually affected by contact. It may admit of being traced through numerous authors and distant periods. Variations may be detected in its value and hue, as it drops successively from different pens. It may sink and disappear for some time from the stream of literature; it may then rise again, and come forth, endowed, as it were, with new powers, or speaking its meaning with other intonations. In tracing and observing all this, there is not only the most exquisitely pleasurable interest, and a healthy exercise of the faculties of the inquirer; but there may be vividly presented to him a continuous history of the human mind,—its modes of thinking at successive periods,—the change which the substance of its conceptions underwent,—the manner in which age after age uttered what was in it, improved on its predecessors, fell beneath, or failed to understand them.

Something, perhaps, may be expected to be said on the danger of contamination from the impurity of some of the classical authors. I must confess, however, that

I do not think this danger exists to anything like the extent that is commonly apprehended. Very little of immoral tendency is actually read in the course of instruction. No boy was ever *made* vicious by what is

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written in Latin and Greek. *Being* vicious, he may search for, and select, what will meet his taste; but he would have done the same had he known nothing but plain English; and the probability is, that *in* English, rather than in the languages of other lands, he finds the reading he likes best. Both in schools and colleges the worst individuals will generally be found among the least learned. "The most studiously devoted to heathen writers, are not always the most heathenish." It is rather, I believe, the exception, than the rule. The fact is, devoted scholars have not time, nor, generally, taste either, for low pursuits and degrading indulgences. As boys, indeed, spring into youth, and youth into men, it is of great importance for their classical studies to be so conducted as to conduce to moral and religious ends. I not only see no difficulty in this, but the greatest possible facilities for it. In first learning a language, the less that is said about the sentiments the better; the mind should be kept to the grammar and the lexicon, the acquisition of words and the knowledge of their laws: but advanced pupils, who read to enlarge their acquaintance with authors, should be directed to notice whatever may aid the formation of their opinions, or afford them materials for reflection and thought. He who would introduce to classical *literature,* and not merely teach the knowledge of the *languages,* must have something of the elements of the philosopher and poet, the rhetorician and orator, inherent in himself; he must have taste and sensibility,—be alive to beauties, and capable of enthusiasm; and, however he may repress and curb his emotions, with his junior pupils, and in elementary instruction, there must be times and seasons, with the more advanced, when he shall yield himself up to their animating impulse, and speak of his authors

with loving delight and reverential admiration. In the same way, he who would turn these studies to advantage,

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in the highest sense, and with moral effect, must be a man of deep and intelligent piety; attached to the discoveries and alive to the grandeur of revealed truth; "holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience;" and disposed from taste, as well as impelled by a sense of duty, to seize upon every favourable topic that comes before him, to make the pursuits of his pupils auxiliary to the nurture of the religious life. It is not difficult for this to be done, especially by one who has done it for himself. The state of manners, for instance, as illustrated by the poets, who depict in their satires individual character, or embody in their dramas what is social and domestic, may give rise to useful reflections on the habits of the heathen, the necessity for the Gospel, and the influence it has actually exerted in the world. … The principles of duty which are defined and enforced by philosophic moralists, will afford subjects of valuable remark, in relation both to their excellence and their defects. … The hesitation and error which characterize their most serious and important theological speculations, may be strongly contrasted both with what the New Testament says, and how it says it. … Passages in the historians, which recognise the facts of the existence of Christ, of Christianity and Christians—allusions to the way in which they were respectively esteemed and treated, may be pointed out and impressed upon the mind, as demonstrating at once the antiquity of our religion, the sufferings of its advocates, and the combined forces against which it prevailed. … The frequent references to priesthood and sacrifice, may be made to illustrate the facts and doctrines of the evangelical dispensation, and to show how the world out of Judea, as well as the people and church in it, was undergoing a preparation for "the fulness of time." … In one word, the pupil may be made aware, that in classical literature he is brought into contact with the

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personal representatives of that large and wonderful portion of our race, who were the subjects of God's prolonged experiment, under which human nature displayed alike its greatness and littleness, its grandeur and deformity,—attaining to wisdom in many respects, and yet, "by wisdom," being led *from* the Creator rather than to Him, By these means, and many others, the study of what we term profane literature may be made to subserve the most sacred purposes; the master in the school, and the minister in the desk, harmoniously co-operate; and the result be, an education at once elegantly learned and deeply religious. Such, unquestionably, was the cherished idea of the venerable founders of this institution. But this leads us to another topic.

IV.

As instruction in religion is an essential part of the system of education pursued here, I must request your attention to a few remarks upon this subject. Without this, no system of education can be complete. To educate is to develop, or draw out, not merely a *part* of man, but the capacities and powers of his whole nature. In the most comprehensive sense, it includes the body as well as the mind; and, in relation to the mind, it contemplates the religious and moral faculties, as well as the intellectual. Secular instruction may expand and invigorate the mental powers—but to do this alone, is only to educate the half of man; it is to leave undeveloped, or rather, indeed, depraved and perverted, those moral feelings, and that religious nature, the proper exercise and sanctification of which, are to fit him for the daily duties of life, and for a life and condition " yet to be revealed." Human nature, in its constitution and attributes, contains within it a prophetic intimation of a higher world. Its religious instincts, its moral conscience,

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its capacity to form, and its *tendency* to form, the idea of God, of Divine law, of invisible authority, and future account—these are so many indications of a sublimer nature moving within us—so many stirrings of profounder faculties, which tell of the sphere for which they are intended, and in which they will attain their perfect development. In this way, the embryo bird, while yet in the shell, and long before it breaks it, indicates, by its tiny, half-formed wings, that its destiny is to fly in the midst of heaven; and, in the same way, the bodily organs of a child in the womb, foreshow and predict the kind of world into which he is to be born.

A person, indeed, may be born into the world deaf and dumb, blind and idiotic, maimed and misshapen. He may be incapable of surveying the marvellous universe by which he is surrounded, of understanding or fulfilling the simplest services, or of holding communion and fellowship with men; the verdant earth, and the resplendent heavens, may be to him a blank, from his want of intellectual or organic perception; and the whole of the wondrous economy of life a thing with which he can have no sympathy. Such a condition it is most distressing and painful to contemplate. It excites, however, no displeasure. We never regard it as the subject of blame. It is an infelicity, a misfortune, not guilt. It may be the result of guilt somewhere—the remote consequence of the criminality of progenitors; but it is never felt, and it cannot be felt, to be, in the case of the immediate unhappy subject, a thing for punishment, but one rather for pity and tears. Into the next state, however, none can be borne morally misshapen,—spiritually blind, dumb, and disfigured,—incapable of bearing or beholding its glory, fulfilling its duties, and sympathising with its society—*hit by his own fault.* To appear among immortals, unfit for the exercises and the blessedness of immortality, will not be

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accounted a misfortune, but a crime; to *remain* among them, will be impossible if it were desired, and would be undesired though it were possible. "Everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord," is denounced against the man dying in his sins; the "outer darkness," to such a man, will be felt to be a refuge from the intolerable splendours of the world of light.

But our whole life is intended to be an education for that world. Our spiritual powers are to be expanded here, to fit us for our future and higher birth. The *religious capacity* is to be called out, developed, and sustained;—faith in the unseen is to guide us through the visible,—to preside over and direct our moral behaviour, —to arm and to aid us in our battle with ourselves^ the world, and the devil,—to keep us in contact with the fountain of divine forgiveness and grace,—to lie at the root of all practical duty, and thus to stamp upon it at once a peculiarity and a grandeur. Christians should never forget, that Mind may be cultivated and accomplished, —that the habits and the character may be socially beautiful and externally attractive,—and yet that this, however passable it may be for earth, and however sufficient to satisfy our fellows, may coexist with an essential deficiency in what is required to capacitate for heaven. Virtue, unconnected with religion, *is* virtue and nothing more. It is manly vigour, human strength, not Divine or Christian holiness. It may be splendid and imposing, and yet be only "of the earth earthy." It rises from a source level with the present temporary life, and here, therefore, it must look for its reward It would be what it is, if there were no God, for it can now subsist without any thought of him. It may actually be exhibited in connexion with the denial of his name, the rejection of his truth, and the neglect of his worship. In such cases, certain moral instincts may be alive, and in action, but the spiritual faculties are as good as dead. The man has

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not within him the religious life. That capacity of his is dormant, the development of which infuses into all present moral action a Divine element, and constitutes such a meetness for the future world, that, in emerging from this, and feeling itself amongst its scenes and its society, the soul shall be conscious that it is only in a suitable and fitting sphere—called to exercises and enjoyments, for which it has brought with it an appropriate nature, with faculties appropriately developed and matured.

Now, the expansion and development of this nature, and of these faculties—the religious and spiritual culture of the soul—cannot begin too early. The scriptural description of the circumstances of our race, tends to enforce the necessity of this. We are so born, that, if let alone, unacted upon by external influences, little or nothing would ever be unfolded but the instincts and appetencies of the animal life. It is by action and agencies *from without,* that everything intellectual, moral, and spiritual, must be called forth; in the latter case, especially, the agencies from without being aided and blessed by another from above. The dislocated condition in which, spiritually, we come into the world, is not our fault; it, therefore, will never of itself without positive, personal gin, constitute the ground of future condemnation; while, to meet our case, a Divine process of restoration is revealed, adapted to our state, adequate to its necessities, and capable of early, efficient action. The Gospel of Christ is that process. Means are appointed for conveying to man the knowledge of its provisions, for exciting within him that faith by which the benefits they confer may be his, and for the continual support and nourishment of the principle, as the seed of outward and visible excellence. The Gospel, *as a message,* is adapted to meet the sinner in his sins, to turn, or convert, him “from the error of his ways,”

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to bring him weeping and penitent to God, and to soothe his conscience by the hope of mercy, mercy flowing from atoning blood, and capable of reaching the most foul and flagrant transgressions; but the Gospel, *as an institution,* or as administered in connexion with institutions, with "pastors and teachers," "tutors and governors," with fathers "training up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," with the prayers and "faith" of "a grandmother Lois and a mother Eunice;" in this way, it may become the instrument of the early impartation of the Divine life, and the early development of the religious nature. The mind from the first may be the subject of its influence. The spiritual faculties may be gradually expanded, by the noiseless descent upon them of the Holy Spirit, as the soft dew upon the tender herb. The man may be thus "sanctified from the womb," growing up as "one planted in the house of the Lord." Like Timothy, "from a child knowing the Holy Scriptures," and like Obadiah, "fearing the Lord from his youth," he may never have to experience the moral transition that distinguishes the course of the ungodly and the sinner. Well is it, when the ungodly and the sinner repent; but innocence is far better than repentance, and early piety than late belief. It is better to be "trained in the way we should go"—a way from which we need never "depart"—than to be converted afterwards from early wanderings, or to run the hazard of never being converted at all. To *be* converted is indeed a mercy, but *to stand in need of it,* in one born of Christian parents, may be at once a calamity, a sin, and a disgrace.

The object of early religious discipline is to prevent this; to prevent it by bringing the mind, from its very first movements, as it opens and grows, into gentle and genial contact with the instruments of renewal

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and sanctification. Divine truth as contained in Scripture, the Holy Spirit as promised to prayer. Living under these influences, and learning to act (though not without many an early struggle) from the aims they suggest, and the motives they inspire, the youth may be preserved by "preventing grace" from "the way of sinners," and the "young man" find himself, as he approaches maturity, "strong" in the power of religious faith, and "in the grace that is in Christ Jesus," and resolutely bent on "cleansing his way by taking heed thereunto according to his word." In its essence—its objective facts and principles of belief, and its subjective operation as a regenerating and sanctifying power—religion is the same in the mind of such an one, as it is in him who, late in life, returns from transgression and obtains mercy; but it differs in some of its accidents and properties, in its rise, progress, history, consciousness, and (let it never be forgotten) the difference is all in favour of the former individual. A day may be more stirring and picturesque that is deformed by clouds, darkness, and thunder; beautiful it may be, when the storm passes and the shadows depart, and resplendent glimpses of sky and sunlight indicate the glory, the calm, and brightness in which it will close; but, in so far as quiet security is really better than deliverance from danger, unruffled peace than tumultuary transitions, and truth and goodness than sentiment and poetry, we greatly prefer that *life,* at least, if likened to a day, should be one whose "morning is without clouds," whose sun should calmly climb to its meridian, and decline and set with unsullied effulgence. "The path of the just is as the morning light, shining more and more unto the perfect day." "The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger."

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Christianity in its message of mercy has its mission to the world; in its fixed institutions, it has not only this, but its process of training and discipline on the ground of it. Children, under the Gospel, have "parents in the Lord," and are "to be brought up in His nurture and admonition;" they are born to advantages which are not to be foregone by their being left to themselves to grow up as if nothing of truth had been certified to man, and nothing of grace revealed from God. All that we believe, obey, and expect, is to be inculcated and taught—taught *dogmatically,* without question, hesitation, or doubt. It is a matter, at first, of simple authority. As youths advance, especially such as are liberally educated, they should be taught the evidences of our holy religion, be made acquainted with reasons as well as results, and have their minds interested, and their principles fortified, by some introduction to sacred literature and argumentative theology. Their classical knowledge, and ability to consult original authorities, may be turned to excellent effect here. In this way, what was, at first, and properly, a prejudice, may become knowledge; and reason itself, instead of teaching to doubt, may be taught to confirm and establish faith. From the first moment, however, of voluntary action, the *conscience* must be cultivated. Duty, obedience, all that is honourable and of good report, must be set forth, as the bounden, becoming, and pleasant service of those who are privileged with the rich inheritance of Christian knowledge, and a real relation to the Christian church. The noble and generous, the upright and pure, the manly, the strong, the morally heroic, should be inculcated and required, *not* upon low worldly grounds, not by appeals to pride and selfishness, utility and calculation,—but from directly scriptural and Christian considerations, grounded on the sayings and sanctions of religion—*because,* in fact, those

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to whom we address ourselves are so placed, by the providence of God, as to be regarded by him, and are bound, therefore, to regard themselves, as learners and disciples in the school of Christ.

Religion, as a life, an actual influencing power, can exist and display itself in all the stages of human development, in a manner appropriate to and consistent with each,—"first the blade, then the ear, afterwards the full com in the ear." In a child it can be infantile, in the youth youthful, in the man varied in its texture, aspect, and utterances, according to the kind of conflict and struggle he has had to maintain with himself and with the world. It is a thing to-be suspected, and therefore repressed, for the very young to affect the language of mature and experienced piety. Precocity here is as bad as precocity in anything else. Terrible are the consequences to the future man, of an unnatural and factitious development of religious emotions,—when exercises have been encouraged, feelings indulged, and spiritual things said and done, beyond rational propriety and warrantable experience. Cases of this sort often terminate—and it is quite to be expected that they should terminate—in heartless indifference to all religion, in secret scepticism, in open unbelief, or in thorough and reckless depravity.

The fact is, that the religious training of the young, is at once one of the most important and noble, and one of the most difficult and hazardous duties that man can undertake. It requires judgment and piety, temper and tenderness, knowledge of the heart, discrimination of character, faith, and prayer,—with other intellectual and spiritual qualifications—to a degree which few imagine and fewer possess. In one form or other, it is the designed instrument, by which the church of Christ is to be preserved and perpetuated, wherever it has once been established and organized. It rests upon

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parents with an emphasis of obligation which it is impossible to exaggerate. Alas! most persons become parents without any conception of their prospective responsibilities, and "when, for the time, they should be teachers, have need that one teach them again what be the first principles of the oracles of God." In places of public education, religious discipline is, in an especial manner, the assumption and the discharge of parental duty. This circumstance obviously imparts to it a very tender and sacred character. It claims for it the profound and earnest thoughts of those by whom it is professedly undertaken, and it demands also for *them,* the hearty co-operation, the sympathy, and the aid, of those whose primary obligations they fulfil. THIS INSTITUTION PROFESSES DEEPLY AND REVERENTLY TO REGARD IT. I hope and trust that it ever will, in all its directors and all its agents, and in a manner as distinguished for wisdom as for zeal. In consistency with what I have just said, I must beg to remind the parents of the pupils, that very much depends upon themselves. They are not to expect that children, whose first years have been neglected, can be sent hither, and be made over again, as if by magic. They are not to wonder if the school be unsuccessful, when home and the holidays counteract its influence. Nothing can be done, in this matter^ to any purpose, but as fathers and mothers give their support. Here, the principles and spirit of the domestic circle are all but omnipotent.

V.

In addressing the supporters of this grammar-school, I should feel it a great and serious neglect, to omit to notice the professed and ostensible peculiarity of the

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institution, as founded and maintained by Protestant Dissenters.

In itself, dissent is an evil. It would be better, if no differences, religious or political, existed in a nation. To oppose or dissent from any ancient or established institution, is, for its own sake, by no means to be approved or desired. The grounds and reasons for such procedure should be very weighty: it should be forced upon us, as our last and only honourable alternative—as the exclusive way in which we can retain our self-respect, by, in our estimation, retaining our loyalty to truth and God, and embodying our devotion to liberty and religion. Justifiable dissent has always been this. It has been a thing to which men have been driven—driven always against their wills, equally against their interests. The tendency in human affairs is, for *might* to take the place of *right*. Secular governments would rule by power rather than reason, or by force rather than law; and churches, sinking into error and corrupting religion, would stand upon authority rather than truth. In such circumstances, the principle of dissent first appears in the secret dissatisfaction of superior minds with things as they are—in the effort to produce a change for the better—and in the wish to identify the outward and actual, with the ideal forms of opinion and procedure, which arise in enlarged and truth-loving souls, from their earnest meditations on the nature of man and the will of God. It is not till after this, often long after, and as the result of internal struggles with themselves, that positive dissent makes its appearance; it never does so without sacrifices on the part of the seceders, and never, it may be added, without benefit to society at large. Realms of thought are wrested from usurpers—rights and liberties gain acknowledgment;—ancient institutions may continue to exist, but they exist shorn of some of their pretensions—

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expressly or silently they modify their action, or abjure their errors, and the result is, a step onward in the progress of society. Such things occurred long prior to the Protestant Reformation, and such have been con-

stantly occurring since. It is thus that the world has been kept advancing. Men, like the men we have just described, have been always accounted the trou biers of their age; but troublers of an age, by thinking and speaking of its corruptions and errors, are always a-head of it—they cannot be understood, nor can they be appreciated, by the men of their time, though they are acting bravely for them and for their children. Extravagance and enthusiasm will commonly, perhaps, mingle with their movements; but enthusiastic minds are always sincere—sincerity and earnestness are generally based on some true thought—and a true thought cannot be resolutely carried into action without the world becoming a debtor to its advocates. The infidel historian, it is well known, attributes the achievement of the civil liberties, in which Englishmen justly boast, to the fervid longings and irrepressible enthusiasm of our Puritan ancestors; and Hallam, in his "History of the Middle Ages," has the following statement:—"The tendencies of *religious dissent,* in the four centuries preceding the Reformation, appear to have generally conduced towards the moral improvement of mankind. Facts of this nature," he continues, "occupy a far greater space, in a philosophic view of society, during this period, than we might at first imagine."

The fact is, that dissent always originates with some earnest, honest, deep-thinking soul, sent into the world by the great God, to see things in their true light, and to call things by their right names. Such a man has rough energy, a face like a flint, a stout heart, and a strong arm. He is necessarily the Elijah, the John the Baptist, the Knox, the Luther of his day. He dares to

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take up Truth, when trampled upon in the streets, and to say to all men, "This is a holy and Divine thing; foully as it has been treated, it is worthy of worship, and *I* am resolved henceforth to worship it." A splendid Falsehood may be riding by, in purple and gold, with all the world prostrate before it; but when it says to this man,

"Fall down and worship *me,* and say that I am the truth"—he straightway answers, "I will not Worship thee, nor call thee the truth; for thou art a lie." The Protestant Reformers were such men—such men were the Puritans after them—and such were the fathers of Nonconformity. The principles they have left us are sufficient to produce such men still.

Our parentage is noble, if there be any truth in these representations. That there is, let history declare. When the world was reduced to intellectual and religious vassallage, by the dominant spirit and usurpations of the Papacy, the liberties of mankind and the royalties of truth had to be again recovered and re-asserted, by intellectual battle and war. None could be admitted to such service, at least as resolute and trustworthy men, but such as *dissented* from things as they were, and were resolved on improvement, whatever it might cost, of reputation or ease, possessions or life. Age after age the contest continued; successive victories discovering new occasions for combat, and every generation furnishing men worthy of their fathers. To such men we are indebted for our meeting this day,—to them we owe the character and existence of this institution. We have reason to congratulate ourselves and each other, on the happy circumstances in which we assemble, when we consider what *might* have been our lot, if the spirit of intolerance had never been met, by the active resistance or passive suffering of those who preceded us. I shall say nothing of what that spirit, which yet survives, would wish still to impose or execute if it could; but the

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period, comparatively, is not distant, when it bad it in its heart to crush by persecution the learned and amiable Dr. Doddridge, for daring to keep an academy for youth; and, at an earlier period in the last century, a bill, you should know, actually passed both Houses of Parliament, and received likewise the royal assent, forbidding any one on the pain of imprisonment, to keep any *public* or *private school,* or seminary; or to teach or

instruct youth, as tutor or schoolmaster, unless he was a conformist to the established Liturgy—obtained a license from dignified ecclesiastics—and promised to teach the Christian religion *only* as it was set forth in the Church Catechism I This bill passed, and became law in 1715. The Dissenters of the day petitioned against it—they petitioned in vain. It was moved, in their behalf, at the last reading, that they might be allowed to have schools for the instruction of *their own* children; but *this* was denied them. They did, however, obtain one favour, that of being permitted to have *school-mistresses* to teach their children to read! We may smile at these things now. But, when such an enactment could be passed in the British Parliament two hundred years *after* the Reformation, and not half that period previous to the formation of this establishment, we may ask, with feelings too serious for laughter,—not only how *this* institution ever could have been,—but what would have been the character of *all* institutions—what the condition of the whole empire, if there had not been, in bygone times, noble, truth-loving, earnest men, who, under the name of Dissenters, resisted ecclesiastical and civil tyranny, and secured, by their personal sacrifices and sufferings, the freedom and blessings which we now enjoy? It is not right that the inheritance they purchased should be taken by any without acknowledgment, or enjoyed without gratitude. It is certainly appropriate, in this place and on this day, to express at once

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our admiration and our thanks. The least we can do is to commemorate a virtue, which few, perhaps, now, have either the ambition or the magnanimity to imitate.

VI.

In concluding this somewhat desultory address, I cannot forbear offering a word or two directly to the pupils:—

My dear Boys,—You have heard what I have been saying about learning and religion; you see how we

attach importance to both. Knowledge is good—large information is very desirable;—but *religious* knowledge is absolutely necessary. Science, literature, and elegant accomplishments—all that gives to the intellect greatness or refinement—if possessed apart from religious faith and holy character, are only as flowers that adorn the dead. There is a knowledge which purifies while it expands—which is life to the soul as well as light to the intellect—which will go with you to any world—and *prepare* you for any, by guiding you safely through the dangers of this. Seek that knowledge where you know it is to be found—in those "Holy Scriptures," which you are here taught, and "which are able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith that is in Christ Jesus." Cultivate, dear youth, piety towards God, deep reverence for his presence, his service, and his name. Pray to him, for that pardon of sin, which boys need as well as men—and for that grace, which children as well as adults can receive. The promise is to you as well as to us.

In relation to your general conduct, I should like you to associate real nobility and greatness of character with what is *moral*—with habitual obedience to the law of conscience, and the dictates of duty. Vice is mean and

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degrading, as well as wrong. In the Bible, sinners are represented as objects of contempt, as well as condemnation. A bad boy knows well enough that he deserves to be despised, for he can't help sometimes despising himself. Do, bravely and manfully, everything that you feel you *ought*. Cultivate a generous, open, unsuspicious temper. Despise selfishness; hate and loath it in all its forms of vanity, sloth, self-will—oppression of the weak, harshness to the timid—refusal of help, which it would be proper to render—or of little sacrifices to serve others. Detest everything like duplicity and deceit. Don't go within a mile of a lie. Value your honour, truthfulness, and integrity. When you have misunderstandings, do not be ashamed of acknowledging error, or apologizing for

wrong. As soon as possible, get rid of grudges and resentments, and live together in cheerfulness and love. Be, in manners, at once frank and courteous—in act and conversation, delicate and pure. In one word, desire, in all things, so to behave yourselves, that, as you "grow in stature, you may grow in wisdom, and in favour with God and man."
One word in relation to your studies. WORK.—

Work well, hard, cheerfully. Don't wish just to get through, or to get off easily, or to be indebted to any one for anything whatsoever—that you ought to know and to do yourselves. Everything depends on your diligence and industry. Let none of you fancy that, because you have genius, you may dispense with labour. No boy ever translated Homer by inspiration. Nothing will come to you in this way. Nothing valuable is, in this world, either done or got without effort. "Nature *gives* us something at first"—something to start with,—our original capacity, whatever it may be. "Everything else, after this, she sells,"—sells always—sells to all—and sells dear. You must pay the price. By intellectual labour you may purchase for yourselves attainments and distinction; happiness and respect come

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by virtue. If you like, you may be idle, thoughtless, wicked; the price is, ignorance, contempt, hell. Recollect, also, that, in the long run, there can be no mistake. No boy or man can ever really get what he has not purchased, or carry away what belongs to another; or if he does so, or appear to do so, he cannot keep it for any long time without being detected. Every day is a day of judgment—a day of reaping as you have sown—of revelation of what you are. "No man is concealed," or can be. Not one of you can go through life, all the way, with the reputation and character of a good scholar, if you are not really such. Things will be constantly occurring to reveal you, and society will not be long in ascertaining your precise height and depth—your solid contents, and superficial dimensions. In the same way, you cannot pass for what you are not, in respect to your

actual moral character; somehow or other, you will come to find yourself weighed and measured. You will pass among your fellows for what you are worth, and for nothing more; if you are worthless, the world will soon make the discovery, and it will *let you know* that it has made it. Depend upon it, the best way to be thought good, is to *be* good; the surest mode of being had in reputation, is to have a character.

If, at this moment, I could gather together here all the pupils that have ever been located within these walls; if I could summon them from wheresoever they sojourn, and cause them to surround you in visible forms, and thus show you exactly what they *are*—it would be a most affecting and instructive spectacle. Many, probably,, would have to rise from their graves; of these, some would appear as spirits of light; some, it is to be feared, with the awful aspect of lost souls. Others would be brought from the ends of the earth, and the isles of the sea; from under ancient dynasties and new republics; from continents and colonies of the other hemisphere: of

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these, some would be found to be honourably engaged in commercial enterprise; some to have been driven from their fatherland, by folly or misfortune; some to have gone voluntarily forth as ministers and missionaries—the highest form and office of humanity. Of those that would come from the metropolis, and from the towns and cities of our country, how great would be the number—how varied the pursuits—how different in their tastes, habits, and character—how changed in appearance—perhaps in opinions, sympathy, belief,—from what they were, when in this scene, as little boys, they plied their tasks, or bounded in the play-ground, or kneeled in prayer! Some would come with university honours and literary reputation; some as presbyters of the Established Church; some as the guides and bishops of our own. Many would be here, there can be no doubt, who have passed through life, and are passing through it, with honourable characters and spotless reputation;

many who are enjoying the fruits and rewards of steadiness and industry; and many besides, who, adding to their virtue, *faith,* and following out their religious training, are known and esteemed as religious men, and adorn the community in which they move. Pleasant would it be, to look upon the countenances of such men—men of intelligence, virtue, and religion; pleasant for you to hear their words of encouragement, and their united testimony, to the advantages of learning—the worth of goodness—the possibility of securing, and the satisfactions flowing from, the friendship of God!

While such as these might allure and attract you towards holiness and heaven, there would be some others whose career and appearance would operate upon you in another manner;—whose ruined characters and blighted prospects,—debilitated health, reckless habits, wretchedness, and shame—would alarm and deter you from following their courses, and move your hearts by pity and

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terror. Some of these, perhaps, when at school, were gay and buoyant—loved by their associates, and worthy to be loved; they entered life with high hopes, and bright prospects; they were the pride of their parents; everything was done for them, to secure and facilitate their advancement and success; with all this, they have come to be what I have described—a *ruin* and a *wreck.* If such could speak, they would probably tell you that they fell from not having a fixed, settled, and serious aim in life; that they gave themselves up to the satisfactions of the moment, whatever they might be; passed, thoughtlessly, from pleasure to pleasure; cared for nothing but immediate enjoyment, having no idea of living for any great or honourable purpose; thus, wasting their talents and squandering time, they easily proceeded from folly to vice, till they found themselves utterly and irretrievably ruined. But, instead of fancying what they might say, I will tell what *actually was said,* by a man of good abilities and finished education, who thus wasted life, and saw his error when too late.

I refer to Sir Francis Delaval, who, when he was on his death-bed, sent for Mr. Edgeworth, and thus addressed him:—"Let my example warn you of a fatal error into which I have fallen. I have pursued amusement, instead of turning my ingenuity and talents to useful purposes. I am sensible that my mind was fit for greater things than any of which I am now, or was ever supposed to be, capable. I am able to speak fluently in public, and I have perceived that my manner of speaking has always increased the force of what I said: upon various important Subjects, I am not deficient in useful information; and, if I had employed half the time and half the pains in cultivating serious knowledge, which I have wasted in exertings my powers upon trifles, instead of dissipating my fortune and tarnishing my character, I should have become a useful member of society, and an honour

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to my family. Remember my advice, young man. Pursue what is *useful to mankind*. You will satisfy them, and, what is better, you will satisfy yourself."

Such was the melancholy close of a sinful course. God forbid that any of the bright eyes that are now before me, glistening with the dew of their young life, and sparkling with the light of innocence and joy, should come to be dimmed with regrets like these! Nay, God forbid that any of you, my dear boys, should neglect to learn the important lesson, that, what formed the highest object of this dying man's ambition and desire, even if attained, however it might really "satisfy" the world, ought *not* alone to "satisfy yourselves." The best that he wished he had lived for and aimed at, is short of the best that you should pursue. *God* is to be satisfied as well as "mankind." However the one may be content with virtue, the other requires piety and faith. He demands character founded on religion—"usefulness" flowing from love to Himself. Your best doings will be imperfect; you will need mercy to pardon sin—the Holy Spirit to implant principles of heavenly strength—grace to renew and sanctify the heart

—the atonement of Christ believed, trusted in, pleaded in prayer, as the source of hope and the ground of acceptance. "Seek first the kingdom of God." "Study to show yourselves approved unto *Him.*" "Serve him with reverence and godly fear." "Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." "See that ye neglect not the great salvation." "Flee, also, youthful lusts; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." Pursuing a course of holy action and religious usefulness, you will come to know the truth of the memorable words of one of our devout and illustrious ancestors:—"You have been accustomed," said Philip Henry to a friend standing by his bed-side, as he was about to die—"you have been

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accustomed to note the last words of dying men; these are mine—A life spent in the service of God, is the happiest life upon earth."

"Behold the happy man!

"I have watched him from his infancy, and seen him in the grasp of death.

"He knelt beside his cradle, and his mother's hymn lulled him to sleep.

"In childhood he loved holiness, and drank from the fountain-head of peace.

"Wisdom took him for her scholar, guiding his steps in purity.

"He lived unpolluted by the world; and his young heart hated sin.

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"Thus did he walk in happiness, and sorrow was a stranger to his soul.

"He put his hand with constancy to good, and angels knew him as a brother.

"And the busy satellites of evil trembled as at God's ally.

"He bent his learning to religion, and religion was with him at the last:

"For I saw him after many days, when the time of his release was come,
"And I longed for a congregated world, to behold that dying saint.
"As the Aloe is green and well-liking till the best summer of its age,
"And then hangeth out its golden bells to mingle glory with corruption;
"As a meteor travelleth in splendour, and then bursteth in dazzling light;
"Such was the death of the righteous, his death was the sun at his setting.*

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* Tupper's "Proverbial Philosophy." First Seme.

ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT MILL HILL, APRIL 15th, 1847,

AT THE INTRODUCTION TO THE CHAPLAINCY OF THE SCHOOL, OF THE

REV. SAMUEL S. ENGLAND.

I.

An important office in this institution having become vacant, and being now to be formally entered upon by an esteemed brother, I have been requested to offer a few words of general remark on some appropriate topic, or of council and encouragement to our future Chaplain. As on a former occasion, my respect for the Committee and interest in the school, have induced compliance with this request. At the same time, my personal acquaintance with Mr. England has not been without its influence; nor, perhaps, will it now be without its effect; it may probably prompt a remark, or lead me to hazard a suggestion, a caution, or an advice, which I might not feel at liberty to offer to an entire stranger.

When I had the privilege of addressing the friends of this institution, on the occasion to which I have referred, I adverted to the circumstance that, in originating the school, one object of its founders was, to secure the religious instruction of the pupils. It was stated "that instruction in religion was an essential part of the system of education pursued here." Remarks of some extent were then made, in which I explained the importance of the development of the religious capacity as essential to

the complete education of man ... glanced at the peculiar character of Christianity as the religion of a lapsed and injured race ... adverted to the distinction

between the gospel as *a message of mercy* to the guilty, and the aspect borne by *its fixed institutions* to the children of the Church … and indicated some of the principles by which, as Christians, we should be guided in religious education, the objects to be immediately aimed at, the manner in which they should be secured, together with some of the difficulties and dangers of the process. Almost all the topics which it would have been proper to introduce on the present occasion were introduced then; and, though it would not have been difficult, nor, perhaps, uninteresting or useless, to restate them in another form, and to enlarge upon them with additional arguments and varied illustrations, I feel that it would be quite unnecessary to do so. If, in what was then said, there be anything worthy of attention, remembrance, or use, it is enough, I am persuaded, in relation to our new Chaplain, to have made this passing allusion to it: his own good sense, and the conscientious and resolute purpose with which, I believe, he is entering upon his duties, will dispose and enable him at once to seize the principles suggested, and to carry them out as far as he may find it practicable and proper.

II.

The connexion of the School with the Church—using the latter word for "a congregation of faithful men," or even for a local or larger aggregate of such congregations—is a matter of much importance in itself, and is somewhat peculiarly interesting to us this day,—as Dissenters, connected with this institution, and assembled for the present service; and as citizens, also, from the

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place which, in one form or other, it just now occupies in the public mind. It would seem, I think, to be the injunction of God and nature, 'for the religious education of children to rest primarily with the parent. To him, by inspired authority, it is solemnly committed—as *his* duty it is repeatedly recognised and enforced.

"Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." This, so to speak, is an ecclesiastical canon, a church law, framed, fitted, and intended for all time—promulgated by an apostle in a letter addressed to a particular congregation, but binding, of course, on all congregations besides that to which it was given, and on all ages as well as the first. In connexion, however, with parents and guardians—in harmony with and in aid of their private action—I think it may be presumed, that the successors of those model-teachers, who, in the person of one of their number, were admonished by the Lord "to feed his lambs,"—their immediate successors, or the apostles themselves—it may be presumed, that they, the one or the other, in the organization of the church, and in the fulfilment of that part of their mission that related to it, would institute "helps" for assisting and furthering home-efforts by ecclesiastical or official agency. They who had "holy women" "labouring with them in the gospel," who exhorted "young men" to be sober-minded, and who directed and admonished unmarried females in respect to certain obligations and proprieties, can hardly be supposed to have altogether overlooked, in their ministerial capacity, and in the action of the church, the religious training of the young of the flock. The gifts and attainments of men or women adapted to the work, we may be well assured, would be put in requisition, and would be exercised in connexion with the superintendence of the eldership. It is not unlikely, indeed, that, at first, the children of Gentile and Jewish

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parents might alike attend the ordinary schools of their cities, to learn reading and writing, geometry and grammar, languages and rhetoric, with the other parts of secular instruction; while their religious education—all that was peculiar, special, and Christian—would be carefully attended to by the parent and the church. In process of time, however, as arrangements gradually became more perfect, and "things that were wanting"

were "set in order, completed, or supplied, it is most probable that Christian youth would be collected in distinct Congregational Schools, and that their education, literary and religious, would not only be conducted by the same parties, but would be overlooked by the church, through its official representatives. This would seem to result, not unnaturally from the necessary separation that would take place between the faithfiil and infidel portions of a given population ... from the repugnance and inconsistency with Christian ideas, of much that must have been mixed up with both Jewish and Gentile school-teaching... from the doctrine that Christian children, even when only either the father or mother was a believer, were, in some sense or other, "holy," had parents "in the Lord," and were to be trained up in his nurture and admonition, as His ... and from the growing adaptation, as Christians increased, of each congregation and of the ministry at large, to the moral demands which those of every age would have upon them.

In consistency with these views of what was probably the procedure of the church at first, I see not that it could be objected to now, for distinct congregations to have schools connected with them, in which instruction and education—the conveyance to the understanding of common knowledge, and the spiritual nurture of the religious life—might be carried on simultaneously by agents belonging to themselves, with the help and

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supervision of their respective pastors. Everything to be done, might thus be done at once—for *all* the children of each community—by the same parties, or under different agents recognised by the church; the entire development of the whole man, intellectual and religious, being cared for and conducted in all its parts, in the same place and at the same time.

But this is not possible in the actual condition of modern society. Whether, indeed, a very rigid realization of it be a thing to be desired, is very questionable;

but that is not before us at present. The impracticability of the thing is, and that, I think, is very apparent. The different classes in individual congregations, especially in the larger and more promiscuous sects, have separate wants in relation to the compass of secular learning. The opulent and cultivated require for their children instruction which the church cannot supply; it is impossible to retain them at home, and to secure for them by those the congregation would furnish, and under the eye of their spiritual guides, the discipline and development which their future probable position demands. Hence the necessity for boarding schools of different degrees of expense and pretension;—schools, which receive for the greater part of the year, and that for several years together, at the most important period of their opening life, the children of different and distant families, who are thus taken at once from the immediate training of the parent, and from the direct notice of their respective ministers. Now, in every such case (however little some may think of it), the spiritual responsibilities of both the parent and the church are actually assumed by the boarding-school teacher; in all such institutions, therefore, religious culture should be felt to be as essential to their completeness as any of the parts of secular learning. There can he no doubt that great evils have resulted to Christian families from parents seeking for

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their children literary advantages in places where their own religious principles were unknown, unregarded, disparaged, or opposed; where, of course, while the intellect was being furnished with every accomplishment, the heart was left without discipline, the religious capacity without culture, the conscience without careful scriptural guidance, and the entire action both of home-piety and of congregational influence met by an antagonist and counteracting force. Where parents have strong or distinctive religious convictions, it would seem to be their duty, if they cannot obtain what they require for their children under their own eye and in connexion with

their own clergy, to endeavour to secure it in such a way, that their personal influence and the official teaching of their respective churches, should be in some sort supplied in the sphere to which their children are removed, and in which such a large portion of their youth is to be spent.

The principles suggested by these remarks I regard as applying more especially to public and boarding-schools, in which the young are detached for three parts of the year from all agencies but those which the schools themselves may furnish. In day-schools, in connexion with which the parent and the church retain their proper province and functions, direct and specific religious teaching is much less required. There, the lettered and qualified citizen can teach to the families of other citizens the branches of useful knowledge and secular learning, leaving to those whose duty it is—(and whose responsibilities *he* has not assumed)—the religious and spiritual care of the pupils. Even when in such schools there may be the children of a poor and promiscuous population, many of whose parents profess no religion at all, and regard themselves as belonging to no church; it is less the duty of the daily schoolmaster, than of the religious societies in the surrounding neighbourhood, to

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feel, in relation to such, charged with a direct spiritual function. There are, however, great principles, and general truths bearing on the culture of the conscience and the character, which the secular teacher may consistently inculcate—consistently, both as coming within the compass of his obligations, and as applicable to all with whom he has to do. They may be enforced by him universally—on the children of the irreligious, from their moral destitution, and on the children of the religious of any class, because assumed by and included in all creeds.

Returning from this digression, I proceed to remark, that, on the principles expounded, this school, with evident propriety, undertakes the business of religious

teaching. This, as has already been intimated, was, from the first, included in its design, and has hitherto been secured by the appointment of a Chaplain, whose office it is to discharge the duty. It might have its advantages for the religious department to be included in that of the Head Master; but such has never yet been the actual system. We are met, therefore, to-day to recognise and welcome our beloved brother, who has been invited by the Committee to become, so to speak, the ecclesiastical head of this establishment. In venturing to present to him a few words of fraternal counsel, I shall content myself, for obvious reasons, with very brief and very general hints and suggestions.

III.

Suffer me to say, that I hope you will cherish a high sense of the importance of your duties. I am well aware that many might regard your present office as something inferior to the pastoral function. Without noticing that the pastoral relation will be sustained by you to the congregation and communicants at the chapel

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of the school, I cannot but think that the position you occupy simply as chaplain to the school itself, the spiritual instructor of these boys, is equal to any, in importance and magnitude, which you could find anywhere in the church at large. Consider, for a moment, the immense results that may flow from the faithful and conscientious discharge of the duties which you now undertake. Here are gathered beneath your moulding influence, those who may be destined to comparative greatness; the future agents in many of the public departments of life; ministers and deacons of our congregations may be before you; professional men; tradesmen and merchants—it *may* be, legislators and senators; writers, who may one day delight and inform the nation; professors, who may extend the boundaries of science; theologians, who may guide the studies of instructors: or even if this were not to be the case, here, at least, are the fathers of future

Christian homes—the parents of the next, and the progenitors of coming generations. It is no light or trivial service to prepare such for the stations that await them; to implant in them principles, and to form habits, which shall make them at once happy in themselves, and useful to society—models to their children, and ornaments to the church; fitted for the obligations that will invest them in this, and prepared for the duties of a future world. "Meditate on these things;" revolve them often, realize them vividly, and then, it will not be difficult for you, in relation to your own duties, "to give yourself wholly to them; nor, perhaps, would you hesitate to say, with him whose advice we thus commend to you, "*I magnify mine office.*"

In undertaking responsibilities such as are now yours, it is proper to have the heart impressed with what, I am persuaded, you deeply feel, the necessity of prayer for Divine assistance; your weakness and insufficiency without such aid, and your consequent dependence

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upon it for success. The religious excellence of your character renders it unnecessary for me to do more than just to indicate what I have now referred to; while your friendship, I think, will forgive me for adding, that, in connexion with it, I would venture to remind you of the importance of strenuous and regular labour for the accomplishment of the end you will be anxious to secure. Never imagine that you can address boys without study, or get them to believe in you, or secure permanently their trust and attention, without personal industry and effort. I would rather, for my part, address *men* without preparation, than youths or children; and as to having constantly classes, and a congregation of such, it will require, be assured, for your own comfort and for their advantage, the constant combination of talent with toil. Bring to bear on their young minds the strength, and fulness, and industry of your own. Depend not upon digests, and questions, and class-books, prepared and furnished by other hands. Be original.

Have your independent methods of Scripture analysis, exposition, and reference, and set your pupils to work in your own way, and on your own plans. Command their attention and confidence by deserving them; inspire respect by the exactness of your knowledge, and quicken activity by the extent of your demands. Gain their affection by letting them feel that they have yours; yet do this, more by the display of regard for their interest, than of indulgence to their weaknesses. The young soon discriminate between those who would benefit, and those who spoil them, and always, in the long run, love more the rigid disciplinarian, than the easy friend.

The awakening of the religious *sentiment* is to the heart what religious instruction is to the understanding. It will be your business to quicken and excite it. To do this is a thing equally important and hazardous. This part of your duty will require a rare combination of

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qualities—a clear head, a skilful hand, a penetrating eye; a manner alike winning and wise, affections equally soft and sober, a heart at once confiding and suspicious. While religious emotion is to be called forth, and to some extent encouraged, its aspects and utterances must be anxiously watched—its kinds discriminated—its counterfeits discouraged—its diversities of development appropriately met. You must repress it where spurious; test it where questionable; regulate it where capricious; purify it where mixed; and ever seek to associate with it, where genuine and true, correct knowledge and fixed principles. Rather endeavour to interest the mind in biblical studies, than to stimulate the feelings by premature excitement. The preservation of youth from moral danger is better secured by the healthful and invigorating exercise of the faculties, than by the early indulgence of emotional fervor … You will do well to get some knowledge of the studies of the class-room, especially of those of the higher forms, and to avail yourself of such illustrations of scriptural subjects—events, institutions, doctrines, morals—as you will find them

often to suggest or furnish … The more mature and advanced boys, you will probably introduce to some acquaintance with systematic theology, and the history of the church, which will comprehend, of course, controversial topics. These will come to them in time, and some preparation had better be made for them. The best way, in all cases, is to teach *the positive* rather than the negative. Fill the mind with the scriptural and the true; try to secure the loving heart and the spiritual and holy disposition in relation to them; and this combination of knowledge and taste will determine of themselves many questions, when critical conclusions and ecclesiastical arguments would fail either to enlighten or convince. The principles of Nonconformity are great and important; some of them are identified with

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whatever is regal in the authority of truth, inalienable in the rights of man, reverential towards Christ and God, conservative of religion and liberty: but I would not teach these by constantly finding fault with the Church of England, or enumerating all sorts of objections to the Prayer-book, much less by permitting anything like lightness, contempt, or ridicule, to mingle with the investigation of the subject, or to be provoked by the mode of conducting it. The first thing—the second, and the third, in all matters of a religious sort, is *seriousness*—manly, deep, enlightened *seriousness;* and if, with this attribute in the teacher, and this disposition in the pupil, there be imparted and received a full apprehension of the positive and the scriptural in relation to Christian doctrine, primitive practices, and the characteristics and design of the Evangelical dispensation, it will not be difficult for educated youth to detect, of themselves, the errors of the early corruption of the faith—or the later evils produced by the subjection of the church to the world—or the remains of both, or the revival of either, in these our times. So far as there is true and holy light in the reason, and serious attachment to its teachings in the heart, it is not

necessary for any church to confirm its catechumens in devotion to itself, by making out that there is nothing but the corrupt and the perilous on the one side, and nothing but the ideal and the perfect on the other. It is more manly, more right, and much more likely to produce permanent adhesion, when justice is done to the good, the expedient, the true, and the becoming, in repudiated systems of opinion or procedure, and yet that the result is, on the loyal and enlightened, in relation to God and his church, that they are obliged to attach themselves, or to continue attached to, as they believe, a minority *with* truth, against a multitude without it.

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IV.

In bringing these few suggestions to an end, I hope you will not think I presume too far, if I detain your attention a little longer, and indulge myself in the expression of one or two thoughts, which have sometimes appeared to me interesting or important in the contemplation of your office and its duties.

On a former occasion I made the trite remark, that "a great school is a little world:" and from the school itself you will often find that you may draw your best illustrations of the nature of the world into which boys have to go, and of the serious conditions under which existence is received and held. You may thus adapt to their apprehension the idea of moral government—that government under which their whole being must be passed; and reveal to them, with something like a guiding force, the practical secret of the philosophy of life. After all we may say, and say truly and rightly, respecting mercy, and compassion, and grace, and favour, —which are infinitely important in their proper place— it is still the fact, that the constitution of things to which we belong is distinguished by the inflexible predominance of *law*. By necessary consequence, certain things are invariably followed by certain other things. Results may sometimes be long delayed, but their ultimate

coming, in one form or another, is as sure and certain as the rise of the tide or the occurrence of an eclipse. We come into a conditional world,—we are brought into a conditional church; "do *that,* and in the long run thou shalt suffer; do *this,* and thou shalt reap the reward." This is the law. The first temptation, addressed to infantile or youthful humanity, was subtilly adapted to the ignorance and inexperience of the primitive man; it was constructed to suggest and insinuate doubt as to

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the reality and certainty of fixed government; to sap and unsettle a faith in it, which, having no proofs, as yet, in the facts and phenomena of actual life, had to stand simply on a predictive declaration. Man was induced to think that he might do something, and yet evade the threatened consequences; or that that consequence was imaginary or uncertain—that it could not be, or would not come. Now, this is just the temptation which still everywhere infests the first stages of life, and which it is so difficult to get the young to understand and to resist. They are slow to believe mere didactic assurances about the end of sin and the results of goodness. The serpent within them repeats and reiterates the primitive lie, that transgression will not entail the predicted penalty, and that "good" may be obtained without the stipulated price. Persuaded by the welcome but perilous fallacy, they venture on the forbidden, and neglect the enjoined, hoping and believing that, somehow or other, they shall escape the consequences threatened in the one case, and,—without desert,—by some sudden change, or some felicitous and lucky chance, secure the advantages promised in the other! For some time the deception may continue, or even be confirmed. Some are seen to recover from crime; and some may appear to unite the rewards of virtue with the want of it. Cases occur in which deserved retribution seems to be escaped, or "the hands are washed in innocency in vain." The inexperienced or corrupt are tempted to regard the exceptions as the

rule, and thus yield to sin on the chance of impunity, and presume on results they are averse to purchase. Now, in spite of appearances, the law stands firm and inflexible—a law at once stern and beneficent—"that no creature can do wrong without loss, or gain a reward it has not earned." This law is regarded in the very constitution of the Gospel itself, and is unrepealed by

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all the interpositions of sovereign favour. The great thing is to get men to believe it. The inward and the outward of human history—the experience of the heart and the realities of existence, come in the end to be a comment on this law. Still the difficulty is to get it believed. The biographies of the Bible exhibit the connexion of causes and effects in the successive events of an entire life, illustrating the fact of the working out, in the present state, of this universal, permanent, and immutable law: and the revelations of the Bible are to assure us of the truth, that the same principle extends into and pervades the future world. What men want is the realization of this; faith in what God alike utters in his word, and testifies in his works; faith in the *actual* in its connexion with the *distant;* the practical persuasion that we are environed within and without, by that which, taking up, so to speak, absorbing and using, everything which we ever do or are, will issue at last in the revelation of each of us, exactly harmonizing and fixing changelessly condition and character. *Now, what the whole of life is to the futurity beyond it, the school is to the futurity of life;* and what *men* experience as they pass through the world, and must expect at the day of final reckoning—*boys* experience, as they pass through their course, and arrive at on the day of examination and reward. Their industry or indolence, their thoughtlessness or attention, all their habits, principles, and procedure, have their effect, while scholars, on their reputation and experience,—give them a character in the community and with the masters,—and terminate at the end in distinctions and honours,—passableness or disgrace,

and continue and cling to them for ever after, modifying their position, capabilities, and enjoyments as long as they live.

It may generally be observed, too, that for the most part, what boys are when they enter they continue to

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be; that they start from a point, according to their previous habits and preparations, which greatly affects them through their whole course; that "half" after "half" perpetuates in the mass what they were at first; that the boy in the lowest is the father of the lad in the highest form—as the child is in general the father of the man, and the man the father of the angel or the fiend.

This is the rule, in spite of exceptions,—some real, many apparent. The whole thing is analogous to what obtains in the world at large. The school, in fact, is the boy's world, as the world itself is man's school. Hence it is, that all the phenomena that distinguish the first, may be used by a wise and skilful instructor, to give such a conception of the constitution of the second, as nothing merely preceptive could convey.

I hope these remarks will not be misunderstood, as if I overlooked the fact of the probation of mercy (though I have referred to it), or made no allowance for the changes that occur both in boys and men. I forget neither. The two combined can alone (as at once provision and proof) sustain hope in the midst of this erring and dislocated world. The general principle, however, of what has been advanced, I regard as perfectly consistent with both, and as capable of being used in harmony with them, in the great business of moral education.

I will now conclude with one other topic, in which I may again run the risk of misconception, but which appears to me of immense importance to all who have to live for the improvement of others. After all, then, that you may inculcate in the way of instruction, suffer me to remind you, that, in the order of means, you must depend on what we may term *inspiration* as the secret of your success

with your young charge. By the accommodated employment of this term, I do not mean the breathing of God's spirit into *you,* but the breathing of your spirit into *them.*

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I strongly hold the necessity of a divine and gracious influence to renew the soul and sanctify the affections,—to make the learner docile and the lesson efficient; nor have I omitted "to stir up your mind" in relation to that truth. There is another truth, however, equally important in its proper place, and essential to the success of all moral and religious teaching. The influence, I mean, *not* of *God upon the teacher,* but of *the teacher on the taught:*—the additional life which a high, glowing, and enthusiastic spirit can infuse into those with whom it has to do, transferring, as it were, itself into another, imparting something like a new soul, awakening the faculties, and giving the consciousness of a new nature, filling its recipients with its own passion, and calling them to the perception, the admiration, and the pursuit of whatever is inculcated. This power is the thing to be sought for in all teachers of all kinds. He alone that hath it hath life. He only that hath life can convey it. He that has enthusiasm for what he has to achieve has the best chance for success in the achievement. It is not, for instance, the mere knowledge of science or art, that qualifies a person to become an effective teacher in either of these departments. It is the being *possessed:*—it is deep feeling—an earnest, absorbing interest in the particular branch which the individual professes. Nay, this is essential to the very acquisition and competency of his knowledge, or at least to the perfection and finish of his conceptions. The fire in the soul—the light that fills, the intensity of interest that animates and pervades it—*this* opens the eye to the beauties and delicacies of matters of taste, and enables it to see in the experiments of philosophy what would utterly escape the less enthusiastic. This it is, that suggests hypotheses, prompts to investigation, lightens

labour; that enables the man to illustrate the obscure, and to discover the unknown; and that causes ideas to be

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received into the memory, as things that have life, power, and splendour, as well as truth; and, when brought forth again in uttered discourse, that bids them to come with a vivacity, freshness, and force of expression, which they can never have but when acquired and reproduced by a mind in hearty harmony with themselves … In the same way, of two classical instructors, the inferior scholar will most awaken the faculties of his pupils, quicken them into life, teach them their strength, infuse taste, and stimulate genius—if he be the superior in enthusiastic earnestness, poetry, and passion. Such an one, while lifting the veil which covers the beauties of the classic page to the untaught eye, imparts at the same time the faculty of sight. Many learn what they never know, and look upon things which they never see. But this man would give eyes to the blind, a spirit to the dead, a heart to the insensible, and at once reveal the objective phenomena, and create and regale the subjective capacity for admiration and delight … The same principle holds, in its measure, with respect to the development of the spiritual life—the infusion of elevated moral tastes; reverence for the holy, admiration of the beautiful, the pursuit of the true, constancy to the right, the culture of the good. It is not so much the substance of what is taught—the extent to which religious doctrine may be conveyed—the correctness with which principles are defined—the perfection of the precept, or the exactness and precision of all that is expounded, so far as the *letter* is concerned;—it is not this that is the greatest thing, though these things are great:—it is the *manner* of the teaching—the *spirit* of the teacher—the breathing into the mind to be quickened into goodness, of the living soul;—it is the creative power of him who instructs in what he fervently loves, and who feels within him the stirrings of the life he would awaken or impart.

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He can best inspire his pupils with generous purpose, honourable sentiment, self-respect, hatred of sin, virtuous resolves and holy aspirations, truthfulness and transparency, contempt of the sensual and the selfish, with all things else favourable to the growth of the religious life and the moral manifestations of advancing character, who possesses the power, from his own inherent nobility and goodness, and his thorough love for and sympathy with the young, of animating those subject to his influence, in respect to all that he would have them to become, with a spirit of high and chivalrous enthusiasm. In the formation of character, in the moulding of disposition, sentiment, and taste, in the implantation of principle, and the development of the moral or devotional affections—*influence* is more important than instruction; *inspiration* than knowledge; *the sympathy of the heart,* than the acquiescence of the reason, or the submission of the will. The nature and properties of the formative element in the minds around them, constitute the atmosphere in which the young live; by which their life, intellectual and moral, is mainly sustained, and for the most part permanently modified; and which, while it is the medium of vision through which they see all things else, can only reveal that world to which itself belongs; and there are many, alas! many and divers worlds, in which men live, and into which the young are born! It is thus that *homes* differ. They are formed by the pervading spirit, that emanates from the head, and which of necessity becomes the life and light of the rising race. Where parents are distinguished by culture and intelligence,—where there are tendernesss, delicacy, elevation of mind, high moral feeling, good sense, benignity, love,—the cheerful fulfilment of duty, the right estimation and the earnest pursuit of the great and serious objects of life, with the glow and sunshine with which taste and accomplishment gild and purify domestic intercourse

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and social pleasures,—where, in short, there are strong, healthy souls,—happy, good, active, conscientious,—presiding over the household, making the influence of what they themselves are, to be *felt* in everything,—*there,* children find themselves born into a different world, and awake up to a different life, from others,—and they come forth other sort of men from what *they* are, whose homes, in spite, it may be, of very much that money can purchase, are yet the seats of ignorance, or imbecility; of low tastes and vulgar habits; of unsocial tempers, or even of good-natured, but of uninformed, uncultivated, and therefore strengthless souls;—or where, though there may not be what is absolutely debasing, sensual, or sordid, there may be carelessness and neglect; the absence of whatever would excite, elevate, refine,—call forth intellectual power or kindle moral ambition ... It is the same thing in different schools, or in the same school at different times;—as there may be the power, or the want of it, of a pervading spirit emanating from the head, and filling the place with all that is healthy, invigorating, and exalting,—or as the feeling and spirit abroad among the boys, mostly generated and sustained by an influential few, is at one time gross, vulgar, and corrupting, and at another manly, generous, and pure. The *atmosphere* of a school is thus of the first importance in respect to all that touches upon morals and affects character; and this again depends on the spirit of those by whom it is created; first, on those who give the education received in the class-room, and next on those who give the education got in the play-ground. This latter education is often by far the most important, in making and moulding the future man. The spirit that shall distinguish *this community,*—in which they shall live together for a season, and through which they shall mutually affect each other—*this,* my dear Sir, it is, pre-eminently, *your* office to regulate and purify, I might perhaps say, to create

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and diffuse;—to you we must look for it to be such, that it may be the breath of life to them that breathe it. Lectures and lessons are not enough of themselves here. This element is not to be produced by mere teaching, however good,—much less by that which is mechanical, formal, and perfunctory. It depends, indeed, much more, on the culture of the understanding,—the activity and expansion of the mental powers—manly ambition and interest in respect to daily studies, than many imagine; and here, I am persuaded, as well as in all their collateral co-operation, you will have the sympathy of the Principal and of the other masters of the school. Still, much will mainly depend on you; and it will depend, as I have said, more on *influence* than instruction, on *inspiration* than knowledge. The moral and religious developer of youth must, most assuredly, impress his own image, and not merely that of the truth he teaches, on those whom he instructs. He will do it, whether he be worth transferring and perpetuating or not—a reality or a shadow. It is of vast importance, therefore, for him to see to what he is, and to the spirit with which he discharges his work, that he may really have something to infuse, and infuse it. Seed must have life in it to produce corn,—from husks and chaff nothing can arise. The seed-life of the lesson is the soul of the instructor. Without it, words are as good as dead. A lesson, indeed, by whomsoever given, may be said to have in it the principle of fructification in the truth taught, which truth, though sown in the soul by a careless hand, and lying there hid and dormant for years, may be at length warmed into life by a divine and gracious influence from on high. I admit this. And I admit further, that we need that higher influence from the first:—that we depend on it to quicken the truth in the child as well as in the man. Still, however, I strenuously hold,—and I believe it to be a

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principle of which teachers can never exaggerate the importance, or too solemnly lay upon their souls,—that, *to the young, there will generally be as much life, and life-giving power, in the truth taught them in any lesson,* AS THERE IS IN IT THE EARNESTNESS AND ENTHUSIASM OF A TEACHER, WHOSE SOUL IS IN HARMONY WITH THE LESSON ITSELF.

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APPENDIX.

NOTE.

Page 1.—First sentence of First Address. "*Although no systematic provision has been made by the British Government for the universal education of the people," &c. &c.*

As a comment on these words, or what seems to be implied by them, I here append the letter referred to in the preface, and which, though incomplete, was published during the late educational controversy, under the circumstances explained below, in the note addressed to the editor of the journal in which it appeared.*

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To the Secretary of the Committee of Council on Education.

Walworth, April 12, 1847.

Sir,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of two volumes of "The Minutes of Council on Education," for the year 1845.

Having to make this acknowledgment, may I hope that it will not be deemed presumptuous if I request permission to lay before you (which I should not otherwise have thought of doing) a few reflections on the scheme now before Parliament, which is occasioning so much excitement, especially in the body to which I belong.

I happen to be one of those who do not hold the abstract principle of the inherent viciousness of Government aid to education, as such. I do not, indeed, regard it as the duty of Government to undertake the education of the people, any more than to feed them; it is the duty of
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Government, in the first place, so to protect commerce and industry and to promote the general prosperity of the people, that they shall be able to feed and educate themselves. Nevertheless, as circumstances may

* *To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.*

SIR,—At the conference on education, now meeting at Crosby Hall, I was this morning called up to speak, though not in the habit of speaking at public meetings, nor at all intending to take a prominent part in that assembly. It so happened that I began a letter this week to the secretary of the Council on Education, having to acknowledge to him the receipt of two volumes of the Minutes of Council received last week; but I had this morning abandoned the idea of completing and sending it, as I found it extending to a great length, and I had still many things to say. Some of the views embodied in this letter, I attempted to express this morning. It just occurs to me, after reading your remarks of to-day on Dr. Vaughan's letter, that, long as my unfinished letter is, you might perhaps find room for it to-morrow, and that thus what I believe to be views in which a minority of the Conference sympathizes, may find an utterance somewhat more connected than I could give them this morning.

Yours, &c.,
April 14th. T. BINNEY.

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be such as to make it the duty of Government actually to feed some of the community, and to see to it that others be fed; so it may be its duty, from other circumstances, to educate some, and to secure and promote the education of all, or all of the poorer and humble classes. Moreover, inasmuch as the quality of education, both in teachers and pupils, may never rise to a very high standard if left either to the means of the working man himself, or to the aid offered him by spontaneous benevolence, it may be at least a wise, patriotic, and becoming arrangement for Government to assist in elevating the standard and enlarging the compass of popular instruction. In doing this, I can conceive that legislators may be actuated by the purest motives, and be as free from sinister aims as the most independent of popular leaders. They may wish to govern by reason rather than force; to prevent crime rather than to punish it; to create taste and diffuse knowledge that shall form an enlightened and virtuous commonalty; and thus, while saving the national resources from being spent on war, prisons, and police, to devote a portion of them to the worthier object of promoting the mental elevation of the people.

The manner in which a government may interfere to accomplish this object must be regulated by circumstances;—by the character, knowledge, history, wants—the political and religious condition—the realized experience, and the rational aspirations of the people over whom it is

placed. In some states and stages of society, I can conceive (in spite of my principles both political and religious) that the best way might be, solely by direct government provision on the one hand, and through the medium of an established church on the other. Happily, neither of these is either necessary or possible, now, in this land of industry, competence, and manhood,—of progressive political emancipation, and progressive religious independence.

I beg most respectfully to submit, that in this country, the recognised rights and actual condition of the people require that the three great properties that should distinguish Government aid to education—at least any expensive national system—ought to be fixedness by Parliament, encouragement to local action, and non-interference with religious teaching.

I wish to be permitted to explain what I understand by these terms, and how the principles they express appear to me to be violated by the Minutes of Council recently issued. In doing this I hope that, without offence, I may refer for illustration to an interview which I lately had with Lord John Russell, as one of a deputation from the three denominations, which interview being official on all hands, I trust I am not wrong in thinking that what passed in it could not be in any sense private or confidential.

1. Without at all pretending to have an opinion as to the constitutional character of the Committee of Council on Education, in its original appointment and with its primary powers, I cannot but express a fear that it is doing something *practically* unconstitutional in proposing to introduce an immense system, which, in its maturity and issues, will be a national institution, characterized by its magnitude and cost, and, once established, by its almost unavoidable and necessary perpetuity. It does not appear right, either that so large an outlay

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should be projected by the authority merely of a Committee of Council, or that a national institution should be liable to continual additions and alterations according to the judgment of such Committee, however worthy of confidence the individuals composing it may be, from eminent talents, scrupulous honour, and patriotic purpose. I am the more convinced of this from what passed when I had the honour of the interview with Lord John Russell to which I have referred. His lordship remarked that, as to expense, he really did not expect that the annual vote would ever rise above £150,000; to which I replied, that, if his

lordship thought so, he could have no idea of the scheme being carried out to any great or beneficial extent; for if it really ever came into such action as would be worth anything, it must and ought to occasion a much larger expenditure. I added that, for my part, I had no objection to £2,000,000 being spent on education, if necessary, and spent constitutionally and well, as I believed we should save it in other ways. But the only inference I can draw from Lord John Russell's remark is, either that his lordship had not grasped and realized what the Minutes of Council really may involve, or that he felt the system would *become* unconstitutional if it were to require very extensive additional grants, and that then it would be necessary to submit it, by bill, to Parliament. Some interpretation of this sort I think due both to Lord John Russell's honour and understanding; but I submit that it sustains the objection to which I am referring, and confirms the principle I have laid down. A system ought not to be introduced by any authority which includes in it what that authority cannot constitutionally be allowed to carry on. If, by necessary consequence, there be that in it which may speedily require revision by Parliament, it would surely be better for Parliament to examine the thin end of the wedge, and to prepare and legislate for coming probabilities.

But another remark that dropped from his lordship bearing on the other part of my first principle, struck me forcibly. On making some objection or other, his lordship observed, "We might introduce a minute to remedy that," or words to that effect. On which I immediately replied, "Ah! my lord, that is one of the things we fear, that we may never know what changes, alterations, or supposed amendments, may at any time be introduced." And this is undoubtedly a grave matter. Surely a national system, involving immense expense, and inviting action from all parties in things respecting which every point should be definite and determined—such a system, that perfect confidence may be inspired and established, ought to be introduced in another manner, and have every provision, principle, and law fixed and settled, without the possibility of comparatively private modification, or sudden, essential change. This point may be illustrated by what appears in the newspapers in relation to the Methodists. They, it is said, would be satisfied with the measure if the reading of the Scriptures, in the authorized version, were universally enforced, as that would be a protest against Popery; and the Government, it is said, are willing to begin by only aiding such schools as do thus use the Bible, but cannot

bind itself not, at some future time, to introduce a minute of another description. With my opinions, which I shall explain by and by, I cannot but regard the Methodists' idea of denying to the poor Catholic

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child secular instruction, except on a condition which his parent's conscience cannot accept, as perfectly atrocious; while the supposed Government offer, to accord to the Wesleyans to-day what they stand ready to revoke to-morrow, involves a principle so precarious as can never lead to the settlement of great questions, and can never be either proposed or acceded to by great-minded men.

2. I beg, in the next place, to submit that the directness of the Government aid to individuals, schools, and localities, and the centralizing character and tendencies of the proposed scheme, are not in harmony with the political progress of late years, nor with the genius of the country as favourable to the principle of municipal self-government. The less a Government does *for* a people the better; better, the more it encourages a people to do for themselves. In the projected measure too many benefits (and some of these are of a very questionable character) come far too directly from the Council and the Crown. It would be much to be preferred, if it were possible, to have educational districts, and to arrange for the inhabitants to tax themselves for those objects which the Government offers directly to effect. This point, also, I mentioned to Lord John Russell, and he seemed to assent to it as desirable and best, if it could be secured, referring to it as the system of the United States, only observing, "There, you know, it is made compulsory;" evidently thinking that this would be a fatal objection to a Dissenter, on the Dissenting principle that, in the matter of education, a Government should do and enforce nothing. I replied that I, for one, in common with many others, did not take the abstract ground that Government should do nothing, and that therefore the idea of wise and constitutional compulsory law was not to me, in itself, objectionable. I am quite willing to acknowledge that, as a first step, the proposed system is not without its advantages. It secures the establishment and the government of schools by the intelligent, liberal, and religious, who are already used to and interested in the work, instead of placing them in the hands of a promiscuous body of electors, who might be without judgment, delicacy, or discretion; still I do think it would be well if there were some signs, or indications of some sort, to encourage the hope that the real and ultimate object of the

Committee was to bring the people, in defined territorial districts, to do for themselves what it is necessary at present for the Government to propose to do for them. There is no such idea, and I suppose there is no such intention. The want of this, and the adoption of another principle, springs, I imagine, from a difficulty to which I shall afterwards advert, and occasions an injustice which cannot be concealed.

3. With respect to the religious aspect of the subject, I must express it as my own firm individual conviction, that while religion is necessary to the perfect development of the human being, to the culture, in fact, of that capacity which is his essential distinction, and which makes him specifically what he is, yet that secular instruction and religious education are two different things; and that while the former may be undertaken by any well qualified person, the latter belongs, by solemn obligation, to the parent and the church; the church, I mean, of the parent himself. If a church considers that the religious education of its young should be conducted in daily and hourly association with

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their secular instruction, and thus comes to look upon secular instruction itself as a thing to be in the hands of a species of ecclesiastics, be it so; it would not be difficult to defend such a theory, it may not be improper for those that can to realize it in fact; there was a time when it would have been the only theory that could have been taken, in connexion with the Episcopal Church, as the basis of a national system of education for England; and it might then have been the permitted, if not the right, because the only possible one. But it will not do now; now, I suppose, from the actual religious condition of this country—from the religious problems that have been wrought out, and stand demonstrated in our history—from the rights and liberties that have been asserted and secured, and have attained sanction and establishment by law, and which are acted upon openly by increasing numbers,—from these circumstances, every sane man, it may be presumed, admits the conclusion that the theory referred to is not only not possible now, but that if it were attempted to be realized, it could only be carried out by the violation at once of general principles and precise statutes, and the commission of the grossest tyranny and wrong.

The only fair and equitable system would be, as I believe, for Government to have nothing to do with anything but with the secular instruction of the people. This may not at present be possible. I will begin with it, however, and then drop down, lower and lower, till I

come to where we actually are, according to the showing of the scheme of the Minutes of Council on Education, for August and December, 1846.

1. In a country like ours, of great diversity of religious opinion, it is presumed that the best system of national education would be for the schools to be purely secular schools, for the children of parents of all denominations to learn together on an equal footing; for them not to be known in the school as belonging to either one church or another; and for neither priest nor presbyter to have anything to do in it; and this, not from the unimportance of religious education, but just because of its immense moment and awful sacredness. While there was this provision for what was secular (with which Government might consistently have to do), and which, from the effects of vigorous mental discipline, and the nature of a school literature like ours, could not fail to be connected with the growth of character, the implantation of principle, the formation of moral sentiment and habit, and the development of the virtuous man of society—at the same time, the churches of the land (with which Government better have nothing to do) would be pursuing their own work in their own way, their proper duty in their proper sphere; that is, through the parent, and the clergy, and the Sunday-school, and the Bible-class, and the evening or the afternoon week-day instruction, they might be training up their own youth in the path of their respective religious peculiarities, and inviting and welcoming all others—"those unclaimed by Lambeth, unknown to Geneva, unconverted by Rome"—who would come to receive what in Christian love they were ready to impart. This form of religious duty and religious beneficence, in relation to the young, is the duty of all churches, as such; they are not the duty of any Government. Governments are not intended to make men religious, or to save

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their souls, churches are; Governments may help and promote the instruction of the people in secular learning; but in respect to religion, they are best employed in simply securing to all churches unfettered and equal freedom, the power spiritually to educate their own youth, and to extend the blessing, by spontaneous benevolence, to their poorer brethren and negligent neighbours. This, then, would be the highest and best form of a national system. It would keep thoroughly distinct the secular and the sacred, and confine governments and churches to their proper provinces and proper work. I cannot but admit, however,

that I have no hope of its being at present adopted in this country. The idea prevalent among all sects, of religion being the basis of education (the ground-work, that is, of secular learning), would lead to the universal rejection of the idea as godless, atheistical, and so on, and to the denouncing of the man or the Government that should propose it, as decidedly infidel. This first system must needs be given up, from its unacceptableness alike to Churchman and Dissenter.

2. The previous plan being of necessity dismissed, the next best form of national education would be, for Government to aid schools built and conducted by any class or number of subscribers; to insist upon and inspect the secular instruction given, but to know nothing whatever of the religious; to enter all schools for the one thing, to enter none for the other; to permit them to be originated by any church or congregation that pleased—for such to unite, if they liked, their respective religious formularies with the daily secular teaching, but for Government to institute no inspection of this—to ask no questions, to require no statement, and, in fact, not to recognise the Episcopal, Congregational, Presbyterian, Methodist, or Catholic school, as such, but to confine its aid and its functions entirely to the support and examination of what was secular. The only law relating to religion should be, that as Government had nothing to do with the direct and positive inculcation of spiritual dogmata, but was seeking to secure the literary instruction of the entire people, no school should be allowed to refuse its general advantages to any child whose patents wished it not to receive the peculiar dogmatic religious teaching, especially in places where no schools could be sustained in harmony with the parent's religious views.

The advantage of this system would be, that the Government could not be opposed by either Church or Dissent for violating their respective principles. It would literally know nothing of religion at all, and have nothing to do with it; whereas, by the Minutes of Council of August and December, 1846, it does touch it on both sides—on that of the Church by positive provision and minute inspection, and on that of Dissent by requiring testimonials of a religious kind. The consequence is, the churchman says, "We are called upon to repudiate the principle we have always held, that the state can only assist religious institutions in connexion with itself, and that we alone can be properly recognized as the authorized religious educators of the people:" and the dissenter says, "Our principles are violated by the state aiding any religious

institutions whatever, in its taking upon it to require religious teaching at all, and by its demanding from us a statement respecting it." If the Government acted as at present proposed, there could be no ground

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for either of these complaints. The system, so far as Government was concerned, would not be in any sense an interference with religion; and yet such is the vivacity and vigour of the religious principle in all denominations, that, possessing the independent and uncontrolled opportunity for action, religion would be fully and universally provided for. But this system, again, I suppose must be admitted to be impracticable and hopeless. This arises from the existing relations of the Government and the Church, and the prevalent tendencies of the public mind. The Legislature would say, "So long as the establishment continues, parliamentary aid to education must both recognize religion, and provide for and inspect it, in Church schools. General opinion would neither sanction the contrary, nor the connexion of the State with the Church permit it.

3. If so, then we are brought to the last and lowest theory. The very least that a national system should include would be for Government to protect the lawful rights of its dissenting subjects. This should be done by requiring, in consistency with the Minute of Council of 3rd December, 1839, that in no Church school, especially where such school existed alone, should any children "be compelled to learn a catechism, or attend a place of divine worship, to which their parents on religious grounds object." And, in relation to dissenting schools, it should not require certificates respecting religious teaching, or proficiency, or know or inquire anything about either one or the other. This is as much the constitution of the country respecting the Dissenters, from various acts of Parliament, as the contrary may be supposed to be so respecting the Church, from the present connexion of the state with that institution.

This last case I put to Lord John Russell in the interview already referred to. I pointed out that, in neighbourhoods where there could only be one school, that would generally belong to the Church, and that there a dissenter's child would not be able to receive secular learning, except at the price of religious apostacy. It must learn a catechism objected to by its parents, and must cease to attend its own place of worship, this being the usual law of the present National Society's schools. His lordship candidly admitted that it was a mani-

fest evil and great hardship; but he proceeded to say "that the Government did not create the evil, it found it existing, the managers of these schools having formed and fixed their regulations for themselves." To this it was replied, that, "while admitting the right of the members of any church to make such laws for their own voluntary schools, if they liked, and to compel all who entered them to learn their formularies, and to attend only their Sunday schools and worship, yet, when such schools were made literally national, by being upheld by the public money, it then became the duty of the Government to protect the rights of the community whose money it dispensed, and so far to interfere as to enact that all children should be admissible to the advantages of the school, without being obliged, if their parents objected, to receive the specific religious teaching. It was no evil to the churchman to be required, as the price of the favour of the State, not to teach in such a case, but it *was* an evil, great and grievous, for the dissenting child to be compelled to learn." In the minute to which I have already referred,

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3rd December, 1839, this principle is recognized and enforced in relation to combined schools; why should it not in fairness be applied to church schools when so situated, that, by the necessity of the case, they *must* partake of a comprehensive character, by receiving the entire children of a neighbourhood?

Such appear to me the three forms by which a national system of popular instruction might be moulded to meet the religious difficulty. The first, I fear, would be opposed alike by churchmen and dissenters. The second would not be ventured on by the Government; and the third—the least possible concession to justice, to the claims of conscience, and the sacred rights of parents and Englishmen—even this, I am apprehensive, the church would be reluctant to grant, and the state unwilling to demand!

It is said to reflect that our religious condition is the great hindrance to anything like a really national or equitable system. It not only exposes us to sectarian jealousies, and makes us quick to perceive the slightest encroachment on our distinctive principles, but it leads to projects which involve, in their working, inequality and wrong. In consequence of the Government feeling itself obliged (or choosing) to dispense its pecuniary aid in connexion with specific religious teaching, the very apparent justice of its measures becomes in the end injustice. Churches and sects are aided, not districts and municipalities; the

consequence is, that the rich gain because of their riches, and the poor lose because of their poverty. The very things that in one case should diminish, and the other augment, aid, operate precisely the contrary way; and yet, all the time, the principle 01 appropriation looks like the fairest, and most reasonable thing in the world. So long as religious bodies are regarded, and education is to be administered according to *their* respective ability, there cannot but be this practical evil. Nothing can prevent it, but something that shall be at once municipal and secular, so far as the State is concerned; religion being being left—where it may be left safely—to the action of the religious bodies themselves.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

T. BINNEY.

The foregoing letter is not given with a view of following it up with what it might have included had it been continued, or with any extended or regular remarks at all. The time is past for that, in relation to the late educational discussions. Intrinsically, the letter has no claims to preservation, even so far as this publication may preserve it; yet, to that extent, I rather wish to give it the chance of "life, as something of a curiosity—as one of the very few voices, which, in the recent

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hurricane of public excitement, so far as the Dissenters were concerned, affirmed the principle of the possibility of Government consistently aiding the education of the people. That the province of Government is mainly to prevent; that it rather punishes than rewards; rather restrains than stimulates; that it more frequently and more properly says, "This shall not be done," than "thus and thus thou shalt do," must be admitted; but, that Government is only a device to render society possible, as if society was always to be considered as a crowd of savages, who were merely to be kept from plundering and murdering one another, and that, *being* thus restrained, nothing more was ever to be attempted—this, I do think, is by no means to go far enough, though other theories may go too far. We may include too little in our notion of Government, as well as too much; and the one error may be as fatal as the other. Admit that the figure may be false, that would make kings the parents of the people; and the reasoning unsound, that would draw from this fancied analogy either rights or duties; it

may yet not be wrong to regard the collective wisdom of a community, as sustaining something like this relation to the mass, nor to affirm that those "who think" must not only "govern," but may also guide, "those who toil." It seems difficult to deny, that consistently carried out, the principle on which the "Minutes of Council" were opposed, as that principle was stated and expounded by many advocates, would brand with error, assumption, and wrong, every thing that has ever been done by Government for the advancement of science; the encouragement of literature; the improvement of art; the opening of museums to the public,—their formation and support; the keeping up of gardens, parks, and palaces, to which the poor may repair for holiday recreation; pensions to impoverished authorhood or neglected genius; sacrifices on behalf of the enslaved and suffering; legislation for colleges; salaries to professors and examiners, with the conveyance to them of legal authority to grant honours and confer degrees. All these things are done; yet surely *society* would be possible without them. They are done; but by no means to the extent that it has hitherto been thought innocent to advocate. They have been hailed, some of them, by educated Dissenters as well as others; and they have availed themselves of the advantages by which they encouraged and rewarded the ambition of their children; but as soon as it is sought to attempt the elevation of the humbler classes, by Parliamentary encouragement, to a higher intellectual and moral culture, a cry is raised, not against the errors and imperfections merely of the proposed plan, but against the *principle* of any one solitary thing whatsoever being done by any Government, at any time, or in any manner, that would have any thing like a positive, or active, or auxiliary character, in respect to the promotion of learning or goodness; or that would be a step beyond the province of a Power, whose sole duty is supposed to consist in standing over the people with a drawn sword, to compel them to keep their hands off one another!

Had the Dissenters sought a modification of the Minutes, there is little doubt that they would have been listened to, and much might have been gained; but taking their stand on the principle they proclaimed, it was to be expected that Parliament would legislate without them. They threw immense power into the hands of the Ministers,

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and might as soon have expected to carry a vote for the abdication of the sovereign, as one for the Committee of Council to be "revoked," and to have all it acts, since its origin, recalled; unless, indeed, that

were proposed as the prelude to some aid to education under another form, of larger extent, and on more constitutional authority. This, however, was not their object, but the doing *nothing,* after so much had been done, and so many were willing that more should be attempted!

Looking for a copy of the first of the preceding "addresses" to give to the printer, I was struck, on opening it, by the first sentence;—"*although* no systematic provision has been made by the British Government, for the universal education of the people"—language, involving, as it seemed, not only the recognition of the principle that such provision might have been made, but something very much resembling regret that it was not—perhaps something like blame for the omission. And this sentence, I dare to say, might have been uttered not only five years, but five months, since, in the ears of many of the antagonists to the Minutes of Council, and might have been understood with the supposed implications, without producing either opposition or dissent, surprize or terror!

The sudden change of opinion and feeling which has recently been witnessed, has, no doubt, been mainly occasioned by the belief, that the proposed scheme was *intended* and adapted to work for the interests of the Church of England, and to injure dissent, and dissenting schools. If such were the fact, it was a valid reason for opposing *the plan.* Had efforts to modify it been found unavailing, or been known to be useless, that might have justified the conclusion that an equitable National system was not possible where, or while, a dominant ecclesiastical establishment existed; but still, it could hardly warrant the vaulting in a moment to the principle adopted—the absolute, universal, and inherent viciousness of every attempt by a Government to aid the education and improvement of the people; the danger to be apprehended if it did anything beyond keeping them quiet, and making it possible for them to get on together!

But abstract principles are the laws of action. *They* are to be taken and brought to bear on human affairs,—human experience is not to be regarded as working out and discovering *them.* This is partly true and partly erroneous. There are times for all things; and, among the rest, there are times for each of the parts of this process. In the government of nations and communities, it may be as bad to legislate too far a-head of the people, as to lag and linger too far behind them. In certain, "especially in public, departments, we cannot always do what is best, but must be content sometimes to do what we can.

Though not in morals, yet frequently in politics, and in ecclesiastical matters too, the abstract and ideal is *not,* practically, best. By those that have it, it may be kept in view, proposed, inculcated, but to become the ground of popular action, progress and experience must gradually demonstrate it to the general mind.

Let us suppose it possible that the abstract principle of the "no Government" party in America may come to be realized throughout society; that every individual shall be so enlightened and virtuous—every family so well ordered—every neighbourhood, town, and city, so

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instinctively self-regulated—that there will be 90 need of constable or judge, Parliament or Congress, law or law-makers, the world over. This consummation will have to be approached through progressive stages, and by the gradual disappearance of one form of Government, and one national or municipal institution, after another. Society must work out the theorem for itself, in actual practice, through all its steps, till it discover, one by one, the results which shall reveal to it the abstract principles, which its own ultimate perfection is to embody. It has ever been thus, both with political and ecclesiastical institutions. In one age, things have been done at which none revolted, and principles held which all recognised, which, by and bye, began to offend, then to be questioned, then to be discussed, then to be doubted, then to be denied, then to be discarded, till at last they were done away, and new abstract principles were enunciated, which, the teaching of experience, and the progress of light, discovered to be seated in the constitution of society, the nature of man, or the "sayings of God;" but which could not have been acted upon or applied earlier, because not before suspected or understood. The natural history and genealogy of such things are,—first the thinker,—then the thinker and the doer combined,—and then all men the doers without thought, or almost without it, because they are "to the manner born." It may seem strange to say it, but Christianity itself, as a divine thing, was thus thrown into the world to be progressively understood. Its real spirit and actual principles were not perceived by those who at first and but roughly handled it. I have no doubt that some of the apostles, if not all, did not see as we do, certain things, which are now regarded as foreign to our faith, or forbidden by the constitution of Christ's kingdom; but I think we are right nevertheless, and that the history of the church has led to the discovery of principles, and the application of truth, in

relation to matters, which, previous to the lessons of experience, even apostolic men would not have perceived to be dangerous or wrong. It is the constitution of providence in regard at once to the individual, to communities, and the species, and in relation to spiritual as well as temporal things, to give a quantity of raw material to be wrought up,—material, including properties and elements called, in both cases (without a figure) abstract principles, which, instead of being all made plain at first, are only *there*—in the substance—present and real,—to be brought out, understood, and applied, as the result of *work*—the study and experience, the blunders and success, the action and reaction, of successive generations.

Unquestionably, to reach and realize the ideal of an equitable national system of education, something better than the present Minutes of Council is required. Under the circumstances, however—with all parties at one time hailing a movement towards State aid, and approving, in some form, parliamentary provision, but all demanding religion in the school, and deprecating the idea of a secular system—I do not know that the Government could well have *proposed* anything essentially different from what they did; though Ministers might have been got (and have been glad to be forced) to modify some of the suggested regulations. At any rate, even on the Dissenting mode of reasoning about Establishments, the Minutes are a step in the right

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direction. If there be truth in the facts on which the reasoning referred to proceeds, things are approaching the beginning of an end. In the United States, we are told, all possible modifications of the Church and State principle have been tried, put to the test, "weighed in the balances, and found wanting." First, in some States, there was the endowment and support of *one* sect; *that* would not do. Then, the recognition of, and provision for, all; *that* would not do. Then, the letting of all alone, and *that does.* Now, surely it is a great thing in a country like this, with such an ecclesiastical system as ours, and with such an exclusive spirit as pervades it, to get the idea faiily admitted, that the period of proscription and exclusiveness is passed; that all forms of religious profession must needs be recognised; that there is no legislating for education without this; and that the Church must just quietly submit to it, because the time has come for it to part with a principle which it has held sacred, and for Government to admit and obey another which it thought profane. I could not advo-

cate or approve the practical extension of this principle to the support, by the State, of different *churches*—the payment of their ministers, clergy, priests; but it would not involve this, in my opinion, to consent to its application to the aid of *schools,* though the schools might belong to churches, if, according to the second of the schemes of the foregoing letter, Government knew not the school of one church from another, enforced nothing respecting, and inquired nothing about, their religious action. Whatever may be the true and the right, however, in this matter, and whatever the nature conduct of the sects, one thing is certain, that Government having affirmed the principle of the equal claims of the different religious bodies to recognition and aid in educating the people, it will be impossible for it to go back to the re-assertion of the exclusive principle. A step has been taken with the consent of the Church, which the Church herself cannot recall; and progress has begun by the will of the Government, which legislators will find it impossible to arrest. The strongest Dissenter might find satisfaction in this thought. Movement has commenced. Things will soon work, so as to render further advance necessary. The cause of truth, on whichever side it lies, must be benefited. Righteousness and religion, knowledge and liberty, I have no doubt, will be ultimately promoted, and, it may be, speedily too; though it may chance to be in ways which neither party at present dreams of, and by results for which neither are prepared.

"There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."

J. Unwin, Printer, 31, Bucklersbury, London.