

local authorities won't do their duty. If smoke nuisances are allowed to go on because nobody will exert himself to put them down; if good water is objected to because it costs a little more in the rates; if streets and alleys are left mere nests of fever and pollution for want of a few drains, the fault is not with individuals here and there, the fault is with the public at large, without whose support and encouragement, in an age and country of popular measures, no important work can be carried through.

#### NECESSITY OF PHYSIOLOGICAL AND GENERAL KNOWLEDGE.

Then as to the habits of those whose occupations are sedentary. I suspect we are few of us aware how rapidly a close indoors existence, where the brain alone is worked, and the muscles don't get fair play, extinguishes health, strength, and in time life itself. Every great city is fed by the influx of strangers from outside. Few, if any, keep up their numbers without such immigration. That is a startling state of things; and it need not be so. Men may live in masses without poisoning one another, and they may be prosperous men of business without sacrificing health to wealth. But they must first have a clear idea of their bodily nature and its requirements, and that is a kind of knowledge which surely can never be out of place. Well, then, there is another sort of teaching of which few persons will deny the usefulness. You well know in these districts how many of the great improvements in arts and manufactures have been made by workers, with only their practical good sense and acquaintance with the details of their business to guide them. Don't you think that such men will work all the better, will keep their eyes more open and their minds more on the stretch for improvements, if they have taught themselves something of the theory of what they are doing?

#### VALUE OF SUPPLEMENTARY EDUCATION.

I say then, for sanitary improvement, which is perhaps the most vital of all questions that affect the national well-being; for inventive improvement, for the keeping up of that manufacturing pre-eminence which we won by hard struggles, and for which we must struggle hard if we intend not to lose it; for the successful working out of the great social problem with which the operative class is now striving to deal, we want institutions such as this. We want them because they supply a gap in our educational system which cannot be otherwise filled up. We want them because we believe that great prosperity, not combined with corresponding intellectual or moral advancement, is for any people an anomalous and unsatisfactory condition. We want them, because we believe that without their help a great part of the £2,000,000 a-year which the State and the people jointly are spending on the education of the young will be comparatively thrown away. We do not suppose that they will effect marvels, that they will put down drunkenness or crime, or place men who have but little leisure for study and thought on a level with those who can give their whole lives to those pursuits. But we think they will be a help to many, a pleasure to many more, a check on some moral and physical evils, a hindrance removed out of the way of self-taught men who aspire to rise in life; and, so thinking, we shall proceed with pleasure to the principal object of our meeting to-night—that of paying honour, in the presence of this vast concourse, to those who have won early distinction in this institution, and who have thereby, if they will allow me to say so, pledged themselves before their fellow-townsmen to a career of honourable exertion and of not less honourable ambition.

## 2. SIR WM. ATHERTON, M.P., ATTORNEY GENERAL.

#### ESSENTIALS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

From a speech delivered by Sir William Atherton, at a Wesleyan Tea Meeting, in Newbottle, a town near Sutherland, we make the following extracts:—He said, "For a number of years he had taken a great interest in Education. By education he meant religious education, because, in his opinion, separated from religion it was no education at all, but a perversion. He believed that if it were possible to train youth in the bare knowledge of general literature, in reading and writing, and leave them ignorant of the existence of God, of their duty to their maker, and of the divine canon of their duty towards their neighbour—if they could carry out such a model of instruction (education he would not call it), he was persuaded that, so far from having benefitted, they would have injured the persons who should be the subject of their experiment. And in making that remark, which was familiar enough, he might say they were not destitute of authority and proof of its truth in the history of their race. The Greeks and the Romans of the olden time were polished people, but, being ignorant of the true God, in spite of their learning, eloquence, and polish, they were sunk in the most debasing practices, and presented the hideous spectacle of polished

vice. But in what respects were they different from what must be the condition of this or any other country where secular knowledge was imparted without religion? To fit a man properly for the duties of Christianity they must give him a knowledge of the various other objects which concern him, coupled with a constant reference to the great Author of Good, the great doctrines of charity and love of man to his Maker, which the Bible inculcated. Let this double instruction be given, and they did all that man could effect or do towards the proper cultivation of his fellow-man, and towards enabling that fellow-man to fulfil his duty in his station in this life, and after this life to enter upon a life of eternal blessedness.

#### OBJECTION TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

There were some who founded their objections to religious education upon the great variety of religious opinions—a variety which, when applied to the Protestants of this country, was very greatly exaggerated—and who advocated the separation of secular instruction from religious instruction, supposing the parents of the child to be disposed to take advantage of the law. That was the only controversy on the subject of religious education in this country, and very little now remained of it. The opponents of religious instruction formed a very inconsiderable section of opinion in this country.

#### NATIONAL NECESSITY FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

There were circumstances in the present day which seemed to make it more than ever incumbent upon those who had the power to endeavour to disseminate and confirm religious education among the various classes of the community. We might say without vanity, looking at the state of surrounding countries, that we were the light of the world. Providence had favoured us in a manner for which we could not be grateful enough. We were defended by our insular position, and were blessed with a free constitutional Government. We had long enjoyed religious liberty, and no man dared to interfere with another man in his honest exertions to bring his neighbour to the religion which commended itself to his mind. We knew little of the persecutions of other countries. England had long been—and long might it continue to be!—the asylum and refuge for the distressed from any other country. Enough of military glory had been accumulated to satisfy those who were most desirous that the country should be distinguished for its feats of arms. We were now blessed with an extended commerce and increasing colonies, and with every circumstance about us which could direct attention to our proceedings, and which ought therefore to make us persevere in the effort to make ourselves an example to the other nations of the world. With all these advantages, and with no impediment except our own slothfulness and want of liberality, surely it must be our own fault and reproach if the most of our fellow-countrymen did not present a favourable spectacle of order, morality, and decorum, which might to some extent seem to be an acknowledgment to the Almighty for the mercies which He had brought down upon us.

#### POWERLESSNESS OF GOVERNMENT AMONG A DEMORALISED PEOPLE.

As he was a member of Parliament, he might be excused making the remark that in this country the people took a very prominent part in its government. There were officers by whom the Government was carried on, and there was our beloved Sovereign at the head of the State. But no excellence in the Sovereign, no ability or efforts of the Ministry, could well conduct the Government unless the bulk of the people were sound at heart, and unless they stood firm to the true interests of their country. The time would come when a considerably greater number of the people would be called upon to take part in its government, and the best way to bring about so desirable a change was that the men who were likely to be brought into the governing body should be fitted by education to discharge their duty. Buildings like that in which they were assembled—erected for the worship of Almighty God, and for the purposes of religious education—were the means by which the people must be trained to exercise a higher and more extended part in the government of the State, and he would be the most true Parliamentary reformer, in his opinion, who would most zealously exert himself to maintain buildings of this description.

#### WHAT THE WORLD WOULD BE WITHOUT BOOKS.

Without books, God is silent, justice dormant, natural science at a stand, philosophy lame, letters dumb, and all things involved in Cimmerian darkness.—*Bartholin*.

#### DUTY THE PATH OF SAFETY.

It is one of the worst of errors, to suppose that there is any other path of safety except that of duty.—*Nevins*.