

In this Province, the system adopted cannot with accuracy be said to come under either of these two. Schools are established throughout the Province, and worked by a very complicated machinery; but, not being based on a recognition of the Scriptures, cannot possess God's blessing.

It is, however, but justice to say, that the Normal School, since its first establishment, has been conducted with ability and success; and where it has failed, it has not been the fault of the teachers, but of the principle on which it rests. It may further be remarked, that the Chief Superintendent has been diligent in his office, and seems to have done all the law permitted to introduce something of religious feeling and knowledge, by adopting the books made use of by the Irish Board of Education. So far, therefore, he deserves commendation, and indeed what is wanting in the system is not to be attributed to him.

It is, nevertheless, such a system of education as would not be permitted to exist for one day in Great Britain. And why?—because civil and religious liberty are well known and defined in the parent state, and education is reduced to principle. Hence all religious persuasions receive equal assistance from the Government in educating their youth. No damp is thrown upon their peculiar opinions; the children are not in this matter separated from their parents.

To take away the power of the parents to judge and direct the education of their children, which is their natural privilege from God, as our schools virtually do, will never be allowed in Great Britain.

There, money is advanced to assist and support schools in connexion with every religious denomination; and the Government is restrained from all interference with the religious instruction, discipline, or management of such schools: there, we have true liberty; gold, and not alloy. But, in this Province, Christianity is not so much as acknowledged in our school-law. The Bible appears not among our school-books; and a belief in Christianity is not included among the qualifications of school-masters; and I am credibly informed that there have been instances of of candidates for schools disavowing all religious belief.

Now the remedy is with you, my Brethren of the Clergy and Laity. We must insist upon the correction of this intolerable degradation, or our children will become infidels. We must demand what the Roman Catholics have already obtained—separate schools; and I honour them for insisting on this just concession. A request so reasonable cannot be long withheld from us, for unjust class legislation cannot endure long in any country.

In Great Britain, the National Society represents the Church of England Schools; the British and Foreign Society represent various Dissenters; the Wesleyan body, with the Free Church of Scotland, represent their several denominations. All are in correspondence with the Committee of Council, and receive assistance in the maintenance of their schools, and all proceed in educating their children in their own way, in harmony and peace; and why is not the same Christian justice dealt out to us here?

It is indeed surprising, that this system, which ought to have been from time to time carefully considered by the framers of the School Acts for this Province, since it offers so very easy a solution of the problem of suiting education to a mixed religious population, should have been neglected; the more especially as it will be very easy to modify our laws, so as to work exactly as they do in the English system.

All that is wanting is, to give powers to the different boards or authorities to grant separate schools, as they now do to the Roman Catholics, to all localities desiring them, and furnishing a reasonable number of scholars.

Not that this can perhaps be done without opposition from the irreligious, but they are few in number; and we do

not again expect the Roman Catholics in the Legislature so far to neglect the true principles of the Constitution as to seize upon privileges for their own benefit which they refuse to others. The continuance of such a course will have a melancholy end, for it would be better for Protestants to perish than submit to such oppression much longer, and to look passively on while their children are brought up in popery or infidelity.

As to any opposition from other parties, if left to itself, it would appear in its true colours, altogether contemptible, because it would be seen to be the emanation of the most narrow selfishness, which allows of nothing unless it accords with preconceived notions; and as they have no religious principles themselves, their desire is to crush such principles in others.

We must therefore petition the Legislature for separate schools. In the meantime, it will be our duty to establish a Church school at every Church or station, and also a Sunday school, both of which to be under the care of the resident Clergyman, whose duty it will be to see that the instruction is on the Church system, upon which she speaks most decidedly. Whenever she treats of education, she means catechising as the principal part. This she takes as her standard, from the practice of the primitive Churches.

Now this must be carried out as she directs, for the benefit of her baptized children, and of this education the baptismal promises and preparation for confirmation form an important and necessary part.

The whole arrangement depends upon you, my Brethren, and you must give your personal attendance to commence and keep it in motion. You must never forget that you are the commissioned instructors of the children of God's Holy Catholic Church, who are to lead them from baptism to confirmation; from confirmation, to their first communion; and from that, to the bar of God!

Compared to this, all other instruction is worthless; but such is the capacity of youth under proper discipline, that with all this they may be made to surpass in every kind of secular knowledge those of the same age who are brought up ignorant of the Gospel and its holy requirements.

Hitherto our people have not perceived the tendency of the present system. They are apt to think, that because some of the books consist of partial portions of Scripture, there is some religion taught. But our religion must be taught systematically by its great doctrines and creeds, as it has ever been, proving them by Holy Scripture, and thus giving them union, power and life. In this way the young Christian drinks conviction from the first fountain of eternal truth, and finds with lively satisfaction that every word which had been taught him by the Church has the sanction of the pure Gospel.

CONCLUSION.

In my Pastoral Letter of the 2nd of April last, invoking the presence of the Laity as well as the Clergy at this visitation, I mentioned that such a combination had been suggested to me by many respectable members of our communion.

They believe, that in the present crisis of our secular affairs, the Church, now strong in numbers and intelligence, ought to express her opinion as a body on the attempt making to despoil her of the small remainder of her property, which has been set apart and devoted to sacred purposes, during sixty years.

Adopting this suggestion, as wise and reasonable, I congratulate you as well as myself on the numerous and goodly assemblage before me.

In October, 1836, there was a meeting some what similar to this, held under the then two Archdeacons, but according to the usage of our Church, it was altogether clerical. It was called in consequence of the protracted absence and feeble health of our late excellent and Venerable Diocesan. His Lordship was too far gone in the disease which soon after