

tance. In those communities formed and rapidly multiplying under most peculiar circumstances, and comprising great numbers of Presbyterians and Roman Catholics, as well as members of the Church of England, it is evident that the attempt to select any Church as the exclusive object of public endowment, even if it were advisable in every other respect, would not long be tolerated. To none of the numerous Christians of those persuasions should opportunities be refused for worship and education on principles which they approve.

"The peculiar tenets of any Church ought to find no place, as such, in these general Schools; but opportunities should be afforded at stated periods, for the imparting of instruction of this nature to the children of different persuasions by their respective pastors. Such is the plan of National Education which has recently been adopted in Ireland, and as I have reason to believe, with considerable success, notwithstanding some peculiar obstacles arising from circumstances, not likely, as I trust, to exist in the Australian Colonies. This plan will require the formation of a Board of Education, composed of members of different religious denominations. The Board will have to agree on such extracts from the authorized version of the Scriptures, to be used in the Schools, as they shall deem best adapted for the instruction of youth. It will also be their duty, by a vigilant superintendence, to secure a strict adherence to the regulations under which the Schools will have been constituted. Persuaded, as I am, that education, founded on the Scriptures, is the best calculated to produce those permanent effects which must be the object of every system of education, I should wish that it may be thought practicable to place the whole of the New Testament at least, in the hands of the children; but, at all events, I hold it to be most important that the extracts in question should be of a copious description. It is my intention to send to you, for your information and as-

sistance, various documents relating to the system of National Education in Ireland, and also a report of the British and Foreign School Society, which is conducted on very liberal and comprehensive principles. I feel assured that I may safely leave to you and the legislative council the task of framing, on these principles, such a system as may be most acceptable to the great body of the inhabitants, and at the same time most conducive to the important end in view.

"I have hitherto had in view those Schools which are to be supported wholly at the public expense, and I am of opinion that Schools so supported, ought to be invariably of the general nature just adverted to. But the system of public education would, I think, be incomplete, if it did not leave an opening for the admission, on certain terms, of private contributions in aid of the public. There may be persons, and even classes of persons, who may entertain such objections to the general plan, as must practically exclude them from a participation in its benefits, and who may yet be unable to supply a proper education for their children from their own funds exclusively. It would be hard that any large class of His Majesty's subjects should be debarred from the advantage of education on principles which they conscientiously approve. I submit it to you and your council as a just object for your consideration, whether, in such cases, some pecuniary assistance might not be afforded from the public funds in aid of contributions from parties dissatisfied with the more comprehensive system. The terms and conditions on which such assistance may be tendered, I leave to the deliberate judgment of yourself and your council, persuaded that you will arrange a system which, excluding no large class of conscientious religionists from its benefits, shall be, in a true sense, national."