

by other educational institutions as those who may have graduated at Oxford and Cambridge. There is, confessedly, no inferiority in the quality of the product; and, seeing that those who make their way to the front ranks of the profession are not now usually University-trained men, the inevitable inference is, either that the Universities do not train well, or that other institutions train better. It is for the Universities, therefore, to look to it, and see that their machinery is equal to the work it is assumed to perform; to overhaul their organisation, and enquire whether any reforms are needed there to keep them *en rapport* with the requirements of the age. Perhaps, were University professors—some of them, we mean—less absorbed in impressing upon their students the importance of empty formalities and gaudy vestments—less taken up, in short, with the great petticoat man—millinery, and priestly-power questions—they might have more time to devote to imparting that thorough mental cultivation which is necessary to fit men to be useful and meritorious public servants at the Bar, on the Bench, in the Senate, the Council-chamber, and the Pulpit.—*Illustrated Times*.

2. UNIVERSITY EDUCATION OF GIRLS.

Commenting in congratulatory terms upon the Cambridge University local examinations which have commenced this week, the *Morning Post* (Dec. 18) remarks that the really great boon in them lies in the admission of girls. The wretched condition of most girls' schools is only really known to those whose duties have led them into practical experience of the working of those establishments. But those who do know them can testify to the baldness, meagreness, and poverty of the instruction given. It is not to be wondered at, since the teachers themselves have had no means of becoming better than they are. If they taught English tolerably well, French decently, music showily, and deportment gracefully, they held their mission to be fulfilled. Hence the large number of ill-grounded, half-educated, unreasoning, showy, superficial women, who so largely increase the insipidity of private society. But Cambridge has virtually said that if any schools or heads of families will so train their girls as to enable them to pass the same examination that the boys pass, the University will attest their success in the same manner as it does the success of the boys. The wisdom of this is undoubted, and the success is yearly increasing. This week girls are being examined in Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Leeds, London, Manchester, Norwich, Sheffield, Wakefield, and Wolverhampton. The total number is two hundred and two, a small number in itself, but, as against one hundred and fifty-eight last year, it shows a marked increase in the acceptability of this movement amongst the class for whom it is specially designed. In future years it must be greater.

3. COMPULSORY EDUCATION IN ENGLAND.

About a fortnight ago, an influential public meeting was held in Manchester, under the presidency of the Mayor, to consider the necessity of petitioning Parliament to establish a system of compulsory education throughout England. The following resolution was proposed, and carried by a large majority of those present on the occasion:—

"That, in the opinion of this meeting, it is highly desirable to make complete provision for the primary instruction of the children of the poorer classes, by means of local rates, under local administration, with legal power, in cases of neglect, to enforce attendance at school."

Mr. Alderman Bennett, the President of the Local Education Aid Society, at Manchester, who proposed the resolution, wound up with saying, that the Education Society give it as their deliberate and unanimous conviction, that such was the apathy and indifference of a large proportion of parents, that nothing but compulsion, in one form or another, would bring their children within the pale of education. Manchester had been the first to suggest any comprehensive measures for public instruction, and he should be proud, as a Manchester man, if it should now be able to instruct the country on this great question of education.

Dr. John Banks, who seconded Alderman Bennett's resolution, informed the meeting how the experiment of compulsory education had already been tried, on a small scale, at Manchester, with complete success. He was speaking, he told his audience, some time ago, to a gentleman who was a partner in a large machine-making establishment in Manchester, and, having become imbued with a feeling of the value of primary instruction, had made up his mind to try what compulsion would do. He had a great number of lads at work, and he gave six month's notice that, at the end of that time, every lad who could not read short words would be discharged. The six months passed over, and, true to his word, he "set up an examination," and he had nobody to discharge. He then "turned the screw" a little further, and, after a period of notice, within

which he required them to learn to write, he had very few to discharge. The same gentleman suggested that an education rate of sixpence in the pound, with the allowance of the Committee of Council on Education, would be ample to provide the necessary funds for this great experiment.

If the conclusions arrived at by the meeting at Manchester may be taken as a test of the educational opinions of the inhabitants of that great city, we fear there is little probability of the realization of Alderman Bennett's aspiration, that they should be followed by the country generally at this moment.

As it is very justly observed by the *Times*, in reference to the proposed scheme, the nation possesses already a system by which twelve hundred and fifty thousand children are receiving a sound and useful education, under the direction of the Council-Office. The number of schools, of pupils, and of teachers is increasing every year. The system rests on voluntary contributions, aided by the State. As the *Times* asks, have these Manchester gentlemen considered what would be the effect of placing side by side with schools created by voluntary effort and aided by the State, schools supported by compulsory rates? Of course, people will hardly care to pay for the education of their children, when they can get such expenses paid by the nation. Other questions, too, arise in connection with the scheme, which cannot be very easily answered. What religious instruction, for example, is to be given in these new compulsory schools? or what compensation is to be made to parents, steeped probably in poverty, for the loss of their children's labour? Other difficulties arise as the subject is further considered. But the whole scheme is so crude and ill-digested, that there is but little danger of its being adopted, either locally or nationally. We are content, as educational journalists, to note the movement as one of the "signs of the times."—*English Educational Times*.

4. AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL ITEMS AND STATISTICS.

ILLINOIS.—Within the past two years there have been 1,122 school-houses erected in the state, being a great increase over any two former years. The average cost of school-houses erected in 1859 was \$519; of those erected in 1866, \$1,357,—showing a very marked step in the right direction.

The Superintendent finds cause for congratulation in the great increase in the amount of *voluntary* district taxation for school purposes, which amount in 1857 was \$412,391, and in 1866 \$2,789,335, which he justly regards as showing a growing regard on the part of the people for the great interests of education.

County Superintendents.—In discussing School Visitation and the office of County Superintendent, statistics are given showing the great increase in efficiency of both, arising from the change in the law respecting the tenure of office and pay of County Superintendents. There have been 13,238 days spent in visiting schools during the past two years by the County Superintendents,—5,696 in 1865, and 7,542 in 1866. Number of schools visited in 1865 was 4,468, and in 1866, 7,363, leaving in 1866, 2,582, or 26 per cent., unvisited. It is shown that this results from the inadequate compensation afforded by the present law—although it is a great improvement upon the former. The County Superintendency is now for the most part filled by earnest educational men, and the justice and necessity of an increase in their pay is forcibly argued.

The Township System.—is fully discussed, and its advantages pointed out; but, while the belief is expressed that the people will soon demand it, its immediate adoption is not urged. We think the Superintendent evinces his wisdom in this; for, while we have no doubt that upon the whole the Township System is far preferable to our present one, yet all such radical changes should rather be demanded by the people than forced upon them. Let the arguments and facts of the report go before the people and be discussed by them for the next two years, and then it will be wise to act.

Normal University.—The total expenditure for the University during 1866 was \$16,984,96, and the total number of pupils in all departments for the same time was 772. The amount of tuition received from the Model Department for 1866 is \$4,304,97.

The School Law has been much improved by the action of the last General Assembly, and but few amendments are now proposed. They are these: (1) Provide that those Union Soldiers who entered the army during their minority may attend, free, any public school in the districts where they severally reside, for a term equal to the portion of their minority spent in the public service. (2) Extend the privileges of public education to all the school-going population of the state, impartially. (3) Provide a general law under which cities and villages may organize for educational purposes without resorting to special legislation. (4) Pay County Superintendents a salary (to be retained out of the school fund of their respective counties) sufficient to enable them to devote their whole time to the duties of their office. (5) Require boards of directors to report certain school statistics to township treasurers. (6) Provide that