

ground is, that everything possible should be left to the *laissez faire* principle, and another, that whatever the State undertakes it must necessarily do less well than the individual could do it. Both these positions, true as broad principles, have in respect of public education been so unanswerably controverted by the first and most liberal of modern English writers on *Political Economy*, John Stuart Mill, that it is only necessary to refer to his work, where he proves that education is one of those things which it is admissible in principle that a Government should provide for the people, and that help in education is help towards doing without help, and favorable to the spirit of independence.

Passing from the question of general education to the specific action of the department, it will be right to give some instances of its functions which could not be carried out by any private agency. Neither Navigation Schools nor Schools of Art, in the present state of public intelligence, could well exist without the assistance that the State affords to them. The collecting of casts and examples of art from the national museums of other countries could only be systematically carried on by a government agency. Already the French Government have permitted electrotypes and casts to be taken of the finest original works in the Louvre, Hotel de Cluny, and Musée de Artillerie, at Paris, and these repetitions may be seen in the Museum. Arrangements have been made to obtain similar privileges in Dresden, Berlin, Frankfort, Vienna, &c. Thus in a few years copies taken by means of electricity and photography of the great Art-treasures in Europe will be collected for the benefit of this country; and, by a self-acting process be distributed as prizes to local museums and schools, and thus will lay the foundations for the establishment of local museums of art, wherever the people themselves may make the necessary arrangements for housing and preserving them. Another instance of the necessity for a central action, which may be open to public criticism and above the suspicion of partiality in administration, is shown by the establishment of the educational museum. This museum is for the most part the assemblage of books, objects, and appliances for aiding education produced by different agencies, all competitors with one another. The producers of educational books and apparatus here willingly submit in competition to the public the publications they have issued. The public here consult and compare together the different models of schools recommended by the National Society, the Home and Colonial Society, the Homerton College and others.

The total national expenditure for promoting public education and science and art in every way through the primary division of the Education Board, the British Museum, National Gallery, grants to universities, and grant to this department, may be taken at the present time, to be in round numbers a million of pounds sterling, which divided among our population, say, of 30,000,000, makes the contribution of each to average nine pence per head per annum. It is difficult to calculate the annual value of the production of this country; but I think, seeing that our imports and exports last year amounted to £288,545,680, it is not an over estimate to place it as being worth £400,000,000 a-year. The State contribution