

PART II.

The same system is established in Democratic Switzerland.

years hence, if every child from this time henceforth should receive eight years instruction in the practical arts and duties of life on Christian principles!

But it is erroneous to suppose that the Prussian law on this subject is an appendage of despotism.—It exists in the democratic Cantons of Republican Switzerland, in a more elevated degree than it does in Prussia. A. G. Escher, Esqr., manufacturer at Zurich, whose testimony has been quoted in a former part of this Report, gives the following evidence on this point, before the Privy Council Committee on Education. In answer to the question, “In the Free Cantons of Switzerland, is the education national and compulsory?” Mr. Escher says: “In the Protestant Cantons it is entirely so. No child can be employed in any *manufactory* until he has passed through the Primary Schools; and he is further under the obligation of attending the Secondary Schools until his sixteenth or seventeenth year. And under all circumstances, and for every employment, it is obligatory on parents to send their children to the Public Schools until they are absolved from the obligation by an examination as to the efficiency of their education.” In these Cantons the opinion of the people is, in the largest sense, the law of the land, yet so enlightened and so strong is that opinion, that it enacts laws, enforced by the severest penalties, securing to every child such an education as is suitable to his intended employment in life.

Also in the Free States of Germany.

The same elevated public opinion exists and operates in the free States of Germany, as well as in despotic Prussia. On this point I will quote the testimony of an intelligent American—late President of the Senate of the State of Massachusetts; and at present Secretary of the Board of Education at Boston