what the nature of tbe prescribed inquiry is to be. I hope that while all honour is paid to attainments, while quickness and self-possession on the day of trial have their due reward, the qualities of diligence, and fidelity, and steadiness in a clerk, of a ready perception and a prompt judgment in a soldier, will not escape the judging eye of our chief examiners. Even in awarding a degree, much discrimination is required, and a failure in one branch of knowledge may be balanced by excellence in another. Some severity at the commencement of such a system is both to be expected and desired; but I repeat, the system itself must be carefully watched, and the experiment must be often repeated before it can be said that the strength of our new machinery has been fully tested."

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2. RIGHT HON. C. B. ADDERLEY, M.P.

(Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education.)

PRINCIPLE UPON WHICH GRANTS ARE MADE IN ENGLAND.—DENOMINATIONAL CHARACTER OF THE ENGLISH AND IRISH SCHOOLS.—COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE.—PRIZES.

Mr. ADDERLEY, before distributing the prizes of the North Staffordshire Prize Scheme Association for the Promotion of Education, at Stoke-upon-Trent, delivered an address, in which, he said that "the first inference to be drawn from the largeness of the number of candidates who elected to be examined in the Scriptures was that the general feeling of the people of this country was by no means in favour of a national system of secular education only. (Applause.) This was now taken as a settled fact by Parliament, and was always considered one of the solved problems of education. As an illustration of this he mentioned that a short time since, when the Manchester Secular School applied to him for a portion of the Parliamentary grant for educational purposes the only answer he could possibly give was that it was not within the province of the Committee of Council to make a grant to a merely secular school. (Hear, hear.) If there was one thing which more than another had upon all occasions been definitely laid down by Parliament, it was this—that the principle to be adopted in the distribution of the educational grant was that of rendering assistance to the voluntary efforts of all recognized religious denominations. (Applause.) The second inference which Mr. Inspector Norris made in his annual report was drawn from the fact that 200 children of all denominations, with the consent of their parents, submitted to be examined by him in the Scriptures, and from this he inferred that the religious difficulty was not a real obstacle to the establishment of a comprehensive scheme of national education. He (Mr. Adderley) was afraid the inference would not stand the test of experience, although experience, might bear it out in part. He believed that the religious difficulty need be no obstacle if the parents were sensible and if the managers of schools and the examiners were trustworthy. But religious jealousies did exist, and there was nothing else which prevented the formation of a great national scheme of education. It was these religious jealousies which had *rendered the Irish National Education scheme as purely denominational as the National Schools of England*, and which had prevented the adoption in this country of a plan far more economical and efficient than that which at present existed. There were, however, signs of these jealousies vanishing; for Mr. Norris reported that several of the promoters of British schools had expressed their complete willingness that he should examine the children taught in them, and he (Mr. Adderley) hoped that this feeling would extend, for it would be of the greatest possible benefit to the country. Referring to an earlier report of Mr. Norris, with regard to children being taken from school at too early an age, Mr. Adderley said he did not at all wish to compel parents to keep their children at school. It was sometimes contended that the Legislature ought to use such compulsion, but he thought such a course ought to be guarded against; and he did not believe it would ever succeed in England. (Applause.) It would be inefficient, and would be sure to be evaded. *He believed that the best scheme for keeping children at school for a proper length of time was the prize scheme.* He was not for keeping the children of laborers from the labour which was their real school for life, and a very efficient school too; but, at the same time, he thought a prize scheme was doing, and was likely to continue to do, a good work, by preventing reckless parents and employers from prematurely benefiting by the strength of those who ought to be at school. The existence of an educational commission at this moment must be of very great interest to every friend of progress. The commissioners had commenced their investigations with great spirit; and they intended for their guidance to take sample districts from various parts of the country. What their object was, or rather what the object of Parliament was through them, was to arrive at some safe conclusion regarding the present state of education generally. They knew the state of inspected schools, but they also wished to know the state of those which were not inspected. They wished also to know the state of remote places which had no schools at all; and he could assure the meeting that the gentlemen who composed the commission were very able men, and had set about their work with great earnestness and vigour. They would, among other things, consider the prize scheme with the view of ascertaining how far it could be made available for a national system of education. That was all he should say with regard to their work, but he would add that when they made their report he did not believe they would propose any radical change in the existing system. This association and other associations might, therefore, proceed without waiting for the report of the commissioners, for he believed that the prize scheme exactly embodied the best principles of the existing system. The very interesting extracts which Mr. Norris had read from the competition papers must convince them that the association was doing a great and good work, and that it deserved the warm support of all the friends of education." (Loud applause.)

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3. RIGHT HON. W. COWPER, M.P.

(Late Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education.)

BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF EDUCATION IN ENGLAND, AND OTHER COUNTRIES—SUGGESTIONS AND REMEDIES.

Mr. Cowper, after some observations introducing the business of the Educational department, over which he presided, proceeded to say: "Interesting and important as are the observations and study of the material world, no one will deny that the study of the mind of man, and of the means of developing its power by education, is a still more important and noble pursuit, and that success in ascertaining the fixed principles of this science would confer an inestimable boon on mankind. One first and greatest want is a collection and generalization of facts, sufficient to form a basis for our deductions and conclusions. Our information respecting particular methods of education seldom embraces their ultimate results; whereas we require to know their effects, not merely within the sphere of the school-room, but also for that after life for which they assume to be a preparation. Some managers, it is true, have taken pains to trace the career of young people who have left their schools; and statistics are occasionally collected, such as those which the Admiralty can furnish with respect to the boys who enter the navy from the Greenwich Hospital schools. These boys are traced through the ships in which they serve, and have been found amply to justify, by their acquirements and superior conduct, the trouble and expense incurred in their education. But such information is rare and exceptional; and even the records of the previous education of prisoners are not available for very safe or general conclusions. The scientific treatment of education would be aided by more precise appreciation of the value and proper admixture of the various methods of teaching. The methods of individual, of simultaneous, and of mutual instruction, and the pupil-teacher system, have successively come into use, and it would be important to determine the occasions to which they are severally adapted. Among other matters on which more settled conclusions must be reached before education can assume the regular proportions of a science, are the degree in which emulation should be encouraged, the right uses of rewards and punishments, the efficacy of prizes, and the respective advantages of oral and written examinations. Since the last meeting of this association, when Sir J. Pakington filled the post to which I have unworthily succeeded, that zealous promoter of education has taken a step towards supplying this deficiency; and the Royal Commission will, doubtless, furnish us with facts on which we can rely, and facilitate the understanding of our educational position. That position is far from satisfactory. The education of our upper classes is said to be the best in Europe, and its boast is, that it has a large share in producing that character of the educated English gentleman of which we are so proud; and no doubt it is an excellent training of the mental faculties. But try it by this test:—How much of what has been learned at schools and Universities is found practically useful in after life, and what proportion of men voluntarily continue, when they are free, the studies they submitted to as scholars, or pursue the cultivation of their minds? And it must be admitted that, though comparatively good, this education is absolutely defective. The education given in the middle class and commercial schools is, generally speaking, as faulty, in comparison with all other education, as it is bad in itself. It has great pretension and show, without substance or solidity. There is no superintendence whatever; there is no test of the capacity of the master, and no test of the success of his teaching. The parents are left to judge after their own uninstructed notions of the excellence of the school, and generally pay the most attention to what is really of the least importance. They are apt to have the highest respect for those schools in which the finest copperplate hand is acquired, with oval flourishes and pen and ink devices, and in which the boys are pushed on into algebra and trigonometry before they have mastered ordinary arithmetic. Accordingly, when a selection of about 1,200 of the best pupils were placed under the Oxford Examinations, half failed to