

Amid the general political upheaval that marked the year 1848, a very distinct reaction against "authority" and precedent was discernable also in the monarchy of intellect. "I think," says Professor Masson, "that I can even mark the precise year, 1848, as a point whence the appearance of an unusual amount of unsteady thought may be dated—as if, in that year of simultaneous European irritability, not only were the nations agitated politically, as the newspapers saw, but conceptions of an intellectual kind, that had long been forming themselves underneath in the depths, were shaken up to the surface in scientific journals and books." (*Recent British Philosophy*.) It fortunately happened that, when the political atmosphere had somewhat cleared, and while men's minds continued still in the quickened and receptive condition which recent events had induced, that great school of applied science—the Exhibition of 1851—opened in London. Here was registered in a few months what an Ontario teacher would call an "aggregate attendance" of more than six millions and a quarter of pupils. The vast educational value of this reunion is now, after the event, apparent to the dullest mind; but it argued great sagacity in Prince Albert to define, more than twelve months before the inauguration, its true significance, in these memorable words: "The exhibition of 1851 is to give us a true test and a living picture of the point of development at which the whole of mankind has arrived, and a new standing point from which all nations will be able to direct their further exertions." (*Speech at Mansion House, March 21st, 1850.*) The impulse thus given to education on the Continent was immediate. In 1852 the French Government were already recasting their whole University system, and bestowing on the newer knowledge its appropriate recognition in the degree, Bachelor of Science. (*Baccalaureat es Sciences.*) Special scien-

tific schools and universities began at once to multiply in Germany, Prussia and Switzerland. For want of wise concession a mischievous distinction had, early in the 18th century, arisen on the Continent between "useful" as opposed to "liberal" education—two things which (as Sir Thomas More once said of law and equity), "God hath joined, but man hath put asunder." The classical schools became, in Germany, stigmatized as "word Schools," (*verbalschulen*) while those institutions which restricted their training to the "3 R's," and to industrial science, were dignified as "thing schools" (*realschulen*.) The publication of Rousseau's "*Emile*" in 1762, powerfully stimulated the demand for objective teaching; every new scientific discovery added to the momentum, and advanced men's minds further towards those fundamental changes, which the middle of the 19th century saw initiated in the whole theory and practice of teaching. While these profound educational movements were in progress on the continent, England was peacefully sleeping on. In 1867, however, the nations assembled at Paris in industrial congress, and England was unspeakably startled to find that a brief interval of sixteen years had, in numberless departments, converted her industrial and artistic superiority into the most palpable inferiority; and that neglect of those general and special educational appliances, which her continental rivals were strenuously perfecting, signified rapid national decadence. Then followed the usual and characteristic panic; commissioners were sent to France and Germany, to report on the systems of instruction there pursued. Then was issued, in hot haste, a Commission of Inquiry into the condition of English Grammar Schools, which has since been followed by similar investigations in the subjects of Primary and University Education.

A considerable number of the English Grammar Schools, (which furnish a con-