

TO THE EDITOR.

DEAR SIR,

If consistent with the plan of your miscellany, I would offer a few thoughts on the subject of education which, I have no doubt you will agree with me in thinking, has never yet, in this province, met with that general attention, which its importance merits. While, for a few years past, great exertions have been made, in almost every part of Europe, and in the United States of America, scarcely any thing has been done here, to improve the state of our common schools. The first improvement necessary is a more liberal support. The miserable pittance which the teachers at present receive, presents no inducement, but to the lame and the lazy; and, though we have many respectable men in the province, filling the humble but useful situation of teachers, they are encouraged more by the hope of better times, than any present remuneration they receive for their labors.

I have lately read Mr. Cousin's report on the Prussian system of education, Duncombe's reports, Simpson's Philosophy of education, Chambers's educational course, Stow's Training system, and Taylor's District School, all of which I would recommend to the consideration of such as have these works within their reach. They throw much light upon the subject, and show that vast improvements are yet to be made, in this important science. Simpson, indeed, wishes to exclude religion as the basis of all useful education, which is entirely wrong. The experience of the last half century clearly proves, that education without religion is a curse to mankind, rather than a blessing. The happy effects of the wise and judicious conduct of the church of Scotland, in making religion an essential part of the parochial system of education, were long, and still are visible, in the intelligence, industry, morality and religion of a large proportion of her sons. It is only since this system was relaxed, and religion began to be neglected, in the schools of our native land, that the enemy has been more particularly successful in sowing tares among the wheat. But though I differ from Simpson on this subject, yet, in other respects, his work deserves attention, and may be read with advantage.

The monitorial system of Bell and Lancaster, the infant system commenced by Owen, at the Lanark cotton mills, and improved by Wilderspin and others—and the Intellectual system of Sheriff Wood of Edinburgh, have all contributed something to the better understanding of this interesting science. But of all the improvements lately introduced into the system of education, none, I think, is so important, or so likely to benefit the rising generation, as the Training system, lately introduced into Scotland, by the Glasgow Educational Society. The Normal school, lately established by this Society, under the superintendance of Mr. McCrie, their rector, is now in full operation. Many teachers trained and instructed, according to

this system, have already been sent out from the seminary. Indeed the call for qualified teachers after the advantages of the system had become apparent, was so great that the society, in less than a year, is not able to supply half the demand. Much higher salaries are consequently offered for teachers, from the Normal Seminary, by those who are anxious to obtain them. The death of the late rector, Mr. McCrie, who had been at much pains and expense, to qualify himself for the difficult task he had to perform, is a serious loss to the institution. He had been employed, for about two years, before he took charge of the institution travelling on the continent of Europe, at the expense of the Society, I believe, and making himself intimately acquainted with the Prussian system, as well as with the various improvements lately introduced into France and Germany. After his return, and while arrangements were making for the establishment of the Seminary, he delivered a number of lectures in Glasgow, tending much to disseminate correct and useful information, on the subject of education. Though his death, so soon after the institution had been brought into full and successful operation, was felt as a serious loss, yet it is a comfort to know, that he has left behind him several of his pupils, fully qualified to take his place; so that there will be no interruption to the progress of the good work.

When the Rev. Dr. Lang left Scotland, last summer, for New South Wales and Van Dieman's Land, he not only took out with him a number of ministers, but about as many teachers, properly instructed in the training system, at the Glasgow Normal Seminary. They are probably already arrived at their destination; so that, in these distant colonies, the training system will be in operation, before one half of our population knew, that there is such a thing in existence. The deep interest taken in this excellent mode of education, in our native land, may be learned from the following extract from a Scotch paper:—

"THE GLASGOW EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY are receiving orders, to a greater extent than they can at present supply, for TRAINED TEACHERS, of different grades and qualifications, from various parts of the United Kingdom; but more especially young gentlemen of good talent, extensive acquirements, and decided piety. The emoluments offered, for these latter, vary from £80 to £150 a year. Appointments are generally made after the parties spend a certain portion of time in the seminary, and prove themselves capable of adopting the complete TRAINING SYSTEM, physical, intellectual, and moral. A period of at least six months is necessary to acquire the system, and the several professional branches of instruction."

The training system is simply an advance upon the plan adopted in infant schools; and when Mr. Owen stumbled upon this system, at first merely by accident, he little suspected what important consequences would arise from his discovery. The proper education of the mind, is the object to be gained. This has hitherto been far too much neglected. To tell youth what