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## EDUCATION IN FRANCE.

Bentley's Miscellany for June has an interesting article on education in France, from which we compile some interesting facts and statistics. The system of education in that empire has been considerably liberalised of late years. Under the old monarchy it was under the direct management of the government, although a certain number of private schools existed by permission. They were, however, under the control of the academical authorities, and the teaching in them was confined within prescribed limits. Under the first Empire, in 1805, the system was reconstituted on a more liberal basis. In 1833 further extensions of the system were made, all the schools being still under the exclusive control of the government.

But in 1850 the monopoly assumed by the state was greatly diminished, a law being passed in that year establishing private schools of all classes, M. de Falloux being then Minister of Instruction, and the projector and framer of the law. The general superintendence of education is vested in that officer, who is assisted by the “Superior Council of Education,” which is composed of four archbishops or bishops, one Calvinist and one Lutheran minister, one delegate from the Jewish consistory, all chosen by their respective colleagues, and several superior government officials named by the state. Eighteen inspectors-general are attached to the council.

For the administration of the public schools (those supported

by the state as distinguished from those founded by private enterprise,) except those in Paris, there is an Academic Council, except that in the primary public schools, their action is confined to questions of pure teaching. Every commune is *required* to have a public primary school for boys, and every commune of eight hundred inhabitants is equally bound to have a separate primary public school for girls. Children of different sects are not allowed to frequent the same school, unless, as often occurs, there is only one of any kind, public or private, in the place. As much as possible separate schools are provided for children free from attempts at conversion. The father is the sole judge of the faith in which he wishes his child to be educated.

Public primary instruction includes, obligatorily, moral and religious teaching, reading, writing, geography, physics, natural history, agricultural, and mechanics, singing, and gymnastics. In girls' schools needlework is added. This public instruction is gratuitous for all children whose parents cannot pay for their schooling: in Paris, and in certain communes, no payment is received at all. The delicate question as to who can pay and who cannot is decided by the municipal council of each commune, which draws up an annual list of the two categories of children, proposes the rate of payment to be charged to those who do pay, and sends the whole for confirmation to the prefect.

The number of communal primary schools in France, whether for boys only or for the two sexes together, has risen from 22,640, in 1833, to about 36,500 in 1847. There are 36,000 communes in France. The number of private primary boys' schools in 1858 was estimated at 3,500, making a general total of about 40,000, of which total 22,000 were exclusively for boys, and 18,000 for both sexes. The number of communal girls' schools, which was only 5,455 in 1847, was nearly 14,000 in 1857, while the number of private primary girls' school in the latter year amounted to 11,500, forming a total of about 25,500. The general total of primary schools in France in 1858 stood, therefore, at 65,500.

The great majority of the 36,500 communal boys' schools are taught by lay teachers; but of the 3,500 private boys' schools, about 3,000 are in the hands of the Christian Brothers. Of the 25,500 girls' schools, 13,500 are taught by nuns, including a certain proportion of communal schools, for which it is often difficult to find female lay teachers in sufficient number.

In 1857 the secondary schools were composed as follows:—