

the State says to a parent, "Give me your child, and I will educate him," it is a business altogether different from the State saying, "Give me your money, and I will dig canals, and build railways, and establish light-houses." It is a matter of supreme importance for the parent to know how the child is to be educated—by whom, for what, and on what principles. The happiness, usefulness, and moral health of an intelligent, moral, immortal creature are largely involved in that question. It is clear that it is within the power of the Christian parentage of a nation so to order matters that the education of that nation must be on Christian principles, within certain limits. What are the limits *below* which their allegiance to Christ will not suffer Christian parents to descend; and *above* which allegiance to good sense, and fair-dealing between one citizen and another, will not allow the magistrate to ascend? This is the question at issue.—What is the precise province of the magistrate of a Christian nation in education?

THE KEY OF KNOWLEDGE.

1. It is certainly one of the ends of a national system of education to *put the key of knowledge* into the hands of each child-citizen. It is beyond the capacity of child-hood, beyond the power of the teacher, beyond the means indeed of a country like Canada to make chemists, mathematicians, linguists, botanists, historians of every boy and girl in the Dominion. The first duty of the State is simply to put the key of knowledge into the hand of each pupil; to teach him how to use that key; and to let him open with it what doors he chooses in his progress through the temple of truth. That key lies in three things—the three R's—Reading, 'Riting, and 'Rithmetic; through which citizens can *know* the laws

of their country, *reco^rd* their own thoughts, *read* the thoughts of others, and *calculat*e in the daily affairs of life. That simple *key* can open hundreds of rooms in the great temple; and it is the opinion of many thoughtful men that the work of national schools should be chiefly—almost exclusively—to teach the pupils to use well, at their leisure in after years, that threefold key; instead of rushing their pupils from one subject to another, from one room to another of the temple of all the "ologies," and cramming their memory with facts which they forget as soon as they learn them; giving them, as Samuel Johnson said, a mouthful of everything, and a bellyful of nothing. On this point Sir John Lubbock spoke well as follows, lately, in the British House of Commons:—

"To many it seemed that our present methods relied too much on memory, and too little on thought; that they sacrificed education to instruction; that they confused book learning with real knowledge; that, instead of training the mind to act with freedom and effect, they choked the machinery of the brain with the dry dust of facts, which at best were but committed to memory, instead of becoming a part and parcel of the child. (Hear, hear.) In education, and especially perhaps in elementary schools, our object, he contended, should be to train, rather than to teach, the child. What the children knew when they left school was comparatively unimportant. The real question was whether we had given them a wish for knowledge, and a power of acquiring it. (Hear, hear.) What they learnt at school would soon be lost, if it was not added to. The great thing was to interest them; and not so much to teach them, as to make them wish to teach themselves. Unfortunately, our system of education had too often the very opposite effect, and under it the acquirement of knowledge had become an effort, rather than a pleasure."

We do not say but the State ought to provide means of higher education in the languages and the sciences, by High Schools and Universities, for such as have means, time, and inclination to follow that course; but for