

For the Canadian Son of Temperance.
FREE SCHOOLS.—No. 2.

To show that Free Schools are not utopian—that they do not appear splendid only in theory, we need only point to the free schools in the Eastern States, where they have existed for more than two centuries, and their practicability and superiority over all other systems, will appear manifest. The Pilgrim Fathers, with their characteristic acuteness, and far-sightedness, perceived very plainly that the scion of liberty, which they had planted in their adopted land, and for which they endured the privations of expatriation, would not flourish, and grow to the mighty tree, destined to overshadow this vast continent, under whose branches were to repose so many millions of free men, unless it were carefully pruned by the hand of an enlightened judgment,—unless the genial showers of knowledge, continually watered its expanding foliage, and dissolved the various ingredients that were to be assimilated to its structure. They therefore proclaimed to the world, and adopted it as a law by which they and their successors were afterwards to be governed, “that all the children of the State shall be educated by the State.” The Eastern States are now the best educated States in the Union; and it might be safely said, that in no country is knowledge more diffused; is law more sacredly revered; and order more strictly maintained, than in the Free School States.

In New York State also, a system of schools, if not nominally free, at least practically so, has been lately established: and hear what Governor Hunt says in his late message, respecting them:—“A system of education, by which knowledge is placed within the reach of all, and our youth being taught to comprehend the rights and duties of citizenship; the supremacy of law and order; the consequent advancement of every agricultural, mechanical, and commercial interest; are results which serve to demonstrate the advantages of free institutions, and the capacity of our people to preserve them in their original purity, and integrity.”

Without enlarging any further on the practical utility of Free Schools, I will at once proceed to discuss the justice of them, by answering some of the most popular objections to their equity. Says one:—“I do not object to the justice of other general taxes; for as Government is bound to protect my life and property, it is no more than right to pay for that protection; but it is the height of injustice to force me to pay a school tax, whereby my neighbor's children are schooled.”

My objector must know that a large item of these taxes goes to defray the expenses of prisons, criminal officers, and the military department. He should also know that the necessity of these, and consequently the expense of each would be materially lessened, were education to be more widely diffused. If then it be just to expend money in punishing crime, is it not also just, and much more beneficial to expend that money in preventing it? The following extract from the report of the Board of Education of Massachusetts, bears on this part of the subject: As our Government was founded upon the virtue and intelligence of the people, it was rightly concluded by its framers, that without a wise educational system the government itself could not stand; and in ordaining that the expenses of educating the people, should be defrayed by the people at large, without reference to the particular benefit of individuals, it was considered that those, who, perhaps, without any children of their own, nevertheless would still be compelled to pay a large tax, would receive an ample equivalent in the protection of their persons, and in the security of their property.”

But says another “my children have all grown to maturity, they have received their school education; it would be highly wrong now to make me pay for the education of my neighbor's children, especially as my money would go not only to assist the indigent, but also those who are quite as wealthy as myself, while I can receive no benefit.” We answer, that part of what you complain of, arises from the necessity of the case, and not from the partiality of the application of the principle. Had our Fathers been more wise you would now be deprived of this objection; yet, we could not suppose a time in which the free schools would be established, without placing some in the same disadvantageous circumstances, which you now complain of. But that you receive no benefit is not true. In the first place, you receive it, as the foregoing extract shows, in the increased security of your person and property. In

the second place, if your own children do not reap the immediate advantages, your children's children will.

But the most doleful complaint comes from the old bachelor. To be without the advice, attention, and consolation of a loving spouse,—to be deprived of the prattling glee, and joyous sunshine beaming forth from the features of promising sons, and beautiful daughters, are quite enough in themselves to make his lot anything but enviable;—to be obliged often to mend his own pants, sew on his own shirt buttons, which his washer-woman had either carelessly, or intentionally rubbed off, in order to drive him into matrimony, are altogether beyond endurance. But besides all this, to be compelled to pay a school tax! when he has no children to send to school, is quite enough to set him frantic. Poor fellow! I really pity you! The only advice, however, that I can give you is to get married, and put yourself in a way to receive the benefits. But, if after all, you are too lazy or too stingy to support a family, and pertinaciously persist in your celibacy, it is no more than right that you should at least be made to assist in educating the children of your neighbor—that you should at least give community this small remuneration for the trouble you are likely to give them, in looking after your welfare, when you are unable to take care of yourself. But seriously. Without referring again to the better protection you would receive under this system, we would ask, is it reasonable to expect Government to prevent a law going into operation, because apparently it clashes with the interests of one individual out of every hundred who chooses to make himself singular from all others; while, on the other hand, it is of paramount importance to the other ninety-nine? Were such a doctrine allowed, we would have no laws.

Were we told that one half of the children of this province are perishing through the want of bodily nourishment, no one would hesitate a moment in saying that Government should use its exertions in making ample provision for their sustenance; but when we are told that the same number are in a state of intellectual starvation, it hardly elicits a sympathetic emotion, much less a noble exertion for their relief. Why this difference? Is it because this gross material body is of more importance than the immaterial spiritual essence? Is it because the interests of the body are more enduring than those of the soul? Ah no! When the inorganic substances of which this body is composed, shall have mingled with their native earth, and the organic with their kindred gases, incorporating themselves into other living bodies; here seen in the composition of the blushing rose; there in the less attractive blade of grass; now observed in the tiny lichen of the arctic regions; then in the towering palm of the torrid zone; sometimes embodied in the unwieldy elephant, at others forming the imperceptible amuleta; and afterwards constituting part and portion of other human beings, yet the soul shall retain its own identity, inseparable, indestructible, and unimpaird.

“The cloud cap't towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The great globe itself, yea all that it inherits,
Shall dissolve, and like the baseless fabric of a
vision,
Leave not a wreck behind.”

Yet the immortal mind is capable of living on, for ever on! unburdened by the pressure of accumulated ages; ever enjoying the freshness of eternal youth! Then all other considerations, no matter how important in themselves, when having no relation to our eternal interests sink into utter insignificance.

We believe that proper education does bear that relation. We believe also, that in proportion as we properly cultivate our faculties here, in some such proportion will our happiness be hereafter; and consequently we must add to our belief, that it is not only the duty of Government, but also individuals, to make this education accessible to all.

CONSTANTIA.

Your St., April 19th, 1852.

BRITISH PENNY POSTAGE.—The number of chargeable letters delivered in the United Kingdom for the year 1841 was 360,500,000—an increase of 13,000,000 over the previous year. Besides there were about 6,000,000 franked letters. In 1839 the whole number of letters delivered was 76,100,000.

FRENCH LITERATURE.—The French press during the last ten years, has given to the world 82,000 works of literature and art.

and respect honest toil—until he comes to think that Pope was right when he said that “wealth makes a man.” Some Sunday morning, when the rain has driven the church of his presence, sitting before the fire, he falls to meditation, and having some faint recollections of his mother's counsels his loving mother, whose grave the violets have blossomed many summers—and he asks “What is good?” and the city answers “The Bank.” Again he asks “What is the thing needful?” and the city answers “Money.” Satisfied with these answers, he resolves to go one step further in his transformation, and he marries himself to money, after the old English forms and customs. Of the collateral of this body, I will not speak, for time will not permit, and will pass to what I deem the true character of a gentleman. He is a gentleman who adds to manhood his gentility—he depends not upon riches, not upon the fineness of his cloth, but upon intellect, his honesty and his truth. You may recognize him. Though he may wear different habits—as the Painter, the Poet, the sailor, the Pill-roller, the Lawyer—the man rises superior to all circumstances. You never think of the riches of the gentleman, but of the man himself. You never eat his viands and think but of the viands you have tasted, for man eclipses his gas-light. In his house, where Donald sits at the head of the table, not where the beef and decanter is placed. He is always true to others and to himself—earnest in all his manly pursuits. Is he rich—he has no more or less dignity than he be poor. Kossuth—the poor editor of Buda Pesth, is hated of the government, the loved of the poor—more the less a gentleman than when he held us enraptured with his eloquence, with this fine land forum, and the stars of America for his sounding-board. The true gentleman treats all men as if they were his equals; his manners are for the poor as well for the rich, and those manners well proportioned for men. One day the elder Adams was driving a shrewd gentleman through Quincy in a gig. On the road he met a negro, who raised his hat and bowed to the gentleman. The President returned the salute, to the horror of his companion, who remarked that he never expected to see such an act. “Why not?” answered the President, “the man bowed and spoke to you; would you have me exhibit less manners than a negro?” Thus it is always with the true gentleman, the true lady is but a sweeter copy of the same thing as a diamond from the same mine, but a purer, brighter gem, worthy of being borne upon the breast of the true man. The lecturer closed by saying that instead of the vulgar-genteele was medieval—in this country it was yet in its infancy. There it was ancient, in harmony with the institutions of the country. It was in opposition to our institutions, false and vicious, unworthy of the free air that surrounds it. It must fall to the ground. All around us we see specimens of the true man, which must soon dispel these shadows of a shade—these accidents of an ancient—and the time shall come when the Poet's lines shall be recognized as truth:

“The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gold for a' that.”

A COALITION OF SNAKES.—On Thursday a laborer cutting trees on the land of T. & H. Livesidge, on the banks of Neponset River, Dorchester, saw a snake coiling itself in a heap of stones imbedded in grass. After he saw another disappear at the same point; curiosity was aroused; he commenced digging, and dug out of a space four and a half feet in diameter, and a half in depth, when he discovered a nest of snakes to the number of 211, ranging from four to fifteen inches in length, and embracing all the different species known to the vicinity, except the rattlesnake. When most of them were torpid, but soon gave evidence of locomotive power. Sometimes they were found singly, and sometimes in bunches of half a dozen. The black, striped, and brown, and the adder, were found the most affectionate embraces. This is undoubtedly the latest, purest, and most complete coalition that has ever been made.—Boston Journal.

M. DE LAMARTINE.—The Belgian journals repeat the news of M. de Lamartine being about to proceed to Egypt to take possession of the estate, in the environs of Suez, presented to him by the Sultan. This estate is extensive, and the soil of the finest quality, but will require an outlay of from 200,000fr. to 300,000fr. to bring it into a good state of cultivation.