

ILLITERACY AND CRIME.

From Father Conway's Pamphlet.

A glance at the progress of crime in countries where State education is in fullest bloom, and illiteracy a thing almost unknown, will convince the reader of the fruitlessness, or rather the demoralizing influence of public education.

The following extracts from the most recent statistics at hand bear testimony to the blessings of State education, or Kultur, as they are pleased to call it in the fatherland: The per centage increase of crime in Prussia, from 1871 to 1878, was an average of 100 per cent., or double the number, the increase of population being only 44 per cent.

We might give figures to show how the alarming increase of crime in our own country goes hand in hand with the spread of godless education. But an abler hand, who works more easily obtainable, has undertaken the task and has accomplished it so successfully that, although he has earned much abuse from the advocates of public schools, to our knowledge, not even a serious attempt has been made to refute him.

If such are the moral fruits of State education, what must be its social effects? If citizens are brought up without religion, without conscience, without God, is it to be wondered at that society is disorganized, that the social order is shaken to its centre, that rulers are trembling on their thrones?

But consider even from a theoretical point of view, the principle of State education is fraught with the most baneful consequences. "If the State owes its children an education at the common expense," says Bishop McQuaid in the Journal of Education, "there is no escape from the Communists' demand for food, clothing and shelter at the common expense."

tion annuls all parental responsibility. And Stuart Mill does not hesitate to call State education an unsupportable despotism, inasmuch as it forms the opinions and sentiments of the people in such a way that the State may lead them whither it pleases.

We are no admirer of the philosophy of Spencer and Mill, but the greater their aberrations in other respects the more importance must be attached to their views on this one point, in which they did not allow themselves to be carried away from the path of common sense by the current of modern notions.

It is needless to point to the pernicious effects of State education on religion. When teachers and pupils are subtracted from the salutary influence of the church, when God and religion and all those things which appertain to man's last end, and should be first and foremost in the training of youth, are proscribed for six days in the week, how is it possible to imbue children with religious sentiments, to ground them in the principles of their faith, so that they may learn to act on religious motives through life?

But State education, we maintain furthermore, far from being beneficial, is highly injurious to the advancement of true civilization, to the true progress of education. Here we must remind the reader that the true civilization of a nation does not consist in its material power and resources, nor in the most perfect utilising of the forces of nature for social comfort and industrial facilities.

But the most lamentable effect of this purely secular education is the rise and spread of error. As soon as science is divorced from positive religion there is no safeguard against error. Science has

no longer the bulwark infallible authority to keep it within the proper bounds. The human mind has no longer the unerring monitor to check its vain curiosity, to say to it: "So far shalt thou come, and no farther!"

Science has its God-appointed moderator in revealed religion. Nor does this subordination in any way derogate from the dignity of science; nay, it enhances the same, inasmuch as it guards it from error, which alone can degrade it.

Moreover, as competition is the life of trade, so also of education; as State monopoly is prejudicial to any branch of business, so it must be to education. Of course the State, having extensive resources at its disposal, can afford material facilities which private communities, in our days, can hardly attain to; but the faculty or teacher whose position is secured by government funds, will rarely devote the same energy to the work of education as those who altogether depend on their own efficiency for their support.

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