

question with the best of the Institutes. The statement he is understood to have made is wide of the mark, and, in our judgment, the compliment was by no means merited. Comparisons, he ought to have remembered (in the language of the copy-book), are odious; and though he may have private reasons, and possibly political ones, for saying sweet things of a denominational seminary, and for straining courtesy to flatter its managers, his Ministerial office required of him to abstain from exaggeration. But having said this, we have emptied the quiver of criticism. On the other hand, there is much in favour of the Minister's action. As the head of our educational system, it is his duty to take cognizance of all the machinery of school instruction. Whatever it denotes, there is no denying the fact, that there is both growth and activity among denominational schools. Their promoters, no doubt, dislike the idea of dependence upon a central department, and prefer the life and movement of a non-official system. And we feel sure they are right. The official system too often blocks the way to progress and to intellectual freedom, and reduces our educational methods, more than one cares generally to acknowledge, to the level of commonplace and stupidity. As some one has said, the State rules a great copy-book, and the nation simply copies what it finds between the lines. "If you desire progress," says Mr. Herbert Spencer, "you must not make it difficult for men to think and act differently; you must not dull their senses with routine, or stamp their imagination with the official pattern of some great department." This, unfortunately, is but too much the result of State systems of education. Under the circumstances, we are therefore disposed to give a

heartly countenance to individual or to local corporate effort in behalf of education. If without the aid of the State this private effort is to be a menace to our State-supported schools, and to place them at a disadvantage in regard to efficiency and the results of their work, it will be a serious reflection upon our official systems. But this danger is not yet apparent, and local sensitiveness need scarcely take alarm. The matter, however, must be looked at broadly, and not merely from a local point of view. It is in the interest of the general intelligence that *all* the machinery of education, whether endowed or not, should be put in motion, and, indeed, be in full blast. And it is the Minister's duty to give countenance and recognition to it all, and to require private schools, if their managers will consent to it, to come up to a given standard, and if possible, as in England, to submit to inspection. If they voluntarily acquiesce in this, so much the better; though, as far as inspection goes, we can scarcely say that they will receive much benefit. Let them, however, beware of uniformity, and reflect upon its evils in the official system. Above all, we would caution them to rely with an abiding faith upon their voluntary system, and to set no longing eye on Government grants. Let them keep, moreover, on the weather side of "payment by results," for they will sacrifice much, and vulgarize their conceptions of education, if they accept this and the Departmental regulations and examinations which accompany it. The private schools of the country are no doubt here and there doing good work; but if they value their freedom in doing it, they will accept Mr. Crooks's blandishments but reject his official moulds and spurn departmental control.