

borne. We shall publish some of these communications in subsequent numbers of the REVIEW, and we cordially invite contributions from those who take a contrary view of the subject.

We append herewith a portion of an open letter on the question, received from Rev. E. A. Watkins, Vicar of Ubbstone, Suffolk, England, for eleven years a missionary of the Church Mission Society :

Educational work in our missions has now assumed immense proportions, and is absorbing a vast deal of the time of our missionaries, and consuming an enormous amount of the money contributed by the Christian public. The great question for consideration is, whether such time and such money are properly and profitably employed. It is generally assumed that the education of nominal Christian and heathen children is a necessary and desirable work, and consequently it is carried on without any scruple by almost all missionary societies, the China Inland Mission being perhaps the only one which scarcely makes any efforts in this direction. But I apprehend that calm and serious consideration of the subject will tend to cause much doubt as to either the necessity or desirableness of this branch of supposed legitimate missionary labor. No valid objection can of course be raised against direct religious teaching, but it is the teaching of *secular* subjects which is open to grave question. With all seriousness I would ask, Is it right that money contributed purely for the spread of the Gospel should be employed in teaching arithmetic, grammar, geography, and, as in high schools, algebra, Euclid, geology and other sciences? Is it right that the time of the missionaries should be spent in these matters, besides so many hours in the financial and other arrangements connected with the management of their schools?

Various reasons are assigned as a justification of the practice pursued and of the enormous expenditure incurred, and we must assume that such reasons are considered satisfactory by the committees of our missionary societies. Still it might be well to examine them a little. They may, I think, be fairly stated as follows :

1. "*It is of vast importance to lay hold of the children, as our main hope is in the rising generation.*"

This is readily granted ; but to lay hold of them in order to give four, or perhaps five, hours of secular instruction to every one hour devoted to religious teaching is not quite what is commonly apprehended by the statement made. The imparting of secular knowledge, however good and important a work it may be, is certainly *not missionary work*. Each agent who has left his native land to evangelize the heathen may very properly say : " Christ sent me, not to 'teach arithmetic and geography,' but to preach the Gospel."

2. "*Heathen parents would not send their children to Christian schools unless a good secular education were offered.*"

This is true to a certain extent, but not so universally as is assumed, and it applies exclusively to missions in India. But if the parents refuse to send their children we have no further responsibility ; our consciences are at rest, and we have the satisfaction of saving the missionaries' time and the subscribers' money, both of which would then be available for more direct missionary work. Let us imagine a somewhat similar case in another sphere of foreign labor. We will suppose that the agents of a Bible society offer copies of the Word of God to the natives of some popish