

him in a situation whereby he was independent of both. And this position of neutrality and independence, after the asperities and disagreements, consequent on an important social change, had passed away, left Lord Elgin, at full liberty to consider the financial measures which were required to raise the credit of the Province. Compare this with the position of Lord Metcalf. Even so late as 1846, there were no instructions, from the Colonial Office, as to any precise course which would have protected the Governor from the obloquy of one or other of the factions with which he was surrounded. The only instructions were those of a general nature, which empowered all former Governors *to act altogether on their own discretion*, assisted, from time to time, by the conflicting advice of the Colonial Secretary. On arriving in the Province, he found a wealthy, intelligent party in possession of all the avenues leading to preferment, and of all the offices which were capable of being used as a means to control the general administration. In such a state of things there was no choice between submitting, on the one hand, to a power greater than himself, and, on the other, countenancing an opposition that had neither character nor organisation. That Lord Metcalf, like his predecessors, therefore, failed to do that which was accomplished afterwards by Lord Elgin, is not to be wondered at; nor is he deserving less of credit for having performed so little. In the same circumstances, Lord Elgin would himself have been sacrificed to the undefined and arbitrary policy which had been followed; and might have returned to England destitute of Canadian laurels, if not have been numbered as the fifth Governor-General on whom the grave had already closed.

Another part of Lord Elgin's speech is, we think, equally exceptionable; namely, that in which he marks 1850 as the year of a crisis, when Canada, previously without developed wealth, character, education, or enterprise, at one bound reached a preëminence so exalted as to eclipse, and, comparatively, throw into the shade the boasted pretensions of the United States. This is what connoisseurs in gymnastics would call "drawing a long bow." But knowing, as we do, Lord Elgin's eclectic method of preparing speeches to suit the tastes of the greatest number, at the same time, to present only that side of a subject which serves best the ends sought to be attained by popular appeals,—we are not surprised at the bold statement he ventured to set forth on this head. The reason, however, for selecting 1850 as the date of the regeneration of the Canadian race, has a meaning which many may not, at first sight, apprehend. That was the year when the Common School Act was passed and came in force, and when Lord Elgin appears to have first perceived the use which could be made of the school machinery to serve a political purpose. If we couple this discovery, and the use he made of it, with his unmitigated praise of the common school system, and in return, the unmitigated praise bestowed on him by the chief conductor of that system,—the reason for selecting the year 1850 will admit of an easy solution. Accordingly, we find, by the speech, that the contrast with the United States in favor of Canada, from that date, is made introductory to the remarks which immediately follow in praise of the school system. This connection is so studied in the speech, yet in reality so false; and the language of fulsome adulation is so contrary to the facts, that we cannot help citing the following, as a specimen of what Lord Elgin had repeated a thousand times before:—

"I do not wish to encumber you with a mass of statistical details, but among writers of all descriptions, political, statis-

tical, and newspaper correspondents who have treated of the affairs of North America, it would be impossible to find one who, writing before 1850, does not aver that the contrast presented by Canada on one side, and the United States on the other, is most unfavourable to the former, most discouraging to those who prefer monarchical to republican institutions. Well, since 1850, there is an unanimity almost as remarkable—and the Lord Provost has adverted to that—the other way. It would be impossible to find one, I think, who does not admit that since that period the progress of Canada has been in all respects most satisfactory, equalling, if not surpassing, the most favored parts of the Union. No people have been more frank in declaration to this fact than our neighbors of the United States. I need not say to you that there is no object upon which the people of the United States are more proud than they are in reference to their system of national education, and they certainly have very good reason to be so; because while we are in this country proclaiming vociferously our zeal for popular education, and proving our sincerity by uniting to overwhelm every specific plan that is produced, there is actually in that colony in operation a system that is elevating the intellectual standard of that people to an elevation never before attained by any community. At the meeting of the Education Board in New York, a paper was read, representing the system of education in Canada as equal to that in Massachusetts or New York, and the President recommended the system adopted at Toronto, Canada West. I do not think it undesirable that the population of Scotland should know that there is a country not two week's sailing from Glasgow, possessing a fertile soil and a genial climate—possessing a population very like what you find in any Scottish county, sharing our views and sentiments on all questions, moral, social, political, and above all, religious, with the means of attaining education, free of cost, and on conditions that can do violence to no principle, on conditions attainable by every child in the community, and where every child of talent and industry may go to the highest school, where a superior education is given on the same terms, and from the superior school to the University."

The people of England, who have thus been told that we have a system of education *that is elevating our intellectual standard to an elevation never before attained by any community*, must imagine, certainly, that we are intellectual prodigies. Yet, we question much, if greater Gothamites are to be found, in any part of the world, than what are turned out of our Normal School. We only invite our readers to read the correspondence of the local superintendents contained in the last Annual Report, to satisfy themselves that Lord Elgin's language is inflated bombast, without one particle of truth. The school act of 1850, which constituted a Chief Superintendent with unlimited discretionary and arbitrary powers, and responsible only to Lord Elgin himself; which established a huge printing machinery to over-rule public opinion; and supplied means from the revenue of the Province on the most extravagant scale, to force on the people a republican system that was repulsive to their British feelings and to British usage; however it may have been made subservient to Lord Elgin's political ends, will yet remain a standing monument of the folly and the mischief of permitting private interests and personal motives to supersede the public good and the general claims of the community.

The allusion, in the above extract, to the estimate formed of our school system, by the New York Educational Board, is intended as corroborative of the tenor of the remarks which precede. The New York Board, however, formed its opinion from the perusal of a paper which had been concocted in the Education Office here, expressly for the occasion. That paper may have been prepared in the same way that Lord Elgin prepares his speeches. The New York Board had no opportunity of knowing whether it was so or not. It may have contained only part of the truth, and that part may have been so varnished as to have imposed on the Board, which was