

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION IN EUROPE.

We take from a late number of the Christian Witness, where it is credited as from "Professor Stowe's Report"—the following statements respecting education in Europe. With reference to Prussia, the author observes:—

"A despotic king of Protestant faith, dreading the evils of an ignorant and unbridled democracy, such as was witnessed in the French revolution, has for forty years been pursuing a course of instruction for his whole people, more complete, better adapted to develop every faculty of the soul, and to bring into action every capability of every kind that may exist, even in the poorest cottage of the most obscure corner of his kingdom, than has ever before been imagined. Men of the highest order of intellect and most extensive attainments are encouraged to devote themselves to the business of teaching; the best plans for the furtherance of this object are immediately received and generously rewarded; talent and industry, wherever they exist, are sought out and promoted, and nothing is left undone that can help forward this great design.

"Another European king of the Roman Catholic faith, Louis of Bavaria, who is connected by marriage with the royal house of Prussia, moved by this example, and excited by emulation in behalf both of his Church and kingdom, is now zealously pushing forward the same experiment among his own people, and already the Bavarian schools begin to rival the Prussian, and the University of Berlin finds its only equal in that of Munich.

"Even the autocrat, Nicholas of Russia, (married to a daughter of the Prussian monarch, who inherits much of her father's spirit,) has been induced to commence a similar system throughout his vast dominions; and from the reports to the emperor of M. d'Ouvaroff, the Russian minister of public instruction, it appears that already from Poland to Siberia, and from the White sea to the regions beyond the Caucasus, including the provinces so recently wrested from Persia, there are the beginnings of a complete system of common school instruction for the whole people, to be carried into full execution as fast as it is possible to provide the requisite number of qualified teachers.

"Nor is the spirit of education confined to these nations. The kingdom of Wirtemberg, and the grand duchy of Baden are not behind Prussia or Bavaria. The smaller States of Germany, and even old Austria, are pushing forward in the same career; France is all awake; Spain and Italy are beginning to open their eyes; the government of England, which has hitherto neglected the education of the common people more than other Protestant country of Europe, is beginning to bestir itself; and even the Sultan of Turkey, and the Pacha of Egypt are looking around for well qualified teachers to go among their people. In London and Paris I saw Turks, Arabs and Greeks, who had been sent by their respective governments to these cities for the express purpose of being educated for teachers in their native countries, if not for the whole people, at least for the favored few. At Constantinople a society has been formed for the promotion of useful knowledge, which publishes a monthly journal, edited by one of the Turks who studied in Paris; and the Sultan now employs a French teacher in his capital whom he especially invited from France.

"In short, the whole world seems to be awake and combining in one simultaneous effort for the spread of education; and sad indeed will be the condition of that community which lags behind in this universal march.

"I will here, however, take the liberty of stating some facts respecting the governmental efforts recently made in Russia, to establish a system of popular education throughout that vast empire. These cannot but be deeply interesting to us, since Russia has so many points of resemblance, and of striking contrast to our own country.

"The whole empire is divided into provinces, each of which has a university—these provinces, into academic districts, which are provided with their gymnasia for classical learning, and academies for the higher branches of a business education; and these

academic districts are again subdivided into school districts, each with its elementary school. As the heart of the whole system, there is at St. Petersburg a model school for the education of teachers of every grade for all parts of the empire. Of the universities, six had already gone into operation in 1835, namely, one at St. Petersburg, one at Moscow, one at Dorpat, in Livonia, one at Charkow, east of the river Dnieper, one at Kasan, on the Wolga, and one at Kiew. At other points lyceums are established, with courses of study more limited than that of universities; and there is an institution at Moscow, especially for the education of the nobility. * * *

The governmental regulations for cherishing in the people a desire for education, and directing them in the attainment of it, are wisely adapted to the purpose. The minister of public instruction publishes a regular periodical journal, in which he gathers up all the facts, information and arguments, to which his official station gives him access, and circulates them extensively through the nation. To illustrate the good faith, diligence and liberal-mindedness with which he executes this part of his office, I would refer to the number of his journal for August, 1835, in which he notices with great approbation the efforts of tract societies for the diffusion of moral and religious sentiments among the people, and mentions by name several publications of the American Tract Society, which have been translated into Russian, as having reached a third edition, and as being happily calculated to enlighten the intellect, and elevate the character of the people among whom they circulate.

If the minister of the Emperor Nicholas shews so much readiness to receive a good thing even from democratic America, we surely will not be so narrow-minded as to spurn a good idea because it happened first to develop itself in Autocratic Russia. As a farther means of promoting education, every school director and examiner undergoes a rigid scrutiny as to his intellectual and moral fitness for those important trusts; and every candidate for civil office is strictly examined as to his attainments in those branches of learning requisite to the right performance of the official duties to which he aspires. As common schools are new in the Russian Empire, and as school-houses are to be built in every part of it, the government, knowing the importance of having these houses well planned and put up, has appointed an architect, with a salary of 1000 rubles a year for every academic district, whose whole business it is to superintend the erecting and fitting up of the district school-houses in his particular province.

Though the Emperor of Russia is justly accused of unpardonable oppression in respect to Poland, yet he does not carry his oppression so far as to deprive the poor Poles of the benefits of education, but is exerting the same laudible zeal to provide teachers for Poland as for any other part of his dominions. It has been found exceedingly difficult to obtain teachers who are willing to exercise their calling in the cold and inhospitable regions of Siberia. To facilitate this object special privileges have been granted to Siberian teachers. Siberian young men are admitted to the University of Kasan free of expense, on condition that they devote a certain number of years to the business of school keeping in Siberia. To forward the same object a Siberian gentleman, by the name of Ponomarew, gives 6000 rubles a year for the support of the parish school of Irkutsk quite to the north-eastern extremity of Siberia, and has obligated himself for ten years to pay 500 rubles a year more for the encouragement of the pupils of those schools.

Teachers from foreign countries are welcomed, and special provisions are made that their religious sentiments be not interfered with, as well as that they do not impose their peculiar religious notions on their pupils. For the perfecting of teachers in certain branches they are often sent abroad at the public expense to study in the institutions of other countries, where these branches are most successfully taught. Of these, there were in 1835, thirteen in Berlin, several in Vienna, and one in Oxford, England.—School examiners and school committees, as well as school teachers, are required to hold frequent meetings for discussion, and for mutual instruction and encouragement. * * *

It is peculiarly interesting in noticing the efforts of

Russia, to observe that the blessings of a good common education are now extending to tribes which from time immemorial have been in a state of barbarism. In the wild regions beyond Mount Caucasus, comprising the provinces recently acquired from Persia, the system of district schools is efficiently carried out. As early as 1835, there were already established in those parts of the empire fifteen schools with six teachers, and about one thousand three hundred children under instruction; so that in the common schools of this new and uncultivated region one teacher is provided for every twenty scholars. Besides this, there is a Gymnasium at Tiflis, in which Asiatic lads are admitted to enter the European universities.

All teachers throughout the empire, according to an ordinance of February 26, 1835, receive their salaries monthly, that their attention may not be distracted by family cares. For the encouragement of their devotedness on the part of teachers, and to prevent all solicitude for the maintenance of their families, the minister of public instruction is authorized to grant the widows and orphans of those teachers who have particularly distinguished themselves, not only a usual pension, but a gratuity equal in amount to their entire salary of two years.—[Professor Stowe's Report.]

A VISITING MISSIONARY IN CANADA.

Amongst the places visited by Mr. Vachell was Grosse Isle, the Quarantine station, and we had pleasure in subjoining his own account of two Sabbath days spent by him in this secluded but interesting spot:—

A ship-load of emigrants had arrived on the day previous, and were necessarily engaged in washing their clothes upon the rocks by the water side. I went to them, and finding one who had been a Protestant to a chapel in the north of Ireland, with me mounted upon the steps of a shed hard by, and commenced singing a psalm. Hardly had I gone through two verses, ere the washing tubs were deserted, and I was surrounded by a large congregation, to whom, after a short prayer that God would bless his Word to the hearers, I gave out my text, and preached in a manner, and with an effect I never permitted of God to do before.—Whether I had op'd the cells were memory slept, by recalling to them the homes they had left, and like the captive Jews of old, they remembered Zion and wept; whether they recalled the many times they had listened to those who preached the Gospel, and now mourned over their spiritual destitution, and their sad separation from religious privileges; or whether for the first time they thought that like Lot, they might have looked too much to the fruitful plains, and little weighed leaving the company of Abraham and the faithful; or whether their hearts were pricked within them, and sin was really brought before them as exceeding sinful, I know not the cause, but it was, my heart was full, and as I spoke to invite sinners—to warn the unruly—to comfort the feeble-minded—and to support the weak, it seemed to pierce their hearts; and to use a favourite Irish expression, 'they filled up'—that is, their hearts filled up, and overflowed.—We all felt much, some of us trusted deeply, and God grant the Word was not altogether as water spilt upon the ground, for I believe the Lord answered our prayers, and was really present. After this I preached to the soldiers, and in the afternoon preached again to my congregation of the morning. Our place of worship was new and simple, it was a little spot of green surrounded by alder shrubs and a few over shading trees, and the stump of an old elm served me as a pulpit—around me were hearers seated on the grass or rocks—they pleased me much by their quietness and attention.

On Sunday the 2d July, I had a short service in one of the sheds at 9 A. M. Afterwards I visited the hospital and found four persons dead, whom had departed within the twenty-four hours. I returned from the hospital and preached to a large congregation of Irish Protestants. 'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;' my conscience being filled with reflections upon what I had seen, and my heart much moved at the thought of how the eyes of the crowd now fixed upon me, would be filled with the dust of death, and how soon the stammering tongue, which was striving to speak