

articles of faith, how far this knowledge may have changed and purified his moral nature, hallowed his affections, or sanctified his heart, it is wholly inoperative as an instrument to discover.

While I so earnestly contend for the principle of emulation, and its exponent examination, as one of the most powerful instruments that a knowledge of the faculties of the human understanding has placed within our reach, I at the same time just as earnestly deprecate its introduction into religious training. So far as Christianity may be considered a science, emulation and examination will insure a knowledge of it, just as they will of the science of jurisprudence for example. If the Bible is to be used with the same objects, and for the same purposes, as a treatise on some branch or other of science is studied, or as the history of an ancient nation may be read, with a view to develop the powers of the understanding, or to store the mind with curious knowledge, let there be by all means searching examinations; let the principle of emulation be developed; but if the book has been given for far other uses, if it has been set up as the standard of our faith, and a light to our path, our ornament in prosperity and our stay in affliction, to be the mould of our habits and the rule of our conscience, to hallow our thoughts and to elevate our affections, let us not seek to degrade it by dragging it down into the arena of intellectual conflict. Let us not set an answer in geography against another in the gospels, nor weigh a theorem in Euclid against a truth in the epistles. If the great object of religious instruction be the formation of religious character, we should use instruments fitted to produce this result. Let us not take into our hands instruments which, however valuable they may be as enabling us to secure other important objects, are yet unfitted to accomplish this.

But there are those who will say—such a measure as you advocate would lead to very great and important changes in the social and moral aspects of the country. We freely admit the charge. They would lead to such, unquestionably. But change is the condition of the life of every organized being. To cease to change is to cease to live. It is no less so of the life of a nation. Contrast the United States of America with the worn-out empires of the East, which have long since passed away. The restlessness of the ocean does not affect its stability. It is the condition of life for all within its bosom. Changes like those we advocate are but the developments of a healthy growth, and of a progress upwards to a long maturity. Change is life, sameness is death. That unchanging aspect of national institutions which has been sometimes lauded, is almost always to be deprecated, for time has shown that reform does not imply subversion, and that long unchecked decay does not admit of conservative renovation. Moreover, when an institution lives in the heart of a nation, the parasitical support of protective laws checks its development and cramps its growth. We trust, then, in the onward progress of legislation; and that as our people increase in knowledge, they will also grow in wisdom; and that these plied together will be the strength and the stay of a hope of better things to come, and of the stability of the present, and "wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of our time."

#### EDUCATION IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

*Extracts of the Report of the Visitor of Schools, as submitted to the Legislature.*

It has been my lot to become acquainted with the educational interests of the Colony when a thorough change had passed over them. The new Education Act had just come into force, which is intended to provide the means of education to the whole rising generation in the Colony. It is impossible to calculate the blessings conferred on a community by the provisions of a State Education, efficiently and prudently carried out. In no country has it ever been found that private or adventure schools have been able to impart even the mere elements of education to the whole community.

Where there is not a machinery of public education, and to some extent, free education, to the necessities of the whole population, a vast majority of the children of the humbler classes must grow up in ignorance, if not in vice. If some aids and facilities be not afforded the working man in the education of his children, nine out of ten parents, whether agriculturists or artisans, would not be able to command the means of educating them in private schools, even if they possessed the solicitude and care for their children's interests (which are so sadly wanting), that would prompt them to make exertions to secure for their offspring every possible advantage in intellectual and moral training. This is specially true in rising and thinly populated countries, where there are fair inducements for adventurous schoolmasters to settle.

This small colony, by the passing of the Education Bill of 1853, has solved for herself the question which has been agitating the public mind of Britain for so many years, and which is still at issue. By its provisions it brings the means of education within the reach of every family. The only part of the machinery confided to the private exertions of the people being the building and maintaining of the school-

house, and where practicable, supplementing the teacher's salary.—Prince Edward Island has taken this step in the right direction in advance of the mother country—for even in enlightened Britain, with its multitude of schools maintained by private support, by charitable and ecclesiastical endowment, and state assistance, there are still thousands of her population perishing in ignorance and crime. It is highly creditable to Prince Edward Island that the Education Bill for Scotland, introduced in the Imperial Parliament by the Lord Advocate during the present session, and lost by so small a majority, was identical in all its essential elements with that in operation here.

But it rarely happens in legislation, that any Act for the general good can at once be framed on so perfect a model as to meet every exigency, or please all parties. It is only when applied and tested by experience, that the merits and defects of any thing new can be discovered. The fate of the Bill, in its reception by the public, so far as I have had opportunities of observing and discriminating, has been more fortunate than could have been predicted or anticipated of a measure so comprehensive in its details, and which embraces so many conflicting interests. Its success in one year is a most happy omen of the good it may accomplish when amended and supplemented, so as to provide for a uniform system of tuition, by the establishment of a Normal School for the training of teachers, thus securing a higher rate of acquirements, and by such a graduation of salaries as shall retain teachers of competent abilities and attainments.

I have visited, in all, 169 district schools, which are thus divided among the respective Counties:—

| DISTRICT SCHOOLS. | CHILDREN ON REGISTER. | PRESENT ON EXAMINATION. |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Prince County, 30 | 1,338                 | 792                     |
| Queen's do. 94    | 4,880                 | 3,177                   |
| King's do. 45     | 2,319                 | 1,431                   |
| ACADIAN.          |                       |                         |
| Prince County, 7  | 301                   | 225                     |
| Queen's do. 6     | 309                   | 250                     |
|                   | 182                   | 9,147                   |
|                   |                       | 5,770                   |

The following statistical statement does not give the correct number of children at present studying all the branches taught, but only those studying them when I visited their schools, as in many schools it was only after an order for the necessary books had been left, on my visit, that Grammar and Geography, etc., began to be taught:—

|               | P. COUNTY. | Q. COUNTY. | K. COUNTY. | ACADIAN. | TOTAL. |
|---------------|------------|------------|------------|----------|--------|
| Reading,      | 1,338      | 4,880      | 2,319      | 610      | 9,147  |
| Writing,      | 601        | 2,114      | 599        | 98       | 3,707  |
| Arithmetic,   | 480        | 1,735      | 634        | 64       | 2,913  |
| Grammar,      | 194        | 593        | 297        | 2        | 1,086  |
| Geography,    | 151        | 462        | 158        |          | 771    |
| Book-keeping, | 2          | 13         | 8          |          | 23     |
| Algebra,      | 3          | 5          |            |          | 8      |
| Geometry,     |            |            | 1          |          | 1      |

Of the 610 who are learning to read in the Acadian schools, 10 are taught to read in the English language.

#### SCHOOL BOOKS.

It would be in vain for me to attempt to describe the feelings with which I contemplated the stock of books exhibited to me in many schools: a tattered and miscellaneous assemblage of books and pamphlets; and heard by what shifts and contrivances these were made to serve the purposes of instructing, it may be, twice the like number of children. In one school, where I found twenty-four children at work, there were eleven reading books, meant for the same stage of progress, but all of a different kind. With such apparatus, to talk of organization and classification, would be preposterous. I deeply pitied such teachers who, in addition to the unavoidable discouragements of their laborious occupation, had such a mountain of difficulties laid upon their efforts. Such a state of matters would paralyze the energies of even the most conscientious man, full of faith and hope in the cause of education. But I am happy to say that this lamentable deficiency is a thing of the past, and it is to be hoped, will never again recur. The liberal grant from the Legislature, which provided a list of excellent school books and maps, at a very low rate, and the enactment which made it imperative for every school to take advantage of it, has opened up a more cheering prospect, not for the teacher only, but also for the parents and children. For the teacher, as it entirely removes the difficulty of classifying his pupils, thus making his work less tedious and laborious, and greatly more satisfactory to him-self, as he can watch and test the progress of each child much better when ranged with its compeers. The child is benefitted, in having an increased interest and zest given to his studies by the emulation which is excited in a class, and when he is ready to be advanced into a higher book, he has not to wait the convenience of his parents in procuring it for him, while he is dawdling away his precious seed time. The parent's peculiar advantage is in his pocket, as each book costs only about one-third of its price at an ordinary bookseller's, and by the trifling local assess-