

ing each other; but I believe the effect would be to put an end to those great crimes that sometimes take place, and do more to preserve the peace of the colony than any thing else. The resolution refers to the duty of the country in taking a part in the work before them. I have often heard said, but never could understand the argument, that England has no business to interfere in these distant fields of missionary labour. That there is enough to do at home, and that to interfere in those distant fields is to wander beyond our own natural sphere of duty, I confess I cannot see the force. It is not as if the population did not contribute to help themselves. The European population will aid them by their money, and their influence with the natives will contribute the help which will supply valuable native teachers, some of whom would, in their turn, become missionaries. But if there were any difficulty in this, that would be no reason why we should not embark in this enterprise. I hold that even for the purposes of mercantile commerce and our manufactures, that a larger advantage would be conferred by pursuing these missionary efforts than by any other means. A far higher advantage is, that this mission is likely to bring about a final extinction of the slave-trade; and I believe that by no other means can that desirable result be accomplished. You may make laws against the slave-trade; you may check and you may punish it, but you cannot prevent it. But if you dry up its sources by employing the natives in commerce, and render it infamous, you will speedily extinguish it altogether. This result has been achieved in one tribe in twenty years from the mission, and were the mission in Central Africa more firmly established, the result would very soon be general. I maintain that experience has shown that the event can be achieved; and therefore I earnestly and sincerely hope that those who have nobly determined to enter upon this enterprise will be encouraged to persevere in it.

(To be continued.)

THE EDUCATION QUESTION

At a time like the present, when such interest is taken in the subject, we thought it would be very generally acceptable to give a correct report of the speech of the Rev. Alexander Pollock, at the important meeting lately held in Belfast, in behalf of the Church Education Society.

The Rev. Alexander M. Pollock, on rising to second the resolution, was very warmly received. He said—I feel it a great pleasure, Christian friends and Rev. Sir, to attend here on the present occasion. With every thing that has fallen from preceding speakers upon the vast and incalculable importance of the present juncture as regards the question of Scriptural Education in Ireland, I most thoroughly and heartily concur. No more momentous period in the existence of this controversy has ever occurred since it first commenced. It is made so by three distinct circumstances, each of which deserves our most serious and mature consideration. First of all, there is that notorious movement on the part of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, which avowedly aims at getting an uncontested hold on the educational funds of the country for their own particular purposes. Secondly, there are the accusations which have been put out from time to time, since the appearance of that prelatic address, to the effect that the friends of Scriptural Education in Ireland and the Roman Catholic party were both drawing in the same direction, and both aiming at one common object, namely, that each should get an apportionment of the funds of the

State into their own hands, to do with them irresponsibly what they liked. The third circumstance is, that it has been stated at various times of late, that there is a cooling down and a subsidence of that interest in our cause which once existed on the part of our laity—that they are getting tired of this protracted controversy, and desire earnestly that, even if we should have to give up what we hold, and have held, dear, the war should cease. I cannot, sir, believe that in this, your own particular locality, at least, such a subsidence of lay feeling and lay earnestness and sympathy can be discovered. It was my privilege to attend here last year upon a similar occasion to the present; and, unless my eye is vastly at fault, the assembly that I have now the honour to address far exceeds in numbers and influence, both on the platform and in the body of the meeting, that which was assembled then (applause). I believe, also, without making invidious comparisons, that it contrasts very remarkably, indeed, in both the respects I mention, with another educational meeting which was held in this hall some weeks ago (hear, hear). Let me, then, so far as your own neighbourhood is concerned, thank God that He has kept up in your breasts a spirit of loyalty to this good cause; and I do trust, notwithstanding all the arguments that may be brought to bear upon you, and all the considerations of personal convenience, and even considerations of a higher kind than this—loyalty to our governors, and intense interest in the future welfare of our Church—that you will never cease your efforts to uphold the cause of God's free Word in the country, so long as God gives the platform a voice to speak or a meeting an ear to hear (hear and applause). From many quarters, however, a clamour arises just at present, that, as I have said, the contest ought to be put an end to. "Join the Board," is the war cry just now. They put it to us, saying that it is our wisdom to do so: our wisdom for ourselves; our wisdom for our future influence in the country; our wisdom for the existence, and perpetuity, and prosperity of our Church; and our wisdom furthermore with regard to the people of the land at large. It is put before us as a question of wisdom and judgment, owing to the crisis that has arisen.

Now, sir, that brings the question to a very distinct and important issue, for all those arguments with regard to ourselves—our future influence—our Church—and the population everywhere—all these would be arguments of the most grave importance were it not for one great fact, namely, that a question of principle is concerned (hear, hear). But that fact of a principle being involved alters the character of the matter altogether. Unless I understand the word "principle" very wrongly indeed, principle is a stern and unbending thing (applause). Principle, sir, is immutable, and no consideration or circumstance can make principle at any time other than it was at first (hear, hear). It remains eternal like Him who is the foundation of it—the God of truth; and nothing that can possibly happen in the world's vicissitudes can make that which was true at one time else than true at any succeeding time. Let us, then, calmly and deliberately ask what is it, in the name of the Almighty God—whose name is so often upon our lips—what is it that we have been so long contending for? Let us view it carefully and examine it accurately. Is it only something that is generally desirable, or is it, on the contrary, something that is absolutely essential? Sir, I take it that we have not been fighting for what is merely desirable. Were it merely a desirable thing—a desideratum—I, for one, would long since have ceased to offer any opposition (hear, hear). It is because I believe

it in my heart and conscience to be an essential—I repeat, an essential—that therefore we have maintained so long this unhappy, vexatious, and wearying opposition. But so long as it is essential, then I say it God be for us now can ultimately be against us. Great is truth—that immutable and unchanging truth; and He who has made it truth will make it prevail (hear, hear). I go on, therefore, strong in hope, not in the hope based on human means or human wisdom—not guided by the false star of human expediency; I go on simply because I believe, to use the most familiar language, that I am doing right in the sight of God (applause). How can I justify my conduct, for example, if I want to teach the child of another man in a manner that I would not feel myself justified in teaching my own child? I cannot (hear, hear). We believe that for the education of our own children, instruction in Divine truth is on no account to be omitted; and shall I, therefore, in my capacity as a member of the Church of Ireland, stand forth, and say that I will be an educator in the country, and consent to do that for others which I would not do for myself? The thing is impossible. Suppose that I, a parent, had my own child come to me and say, "I will take instruction in secular things from your hands, father, but I refuse to open with you the Book of Everlasting Life," would I consent to that? I would wrong my conscience in so doing, and I would feel that in administering that mutilated education I was acting any thing but a father's part towards him. Now, I say, what is conscientiously binding upon us as educators in our private capacity, remains, and must remain, conscientiously binding upon us in our public capacity likewise (hear, hear). I have no sympathy whatever with those men who are described as having two consciences—one for indoor and the other for out (hear, hear). My conscience is the same whatever side of the door I stand at (laughter). I believe that what is binding on me in the family is binding upon me when I come into public relations with those abroad likewise; and therefore I hold that we are obliged to administer (if we pretend to give education at all) to the children that come to us what we believe to be such an education as is right and religious, and true and sound, and thoroughly good (applause). We can never, therefore, give up our fundamental principle, that the Scriptures should be the basis of a nation's instruction. And may I be permitted to say, that when we speak of making them the basis of a nation's instruction, we do not mean to say merely that we shall be left at liberty to make use of mere allusive references to them as occasion may demand, but that we shall be at liberty to take down in an honest straightforward manner the Word of God without shame (applause). I believe that the true principle is that the reading—mark that well, the reading,—of the Scriptures, as well as a reference to the truth of Scripture, shall form an integral part of the system of education (hear.) These are my principles.

(To be continued.)

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TO END OF VOL. VII.—Rev. T. B. Picton; Rev. A. H. R. M., Owen Sound; J. H., Hawkesbury; W. F. B., Grimsby, in full.