

tractability for their lack of experience, and may therefore render useful service in the lower and more mechanical departments of teaching. This principle was asserted in the monitorial system, and it betokened at least a wholesome reaction against the ancient pedagogic practice of setting tasks and 'hearing' the scholars repeat them one by one.

The question once so angrily discussed respecting the relative merits of the two systems of Bell and Lancaster, and the conflicting claims of these worthies to priority in the discovery of the 'mutual' method, have long ago been swept into the 'limbo large and broad' of barren and forgotten controversies. 'It would be lost labour to revive them now. Fundamentally, there was little difference between their methods of instruction. But Bell was patronised by Church dignitaries, energetically supported by Southey, and Mrs. Trimmer, and the *Quarterly Review*; and his efforts gave birth to the National Society for the Education of the Poor in the principles of the Established Church. Lancaster, on the other hand, was a Quaker, and earnestly contended that national education should be Christian, but not sectarian. He was supported by the Nonconformists and by Whig Churchmen, by Sydney Smith and the *Edinburgh Review*, by Brougham and the 'Useful Knowledge' party. The result of his early efforts was the establishment of the British and Foreign School Society. Both of these great societies continued for many years, and still continue to do honourable service in promoting the education of the children of the poor. Indeed, up to the time when the present system of Government grants was established, and for some years later, the only public provision in England for primary education was made through their means. But each of these societies has come in time, if not to abandon the monitorial system, at least to distrust it, and to supersede it largely by other agencies; and each of them has, though for very different reasons, become somewhat ashamed of its founder. Poor Lancaster, though generous and unselfish, and animated by more of the 'enthusiasm of humanity' than Bell, was vain, thriftless, unmethodical, and fatally incapable of working well with other people in the administration of a great society or in the pursuit of a common end. Yet the personal influence of both men was considerable during several of the early years of the present century; and the part they played respectively well deserves to be studied."