

not retain and exercise full control over their children till they are seventeen at any rate. There are instances where, perhaps from very special peculiarities in a child's character this would not be possible, but such cases must be rare. In all ordinary cases when such restraint is not exercised, must the fault not be laid at the parents' door? And, if so, are they not to be held responsible as the great criminal makers the world over. It might still further be asked if the common tendency of the present day to give children at a very immature age, a very large and even increasing amount of self rule, so that they are scarcely out of their cradles till they manage themselves and their parents also, may not be gently intensifying the evil. We need scarcely add how forcibly that points to the kind of remedial measures likely to be most successful. Cast off and neglected children will make their presence and this influence felt one way or other; is it not the best and cheapest plan for the community, instead of punishing juvenile criminals, and going on punishing them till they become incorrigible, to take such an act the part of a father or mother to them; Train and restrain them and "give them a chance." Even in a young country like this, such questions will have to be put an answered. Neglected, vicious children are growing up around us everywhere. Has society no right to protect itself from the evils arising from this state of things, by punishing parents who do evidently neglect their duties, both to these children and the community, and acting as a parent to those who have none? Any little infraction of police regulations is punished. Any nuisance complained of has to be abated. Any manufacture injurious to the health of the community stopped. Why not go a good deal further? Surely no one has a right to train a family in ignorance and vice, or even allow them to grow up in such a state, because the work and the expense are too great for them to make an effort to have it different. And if parents will do this, would it be any undue infringement of the liberty of the subject or the parental rights for society to do it for them and at their expense, while punishing them for the neglect of their manifest and important duties? People cry out against compulsory education, for instance, as an interference of individual liberty: is it any more so than compelling a man to keep his fingers off his neighbour's property, and making his feet fast if he will persist in that way of vindicating his personal right to do as he chooses? We confess we don't see much difference. The person who lets loose on society an ignorant, immoral, untrained child or youth, seems greatly more a criminal than many in our prisons and penitentiaries.

He has no more a right to do so than he has a right to introduce contagious diseases into his neighbourhood, to fire his neighbour's premises, or take his neighbour's life.

This everlasting punishing of mere children, without anything being done to strike at the root of the evil, will never do. To make parents directly and fully responsible to the community for their children's behaviour, might be going too far, but to make them so far responsible that they shall not allow these children to grow up in ignorance of the ordinary branches of a common education, or of an honest way of earning a livelihood, without being liable to fine or even imprisonment, would appear to us, we must acknowledge, just about the right thing. If moral nuisances, which naturally very soon become physical ones, were to be treated as material ones, such as dunghills on our streets or snow left unremoved on our sidewalks, a good deal of work certainly would have to be gone through.

We don't require to be told that moral evils are to be remedied by far other means than force, but force has its place and its uses too, and perhaps these may be found applicable to certain evils upon which they have as yet been scarcely tried.—*Globe*.

4. COMPULSORY EDUCATION.—DOES IT INDICATE FAILURE?

The *Canadian Freeman* regards the letter which appeared in *The Leader* some days since, signed by most, if not all, the Superior Court judges and a number of other citizens of good position, in favor of compulsory education, as the strongest possible proof of the failure of the common school system. There could be no more inconclusive reasoning. It is quite possible that the system may be defective, inasmuch as it does not bring within school influences a number of boys and girls who now grow up deprived of all education. Our contemporary argues that the common school system should, therefore, be given up and a denominational system established in its place. In England there is an essentially sectarian system; yet there we find leading educationalists engaged in discussing the very same question which is engaging attention here, where a national school system exists. At the late educational conference in Manchester, the question of compulsory education was fully considered as a means of bringing within the reach of the schools those children who now grow up without instruction. It is everywhere found to be a matter of great difficulty to bring the entire school population to the schools; and it is altogether unfair

to assume that the statements made in the petition which was published in our columns in any way affect the correctness of the principle on which the common schools are conducted in Canada.—*Leader*.

5. PETITION TO THE LEGISLATURE ON COMPULSORY EDUCATION.

"RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH:—That all the rateable property of this city is compelled by law, to contribute to the support of Common Schools for the education of the children of Ratepayers.

"That the estimated value of the School buildings and grounds belonging to the School Trustees, (exclusive of fittings), was in 1866, over eighty-four thousand dollars, and the Schools are supported by an annual assessment of about twenty-five thousand dollars and a Legislative grant of over three thousand dollars.

"That the Schools are open to all free of charge.

"That your petitioners believe that the Toronto Schools are very well conducted, and in every way competent to educate their pupils.

"That it has been ascertained by authority that over 1,600 children in their School, age, neither attend school, nor are taught at home, besides nearly 800 in the School lists, attending less than twenty days in the year, and about 120 children under sixteen years of age, are annually committed to Toronto gaol.

"That your petitioners most readily accept the burden imposed on them by law, of providing Schools for general education, and are fully impressed with a sense of the ample return, which, as citizens, they would receive from their outlay, if the blessings of education could be insured to all that need their influence.

"That your petitioners have learned by many years experience, that the class of children, most peremptorily required to be taught, cannot possibly be induced to accept the offered blessing.

"That your petitioners adopt the language of the Local Superintendent's Report for 1866, printed by the School Trustees in their Annual Report:—"Of our city it may also and especially be said—

'Here is education provided, yet it is by no means universally received, because of the indifference and inertness of parents; our Legislation provides for the building, furnishing and maintenance of school houses—for the employment and payment of competent teachers—in a word, for all the machinery for useful education; but much of the material to be educated is withheld, through parental indifference or parental cupidity, or it may be, in some few instances, by parental poverty, and the obvious and painful consequence is, that juvenile idleness, vice and crime, abound; and numbers of children, who should be in the school house, are in the streets, or prowling about the lanes and yards of the city, or on the watch for mischief and plunder, objects of mingled pity and dread to the citizens—thorns in the flesh of the Police Magistrate—rising candidates for the Jail, Reformatory and Penitentiary, and a reproach to our vaunted civilization and professed Christianity.'

"Your petitioners respectfully suggest that the legal obligation cast on them to provide education should, in fairness, be accompanied by an obligation to accept education on the part of the class of children in whose civilization society at large is chiefly, if not wholly, interested.

"Your petitioners pray that your honorable House will be pleased to inquire into the working of the Common School system in the cities and towns of Ontario, with a view to increasing its powers of usefulness and extending, so far as may be found practicable, its advantages to that class of children which, under the present law, it has been found impossible to reach, and from which the community has the strongest reason to apprehend danger to its peace and well-being.

"And your petitioners will ever pray, &c. (Signed) Wm. H. Draper (Chief Justice), P. M. Vanhoughtnet, (Chancellor), Wm. B. Richards, (Chief Justice, C. P.), John H. Hagarty, Adam Wilson, and John Wilson, (Justices), O. Mowatt and John C. Spragge, (Vice-Chancellors) Fred. W. Jarvis, (Sheriff), John W. Gwynne, Q. C. (Rev.) E. Baldwin, Wm. McMaster, (Senator), John Macdonald, (ex M. P. P.), Hon. Robert Spence, David Buchan, Rev. Alex. Topp, Robert A. Harrison, Q. C., Adam Crooks, Q. C., S. H. Blake, John Roaf, Q. C., Thomas Moss, John Boyd, S. H. Strong, Q. C., John Hector, Q. C., Rev. Alexander Sanson, James E. Smith, Mayor, Ald. S. B. Harman, Ald. John J. Vickers, Ald. Thomas Smith, Ald. G. D'Arcy Boulton, Ald. N. Dickey, Ald. Thomas Thompson, Ald. Wm. Strachan, Ald. G. W. Beard, Ald. John Boyd, Ald. Alexander Henderson, Ald. F. H. Metcalf, Hon. John Hillyard Cameron, Q. C., T. Henning, Jos. A. Donavan, Charles Robertson, Lawrence Heyden, Rev. F. H. Marling, C. Robinson, Q. C., L. Heyden, Jr.

6. PREVENTATIVE MEASURES AGAINST CRIME.

From the recent charge of the Judge presiding at the Assizes for the City of Toronto, we make the following extracts:—

But while resolute in enforcing the criminal code, it behoves us