the opposition (in the storm of reprobation excited by this proposal) was enabled to inflict upon it. The Minutes of 1839, even when this obnoxious plan was withdrawn, barely escaped defeat. The grant of £30,000 for that year was passed with a majority of only two votes. Those who were responsible for the whole of these proceedings as members or advisers of the Committee of Council on Education, must recollect the denunciations with which they were assailed in both Houses of Parliament and in the press. It was a very small matter indeed to be misunderstood, to be denounced by prelates and statesmen as infidels. Under the influence of a paramount claim of duty, in private life, it would not be difficult to bear patiently even worse misconstruction. And this controversy left the impression that the convictions expressed by the religious communions of England were entitled to more respect in such a matter than even the will of the civil power.

EDUCATIONAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE GOVERNMENT IN ENGLAND—OPPOSITION TO THE SECOND PARLIAMENTARY MEASURE.

The civil government had done little or nothing for the education of the people since the foundation of the Grammar-schools, chiefly in the days of Edward and Elizabeth. The religious communions had, towards the latter end of the last century, founded, and had since with remarkable zeal and success greatly extended and improved, the Sunday-schools of England and Wales. Such elementary day-schools as existed owed their origin to the same zeal of Christian congregations. These schools were for the most part supported by congregational subscriptions and collections—managed by the ministers and principal laymen, and conducted by a teacher appointed by them. The number of these schools was to be weighed against their comparative inefficiency. Their resources in school-pence and subscriptions formed no insignificant contribution towards the cost of a new national institution, which could not be supported in efficiency without the annual outlay of millions. The zeal of the managers, the vigilance of the ministers, the character and motives of the teachers, were such as might be brought into successful comparison with those of any body of civil functionaries. If, therefore, the age was not ripe for a school common to our religious faith ; if it was not self-conscious that the several denominations of Christians are only worshipping in separate chapels of one great cathedral ; was it not required from a statesman to accept the aid of this religious organization, in order to make the means of giving an education which should ultimately eradicate the barbarism of ignorance from our people ? Such ultimately was the decision of the government ; but it passed through another storm of misconception in 1842. Sir James Graham, then Secretary of State for the Home Department, was painfully conscious of the inefficiency of the schooling obtained by children, who, under the Factories' Regulation Act, were withdrawn from labour for instruction during half of each day. With great zeal and sincerity, he brought the powers of Sir Robert Peel's strong government to remedy these defects. A measure was prepared with the most deliberate care, but it encountered the necessity of defining a constitution for the schools in which the factory children were to be taught. The Minute of 1839 had been constructed on the basis of religious equality,—the Bill of 1842 was founded on that of religious toleration. Even on this ground, it scarcely conciliated the cold and reluctant assent of the Church of England, whereas it encountered the reprobation of every other religious communion. The Bill therefore was withdrawn. Two such signal defeats, together with incessant controversy on almost every act of their administration, were proofs of the extreme distrust with which the Committee of Council on Education were regarded by every religious denomination.

Those churchmen who most emphatically asserted the authority of the church, claimed the instruction of the young, as the function of the priest, under the guidance of his ecclesiastical superior. Even the lay members of the church, as they affirmed, had no part in this purely spiritual duty, and the intrusion of the civil power was an usurpation. At the opposite extreme, a genuine alarm was felt lest the State should create a new authority, enabling it to control public opinion, and to benumb the energies of civil and religious freedom. If we would preserve England from a tyranny more dangerous than that of a military despotism, we were warned to reject the subtle scheme of moulding a democracy,—itself tyrannously strong,—but merely the creature of the Minister of Education. Between these two extremes, the Wesleyan communion, and the moderate and evangelical members of the Church of England, watched, with interest, the steady front which the Committee of Council showed to every demand of intolerance, of exaggerated ecclesiastical authority, and of fanatical denial of the simplest functions of government to protect the Commonwealth from barbarism. Gradually the extremes unconsciously succeeded, by their violence, in creating among all moderate parties the conviction, that co-operation with government was not an interest merely, but a duty.

PLAN PROPOSED BY LORD JOHN RUSSELL'S CABINET IN 1846.

This was the state of public opinion when the cabinet of Lord John Russell was formed in 1846. To this cabinet is due the merit of the most important step which has ever been taken in this kingdom to provide an efficient education for the children of the millions supported by manual labour.

The whole question of National Education had now been patiently studied during seven years of painful controversy. In the background, inquiries had been diligently pursued—a school of method had been tried—the training of pupil teachers in a model school, and in a college, had been experimentally tested. Each portion of the matter of instruction and various methods had been examined under circumstances which prepared public opinion for further action. Lord John Russell doubtless also saw, that the failure of the two preceding schemes left open only one plan by which the government could protect religious liberty while they recognised the claims of each communion to manage its own schools. That plan was to defend the right of the parent to choose what religious instruction should be given to his child. Practically, it went to enable every communion to found its own schools ; to protect minorities not having schools by enabling them to withdraw their children from religious instruction obnoxious to them ; and when this reasonable liberty was not given, to enlarge the aid ordinarily granted to found a school. That was the political basis of the arrangements adopted in 1846, but though this gradually won the consent of nearly the whole of the religious communions of Great Britain, it is to the Minutes of 1846 that we must attribute their active co-operation with the government in founding Normal Schools, apprenticing pupil teachers, competing for Queen's scholarships, and striving with persevering energy to fulfil the intentions of the Committee of Council to make their elementary schools efficient for all the secular objects of a representative government, elected by a people asserting its claims to more comprehensive franchise.

EDUCATIONAL POLICY OF THE VARIOUS RELIGIOUS BODIES IN ENGLAND.

This great act of concord between the Committee of Council on Education and the religious communions of Great Britain has already issued in the apprenticeship of 24,000 pupil teachers, of whom 14,000 are at present serving as apprentices in day-schools,—(the majority of the rest having entered Training Colleges and become teachers,)—in the foundation of forty Training Colleges, containing 3,000 students, now chiefly Queen's scholars, who have passed through five years' apprenticeship in a day-school,—in the settlement in charge of day-schools of 10,426 teachers holding certificates of merit, of whom 6,814 are now in receipt of augmentations of stipend from the government ; and in an annual supply of about 1,000 teachers who have had two years education in a Training College, and have nearly all likewise served as apprentices. In support of this great and growing machinery of elementary education, the annual Parliamentary grant has risen to £663,433, and it is probable that Sunday, day, and evening-schools are supported at a cost of about two millions of annual outlay from all sources. The accession of the Wesleyan Conference to the scheme developed in the Minutes of 1846 was a signal event. Up to that time, the aid of the government had been distributed solely to schools in connection with the National, and British and Foreign School Societies. To extend the grants beyond these limits was to take the first step, either towards the creation of common schools, or of schools under the management of congregations, and incorporated in the organisation of religious denominations. The idea of the common school had been resisted in every form in which it had been proposed. Even the British and Foreign School Society encountered embarrassment by the growth, among its chief supporters, of the principle of denominational action. The phenomena had been observed with the vigilance with which a student of nature watches the facts from which he hopes the evidences of some comprehensive law of physical force will gradually evolve. The signs of the relative strength of these social forces were studied in order that whatever was done might be in harmony with them. The problem to be solved was in what way the civil power could obtain security for the efficiency of the secular instruction, while it recognised the right of the parent to direct the education of his child, and the claim of the communion to retain the school as a part of its religious organisation. The Minutes of 1846 were proposed as defining the means by which this result was to be obtained. The inevitable consequence was that the Minutes should be so administered as to include every religious communion. The first denomination then admitted to participation in the Parliamentary grant was the Wesleyan. The consequence of the adoption of the Minutes of 1846 by the Education Committee of the Wesleyan Conference was the erection of the Training College and Model Schools in Westminster, which cost £45,000, and are maintained at an annual outlay of £5,500, having now 124 resident students, of whom 108 are Queen's scholars. We may well hesitate to affirm that even any national or