

and worthy of being kept in continual operation. The want of such an educational establishment had been long felt in Britain before the system of diffusing general information was devised, and since they have been put in operation, they have been found to answer the purpose for which they were intended remarkably well, and to exceed the anticipations of their founders. Although originally formed by mechanics, they are now extensively patronized by all classes, the most wealthy as well as the poorest. Indeed, many of the best educated men appear to take as much interest in their progress as that of the higher and more fashionable seats of learning. In proof of the high estimation in which they are held by the upper classes in Britain, the following notice, taken from the *Eclectic Magazine* of the present month, may be cited:—"A lecturing zeal has pervaded the ranks of the nobility. The Earl of Carlisle is announced to lecture on Gray, at Sheffield; the Duke of Newcastle is to lecture to the mechanics at Worksop; Sir Alexander Cockburne at Southampton, and Lord John Russell at Manchester." The approbation which they thus receive at the hands of the greatest statesmen and philanthropists of the age, is a reliable proof of their excellence.

CORRUPTION OF POLITICS IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK. DUTY OF TEACHERS IN RELATION TO POLITICS.

After the manner in which the system of elections in the neighbouring State of New York has been praised by some writers, the following statements, from a late number of the *New York Teacher*, will be read with surprise and pain, while the advice given, at the conclusion of the article, is as applicable to Teachers in this country as to those in the United States:—

"The election is over, and we have, therefore, no fears of being accused or even suspected, in the remarks which follow, of attempting to foist our own political opinions upon our readers. Whether we are pleased or displeased at the result, is a question on which all are at liberty to exercise their guessing faculties, to their hearts' content. If 'the country is now safe,' as one party believes, then shall we rejoice; and if it is ruined, or is likely to be, as the other party believes, then must we suffer in common with others.

"But there are dangers to which our country is exposed, which both parties see and acknowledge, and yet do not raise their warning voice against; but, on the contrary, both are equally guilty in hastening and increasing. The doctrine that 'all is fair in politics,' has not only become prevalent, but absolutely popular, until, finally, it seems to be conceded that he who can cheat the most, is the best party man. Corruption in high places, and by places, seems to go unrebuked; and bribery and fraud are the general rule, and honesty and fair dealing the exception. On election days, voters are bought and sold like cattle in the shambles, and men claiming to be respectable will not vote until paid for it. Had we all the money which was expended in this way, in the State of New York alone, at the recent election, we could retire with a fortune larger than that of any other individual within her borders.

"What is the effect of all this? We answer: our liberties are endangered; our public morals are corrupted; and the ballot box, which might do infinitely more than the cartridge box in perpetuating our free institutions, is fast becoming a mighty reversed engine, which will hereafter, unless some redeeming power be speedily brought to bear upon it, carry death and destruction to all who have ventured upon its track. Money—the fatal tempter which has beguiled all traitors, from Judas Iscariot down to —is already corrupting our electors, until it has become a common saying that 'every man has his price.' 'Egg-men'—already a numerous and rapidly-increasing class—vociferate for those candidates who pay well, and capable, honest, and deserving men, if poor, are pushed aside without ceremony. If a candidate will only 'bleed' well, his election is sure, even though his character and morals may be as foul and corrupt as a cesspool!

Is this picture overdrawn? Is it too highly wrought? Would to God it were so: for then we might innocently be silent. But the half has not been told. Our limits only admit of a mere reference to it; but, in saying less, we should have been verily guilty.

And now for the remedy. As the disease has been coming on gradually, so must the cure be gradual. And this leads us to the point at which we were aiming. The youth of our land, who will soon be voters, must be enlightened in relation to their duties to their country.

They should be taught, that, to sell their vote, is a piece of treachery—that the attainment of even a good object should not be sought by the use of unfair means—that they should be governed by patriotism rather than by party spirit—and, above all, that for the use or abuse of the elective franchise, especially in this free republic, they are as much responsible to God as for any other act of their lives.

These principles may be inculcated in almost every exercise of the school-room. At times, familiar conversation should be held with the pupils, in relation to the great events now transpiring in our land. This should be done in a spirit of candor and fairness, and special care should be taken not to favor either political party, but to do equal justice to all. The love of our highly favored country should be carefully cultivated, and its advantages over all others distinctly pointed out.—The dangers to which all republics are exposed from ignorance, corruption, and vice, should be kept before the youthful mind, and the fearful condition of any country whose liberties are gone, should be held up to view. Above all, our children and youth should be taught that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

"FELLOW TEACHERS! This duty is ours. Shall we endeavor faithfully, honestly, and conscientiously to discharge it? Or shall we, by our indifference and neglect, or, worse still, by our pusillanimity, only hasten the crisis of our country's fall? We speak as to wise men; judge ye."—*N. Y. Teacher.*

EVILS OF THOUGHTLESS SCHOOL LEGISLATION IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK.

We take the following important testimony on this point from the report of the New York State Superintendent for 1851-52, which has recently been laid before the Legislature at Albany:—

"The school system of New York is too vast, involves interests too important, to be rashly established or rashly changed. It requires permanency to adapt it to the circumstances of society, and to give facility and vigor to its operations. Where no serious practical evil is felt, it can scarcely be doubted that a reasonable degree of such permanency is preferable to incessant changes, even though, independently considered, those changes might promise some degree of improvement.

"In the rapid transition from system to system, in the constant change of details, made without the benefit of sufficient experience which has marked the school legislation of the last four years, the natural result has followed. Grave errors have been committed. To retrieve them new ones have been plunged into. The local officers have been embarrassed to understand their duties, varied by each year's legislation. They have consequently performed them with diminished spirit and greatly diminished accuracy. Want of zeal or want of efficiency in the principal, soon extends to the subaltern, or paralyzes his efforts. Even the teachers—a finer or more spirited professional body than whom is not to be found in our state—have lost something of that high enthusiasm which a few years since exhibited its kindling traces throughout our schools, or, as is more likely, their efforts unsupported from without, have fallen on a soil made sterile by indifference, or choked by angry contention. Melancholy as is the confession, and decided as are the exceptions to it, our schools, in the opinion of the undersigned, have deteriorated during the rapid changes of the last four years.

"Whether we have reached a point in these mutations where it is best to pause, and let existing regulations where not obviously and seriously wrong, stand, until a further developed experience and a more settled public sentiment shall call for well considered changes, is the grave question now to be settled."

APPELLATE JURISDICTION OF THE NEW YORK STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS.—Doubts have arisen as to the power of the Superintendent to hear and determine cases of appeal, arising under the school laws of the State. These doubts have been occasioned by the repeal of sec. 132, chap. 480, of the laws of 1847, by an act passed in 1849. This repeal is supposed to have been the result of a clerical error. Whatever its effect, it is well understood that the idea was not entertained or even broached, in the Legislature, of abolishing the appellate jurisdiction of the Superintendent, and compelling all parties aggrieved by the acts or decisions of the inferior school officers, to resort to courts of law for redress. Entertaining this belief, and conceiving that the act of 1849 did not, at all events, affect some of the legislative enactments conferring jurisdiction on the Superintendent, passed prior to 1847, the undersigned has entertained the appeals which have been brought before him; and he is not aware that his decisions have been in any case disregarded. But to remove doubts, and prevent controversy, it is recommended that the Legislature, by express enactment, reconfirm that appellate jurisdiction in the Superintendent, without which our school system would be crushed by litigation, almost within a single year. (Report of the Superintendent, for 1851-2.)