

Nova Scotia District, arrived before his brethren, and preached on the following Sabbath morning from the 12th verse of the 6th chap. of the second Book of Kings. "And as he was preaching," writes our sister, "the Lord was pleased to speak with power to my heart. I could scarcely refrain from weeping aloud. I hastened home without stopping to speak to any one." "I went into my closet and prayed to the Lord to have mercy upon me." "From this time, I used secret prayer and searching the Scriptures daily."

For the space of five months she sought the Lord with many tears, when she was enabled to cast her intolerable burden on the Lord. She says: "While pouring out my soul before Him in secret, He was pleased to apply the words of the Apostle: 'Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.' My heart immediately replied—'Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief'—that moment, I was enabled to exercise faith in Christ." Then she broke forth in joy: "O Lord I will praise thee."

Nine years from this "day of salvation," she writes: "After this I joined the Methodist Society, I believe I shall have reason to praise God while eternity lasts that my lot fell among them." She continues: "The Lord has kept me that I have never cast away my confidence, but have been enabled, through grace, to hold on my way. He has never left me without an evidence in and through my Redeemer; and I think I feel an increasing desire to press forward. Lord help me so to do."

In the year 1823 Miss Starr was married to Samuel Sharpe Esq., and from that time to the end of life resided in the western part of the Township. Methodism was scarcely known in this part of the country at that period. Sister Sharpe was, therefore, deprived of the precious means of grace which she so highly prized. Nevertheless our faithful sister walked humbly with God—cherishing the hope of yet seeing the cause of God prosper in her neighbourhood. In process of time, through the divine favour, a Methodist Society was formed in her vicinity, and regular pastoral aid secured for it. In the successive revivals of religion with which that Society has been blessed, Sister Sharpe greatly rejoiced; and of their benefits her own family have largely partaken.

She lovingly appreciated the doctrines and economy of her Church. Twenty-five years ago, she wrote thus, "O what a privilege we have above any other people. O how holy we ought to be—how we should improve our great privileges to the glory of God." This opinion lapse of time only strengthened.

There was nothing gloomy and clamorous in her religion. Her piety shed a soft radiance over the monotony of daily life. It beamed from the eye, gave sweetness to the tone, and gentleness to the manner. And yet with all these milder graces of the christian character, she was noted for firmness, decision and perseverance. The harmony of her moral features was not disguised by narrow-minded bigotry; she was, indeed, most truly Wesleyan in feeling and judgment, but she loved all who love the Lord Jesus. A few weeks previous to her lamented death, she was appointed to the important office of Class Leader to a company of young females lately brought to the enjoyment of peace with God. She took much interest in the well-being of her class, and her brethren were sanguine in the belief that she would be made a great blessing to her young friends. But the Master had need of her. The fiat had gone forth. A brief illness terminated her life and labours.

She had not lived in vain—she had so lived as to be prepared to die—she had lived to see her husband and children travelling to Zion with their faces thitherward—she had lived to endear herself to her christian brethren; and though now dead she yet speaketh in the memory of her humble and devoted example.

Cornwallis, May 17th, 1851.

N.

Correspondence.

JUDGE MARSHALL'S LETTERS.

The Parliament and Executive Government also, through all ages, and down to a few recent years, were entirely inattentive and neglectful, on the same subject of literary instruction for the people, generally.—It cannot be supposed, that it could have been otherwise, considering, of whom those powers were invariably composed. One branch of the Parliament, consisted entirely of the members of the same unfeeling and oppressing Aristocracy; and another, partly of the titled individuals of the same order, and, in part, of the highest dignitaries of the ecclesiastical body, who, as has already been mentioned, were about as neglectful or unwilling as the lay Aristocracy, with regard to general or extended popular instruction, in any literary branches, even of the most ordinary or elementary descriptions.

It may well be concluded, that, for the same or similar reasons, the Executive

rulers, through the same ages, and until very recently, would neither be aroused, nor inclined to originate and carry out means for effecting any such liberal and benevolent purpose.

From time to time, indeed, there were honourable exceptions to the general indifference and neglect, as to literary instruction for the children of the labouring orders, in the establishment, by pious or benevolent individuals, of schools and public institutions under other names, for affording them such instruction, together with other important advantages; but, unhappily, in some instances, through cupidity, mismanagement, or other adverse cause, those benevolent institutions, have, in a great degree, failed to convey and continuously secure the literary advantages they were originally designed to impart. Moreover, in general, they were so limited or restricted in their conditions, or as to the particular parties or occupations they were instituted to benefit, that the labouring class, as a body, received but little benefit from them. Those institutions, indeed, comparatively speaking, formed but the partial, or rather solitary exceptions to the general neglect and deficiency on the subject.

The Ragged Schools, as they are generally called, were not originated, or put in operation, by the Aristocratic Order, or the higher dignitaries among the clergy; but were established, and have almost exclusively been supported and watched over, by benevolent individuals, both clerical and lay, in the middle orders.

But, possibly, some short sighted caviller, or Aristocratic, or bigoted parasite, may object to the foregoing views and opinions, and say, what operation and effect could the sentiments and conduct of those higher orders, in former ages, have, in producing the condition of the now existing laborious and indigent classes, in regard to the points under review; and what necessity is there, for any such exposure of the members of those orders, who lived in bygone times. A moderate degree of attention, and impartial and continuous reflection on the whole subject, will suffice to afford a full and satisfactory answer. Indeed, the unvarying continuance, through so many ages, and until very recently, of the same apathy or opposition on the point, in all the higher quarters, when viewed in combination with the utter inability of the inferior classes, both as to pecuniary means, and in other respects, to effect for themselves, their literary instruction and general intellectual improvement, should, it is thought, be amply sufficient to show, that the primary and abiding, as well as principal causes of the illiterate and ignorant condition of the existing working classes, in general, are those which have just been given, as having originated and rested, with those higher orders, both lay and clerical.

As to those labouring classes themselves, through all those previous ages, as they did not experience, and, consequently, could not at all rightly or adequately estimate, any of the advantages of such instruction and improvement, they, neither, in general, desired, nor sought for them. Considering the prevalent inclination or feeling among mankind, to adhere to existing customs, and long continued habitudes of thought, desire and conduct, the general indifference of those classes, as to literary instruction, and their long continued, and passive acquiescence in a state of ignorance and mental imbecility, are, precisely, the effects which might reasonably be expected. The son would naturally suppose, that the condition of his sire, and of all his servile ancestors, in regard to literary instruction, was quite good enough for him; and he would, therefore, be induced to remain, with perfect contentment, in the same state of ignorance as to educational attainments. From this cause, also, in part, the general illiterate and mentally imbecile condition of those labouring and servile classes, was perpetuated from age to age, and down to very recent times, as also their indifference, in general, with regard to securing any literary or intellectual advantages.

To that indifference, or contented acquiescence in ignorance, call it which we may,—for both expressions are of identical import—may, chiefly, be attributed, the general carelessness and neglect of parents in those classes, at the present day, as to securing for their children those educational advan-

tages, now so extensively, and on such favourable terms, placed within their reach. Such carelessness and neglect on the part of those parents, will hereafter be more fully exhibited and proved.

Some citations will now be given, from high and valid authorities, which will amply suffice to prove the correctness of the opinion which I have ventured to offer, concerning the long continued neglect of the higher orders, both lay and clerical, to employ any means or endeavours, for affording literary instruction, or any kind of mental improvement to the labouring and indigent population. In the prize Essay on Juvenile Depravity, the author,—himself a clergyman of the Established Church—makes the following statements and remarks on the point—"The legislature has awakened to the importance of education for the labouring and artisan class." Again,—"*We have reason to be thankful, that the Government of this country seem to be awakening, from a stupor of long continuance, and are arming for the contest against ignorance and all her train, with real ardour and discreet purpose of will. Their sympathies are at length excited for the thousands and millions of their fellow-subjects and fellow-creatures round them, who are perishing 'for lack of knowledge.'*" And in another place he writes,—"*But the appeal should be made, with the greatest force, to the ministers of religion, of whatever denomination; to the clergy of the Established Church, particularly those in high stations of authority, our dignitaries and bishops.—The religious element in the question, is the most important of any. Let these be asked, 'What have you done for the masses in this country? They are sunk in heathenism, in destitution, in depravity, through intemperance. What has your christian zeal effected for them? Let our criminal calendars,—let the reports of our metropolitan police,—let the statistics of juvenile crime, return an answer to this query. The question is a momentous one, and deserves to be considered now, because it will hereafter be put to each responsible individual, in another world, before a higher audience than meets in parliament; and from the mouth of the Almighty one himself—What has been really done for the demoralized classes of our heathen poor.'*"

The Rev. B. Parsons, in his able letters on Education, addressed to the Rev. Dr. Vaughan, contained in the pamphlet under the title of the scriptural injunction, "Buy the Truth and sell it not," makes the following very pointed remarks and strictures,—"*But if the people, as you suppose, were indifferent to education, ought they not to be aroused to perform this duty: 'Their present apathy must be attributed, in no small degree to those whose office it was to teach them better.'*" Again,—"*As the people can and do manufacture better than the state, so they can educate. You may say, 'they have not done it,' and our reply is, that they have not done it, for the most obvious reason in the world, because they have not tried. Why, Sir, the year 1846 had to run no small part of its cycle before even your worthy self became very zealous on this point. The public press, also, is but just awaking and rubbing its eyes, and some of its leading men talk such nonsense, that they leave us no alternative but to conclude, that they are still dreaming. The waking thoughts of not a few of them, hitherto, have been, that this said 'education' would ruin peasants and operatives, destroy the constitution, and dethrone the Queen! The Church, till lately, has slumbered or croaked more deeply over this subject than any one else, and even the voluntary principle is but just beginning to try its power in this service."* In another place, he says, "The question of day school education for the masses, is a new subject. It is only very lately that it has been viewed in any other light than as a tremendous evil. Considering the short time that it has been entertained, it has met with greater favour from our Churches and Ministers, than any other that has been laid before them."

Not only the higher orders, but the farmers also, it would appear, have been, and still are, opposed to the literary instruction of the labouring poor. In the prize Essay lately cited, there is this express assertion on this point—"The farmer, unhappily, is, for the most part, opposed to the spread of education. It is his calamitous lot, to be

left to the guidance of a half instructed mind, without, for the most part, any presiding and superintending influence."

The next cause to be assigned for the continued ignorance of the working classes, especially the agricultural portion of them, has been, the almost constant low rates of wages. If there had been no other cause, this would, to a great extent, have prevented them from supplying the pecuniary means for the education of their children, even if they had been ever so desirous of securing that advantage. In the preceding letter concerning "Taxation," it was shown how the aristocratic order, in ancient times, oppressed the labouring classes, by fixing their wages, by law, at the very lowest, and most inadequate rates; and in the letter on "Labour and Wages," facts were given, to prove that the rate of wages for agricultural labourers, in some districts of the Kingdom, is not more than 1s. a day and, taking Great Britain throughout, is, on an average, even less than 1s. 6d. per day, or under 9s. a week. It has also been shown, that in the cotton and linen factories, taking all England through, and looking through all the different grades of employment, in those factories, the average weekly earnings of the men, are only about 10s., and that, estimating in the same way, for both men and women, only 8s., or a little over, in the week. In the pottery districts, also, the wages of the common workmen, are about the same. It must, therefore, be clearly apparent, that after defraying all absolutely requisite expenses for the bare subsistence of a family, there would, in nearly every instance, be nothing to spare, for securing even the most common literary instruction for children.

But, unhappily, another and most abounding cause of ignorance among the working people, is, that the great majority of the parents, are either of such drunken and dissipated habits, or so involved in the habit of use of intoxicating drinks, and also of tobacco; but especially the former, that they squander away a large portion of their earnings, in those merely sensual and pernicious indulgences, and, thus, in a vast number of instances, whether their wages or gains be high or low, so far from having any thing to spare, for even the ordinary schooling of their children, they scarcely furnish their families with the most common or absolute necessities. These pernicious indulgences, and consequent inability, as to pecuniary means, for the school instruction of their children, combined with their own ignorant and depraved state of mind and feeling, give rise to another cause for education being withheld from their children—namely, an utter carelessness or indifference, in a vast multitude of cases, as to their children ever obtaining that instruction, or any description of mental improvement. So much has already been stated, in the course of these letters, to show the drinking and dissipated habits of the working classes, in general, in the United Kingdom, that nothing on the point need here be added. In regard to the carelessness or indifference just mentioned, on the part of very many parents, it is just what might be expected, from a view of all the unfavourable circumstances respecting them, which have already been stated. That indifference is now known to be one of the principal discouragements in the various and zealous efforts which are, at present, being made for the education of the children of those labouring classes. On both of these points of the drunken habits, and of the indifference of the parents, being powerful preventives to the diffusion of literary instruction among the children of those classes at the present time, the following statements and remarks, in the Essay on Juvenile Depravity, are full and explicit,—"*It has been shown, that the children of drunken parents, apprehended by justice, for the commission of some crime, are, almost uniformly, either wholly, or in great measure, uneducated. He who considers the wide spread intemperance of the lower orders, as is proved by the immense consumption of intoxicating liquors, particularly of ardent spirits, which are little used by the upper ranks, will have no difficulty in explaining the general destitution among the same class, in regard to education. It cannot be otherwise, than that the children of drunken, idle, pauperised, and brutal parents, will be, for the most part, uneducated. Under the malignant influence of intempe-*