

throve well. He was greatly flattered and honored; his 'system' was adopted by great people, and lauded as a new safeguard for Church and State; and before his death in 1832 he was able to place in the hands of trustees in St. Andrews the sum of £120,000, which he desired should be employed in 'promoting and immortalising his educational ideas.'

There is a pitiless candour in the brief sentences in which the present occupant of the Chair of Education founded by Dr. Bell's trustees sums up his character:—

He was not an interesting man, he was not a great man; he had very little insight into human nature, though here and there are to be found glimpses of truth; he was singularly narrow-minded, and he was in several respects a terrible bore. There is in his own mind hardly a trace of education—hardly the smallest sign of literary culture. He had read Cicero and Quintilian, Milton and Locke; but he had read them only for the purpose of digging out of them mottoes for the chapters of his works, or passages in support of his own conclusions. There is no more trace of literature or of literary culture in all his voluminous writings than there is in the minutes of a corporation or the report of a banking company. He remained to the end of his days of the opinion which he expressed when he was acting as tutor to his two American pupils, 'I thought that a good hand was better than all the Greek or Latin in the universe.' And even after he was a richly benefited clergyman, he looked upon grammar schools and universities chiefly as places where people contract prejudices. His whole mind and soul were absorbed in the one idea of extending to the whole world the blessings and the peculiarities of the Madras system.

But, although the reaction which has since taken place, against the extravagant praise once accorded to the monitorial or mutual plan of instruction is perfectly justifiable, the plan had substantial merits. Bell and Lancaster showed to a public, just becoming conscious of the need of national education, but utterly bewildered as to the best way of supplying that need, a cheap contrivance for bringing large numbers together, drilling them into order, and imparting to them the rudiments of learning. Children certainly learned to read and write, and were made cheerful, loyal, and obedient. This was a clear gain. We do not now believe, as the enthusiastic supporters of Bell and Lancaster did, that boys are better teachers than men, that it is easy to teach all one knows, and especially easy to teach that which we have only just acquired for ourselves. But it remains true that a school is a community of learners who ought to be in helpful relations to one another, and that young teachers often make up in freshness of mind and