

THE CLAIMS OF UNIVERSAL EDUCATION.

It is not uncommon for those who have never reflected upon the subject to consider it unjust, under any circumstances, to tax the property of one man to educate the children of another. Such are ever ready to inquire, Of what interest is it to me whether the children of others are educated or not? True, the whole subject has been thoroughly discussed, and its bearings clearly shown again and again; yet there are still found, in almost every community, some whose minds remain unenlightened. To such it is the effort necessary to present anew the considerations which have led thousands of others (who once thought as they now do,) to believe that a liberal provision for free education is the cheapest and best insurance which can be effected upon property and the surest guarantee for the safety of property, reputation and life. Among these are the following:

The statistics of *crime* informs us that nine-tenths of all the criminals confined in jails and penitentiaries are deplorably ignorant, as well in regard to science and knowledge in general, as in respect to morals and religion. Had they been properly educated in childhood and youth, instead of preying upon its best interests, they might have contributed to the improvement of society, or honoured its highest stations.

If proper inquiry be made, a large proportion of the *paupers* sustained at public expense, will be found to belong to the ignorant class, and to have been brought to their present condition by their want of the intelligence necessary to enable any one to manage business for himself. A good common school education would have saved them from becoming burdens upon society, and enabled them, beside maintaining themselves respectably, to bear their share of those burdens which are unavoidable by human foresight or sagacity.

Could the statistics of *intemperance* be fully ascertained, it would be found that the great majority of those who have ruined themselves and beggared their families by intemperate drinking, have, by the neglect of the culture of their minds, been rendered unable to enjoy any other than sensual pleasures. Does not every observing person know that those who frequent the grog-shop are not generally the intelligent.

It can be shown that more than one half the *sickness* in our country is the result of ignorance, of a want of that acquaintance with the laws of health which might easily be obtained, and that, consequently more than one half of the expense occasioned by illness, and the loss of time, labour, etc., attendant upon it, might be saved if the whole community were properly educated.

It is well known that a large proportion of the *litigation* in this country arises from the inability (or the indisposition occasioned by a want of facility in doing it properly) to keep a proper record of business transactions. Let every young person be made familiar with arithmetic and the elements of book-keeping, and taught to keep an accurate account of his dealings with others, and one-half or two-thirds of all the petty law-suits which are constantly disturbing the peace of neighborhoods would never occur.

It can be demonstrated that those who are respectably educated can *earn* for themselves, or others, from twenty-five to fifty or one hundred per cent. more than those without education; and that, too, in employments where physical labor and manual skill are mainly concerned; to say nothing of other occupations, where mental culture and a profound acquaintance with science are required. Every thinking man knows that it is far cheaper to hire a man who is intelligent, than to employ an ignorant, stupid one, who needs an overseer to prevent him from slighting his work or destroying the material on which he operates. It costs no more to board a good workman than a bad one.

It can be proved by the best of testimony that without that intelligence and virtue which is the aim of the friends of universal education to secure, so far as human agency is concerned, to every youth in the land, a *Constitutional government* and our free institutions can not be perpetuated.

It can be shown with equal clearness, that without general intelligence, *piety* can not be expected to prevail; since, without it, religion is ever in danger of degenerating into superstition or fanaticism.

The facts establishing these conclusions may not be familiar to all, but they have been frequently presented in the reports of school officers and those in charge of almshouses, prisons, and other

public institutions; and both the truths and the facts which sustain them are familiar, to all who have sought for such information, as household words.—*Ohio Journal of Education.*

THE ECONOMY OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN CANADA.

From two interesting addresses recently delivered by Dr. Hope, of Belleville, on the occasion of certain school examinations, (reported in another part of this number,) we select the following valuable statistics, compiled with great care and labour, illustrative of the great comparative cheapness of a symmetrical and efficient system of free public schools, primary and high schools, over private or other schools;—also the vast superiority of an educational to a military or civil system of police for cities and towns:—Dr. Hope remarked that in Belleville, “the number of pupils in attendance since the commencement of the year was 1017, and the average daily attendance very encouraging indeed; one-fourth of the pupils attending the schools were studying the following branches of education: Natural Philosophy, Mathematics, Animal and Vegetable Physiology, Book-keeping, &c., which would cost at a private school 15s per quarter; say 200 at 15s. would be £150; 600 studying the usual branches at a common school at 10s. per Qr. would be £1200,—total, £1350. He said to educate the same number in the same branches of education, in our comfortable school houses, costs the town £486 18s. exclusive of the Legislative school grant of £90 12s. which could not be obtained by private schools. He said, although the above was an exact estimate of the amount which the town had to pay towards the support of education, that in consequence of the rapid increase of pupils since the opening of the new school houses, it would be necessary to engage an assistant teacher in each school, which would probably make the amount above stated £586 18s.—showing a difference in favour of free schools of £763 2s., or we might say as 33s. 9d. is to 12s. 2d. He considered that these facts went far to show the advantage in every point of view of the free system over the old. Dr. Hope also gave a very interesting sketch of the working of our common schools, as well as the different amounts of money which had been granted by the government for the support of education, which was listened to with great attention. He stated that many persons complained of being taxed for the support of education, but he would remind those who thus complained, that if they did not pay for the support of education they would soon have to be taxed in another way less agreeable to their feelings; for he contended and was prepared to prove his statements, that where the people refused to support education, they would have to pay more for the support of criminal justice, for it was universally admitted that where ignorance abounds, there crime as a necessary consequence will prevail to an alarming extent, and as an illustration of the power of education as a preventive against crime, he gave the following interesting statistics, which are taken from the Journal of the Statistical Society published in London, and though they are somewhat startling, their accuracy may be relied upon. He said, taking all the counties of England and Wales from 1836 to 1847, a period of 11 years, more than half of those counties fail to furnish a single accusation against any person whose education went beyond reading and writing.

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| The annual average accusation in all the counties was..... | 25,412 |
| Do. of persons convicted educated beyond reading and writing..... | 106 |
| Proportion of accusation to the male population, total 1 in.... | 370 |
| Do. do. of males educated beyond reading and writing, 1 in.... | 77,227 |
| Proportion of accusation to the female population, 1 in..... | 1,680 |
| Do. do. of females educated beyond reading and writing, 1 in.. | 2,034,718 |
| 22 Counties comprising a population of 11,183,718 which furnished of convicts educated beyond reading and writing ... | 45 |
| 30 counties comprising a population of 7,628,039 furnished of convicts educated beyond reading and writing..... | 0 |

To the honour of the female sex, the number accused of crime is very small indeed, especially of the educated, only 1 in 2,034,733.

He thought these facts were most conclusive, as to the benefits that education confer on the community at large in a civil point of view, and if there was no other argument than this, that education is a powerful preventive against crime, it should therefore, be well supported. It is a duty we owe to our children, as well as to the state, to see that the rising generation receive a good education, when we are aware that it confers so many blessings on our children. Some present must have often felt the disadvantages they