

lettered," and indicated "a nature and breeding thoroughly plebeian." If such were the esquires, with regard to education, what must have been the state of the plebians? In the times of Charles the second, the "literature, which could be carried by the post bag then formed the greater part of the intellectual nutriment ruminated by the country divines and country justices;" and few knights of the Shire had libraries so good as may now perpetually be found in a servant's hall, or in the back parlor of a small shopkeeper. \* \* No circulating library, no book society then existed even in the capitol. \* \* And as to the lady of the manor and her daughters, their literary stores generally consisted of a prayer book and a receipt book. \* \* And during the last part of the seventeenth century, the culture of the female mind seems to have been entirely neglected. If a damsel had the least smattering of literature, she was regarded as a prodigy. Ladies highly honored, highly bred, and naturally quick-witted, were unable to write a line in their mother tongue without solecisms and faults of spelling such as a charity girl would now (1849) be ashamed to commit. And the sale of books was so small that a man of the greatest name could only obtain a pittance for the copyright of the best performance. \* \* Pedagogues knew no way of imparting knowledge but by beating their pupils."

The most important step taken, in order to promote education was that adopted by the Scottish parliament in 1696. An act passed, says Macauley, ordaining "that every parish in the realm should provide a commodious school house and should pay a moderate stipend to a schoolmaster. The effect could not be immediately felt. But, before one generation had passed away, it began to be evident that the common people of Scotland were superior in intelligence to the common people of any other country

in Europe. To whatever land the Scotchman might wander, to whatever calling he might betake himself, in America or India, in trade or in war, the advantage which he derived from his early training raised him above his competitors. If he was taken into a warehouse as a porter he soon became foreman. If he enlisted in the army, he soon became a sergeant. Scotland, meanwhile, in spite of the barrenness of her soil and the severity of her climate, made such progress in agriculture, in manufactures, in commerce, in letters, in science, in all that constitutes civilization, as the old world had never seen equalled, and as even the New World has scarcely seen surpassed. This wonderful change is to be attributed, not indeed solely, but principally, to the national system of education."

The above extract shows not only the importance of education and its effects upon mankind, but also the advantages of system. The Scottish system of education was the only national system, except the Waldensian, in existence at that time, and for a long time after. Prussia, and the United States of America, were, we believe, the next to adopt a general system of public instruction; England has no national system yet; France, and a few other countries have recently adopted systems of education.

In examining the state of educational systems, whenever established, they appear to be in a transition state; no country has yet adopted an absolute system; the changed circumstances of the Scottish people, is calling for a change in their educational system; and so it is in other countries, no matter to what height the state of civilization may have run;—change is written upon every thing.

It was change in the circumstances and relations of society that caused a revival of literature in the 16th century. A political, moral, and intellectual change. Among the political causes of this change, may be enu-