

the parent has a natural right to say in whose hands he will place the education of his child. The Catholics, being a large and united vote, assert that right against the general principle of the State system. The State has no natural right to take away the child from the parent or those to whom the parent chooses to entrust it. Nor, if the parent is willing to do his own duty, has the State any natural right to tax him for the immunity of others. The State cannot reasonably say that those upon whom it has conferred political power are imbeciles in the matter of education and incompetent to perform their natural duty or exercise their natural right in respect to the education of their children.

This, I am afraid, will sound like rank heresy to the theorists who hold that the rights and duties of the individual and the family ought to be surrendered to the State.

Natural right, however, whether of the individual or of the family, must sometimes give way to public exigency. In this case the public exigency, so far as the State is concerned, is the danger of an ignorant electorate. As Robert Lowe rather bitterly said, "We must educate our masters." The fact that the exigency has been created by the rivalry of political parties which has abolished all qualifications for the franchise and puts the ballot into every hand, instead of letting industry and frugality stretch out their hands for it, does not make the peril any less. On the other hand, the security for the voter's intelligence which the State requires might be obtained, without taking away education from the parent, by certified inspection or an educational test. Nor does it seem that the community is in any way bound, or that any public interest would lead it, to go to the expense of imparting any more than a strictly necessary education. To excite and gratify the pupil's ambition of rising above the station in which he happens to have been born, may be a good thing in itself; it certainly is when the person to be so raised is well selected

and helped either by private munificence or by State endowments specially devoted to that object. One who assisted in the foundation of Cornell University may fairly say that he has not personally failed to take part in the opening of that door. The State may also properly endow special institutions for instruction in technical science, scientific agriculture, or other studies which are profitable to the community at large. But the community at large has no interest in the indiscriminate fostering of ambition. On the contrary, an extensive displacement of industry may be economically injurious to the commonwealth. Nor is happiness more than contentment certain to be the fruit of such a policy. As was said in the address to which I have referred, we cannot all actually climb over each other's heads, though restless desire may be kindled in all.

To the exercise of educational charity, of course, there are no limits. Nor can charity be better exercised than in encouraging education and in enabling real ability to attain the station in which it can be most useful to the commonwealth.

A State system of education can hardly fail to be mechanical and Procrustean. Its spirit was depicted by the French Minister of Education who boasted that when he rang a bell the same lesson commenced in every school in France. The Voluntary system, on the other hand, if it can be made successful, is flexible, and adapts itself to local, social and industrial circumstance. It has also in it the motive power of emulation, which, in all things, is a stimulus of improvement.

Under the Voluntary system teaching is a profession which the teacher enters expecting to live by it, as he knows that his special gifts and exertions will, in this as in other professions, fetch their proper price. Under the State system teaching is hardly a profession, so far as many of the male teachers are concerned. The man is never sure of earning his fair market value. It is inferred from facts before the Department of Education that the