

school house. The gentleman asked what building that was, pointing to the school house, and when told it was one of our common school houses, he looked with profound astonishment for a minute or so, and then said, "Why, it looks like a College." That was the impression made upon the gentleman's mind when comparing the external appearance of our common school houses with those school houses with which he was familiar in the city of Rochester. These houses did not only look like Colleges, but they are Colleges. They are the Colleges of the mass of the people. They are the first and last institutions in which the great body of the youthful population of the country enter, and it is therefore proper that in their external appearance, and internal arrangements, they should be adapted to give a good education to those on whom in a great measure will devolve the duty of hereafter sustaining all the institutions of this country, and of giving colour to its character. But what, it may be asked, is the basis upon which this system is established, and on which this work is so far advanced, and which he hoped would advance to a still greater extent? The principle involved in it from beginning to end, so far as relates to the civil point of view, is that of local self-government, and this principle is carried out to an extent in the Province of Upper Canada not known in any State in the Union. In Albany, five or six years ago, it was proposed to put to the vote to the State, that every man should contribute to the support of free schools according to the property held in the State. He said to them that in Upper Canada they recognized to a greater extent the principle of self-government; for suppose a majority of parties in the State were to vote in favour of the motion then submitted, the free school system would be forced upon every city and town in the State. But according to the principle of the Upper Canada School Law it was left to every municipality to judge for itself. If one municipality considered it necessary to have free schools for all, it is in their power to establish them. If another municipality was not prepared to do so, they were not forced to adopt the system. This was the principle recognized in the School Law. And if the free school system is established in the City of Toronto—as he rejoiced to say it was—it is established by the patriotism of the people themselves, and not by any force on the part of the local government, or on the part of the Legislature. (Applause.) Then in respect to the principle itself and its application to the children throughout the Province, as well as to the youth of this city, the principle is simply this—that each child in the Province of Upper Canada has a right, by the very laws of its existence, to receive such an education as will fit him for the duties of a citizen in this country, that being born in the country and being brought up in it, he has the right to such an education as will fit him for the discharge of all his duties towards his fellow men in the country. (Applause.) This principle is prior to any other, prior to the right of the parents themselves; and that being the right of the children, no parent has a right to deprive his children of what they are entitled to by the very laws of their existence. A parent has no more right to leave his children intellectually blind, than he has to make them physically blind. He has no more right to maim him intellectually than he has to maim him physically. The law will punish him in the one case, and it *should* punish him in the other. If a parent should be so unnatural as not to provide for his children, the law will step in and protect them. So should it in like manner protect those orphan children from parents who would neglect their education. The Province has thus far a right to protect all its citizens, and if it has a right to protect life and liberty and property, it has a right to provide for the education and the efficient discharge of duty on the part of those not properly cared for by their parents. The education of a people under a free government is essential to the very existence of that government, the wise administration of its laws, and the stability and efficiency of all its institutions. If that be so, a corresponding duty necessarily follows. If it be right that each child should have an education that will fit him for the efficient discharge of all his duties, it is the right of the State to provide that education. And according to the property which a man enjoys and the protection afforded to that property by the State, is every person, whether he has children or not, bound to contribute to the education of the children of the State, upon the grounds of public policy, morality, and the laws which regulate property. No police system, however well organized, is equal to that of a thoroughly efficient general public school system. The application of these two principles involves the whole mystery of what is called Free Schools. It is palpable to every person who reflects upon it that the system involves principles of the highest humanity as well as of the noblest patriotism. (Applause.) Without reflecting upon these general principles, there are many persons—well meaning persons too—who think themselves seriously injured by being compelled to pay their quota for the support of the free schools. A gentleman—the owner of some mills in the neighborhood—it would not be right, perhaps, to give his name—came to him one day to complain of what he conceived to be a serious wrong. "I own some mills in—naming the District—but I don't reside there, and yet they have taxed me £20 to build a school house there. I think this is a wrong

and a great injustice. He (the Dr.) said to the gentleman that having property he was particularly interested in that case in the welfare of the country at large. Knowing the gentleman had a number of sons, the question was put to him whether he had any of his sons educated in Canada. Yes, he said, he had one at Upper Canada College, and two at the University, one of whom had obtained a degree. He was then asked if he had paid for the building of Upper Canada College, or the endowment of the University, or for the endowment of the masters of Upper Canada College? "Certainly not," he said. He (the Dr.) then stated to the gentleman that hitherto he had educated his children at the expense of others, and if it was wrong for any man to educate the children of others, then he had been wronging the public to the extent of the education of his children. The gentleman said he was satisfied, now he had nothing to complain of, he saw it was right, and he went away well pleased [Applause]. The City of Toronto has been much more highly favored than any other city or town, for no other city or town in the province had received so much from the public for the endowment of educational institutions as the City of Toronto. The expense of Upper Canada College, and of the ground it occupies was £25,800. The expense of University College was about the same, so that the expense of these two institutions, in which the city of Toronto is more deeply interested than any other, or than all other places in Upper Canada, has taken three or four times as much from the public fund as the entire expense of all the common schools and school teachers in Toronto. Persons who have had their sons educated at these institutions cannot for very shame, refuse for one moment to contribute to the extent, and in proportion to the amount of their property to the education of the masses of the people in this city. The endowment of the University at this moment is considerably more than the expense of all these schools in the city, so that parties who have so largely benefited by these institutions ought to be the very first, and the most zealous advocates of the free school system, and give it all the support in their power. If the principle, that no man has a right to contribute to other than the education of his own children, be the correct one, then it is wrong for the Legislature to give one single 6d. for the endowment of any school in the country. That it is wrong to establish a fund for the support of any educational establishment, no person believes, and, if government gives enough for the support of one sort of education, it should give enough for the education of the youth of the country. But among some of those who think the principle right, a doubt has arisen as to whether its application is calculated to have a good effect upon the children of this city. The fact is, that many children, by the neglect or unnatural conduct of their parents, are still denied the advantages of the education which the free school system provides, and there should be some means provided by which all might share the benefit of the system. In countries where this principle is fully in operation, provision is made to carry out that other principle, confessedly involved in the system. In European countries where the principle is applied, any parent is liable to be visited by the authorities who does not educate his children. They are not compelled to send them to the public schools but they must send them to some schools. In Switzerland, the most democratic country in Europe, they are promptly visited and punished, and this provision is made, that no child shall be apprenticed by his parents until he appears before a board of commissioners, and goes through an examination satisfactory to them. If the youth is to be apprenticed to a tanner, he must be acquainted with chemistry, natural philosophy, as far as necessary to understand the processes and machinery employed in that branch of manufacture, besides book-keeping, arithmetic, and a knowledge of his natural tongue. The rule is imperative that no one shall be apprenticed until he is fully qualified to reach the very top of his profession in future life. They carry out the principles of the individual right of each child to this extent that they will not suffer him to go to any trade unless he is qualified to advance himself to the highest position in society. In Boston and other New England States, they have felt the want of this provision. They have, however, a principle they adopt in regard to the attendance at schools, investing each municipal council with power to make such regulations as they think proper for the punishment of children who come under the character of vagrants. A certain portion of the police are called vagrant officers, their business is to look out for children not attending school, and if any child between 4 and 14 years of age is seen on the streets of Boston without any employment whatever, he is liable to be taken up by these officers. They are all required to attend some school. Some provision of this kind should be made in regard to those who will not benefit by the provision made for the education of all. The great wrong inflicted upon these children by their parents, calls for the adoption of some remedy. These children should be compelled to attend some school, in order that they may be educated, and not be allowed to grow up to be pests to society. Without interfering therefore with any private or individual right, this provision is made to secure to children who are wandering about in the streets the advantages of instruction, so that if seen in the streets during school hours without any occupation they are liable to be taken up as vagrants. If