

"I am equally concerned with any others for the superior education of girls; but I am not disposed to advocate a course which I believe will impede, rather than promote the proper education of girls. I think many boys would do better to get a solid English education than to neglect it for a smattering of Latin.

"The following extract from an official letter which I addressed last December to a chairman of a Grammar School Board of Trustees, will show that I have not acted hastily or arbitrarily in the matter, but deliberately and according to law:—

"I have the honor to state, in reply to your letter of the 23rd instant, that the question which you so ably discuss is under the consideration of the Law officers of the Crown in regard to the provisions and intentions of the Grammar School law.

"The trustees and masters of some Grammar Schools believe that Grammar Schools, as well as University Colleges, were intended for boys; and that no part of the fund set apart for Grammar Schools, any more than the University endowment, was intended for other than the education of boys or young men. They have, therefore, complained that while they educate only boys, other schools are paid for admitting girls, the great majority of whom are pressed to learn Latin merely to increase the apportionment of the school, without any intention of studying Italian, French, Spanish and Portuguese, to which the study of Latin is an appropriate introduction, and most do not go beyond the first or second declension. It is also urged, that if the Grammar School Fund is apportioned according to the average attendance of boys only, then all Grammar schools will be treated alike; and if the trustees and masters of some Grammar Schools think proper to admit girls, they can do so, and charge such fees for their attendance as they please. It is also urged that the English branches of education are less efficiently taught in the Grammar than in the Common Schools.

"I may remark that I administer the Grammar School law not only, as above stated, according to the legal opinion of the first law officer of the crown, but also upon a principle which I believe to be just to the masters and teachers of the Grammar Schools, and to the best interests of Grammar School education. I think, however, that since our separation from Lower Canada, it is a question for consideration whether French should be made imperative in any case, any more than German—thus leaving simply two courses of instruction in the Grammar Schools—an elementary classical and a higher English course.

"As to the question of the higher education of girls, this is not the place or occasion to discuss it. I have not omitted this important subject in my special report; just through the press this week, in my twelve suggestions for the further improvement of public instruction in Ontario." I will merely quote here the first three sentences of my tenth suggestion, under the head of "High Schools for Girls."

"I would suggest that a more specific and effectual provision be made than has yet been made for the better education of girls. It is the mother more than the father that decides the intellectual and moral character, if not material interests of the household. A well educated woman seldom fails to leave upon her offspring the impress of her own intelligence and energy, while on the other hand, an uneducated or badly educated mother often paralyzes by her example and spirit, all the efforts and influences exerted from all other sources for the proper training and culture of her children."

II. Education of England and the United States.

1. FEMALE EDUCATION IN ENGLAND.

A late Parliamentary Commission devotes a chapter of their report to the subject of female education. The defects of the present system, they say, are want of thoroughness and foundation; want of system, slovenliness and showy superficiality; inattention to rudiments; undue time given to accomplishments, and those not taught intelligently or in any scientific manner; want of organization." The teaching of "common things" and household duties is rare and occasional. They state that there is weighty evidence to show "that the essential capacity for learning is the same in both sexes;" and that the health of girls is not likely to suffer from increased and more scientific exercise of the mind, with a view to higher attainments. At the same time, it is suggested that more thorough recreation is desirable in many girls' schools, and physical exercise of greater freedom than is now the rule. One Commissioner expresses his regret that girls have no game corresponding to cricket and football, by which to help and unrestrained development. *English Sunday School Teacher.*

2. FRENCH REPORT ON THE ENGLISH SCHOOLS.

A very interesting report has just been published, containing the result of a French official commission of inquiry into the state of education in England. It is written in an exceedingly tolerant spirit, and it is valuable for the light it throws on the condition of the English public schools like Eton and Rugby.

The subjects of flogging and fagging are mentioned with wonder that they could be countenanced in this civilized age, and the latter is referred to with deserved contempt. That young boys should be compelled to devote their entire first year in school to menial services, and that the masters are unable to protect them, so strong is the spirit of routine and the obstinate opposition of the older boys, seems incomprehensible, and the Commissioners very pertinently ask if the English schools, with their princely revenues, cannot afford to pay for servants to perform the necessary household duties. They next allude to the subject of ancient languages, the system of learning which they condemn as exceedingly faulty. The same opinion is expressed of the complicated arrangement of the classes, which are entirely without order or method. The situation of the schools, generally, in rural districts, at a distance from large towns, and with ample opportunities for healthful occupations and amusements, is contrasted favorably with the closed and barred buildings of the French colleges, with long dormitories, and gravel spaces in the centre for a play-ground.

The Commissioners admit that English education develops self-reliance and strength of character, but they do not estimate very highly the amount of knowledge it confers. Mathematics are commonly learnt by rote without an attempt at really understanding their meaning, and the Commissioners are forced to the conclusion that "with the system of learning Euclid by heart, it is difficult to understand how England gave birth to Newton." Modern languages, including English, are almost neglected, and the Commissioners remark that "but for private reading and for having to make translations of the finest passages of the poets of his nation into Latin and Greek verse, a young Englishman might even leave the University, without knowing that Spencer, Milton, Shakespeare and Byron had ever existed."

But the strongest evidence of the low state of the schools is found in the results of the examinations for the Universities. The test for graduation is exceedingly simple. A passage of Virgil and one of Homer must be translated, a composition in Latin prose written, some grammatical questions answered, and a few sums in arithmetic done. Yet though the pieces selected for translation are from parts which they have already read, and the other questions are very commonplace, about one third of the candidates fail in the examination. The answers to the grammatical questions are very incorrect, and those in arithmetic are so poor that it is thought injudicious to examine in Euclid and Algebra.

There are 16,000 boys in England receiving this kind of education, and the best illustration of its inefficiency is seen in the fact that out of 2,886 applicants for competitive examination to obtain government positions only six per cent, belong to this class. These examinations are for positions in the army, navy and civil service, and a young man who is incompetent to pass them must possess very limited acquirements.

3. ENGLISH PUBLIC SCHOOLS INQUIRY.

A report of the English Schools Inquiry Commission was, during the last Session, presented to Parliament. We find an abstract in one of our English contemporaries which we subjoin. It refers mainly to middle class education:—

"Much complaint is made of the want of method and supervision of the schools. The controlling authority has hitherto been vested in the Court of Chancery, but in the schools everything is unregulated, and each master does pretty much as he pleases. The Commissioners divide the schools into three classes: endowed, private, and proprietary. The two last have grown up as correctives of the endowment system, which has been the nucleus of English education for centuries. There are about 3,000 endowed schools many of which have large incomes. King Edward's school, at Birmingham, has a present income of £12,000, and expects to have £50,000 before 1900. The net income of all the schools of this class mentioned in the report is £200,000 a year, and the total number of pupils educated is 36,874. There are said to be over 10,000 private schools, and 12,000 pupils in proprietary schools.

"These last only educate a small number, and the middle class are mainly dependent upon the endowed schools, which are of a very inferior grade. It seems incredible that so much money should be spent with so little result, yet this is actually the case. Birmingham with its £12,000 a year, teaches 800 boys. Leeds, with an income of £1,481, teaches 237 boys. Manchester expends £2,527