

years. As to the quality of popular education, in Birmingham and Leeds with a population of 600,000, only 530 pupils passed the sixth standard, which was lower than the *lowest* Saxon or German standard. "In England only 20,000 in a population of 20,000,000 passed the sixth standard; in Old Prussia, 380,000 in a population of 19,000,000 passed every year."

Mr. Peek gives a brief account of the provisions and working of the Elementary Education Act of 1870. It divides the country into school districts, in each of which, unless sufficient school accommodation is provided within a certain time by voluntary effort, a School Board is elected by the ratepayers, and is empowered to build schools with funds borrowed from the Government, repayable in 50 years at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The Boards appoint local managers to schools and Divisional Committees to enforce the regular attendance of the children. They have power to raise funds by levying a rate over the whole district, and to charge fees to the parents. Both Board and Voluntary Schools receive Government grants according to the excellence of the pupils. Each Board decides whether the education in its schools shall include religious instruction or be altogether secular; denominational teaching, however, being prohibited in any case. There were fiercely fought battles at the first formation of most of the boards on this question of religious instruction, the introduction of which into the schools was vehemently opposed by the Nonconformists. The advocates of the "Bible in the School" triumphed almost everywhere,—in the London School Board by a majority of five to one. It is still open, nevertheless, for a parent to require that Biblical instruction shall not be given

to his child, but secular lessons instead.

By way of contrast to the gloomy description he has given of the condition of elementary Education in England in 1834, Mr. Peek adds the following accounts of the results of the Government inspection in the year ending 31st August, 1877. There were then inspected 15,187 day-schools, "containing 22,033 departments, under separate teachers, and furnishing accommodation for 3,653,418 scholars. There were on the registers the names of 3,154,973 children; 1,100,000 being under seven years of age, 1,929,000 between seven and thirteen, and 125,000 above thirteen years of age. 771,000 passed the prescribed examination without failure in any one of the three subjects—reading, writing, and arithmetic. In addition to the day-schools, 4,733 night-schools, having 57,000 scholars above twelve years of age were recognised as efficient by the Government. Of these 57,000 scholars, 48,000 were examined, and out of every hundred scholars, eighty-seven passed in reading, sixty-nine in writing, and fifty-eight in arithmetic. To carry on this education, 24,841 certificated teachers were at work, these teachers being mainly supplied from forty training colleges, containing over 3,000 students. We find, also, that 270,000 children were presented for examination in specific subjects, and that, of these, 45,000 passed successfully. Grammar, elementary geography, and history, which up to 1876 were treated as specific subjects, are now included in the ordinary work of the schools, and, in 1877, formed (with needlework) part of the examination of more than a million scholars. Ordinary school-drill is also part of the work in every good school, and in 1,178 day-schools military drill is systematically taught to the boys."