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The Parish School Advocate,

AND FAMILY INSTRUCTOR:

FOR NOVA SCOTIA, NEW BRUNSWICK, AND PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

THE PARISH SCHOOL ADVOCATE, and FAMILY INSTRUCTOR: is Edited by ALEXANDER MONRO, Bay Verte, New Brunswick, to whom Communications may be addressed,— post paid; and Printed by JAMES BARNES, Halifax, N. S.

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VOL. I.

JANUARY, 1858.

No. I.

PROSPECTUS.

WE propose to publish a Monthly Magazine, under the above caption, to be devoted principally to the advancement of Parish School Education in the lower provinces of British North America.

While other countries have their numerous periodicals devoted to the advancement of education, and all departments of provincial interest in these provinces are fully represented, that of Education is without any special advocate.

This deficiency we propose, in a measure, to obviate, by publishing a periodical, in the columns of which we shall endeavour to call attention to this important subject, and do all in our power to encourage parents, teachers, and governments, in the education of the youthful mind.

OUR PLATFORM.

1. **FREE SCHOOLS**, and their support to a limited extent by direct assessment.
2. The **BIBLE**, the testmark of moral obligation, without which education useless.
3. **NO POLITICS**, further than what relates to education.
4. Articles on general literature will be admitted when space permits.

SUBJECTS FOR INQUIRY.

1. The state and prospects of Education among the mass of the people in the lower provinces.
2. The objects of Education.
3. Want of Books and school libraries and apparatus, and the evils arising from conflicting text-books in schools.
4. The importance of forming right habits, and giving a right direction in the early stages of education, and the necessity of cultivating the social affections among pupils.
5. The parish school systems, as at present, not suited to the wants of the inhabitants.
6. The necessity of county or local organizations in the management of schools.
7. Payment of Trustees and other officers.
8. Grammar schools re-constructed and fitted for training of teachers, as well as giving instruction.
9. The elevation of the position of teachers.
10. Remuneration of teachers of parish schools.
11. Direct taxation in part support of schools.
12. Simplicity and adaptation of legislative enactments with reference to schools.
13. Frequent visitation of schools by local authorities and proprietors.
14. Encouragement to pupils,—studying one branch at a time.
15. Importance to be attached to the teacher's knowledge of the philosophy of mind.
16. Necessity of acquiring a knowledge of natural history.
17. The best education for an agricultural and commercial people.

GENERAL STATE OF EDUCATION IN THE LOWER PROVINCES.

In taking a general glance at the state of Education in these provinces, we are constrained to acknowledge that some power and machinery is required, different from that now in operation, in order to secure its blessings to the mass of the people. The training and Normal systems, as far as they have been introduced and set in operation, have no doubt produced much good in the qualification of teachers: but in too many instances the training bestowed has done little good beyond the advantages to the teachers themselves. It is not uncommon for teachers, after having obtained a first class ticket, to abandon the vocation of a teacher for some other and more lucrative employment—for any employment is generally considered more remunerative, and certainly more thankful, than that of teaching parish schools; and in numerous instances, those who do pursue this calling after having undergone a system of training and instruction, commence teaching in some secluded country place, shut out from every means of self culture, and in a log hut, with ten or a dozen children at their A B C's, and without books, only as the teacher supplies them. In such cases,

which are very numerous, the teacher receives little more from the subscribers than board and lodging, and is only teaching for the government allowance. Hence, it is no wonder, that young men of good natural and acquired abilities, continue no longer as teachers than the way is made clear to some other and more congenial calling. Consequently, old and sickly men, who have passed the meridian of life, and are entirely unfit for other pursuits; and a few boys and girls—the latter teaching “common needle-work”—many of whom are more fit to be pupils than teachers, compose the great majority of the instructors of youth of the present day in these colonies.—There are, we admit, a goodly number of first rate teachers interspersed throughout the provinces, but whose usefulness and abilities are far from being appreciated as they should be. We believe that something more than common needle-work is required to be taught in the schools of a country with over 150,000 unlettered people in it, and a large portion of the so-called educated, would be benefitted by the change: and school libraries connected therewith. There ought to be, at least, one in every five of

the population receiving education, while there are little over one in *eight* participating in its blessings, and much of that without any moral direction. In those countries on the European continent, where education is receiving due attention, the average is six. In many of the States of America, where the free school system is in operation, the average is one in every four; while in the British provinces, except Canada, where the free school system prevails, the scale is very low.

It is estimated that there are over 40,000 descendants of the Acadian French in the province of New Brunswick, and it is very doubtful if 6,000 of them can read or write; besides there are large numbers of these people in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, who are in a similar state of ignorance. In a few instances, the Catholic clergymen have taken a very active part in their education; while the governments of the respective provinces have almost entirely neglected them, either as regards education or schools. Neither is this state of ignorance peculiar to these people, for there are numerous settlements composed of families and their descendants, the parents formerly from the old country, still without schools, and shamefully ignorant. The time now is, when this state of things should be remedied; and especially when Canada and the United States are setting us such bright examples of educational progress. Certainly it is high time we should arise from our lethargy and bestir ourselves; for if we do not introduce the educational improvements of other countries into these fair provinces, one thing is certain, we shall have the vices and evil habits of other countries. Vice generally finds its way, and makes progress in a country, in proportion to the moral and intellectual inability to arrest its progress. We can at present boast, if boast we should, of an orderly and peaceable people, generally speaking; but this tranquil state of the public mind cannot long remain so, unless education on a proper basis, is introduced and made to keep pace with the increased development of the resources of the colonies, and increased facilities of locomotion. We believe the legislatures are not doing their duty to the parish schools, which should be the pride of the country, while making such

large appropriations to sectarian colleges and academies.

The province of Nova Scotia pays annually in support of denominational and other literary institutions of education, £2000; and New Brunswick upwards of £4000; besides government schools, of which there are twelve in the latter province, averaging £100 each from its revenues. We believe it would be difficult to find a parallel to this case;—where is the country with so limited a population, where such large sums of money is bestowed on what is called the higher institutions of education, while at the same time there is such neglect of parish school education. We must not be considered opposed to the establishment of literary institutions of a higher order: on the contrary, we should be proud to see a thorough University established, where our young men could get a thorough education, and be able to compete with other countries.

In order to a more permanent improvement in our parish school system, we want the establishment of school libraries, which will do an incalculable amount of good among our young and adult population; we want better and more simple laws for our guidance; we want better attention to education among parents and guardians of youth; we want county grammar schools converted into schools of instruction and training; we want a board of education for every county in the provinces, composed of persons from each parish, and a portion of each board, and also the trustees for each parish should be paid; we want free schools; and we want a good sound system of moral and intellectual instruction;—then would a foundation be laid that would not fail to develop the energies and capabilities of our noble provincial youth. May God hasten the day when education will be as free as the light around us to every youth of our land, no matter how humble the condition, and when proper moral and mental culture shall be truly estimated as the greatest earthly treasure.

DOCTOR PALEY says, "To send an uneducated child into the world, is little better than to turn out a mad dog, or a wild beast, into the streets."

“KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.”

WHETHER we apply this statement of Lord Bacon to the time when the infinite fiat went forth, bringing into being the universal whole,—or whether we consider that whole in its vast and varied details, as far as the finite can pierce the works of the infinite, we must be sensibly impressed with the fact that in wisdom, power, and knowledge, the vast machinery was brought into being, and governed in all its vastness by him who is all powerful, and sees the end from the beginning.

But man, the lord of this lower creation, has failed to fulfil his part in the great drama, in accordance with his primeval instructions. Still perusing the history of the world—a history of humanity—we can point to a category of facts—of achievements which have been brought to bear upon dead matter by the operation of mind, which fully prove that knowledge is power. Passing by the sacred text, replete with truths of an extraordinary nature, and turning to profane history, we see enough to teach us that well directed knowledge is power, and will result in ultimate good to sentient, intelligent, and responsible man,—the great actor in the scene; and finally redound to the glory of Him who sees the end from the beginning. It is knowledge, rightly directed, that elevates the human family in the scale of social, moral, intellectual, and christian being; it is this power, rightly put in operation, which subdues the adamantine nature of the various kingdoms of earth, and renders them subservient to man's interests; it is knowledge, rightly applied, that enables kings to reign in righteousness, and princes to decree justice. The history of the kingdoms of the world, whether christian or heathen, demonstrate the results that ever flow from the application or non-application of knowledge.—Turn, for example, to Judea of old, with

her once boasted institutions, so long as she remained steadfast, and adhered to these enlightened principles, all was well—while the surrounding nations were tottering on their bases. But no sooner did this favored nation, Israel, depart from the precepts of the moral law, and mix with, and participate in the idolatrous worship of the surrounding nations—her enemies,—than her knowledge became worthless, and ceased to be power.

In modern times, we have full illustrations in the history of the many, once powerful empires, that have crumbled to dust; and others, though still breathing out a languid existence, show, for the want of well directed knowledge, evident signs of approaching mortality.—But turning from the dissatisfactory contemplation of the dreary picture, which is ever presented by the absence of well directed knowledge, to Great Britain, North America, and other isolated spots of earth, where the spread of enlightened principles prevails, and the picture is certainly changed, and at every onward step demonstrating that knowledge is power.

Lastly, in turning from this cursory view of those extensive portions of the globe, to our own little provinces, integrals of that powerful nation, England, which is at every step illustrating the principle that knowledge is power of improvement, power of development, power of acquisition, as well as power of government. And in order to appreciate these principles, we must seek for a more general education of the mass of the people,—a more exalted intellect and station, which will enable us to add to our wealth and resources, and improve the institutions of these fair provinces, when we will be able to take our stand and assume a position worthy of an enlightened people, among the other colonies of the empire.

SCHOOL BOOKS.

In this age of various and cheap literature, and elementary and other works on education, one would be led to believe that every school and hamlet in these provinces would be supplied: but it is not so;—for a large number of the schools are deficient indeed, and many

of those in use are very defective. In addition to works treating on general knowledge, the inhabitants of every country should be supplied with books detailing the peculiarities of the country, which they call their home, whether it be so by birth or adoption. In fact

every member of a community should be so educated as to understand its resources and capabilities in order to their development and general utility. We find this principle is practically borne out by the course pursued by the United States,—for the greatest part of the education of that people, consists in a knowledge, so to speak, of themselves and their country. The inhabitants of that country are being continually schooled from childhood into the superiority of their country and institutions; a course which has tended more than any other to develop the resources of the Union. Every work highly eulogises the country.—Take for example an atlas, which embraces geography also, and at every step we are presented with full forms and delineations of the states, while little is said of the surrounding countries; and what is written cannot be relied upon; still we colonists use those works in our schools and other literary institutions. It is no wonder that so many of our young men, the bone and sinew of the country, have made their way within the last few years, to the states. However, many of those who had been taught, in fact, in our schools, by studying United States authors, have recently returned to the provinces, affirming that much of what they have seen and read of the greatness of the Union, turns out, on personal examination, to be an overdrawn picture, and has failed to satisfy the seeing eye and hearing ear. And many of the school books issued from the British press, especially those touching the geographical and natural features of these colonies, are little better; for instance, it is stated in the geography published by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, in 1849, that the chief rivers of New Brunswick are the Saint John, the *Shubenacadie*, and the *Annapolis*; and that the inhabitants employ themselves, during the winter season, in rolling logs down the banks, and taking them to Halifax in the spring. What consummate nonsense for the mother country to teach her children.

Another drawback to our educational institutions is, the want of union. The United States system obviates this difficulty entirely. The geographies of the States do not present a partial picture,—each state its own peculiarities, separate and apart from the whole. No:

but an account of the whole Union.—This is not the course pursued by the British provinces. Canada has her numerous school books, delineating her vast resources; and more recently, 1856, an inestimable work has been issued from the Canadian press, giving a full account of its history, geography, etc., for the use of schools, by *J. Rey*, a female of first rate ability. Nova Scotia has her Hand Book of Geography and Natural History, with a map, for the use of schools, by *J. W. Dawson, Esq.*, now professor Dawson. This little work has already gone through four editions, and is highly appreciated in the schools of the province. New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island are without any work devoted exclusively to the education of either colony. In 1856, a work was issued by *Hugo Reid*, Professor of languages and logic, and principal of the day schools, Dalhousie College, Halifax, N. S., entitled: “Elements of Geography, adapted for use in British America, containing the geography of the leading countries of the world, with British America fully developed, and outlines of physical and astronomical geography.” This useful little work we feel safe in recommending for general use in the schools of these provinces. It is entirely free from exaggerations, and contains 152 pages of sensibly written and closely printed matter. There are a few errors and omissions, that could easily be corrected in another edition.

What appears to us to be required for the more efficient teaching of our youth, is a work beginning with the physical and astronomical geography of the globe, as in the work of Mr Reid, followed by a detailed account of the peculiarities of each section, into which British America is divided, on a plan similar to Mr Dawson’s work, though somewhat more condensed; and the whole concluded with a brief account of the other principal sub-divisions of the globe, on the plan of Mr Reid’s work, with a map, and views of the principal cities, towns, etc., of British America. Such a work would be a desiderata in our parish schools, and of great utility to the adult population: besides, it would find its way into other countries, and ultimately tend to elevate the province abroad, as well as at home, by instructing the youth of other countries in the resources of these colonies. Some entertain the opin-

ion that what we learn at school has little to do in forming the habits and associations which characterize man in after life. This we believe to be a great mistake. The teachings of our school-boy days will generally cling to us as long as our reason, except it has been our unhappy lot to fall into extreme vice; and even then the latent sensibilities will occasionally become sensitive of the better teachings, if better we had, imparted to us in our youth.

We cannot better conclude the article under this head, than by extracting a few of the remarks of Dr Ryerson, Chief Superintendent of Schools for Upper Canada:—

“But on no part of the work which I have undertaken, do I reflect with more interest and pleasure than that of rendering accessible to all the municipalities of Upper Canada—even the most remote—books of instruction and useful entertainment which would not have otherwise come within their reach, and that at prices which will save them thousands per annum in the purchase of them—thus adding to their resources of knowledge and enjoyment by the variety and character of books to which they can have access, and the increase of facilities and the reduction of expenses in procuring them. It will be seen that the books selected, embrace nearly the whole field of human knowledge—at least so far as it is embraced in works of popular reading—including the best works of the kind that issue from both the English and American press, and en-

abling the youth of our land to converse with the learned and the wise of all ages and nations, and on any subject of intellectual inquiry, or of practical life. By our system of schools, we are putting it into the power of every Canadian to read, and read he will, whether for good or for evil; and his ability to read will prove a blessing or a curse, according to the manner in which he exercises it.—By our system of libraries, we are providing them with wholesome and entertaining reading on almost all subjects, without the poison of publications which are calculated to enfeeble the mind, and vitiate the taste, and corrupt the morals. Perhaps to no books in the catalogue will attention be more readily directed, than to those which relate to Natural History, Manufactures, Useful Arts, and Agriculture.—presenting in attractive forms the wonders, beauties, and curiosities of nature, and those wonders of science, genius and industry, to which our age owes its pre-eminence over any preceding age of mankind. It is not to be supposed that every reader will or can read every book in the catalogue; but the variety of books affords the means of gratifying every rational want, interest and taste.”

Upper Canada has now nearly 160,000 volumes of such books as Dr Ryerson names above. When will New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island be in a position to report of their school libraries? We fear, according to the movements of the past, that it will be some time far hence.

FREE SCHOOLS.

THE word *free*, at all times gives import to something in accordance with the feelings of man; and not more so than when it is associated with the educational movement. Man is a being capable of acquiring intelligence to an indefinite extent, and any movement that affords free access to the source from whence the human faculties draw their moral and intellectual nutriment, so to speak, must be of vast importance to society at large.

We believe of all the schemes ever devised for the advancement of education, that of free schools stands most pre-eminent. We refer to the system which was introduced into the New England

states in 1647, when the inhabitants were but few. 21,000 souls, hardly the population of one of our sparsely populated counties at the present time; and which has produced such astonishing results, and become the admiration of the intellectual world. This system is based upon the broad principle of taxation, or, to use a word more suitable to the sensibilities of society at the present time, *assessment*, which was made compulsory by legislative enactment. Although this plan of advancing education has been in successful operation in the United States, and its vast importance fully ratified by time, upwards of 200 years, still, with the exception of Canada, no other coun-

try has adopted it as yet. The province of Canada has recently introduced the New England principle of advancing education, but upon a somewhat modified plan. The difference between the two plans principally consists in the manner of introducing it, in order to overcome the prejudices which pervade society as to direct assessment. As soon as the public men and the press laid hold of the principle, the Canadian mind became educated upon this point, which was a work of time and labour, a law was introduced leaving it optional—while the New England plan made it compulsory—with every municipality, to accept the compulsory plan or not, at pleasure; and the law at the same time encouraged its adoption by large grants of money in aid of education from the public treasury. The result has been, that nearly all Upper Canada has voluntarily adopted it, and put in circulation nearly 100,000 volumes of excellent books, consequently the school attendance has been increased from 50 to 300 per cent.

The plan of assessment, as in operation in Canada, is the only one suitable to a growing people; and before we get such a law introduced into the maritime provinces, the public men and the press will have to come boldly to the work of agitation and instruction—removing every objection by the way; and when the public mind once becomes enlightened, and sees the advantages likely to accrue, in the general and more substantial education of the youth of the country, then, and not till then, can such a law be introduced and carried successfully into operation.

The following able article from the School Reports of J. W. Dawson, Esq., formerly Superintendent of Education for Nova Scotia, with the views of Dr Ryerson, Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada, embodies the history and progress of the free school movement, and the pleas for its adoption, with answers to every objection that can, with the least degree of plausibility, be urged against it. This article should be carefully read, and the facts set forth properly understood, by every person at all interested in education.

Mr Dawson says:—

“1. My first reason for commending assessment as the best method of providing for the education of your children is, that the people who have been educated

under it for two hundred years, are distinguished for personal independence, general intelligence, great industry, economy and prosperity, and a wide diffusion of the comforts and enjoyments of domestic life. The truth of this remark in reference to the character and condition of the people of the New England States, will, I presume, be disputed by none. If their system of civil government be thought less favourable to the cultivation and exercise of some of the higher virtues than that which we enjoy, the efficacy of their school system is the more apparent under circumstances of comparative disadvantage. I will give the origin of this school system in the words of the English ‘Quarterly Journal of Education,’ published under the superintendence of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, and at a time when Lord Brougham was Chairman and Lord John Russell Vice-Chairman, of the Committee:

“The first hint of this system—the great principle of which is, that the property of all shall be taxed by the majority for the education of all—is to be found in the records of the city of Boston, for the year 1635, when at a public or ‘body’ meeting, a schoolmaster was appointed ‘for the teaching and nurturing of children among us,’ and a portion of the public lands given him for his support. This, it should be remembered, was done within five years after the first peopling of that little peninsula, and before the humblest wants of its inhabitants were supplied, while their very subsistence, from year to year, was uncertain, and when no man in the colony slept in his bed without apprehension from the savages, who not only everywhere crossed their borders, but dwelt in the midst of them.

“This was soon imitated in other villages and hamlets springing up in the wilderness. Winthrop, the earliest governor of the colony and the great patron of Free Schools, says in his journal, under date of 1645, that divers Free Schools were erected in that year in other towns, and that in Boston it was determined to allow, for ever, £50 a year to the master, with a house and £30 to an usher. But thus far only the individual towns had acted. In 1647, however, the Colonial Assembly of Massachusetts made provision by law, that every town in which there were fifty families should keep a

free school, in which reading and writing could be taught; and every town where there were one hundred families should keep a school where youth could be prepared in Latin, Greek, and Mathematics, for the College or University, which in 1638 had been established by the same authority at Cambridge. In 1656 and 1672 the colonies of Connecticut and New Haven enacted similar laws, and from this time the system spread with the extending population of that part of America until it became one of its settled and prominent characteristics, and has so continued to the present day.' "

"The following extracts from the Annual School Reports of 1847 and 1848, prepared by the Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, deserve special attention, as well for the beauty of their language as for the nobleness of the sentiments which they express:

"The present year (1847) completes the second century since the Free schools of Massachusetts were first established. In 1647, when a few scattered and feeble settlements, almost buried in the depths of the forests, were all that constituted the colony of Massachusetts; when the entire population consisted of twenty-one thousand souls; when the external means of the people were small, the dwellings humble, and their raiment and subsistence scanty and homely; when the whole valuation of all the colonial estates, both public and private, would hardly equal the inventory of many a private individual at the present day; when the fierce eye of the savage was nightly seen glaring from the edge of the surrounding wilderness, and no defence or succour was at hand: it was then, amid all these privations and dangers, that the pilgrim Fathers conceived the magnificent idea of a free and universal education for the people; and, amid all their poverty, they stinted themselves to a still scantier pittance; amid all their toils, they imposed upon themselves still more burdensome labours; amid all their perils, they braved still greater dangers, that they might find the time and the means to reduce their grand conception to practice. Two divine ideas filled their great hearts,—their duty to God and to posterity. For the one, they built the Church; for the other, they opened the School. Religion and Knowledge"—two attributes of the same glorious and eternal truth,—and that

truth, the only one on which immortal or mortal happiness can be securely founded.

"As an innovation upon all pre-existing policy and usages, the establishment of Free Schools was the boldest ever promulgated since the commencement of the Christian era. As a theory, it could have been refuted and silenced by a more formidable array of argument and experience than was ever marshalled against any other opinion of human origin. But time has ratified its soundness. Two centuries now proclaim it to be as wise as it was courageous, as beneficent as it was disinterested. It was one of those grand mental and moral experiments whose effects cannot be determined in a single generation. But now, according to the manner in which human life is completed, we are the sixth generation from its founders, and have we not reason to be grateful both to God and man for its unnumbered blessings? The sincerity of our gratitude must be tested by our efforts to perpetuate and improve what they established."—(Tenth Annual Report to the Board of Education, for 1847, pp. 107, 108)

"2. The second ground on which I commend this system of supporting Common Schools to your favorable consideration, is its cheapness to parents educating their children. I will select the example of one district, rather better than an average specimen; and the same mode of reasoning will apply to every district in Upper Canada, and with the same results. In one district there were reported 200 schools in operation in 1848; the average time of keeping open the schools was eight months; the average salaries of teachers was £45 7s. 1d.; the total amount of the money available for the teachers' salaries, including the legislative grant, council assessment and rate-bills, was £7,401 18s. 4½d.; the whole number of pupils between the ages of five and sixteen years on the School registers, was 9,147; the total number of children between those ages resident in the district, 20,600; cost per pupil for eight months, about sixteen shilling. Here it will be seen that more than one-half of the children of school age in the district were not attending any school. Now, suppose the schools be kept open the whole year, instead of two-thirds of it; suppose the male and female teachers to be equal in number, and the sala-

ries of the former to average £60, and those of the latter £40; suppose the 20,600 children to be in the schools instead of 9,147 of them. The whole sum required for the salaries of teachers would be £10,000—the cost per pupil would be less than ten shillings—less than five shillings per inhabitant—which would be reduced still further by deducting the amount of the legislative school grant. Thus would a provision be made for the education of every child in the district for the whole year; there would be no trouble or dispute about school rate-bills; there would be no difficulty in getting good teachers; the character and efficiency of the schools would be as much improved as the attendance of pupils would be increased; every child would be educated, and educated by the contribution of every man according to his means.

“ 3. This is also the most effectual method of providing the best, as well as the cheapest, school for the use of each school section. Our schools are now often poor and feeble, because a large portion of the best educated inhabitants stand aloof from them, as unworthy of their support, as unfit to educate their children. Thus the Common Schools are frequently left to the care and support of the least instructed part of the population, and are then complained of as inferior in character and badly supported. The Free School system makes every man a supporter of the school according to his property. All persons—and especially the more wealthy—who are thus identified with the school, will feel interested in it; they will be anxious that their contributions to the school should be as effective as possible, and that they themselves may derive all possible benefit from it. When all the inhabitants of a school section thus become concerned in the school, its character and efficiency will invariably be advanced. The more wealthy contributors will seek to make the school fit and efficient for the English education of their own children; the Trustees will be under no fears from the disinclination or opposition of particular individuals in employing a suitable teacher and stipulating his salary: and thus is the foundation laid for a good school, adapted to all the youth of the section. The character of the school will be as much advanced as the expense of it to individual parents will

be diminished; the son of the poor man, equally with the son of the rich man, will drink from the stream of knowledge at the common fountain, and will experience corresponding elevation of thought, sentiment, feeling and pursuit. Such a sight cannot fail to gladden the heart of Christian humanity.

“ 4. The Free School system is the true, and, I think, only effectual remedy, or the pernicious and pauperising system which is at present incident to our Common Schools. Many children are now kept from school on the alleged grounds of parental poverty. How far this excuse is well founded, is immaterial to the question in hand; of the fact of the excuse itself, and of its wide-spread, blasting influence, there can be no doubt. Now, while one class of poor children are altogether deprived of the benefits of all education by parental pride or indifference, the other class of them are educated as paupers or as ragged scholars. Is it not likely that children educated under this character will imbibe the spirit of it? If we would wish them to feel and act, and rely upon themselves as freemen when they grow up to manhood, let them be educated in that spirit when young. Such is the spirit of the Free School system. It banishes the very idea of pauperism from the school. No child comes there by sufferance, but every one comes there upon the ground of right. The poor man as well as the rich man pays for the support of the school according to his means? and the right of his son to the school is thus as legal as that of the rich man's son. It is true, the poor man does not pay as large a tax in the abstract as his rich neighbour, but that does not the less entitle him to the protection of the law, nor should it less entitle him to the advantages provided by law for the education of his children. The grovelling and slavish spirit of pauperism becomes extinct in the atmosphere of the Free School. Pauperism and poor laws are unknown in Free School countries? and a system of Free Schools would, in less than half a century, supersede their necessity in any country.

“ 5. The system of Free Schools makes the best provision and furnishes the strongest inducements for the education of every youth in each school section of the land. Every parent feels that hav-

ing paid his school-rate—whether little or much,—he has paid what the law requires for that year's Common School education of all his children, and that they are all entitled by law to the benefits of the school. However poor a man may be, having paid what the law requires, he can claim the education of all his children as a legal right, and not supplicate it as a cringing beggar. His children go to school, not in the character and spirit of ragged pauperism, but in the ennobling spirit of conscious right, and on equal vantage ground with others. Each parent, feeling that he has paid for the education of his children, naturally desires that they may have the benefit of it. While, therefore, the rate-bill per pupil is a temptation to each parent to keep his children from the school, the annual school-rate upon property furnishes each parent with a corresponding inducement to send his children to school—relieving trustees at the same time from all fear and uncertainty as to the means of providing for the teacher's salary. It is not, therefore, surprising to find that wherever the Free School system has been tried in Upper Canada or elsewhere, the attendance of pupils at school has increased from fifty to three hundred per cent. The facilities thus provided for the education of each child in a school section, will leave the ignorant, careless, or unnatural parent without excuse for the educational neglect of his children. The finger of universal reproof and scorn pointed at him, will soon prove more powerful than statute law, and without infringing any individual right will morally compel him, in connexion with higher considerations, to send his children to school. This system of 'compulsory education,' I wish to see every where in operation—the compulsion of provision for the universal education of children—the compulsion of their universal right to be educated—the compulsion of universal interest in the school—the compulsion of universal concentrated opinion in behalf of the education of every child in the land. Under such a system, in the course of ten years, an uneducated Canadian youth would be a monstrous phenomenon.

“ 6. I think the system of Free Schools is, furthermore, most consonant with the true principles and ends of civil government. Can a more noble and

economical provision be made for the security of life, liberty and property, than the removing and preventing the accumulation of that ignorance and its attendant vices which are the great sources of insecurity and danger, and the invariable pretext, if not justification, of despotism? Are any natural rights more fundamental and sacred than those of children to such an education as will fit them for their duties as citizens? If a parent is amenable to the laws who takes away a child's life by violence, or willfully exposes it to starvation, does he less violate the inherent right of the child in exposing it to moral and intellectual starvation? It is noble to recognize this inalienable right of infancy and youth by providing for them the means of education to which they are entitled,—not as children of particular families, but as children of our race and country. And how perfectly does it harmonize with the true principles of civil government for every man to support the laws and all institutions designed for the common good, according to his ability. This is the acknowledged principle of all just taxation; and it is the true principle of universal education. It links every man to his fellow-man in the obligations of the common interests; it wars with that greatest, meanest foe to all social advancement—the isolation of selfish individuality; and implants and nourishes the spirit of true patriotism by making each man feel that the welfare of the whole society is his welfare—that collective interests are first in order of importance and duty, and separate interests are second. And such relations and obligations have their counter part in the spirit and injunctions of our Divine Christianity. There, while every man is required to bear his own burden according to his ability, the strong are to aid the weak, and the rich are to supply the deficiencies of the poor. This is the pervading feature and animating spirit of the Christian religion; and it is the basis of that system of supporting public schools which demands the contribution of the poor man according to his penury, and of the rich according to his abundance.

“ 7. But against this system of Free Schools certain objections have been made; the principal of which I will briefly answer.

“ First objection:—‘ The common

schools are not fit to educate the children of the higher classes of society, and therefore these classes ought not to be taxed for the support of the common schools.'

Answer.—The argument of this objection is the very cause of the evil on which the objection itself is founded. The unnatural and unpatriotic separation of the wealthier classes from the Common School has caused its inefficiency and alleged degradation. Had the wealthy classes been identified with the Common Schools equally with their poorer neighbours,—as is the case in Free School countries—the Common School would have been fit for the education of their children, and proportionally better than it now is for the education of the children of the more numerous common classes of society. In Free school cities and states, the Common Schools are acknowledged to be the best elementary Schools in such cities and states; so much so, that the Governor of the state of Massachusetts remarked at a late school celebration, that if he had the riches of an Astor, he would send all his children through the Common School to the highest institutions in the State.

“Second objection :—‘It is unjust to tax persons for the support of a school which they do not patronise, and from which they derive no individual benefit.’

Answer.—If this objection be well founded, it puts an end to school taxes of every kind, and abolishes school and college endowments of every description; it annihilates all systems of public instruction, and leaves education and schools to individual caprice and inclination. This doctrine was tried in the Belgian Netherlands after the revolt of Belgium from Holland in 1830; and in the course of five years, educational desolation spread throughout the kingdom, and the Legislature had to interfere to prevent the population from sinking into semi-barbarism. But the principle of a public tax for schools has been avowed in every school assessment which has ever been imposed by our Legislature, or by any District Council; the same principle is acted upon in the endowment of a Provincial University—for such endowment is as much public property as any part of the public annual revenue of the country. The principle has been avowed and acted upon by every republican State of America, as well as by the Province of Canada and the coun-

tries of Europe. The only question is, as to the extent to which the principle should be applied—whether to raise a part or the whole of what is required to support the public school. On this point it may be remarked, that if the principle be applied at all, it should be applied in that way and to that extent which will best promote the object contemplated—namely, the sound education of the people; and experience, as well as the nature of the case, shows, that the free system of supporting schools is the most, and indeed the only, effectual means of promoting the universal education of the people.

“I observe again on this second objection, that what it assumes as fact is not true. It assumes that none are benefitted by the common school but those who patronise it. This is the lowest, narrowest and most selfish view of the subject, and indicates a mind the most contracted and grovelling. This view applied to a provincial University, implies that no persons are benefitted by it except graduates; applied to criminal jurisprudence and its requisite officers and prisons, it supposes that none are benefitted by them except those whose persons are rescued from the assaults of violence, or whose property is restored from the hands of theft; applied to canals, harbours, roads, etc., this view assumes that no persons derive any benefit from them except those who personally navigate or travel over them. The fact is, that whatever tends to diminish crime and lessen the expenses of criminal jurisprudence, enhances the value of the whole estate of a country district; and is not this the tendency of good common school education? And who has not witnessed the expenditure of more money in the detection, imprisonment, and punishment of a single uneducated criminal, than would be necessary to educate in the common school half a dozen children? Is it not better to spend money upon the child than upon the culprit—to prevent crime rather than punish it? Again, whatever adds to the security of property of all kinds increases its value; and does not the proper education of the people do so? Whatever also tends to develop the physical resources of a country, must add to the value of property; and is not this the tendency of the education of the people? Is not education in fact the power of the

people to make all the resources of their country tributary to their interests and comforts? And is not this the most obvious and prominent distinguishing feature between an educated and uneducated people—the power of the former, and the powerlessness of the latter, to develop the resources of nature and providence, and make them subservient to human interests and enjoyments?—Can this be done without increasing the value of property? I verily believe, that in the sound and universal education of the people, the balance of gain financially is on the side of the wealthier classes. If the poorer classes gain in intellectual power, and in the resources of individual and social happiness, the richer classes gain proportionally, I think more than proportionally, in the enhanced value of their property. As an illustration, take any two neighbourhoods, equal in advantages of situation and natural fertility of soil; the one inhabited by an ignorant, and therefore unenterprising, grovelling, if not disorderly, population; the other peopled with a well educated, and therefore enterprising, intelligent and industrious class of inhabitants. The difference in the value of all real estates in the two neighbourhoods is ten if not a hundred-fold greater than the amount of school-tax that has ever been imposed upon it. And yet it is the school that makes the difference in the two neighbourhoods; and the larger the field of experiment the more marked will be the difference.—Hence, in free school countries, where the experiment has been so tested as to become a system, there are no warmer advocates of it than men of the largest property and the greatest intelligence;

the profoundest scholars and the ablest statesmen.

“It has also been objected, that the lands of absentees ought not to be taxed for the support of schools in the vicinity of such lands. I answer, the inhabitants of the school sections in which such lands are situated, are continually adding to the value of those lands by their labours and improvements, and are therefore entitled to some return, in the shape of a local school tax, from such absentee land-holders.

“The objection that the Free School system is a pauperising system has been sufficiently answered and exposed in a preceding part of this address. Such a term is only applicable to the present system, as I have shown; and the application of it to the Free School system is an exhibition of the sheerest ignorance of the subject, or a pitiful manoeuvre of selfishness against the education of the working classes of the people. History is unanimous in the assertion that the first race of New England pilgrims were the best educated and most independent class of men that ever planted the standard of colonization in any new country. Yet among these men did the system of Free Schools originate; by their free and intelligent descendants has it been perpetuated and extended; their universal education has triumphed over the comparative barrenness of their soil and the severity of their climate, and made their States the metropolis of American manufactures and mechanic arts, and the seat of the best colleges and schools in America. Nor is a page of their educational history disfigured with the narrative of ‘a Ragged School,’ or the anomaly of a pauper pupil.”

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

THERE are few terms in our language with which we are so intimately acquainted, in a practical point of view, and which takes such a latitude of meanings, as that of “education.” By some, it is considered to consist principally in a knowledge of the various languages, both living and dead, and the higher branches of mathematics and metaphysical sciences; by others in a knowledge, to use the language of a Spartan king who, when asked “what things he thought most proper for boys to learn,”

answered, “those things which they expect to do when they are men.”

However, departing somewhat from both these views, we hold that a proper system of education presents itself in a twofold aspect. First, man, as a rational and intellectual being, is required to learn, progress, and know; and, in the second place, as a responsible being, his knowledge requires to be rightly directed. On the latter clause of the sentence we propose to offer a few remarks.

In all ages, intellectual education has

made great advances; even heathen and idolatrous nations have not been behind in affording an impetus to scholastic attainments; while, in a moral point of view, education, in every age, has been surrounded by a host of difficulties and opponents. And though society has the experience of the history of the world—a history of humanity—for its guide, still a vast portion of mankind insist, even to the present day, upon a merely intellectual education. Turn to the countries of antiquity, whose intellectual greatness and moral weakness have caused their very existence, like the morning dew, to be wiped away.

What became of Jerusalem, the capital of the Israelitish nation, after she forsook the teachings of the *moral law*, and mixed with and subscribed to the worship of the idolatrous nations—her enemies—with which she was surrounded? Where is Tyre, that great mart of nations? Where is Chaldea, with its capital, Babylon? Where is Athens, the capital of the Grecian empire?—where, as a late writer says, “vast sums of money were collected by forcible contributions, and laid out in ministering to the amusements of the people: the services provided, games and spectacles and theatrical entertainments, in which troops of singers and dancers displayed their musical skill and performed their evolutions.” Where is Rome, the once mistress of the world? And where is that “exceeding great city, *N. neveh*?—the capital of the Assyrian empire, which was three days journey”—or 60 miles in circumference,—and which had “more than six score thousand persons (120,000) that could not discern between their right hand and their left hand.” In fact, where are all the great places of ancient times, whose inhabitants revelled in luxurious impiety, despotism, and almost every species of moral ignorance? And if we turn to many of the countries of note of the present day, and ask wherein does that weakness and imbecility lie, which continues to cause so much bloodshed and so many wars and internal broils and revolutions? the answer will invariably be found in the want of moral and intellectual education, which, when combined, is power indeed.

It is not the morality of Greece and Rome, or any of the once benighted and now almost extinct countries of antiquity; nor yet the morality of the lifeless

and tottering nations of the present day,—it is not the morality of those chiefs and sepoy of India, whose unparalleled acts of bloodshed and murder have so horrified society: but it is the morality of the Bible, and that alone, that must pervade our schools and public institutions. In advocating this view of the subject of moral education, we do not mean that any one particular creed or code of peculiar doctrines shall be forced upon the children, or even taught, who may not desire it; nor do we believe that a system of proselytizing should be allowed in the public schools and literary institutions of the country. What we hold to be right is, let the Bible be read in the parish schools, without note or comment, by all children whose parents or guardians do not forbid it.—The parents who forbid, or even do not inculcate the use of the scriptures among their offspring, must be ignorant indeed of their only safeguard against depravity. And as to the doctrine frequently urged, that, because children sometimes laugh or cry with the Bible in hand—profaneing, as some say, its sacred character,—its use should be abandoned entirely; we cannot see any force in this view of the subject: but, on the contrary, we admit that the scriptures should be used with reverence and veneration to its Divine author, and it is the duty of parents and teachers to inculcate a solemn regard for the doctrines of the Bible among those under their charge; still, because their efforts may sometimes partially fail to secure this result, it will not do to abandon this only sure path to prosperity and happiness. Because the morality of the Bible has even been opposed, spurned, and scoffed at, and its votaries shamefully and cruelly put to death by an unbelieving and infidel world, it is no reason that its moral precepts should be discarded from our institutions of education. The idea is too preposterous to be entertained for a moment by an enlightened people: a people who can safely say that all the light and liberty they possess has been gained by a diffusion of the spirit of Christianity breathed forth on every page of the bible.

Knowledge is not virtue, nor does it always lead to good morals: but it is certainly far more favorable to an advanced state of morals than ignorance; and yet we seem to think that all that is necessary to the education of the young

is simply to provide for them the means of learning.

There is probably no nation at the present time that furnishes so large a number of learned men as that of France, and few nations, if any, that wallow so deeply in vice: Sabbath desecration, plays, the theatre, and every kind of senseless exhibitions are patronised by all grades of society, from the monarch to the peasant, while the general state of even intellectual education is at a low rate among the humble classes of society. However, one encouraging feature in the case is, that the youthful mind is favorable to moral culture as well as the acquisition of knowledge. There is a susceptibility disposing the young to imbibe and profit by instruction. Hence, such instruction should be imparted as will enable them to form good habits—for habit is powerful—and act with justice, truth, kindness, and charity:—in other words, fit them to become proper denizens of this world, with a view to a blissful immortality. The subject of Christian education claims the serious attention of every well-wisher to society; and we are glad to see men of influence, like Sir Culling Eardley and Lord Shaftsbury, turning their attention to this important subject. Their sentiments on the subject of the bible in the schools of India are fully applicable to any other country, and read as follows:—

EDUCATION WITHOUT RELIGION.—At a recent meeting in London, Sir Culling Eardley said, in reference to the future policy of the government towards the use of the Bible in schools in India, that if the government did meddle, it should only meddle in the way of encouraging Christian schools; that if the government had schools of its own the Holy Scriptures should not be excluded from them. If that principle was good for schools supported by the government, of

course the moral obligation was equally applicable to schools assisted by the government. And if it was sinful for a Christian government to maintain a school in which the name of Christ was denied, or from which it was excluded, it was equally wrong, for any supposed secular benefit, to aid in the least degree any schools of infidel or heathen character. The Council had, therefore, come to the conclusion to put forth a resolution urging the government not to originate or contribute to any school in which the Christian religion was not taught. Upon this point he might quote a sentence from a document signed by the representatives of the missionary societies: “Even secular education without Christianity does but furnish the masses with more mischievous leaders, as in the case of Nena Sahib, at Cawnpore.” He might also read a letter from Lord Shaftsbury on the same subject:—

Whitehall-place, Nov. 18, 1857.

Dear Sir Culling,—One thing is, to my mind, unanswerable. If the government have schools, into those schools the Bible must be introduced.

But if they do so, will there not be raised in England and India a cry of compulsory proselytism?

The solution of the difficulty appears to be that government should give grants in aid on a liberal scale, and leave to missionaries and others the foundation and conduct of schools.

The government schools are not popular, and I should have very little confidence in their religious teaching.

Yours truly,

(Signed) SHAFTSBURY.

Sir Culling Eardley, Bart.

He quite agreed in that opinion; either that the government must stand aloof altogether, or if it did take part, it should take part as a Christian government ought to do.

LEGISLATIVE ENACTMENTS FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF EDUCATION.

ALL acts of the Legislatures touching the subject of education, should be plain, obvious, and easily put in operation; and the public made acquainted with their details, in order to be able to estimate their utility and adaptation, before they become law.

It is no uncommon thing in these colonies, for the legislatures to impose measures, on the most important matters, upon the public, without a tenth part of those interested having any knowledge of the measures until called upon to comply with their workings.

The pages of the statute books of these colonies, are already encumbered with a mass of useless and impracticable machinery, on the subject of education.

We anticipate the enactment, during the approaching sessions of the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia legislatures, of laws for the better regulation and encouragement of parish schools. What the measures to be enacted may be—whether the assessment principle will be

introduced, or local boards of education be established, and trustees paid as they should be—we are unprepared to say.—However, we do hope that the legislatures will not, as heretofore, impose laws touching a subject of such vast importance to the future prosperity of these important provinces, without taking measures to acquaint the people with their details.

A WORD TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS.

The primary object we have in view in issuing "The Parish School Advocate," is the advancement of education; and, in order to this end, we hope to secure the co-operation of both parents and teachers,—if not, our work will be one of labour without encouragement.

First—to Parents. The moral and secular education of youth must ever be a subject of importance, and any object for its better and more substantial advancement, must also claim your attention.—In issuing our Magazine, of which this is the first number, we propose to embody such information as will not only be useful in every family, and tend to secure better laws and regulations for the management of schools, but elevate and encourage the youth of our land to take a higher, more dignified and exalted stand, in the scale of moral, sentient, and intellectual existence.

Second.—To teachers of parish schools. The position you occupy as instructors of youth, is one of no small importance. If rulers fail to make and administer the laws of a country in accordance with free and enlightened principles, their course may be retrieved: but it is far different with the teachers of youth. If wrong principles have been instilled, and a false foundation laid, the whole moral and intellectual superstructure will be false, and almost impossible to be again brought to a state of rectitude; to retrieve in this case will be the work, not of the present, but of a coming generation. Therefore, you occupy a high and responsible position, and should be careful what sort of moral and intellectual seed you sow. The work of every teacher devoted to his calling, is a work of toil, and in too many instances he gets little

thanks for all his assiduity and usefulness. Parents and neighbourhoods have got a lesson to learn on this point. We hope to see the day that the place of the properly qualified teacher will stand next to that of the minister of the gospel; and when ministers, teachers, and people will fully co-operate in the extension of a proper system of public and private instruction.

In conclusion, we think the importance of our object,—the moral and intellectual advancement of the education of the youthful mind; that youth, which is yet destined to rule and be ruled; to develop the resources of these valuable and extensive domains; to be both the teachers and the taught of a coming period; to be the parents and guardians of a coming generation; and to be the future guardians and protectors of us, parents and teachers, the now responsible parties, when old age and decrepitude are upon us; is a department of stirring importance. And as it is justly said that "the labourer is worthy of his hire," we ask you, and we hope we are not asking too much, to encourage our efforts by assisting in our circulation and subscription list, for without such aid we must fall to the ground. The work is cheap, and contains a large amount of reading matter upon the various topics of education.

We are happy to introduce our first number with the year 1858, and hope you and ourself will be long spared in health and strength to advance one common object—education; and when you are about to select reading matter for the current year, please do not forget to subscribe for "The Parish School Advocate."

WINTER EVENINGS.

If each person who lives to see thirty years of adult life, were to devote one hour of each of the six days devoted for man to labour, which would allow two and a half years for study, to the study of some useful branches of knowledge, how different would the state of society be at the present time. The proper and economical devotion of time is of first importance to mankind.

But the winter evenings afford by far the greatest advantages in this respect; books are now so plenty and cheap, that "he who runs may read, and he who reads may understand." The acquisition of useful knowledge does not so much depend upon the amount of reading as upon the character of the matter to be read, and the manner of reading it: all reading should be done with the understanding. While there are vast stores of excellent reading matter in circulation, still the world is flooded with a shoal of novel and infidel trash, which is more fit for the flames than to be allowed into our families. The number of the *Scientific American* of the 14th of November last, thus speaks on this subject.—

The season when King Frost enchains our country in his icy grasp, and throws his white mantle over the earth, will soon be upon us, and we must begin to think what we shall do with ourselves in the long winter evenings, when there is no comfort but at the fireside, or in sitting close around the stove. Those evenings contain many precious hours that ought not to be, as they too often are, wasted and lost. Reader, we will propose a scheme to you whereby you will find them pass pleasantly and profitably; and when spring again comes, with its gladsome sounds and beautiful vegetation, you will be happier and better for the winter that has passed. Our advice, then, is, learn to do something. No matter what—to draw, to paint, to put together machinery, to read or speak a language that at present you do not know; invent something in your own line of business that is wanted, and determine to make it by the spring. Learn something, read a useful book every evening, if only for an hour; but do whatever you determine regularly and punctually, and you will be surprised how

much knowledge you will have acquired in a short time. Do not idle away the precious moments in foolish conversation and story paper nonsense, although they are both very good in their place; but try and master a branch of science—each one of you knows which you like the best, and which is best suited to your habits and capabilities,—and should you meet with difficulties in the way, as no doubt you will, write to us, and we will give you the best aid and advice that is in our power to dispense."

So say we: Set to work, young men of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, in good earnest,—read useful books, ponder and weigh well their contents; and who knows but that some of the brilliantly minded youths of these fair provinces, may, ere long, shine forth in the field of literary, artistic, and scientific fame.

Special Notices.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We invite to our columns, brief articles, touching the interests of education throughout the provinces. All communications, in order to receive attention, must be addressed to the Editor—post paid,—with the name of the author, which will be suppressed, if required. We do not hold ourselves responsible for the views of correspondents.

—o—
 We send copies of this Magazine to proprietors of newspapers in different parts of the provinces, from whom we shall be happy to receive copies, monthly, of such papers, containing notices of *The Parish School Advocate*.

—o—
 We take the liberty of forwarding copies of "The Parish School Advocate" to a number of gentlemen in different sections of these colonies, and pray that they will do us the kindness to put them into the hands of such persons as will take an interest in obtaining subscribers, and forwarding their subscriptions to the Editor, at Bay Vert, New Brunswick.

The Parish School Advocate,

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CLUBS of five, paying for a year, in advance, will be supplied for 3s. per copy; and clubs of ten will be supplied for 3s. per copy, with one additional copy for the getter up of the club.