

SEVEN LETTERS

ON THE

NON-RELIGIOUS

COMMON SCHOOL SYSTEM

OF

CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES.

BY

ADAM TOWNLEY,

PRESBYTER OF THE DIOCESE OF TORONTO.

TORONTO:

HENRY ROWSELL, KING STREET EAST.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The following Letters, founded on the Chief Superintendent's Appendix to his Common School Report for 1851, appeared first in the *Canadian Churchman* and other provincial papers, and latterly, with important additions, in the *New York Churchman*; these additions being composed principally of further statistical information and of answers to the most popular objections which have been made to the writer's views in the provincial papers. The whole series is now reprinted, in the hope that, however deficient in literary merit, the truths and facts which they contain may serve to draw increased attention to the infinitely important question which they discuss. In thus seeking to give them more extended circulation, the writer has been guided by the wishes of those whose opinions he is bound to respect.

A. T.

DUNNVILLE, July, 1853.

THE NON-RELIGIOUS COMMON SCHOOL SYSTEM.

LETTER I.

Assumption of the Chief Superintendent—Defence of England.

DEAR SIR :

The Chief Superintendent of Schools, in the Appendix to his recent Report for 1851, headed " Question of Religious Instruction in connection with our system of Public Instruction," endeavours, in what I consider a most fallacious manner, to defend the present Common School System, in opposition to those numerous, highly respectable, and earnest-minded Christians of this Province who desire not only intellectual but *religious* schools. And further, believing the plan, so generally adopted on this Continent, of instructing the masses of the people in secular knowledge, altogether apart from religious training, to be alike dishonourable to God, subversive of national morality, and awfully dangerous to individual happiness, both present and future, I beg to submit a few thoughts upon the subject through the columns of your paper.

In proceeding therefore to notice the Appendix to the Common School Report for 1851 :

First, I protest against a public document of that nature being made the vehicle of egotistical declamation, of theological discussion, and of a singularly autocratical lecture to the ministers and pastors of this Province. It is a most unfair use of the public money, thus to enlarge what ought to be a mere official statement of school affairs, for the purpose of enunciating the private views of an individual on a dis-

puted religious question. Further, under our present system of legislation, it is to all, but the ultra-liberal religionists, whom he happens to represent, a grievous denominational wrong, for Provincial funds to be thus used in disseminating one class of doctrinal sentiments, since to those who hold opposite views no such means of defending their opinions is offered. While the Government repudiates the very idea of state-ministerial support, it has surely no right to put the Province to the expense of printing the sectarian religious lectures of one of its officers!

Besides, the whole thing is an arrogant abuse of Dr. Ryerson's office, and an insult to the Ministry of all denominations in the Province. He is not appointed to inculcate his particular sentiments upon the question of religious education; he therefore takes a most unconstitutional advantage of his official position in thus endeavouring to bring all his underlings, particularly those important classes, School Trustees and Teachers, to adopt his *rationalistic* theories on that vital question. Nor is he commissioned to lecture, and to denounce before the public those Ministers, and that very numerous and intelligent portion of the lay community, who venture to differ from his most unscriptural doctrines.

If such is to be the method of procedure adopted by a Chief Superintendent of Common Schools, it need be no matter of surprise if ere long a most influential portion of the people, disgusted at seeing themselves and their pastors thus domineered over, should demand the entire abolition of the office.

But we must hasten to consider the document itself.

1. Dr. R. opens by an attack upon England, thus: "The question of religious instruction * * * has hitherto deprived England of a national system of education, permitting to it nothing but a series of petty expedients in varying forms of government grants to certain religious denominations, while the great mass of the labouring population is unreach- ed by a ray of intellectual light, and is 'perishing for lack of

knowledge,* amidst the din of sectarian war about 'religious education,' and under the very shadows of the cathedral and the chapel." The Chief Superintendent well understands the value of large assertions, boldly made, in swaying the public mind, especially where "his adversary, who, coming after, would search him," has not the same means of making himself heard.

That in a country so densely populated as England much ignorance, both moral and intellectual, will prevail, is certain; at least until that brotherly love which is, ordinarily, only the result of early religious training, is much more prevalent than, alas, it is anywhere at present. But that this ignorance prevails to the extent, and from the causes, which the preceding extract would insinuate, is certainly a misrepresentation. A considerable portion of my life was spent in the manufacturing districts of England, and from personal knowledge I can declare that Sunday School instruction is very general; and most sincerely do I wish that, deep as are the evils, yea, and the guilt, both legislative and proprietary, connected with our manufacturing system,—yet, I repeat, sincerely do I wish that I could see even the same evidence of a pervading religious influence on this Continent, which I there habitually saw. But, Sunday School operations, on this Continent, are almost entirely undermined by our Common School System, as I purpose to show in a subsequent letter.

Still, the need of a far more general and thorough education of the masses, especially as it tends to advance their moral and religious principles, no one acquainted with England will deny. Let, however, Dr. R. and all who support him, remember, that it is owing to men of their principles that England is not now rejoicing in a more efficient system of education, religious and secular; as it was the bitter

* What a strange perversion of Holy Scripture. The "knowledge" here spoken of is certainly *religious*, not "intellectual;" and verily it is for lack of this *holy* knowledge that the nations are suffering.

opposition of the *liberal* party to the Church of England which overthrew the Factory Education Bill. But the Chief Superintendent will triumphantly say, that this was the very consequence of insisting on a system of *sectarian* education ! I grant it ; yea, and will plead guilty, not only on behalf of the Church, but of England also, to the charge, that they think it safer to give *no* education than to give an *irreligious* one ! Let, then, the shame, aye, and the deep sin of an uneducated people rest upon those whose *unholy hatred* prevents them from being educated as *men* and as *Christians*.

England fully admits the principle that "knowledge is power ;" and, thank God, she has, as yet, acted on the further belief—founded on that sacred volume which was for so long the basis of her legislation—that "power," without the grace and wisdom to use it aright, is a fearful weapon of impiety towards God, and of misery and anarchy in the commonwealth ! Hence she has hitherto refused to aid in imparting earthly and intellectual knowledge unless accompanied by that religious instruction and training which is the *only* guarantee for its right use. May she ever continue to follow this course, sanctioned as it is by the Wisdom that is from on High ! And, with all England's evils and faults, we challenge Dr. Ryerson to point us out among the nations who have put intellectual instruction dissociated from religious training, in the fore rank of their national policy, one in which scriptural, religious principle is at this moment so generally diffused, and which under the Divine blessing, has ridden so triumphantly over the political storms and social convulsions of the last sixty years !

But that neither England nor England's Church undervalues education in the proper sense of the term—that is, religious and intellectual training—I will adduce the testimony first, of an American prelate, and then of an English Wesleyan Minister. That noble hearted prelate, the Right Rev. Samuel A. McCoskry, D. D., D. C. L., Bishop of Michigan, thus expressed his sentiments at a meeting in Exeter College,

Oxford: "On behalf, then, of the American Church, I heartily thank you for your kind expression of esteem; and permit me to say, that one of the greatest comforts for the present and the future, with regard to yourselves, *is the connection which I see everywhere in England between religion and education. It is this which is the security, and will be the security, of your land.* Dissever them—I believe it was the remark of an eminent individual in your own land, whose name is always remembered with gratitude, the Duke of Wellington—I believe it was he who said, "*Dissever religion and education, and you only make men clever devils!*" It has always been so: and if there is one thing in our land (the United States) which we deeply deplore, and with respect to which we look to the future with feelings of disaster, it is that severance." Such are the sentiments with respect to the *inseparable* union which ought to subsist between religion and education, and such his admiration of the conduct of England herein, of an *American* Bishop. How beautifully it contrasts with the unfilial slanders of a Canadian Chief Superintendent of Common Schools!

In a letter recently reprinted in the *Christian Guardian*, and supposed to be written by the Rev. Doctor Hannah, one of the most able of the English Wesleyan Ministers, language almost equally strong with the above is used, as to the energy and success with which the Anglican Church is endeavouring to educate her people; and to this, as one chief cause, he attributes the rapid increase of the Church. I regret that the paper in which I saw the extract from this letter is destroyed; however, the Doctor concludes thus: "From this it will be seen that the relative strength of the religious parties in this country (England) has, during the period referred to, been very much changed; the Church having in that time gained much ground; and if the non-conformist bodies have not actually lost ground, they have relatively done so by the growth of their rival, (the Church of England.)"

Again, contrast the candor of the English Wesleyan Minister with the want of it in the Canadian politico-Methodist Minister.

Adieu for the present. Yours truly,

A. T.

LETTER II.

Non-sectarian schools necessarily unchristian—Dr. R.'s definition of a "patriot"—Nations designed to uphold the Church—Defence of England again—Sir A. Alison on mere intellectual education—Our duty.

DEAR SIR :

I proceed, according to the intention intimated in my last, to notice and endeavour to refute, in the order in which they occur, the very unchristian principles enumerated in the concluding section of the Appendix to the Common School Report for 1851.

1. In the first section of his remarks the Chief Superintendent declares thus : " The system of Common School instruction should, like the Legislature which has established it and the Government that administers it, be non-sectarian and national." This is, translated into *honest* English,—the system of Common School instruction should (alas, too truly!) *like* the Legislature which has established it and the Government that administers it, be *non-Christian*, having no reference to man's immortal nature, but *heathenly* national, being solely confined to his temporal advantage. In nothing does the Chief Superintendent appear to be more painfully disingenuous than in his bitter opposition to denominational schools, and yet his *cant*, (I wish I had a softer word equally truthful to use,) in professing to wish the Common Schools to be religious. I can understand the conduct of many of our rulers—mere political adventurers—whose aim is notoriously their own advancement, and who unblushingly worship the god of this world, in their determination to exclude religion

from the public instruction of our youth ; theirs is at least consistent impiety ! But for one who still claims the ministerial character, first to exclude all ministerial interference and distinctive religious teaching from his schools and then to profess to wish to retain religious influence in them, is an unholy inconsistency to which I do not care to give a name.

Dr. Ryerson is too acute a theologian not to know that in excluding what he is pleased to term "sectarian instruction," he *excludes Christian instruction* ! Christianity is not a mere compound of negations, nor is it only a code of moral precepts ; it is a positive, mysterious, sacramental institution, the fulfilment of whose duties and the enjoyment of whose transcendent blessings depend upon the positive reception of Divine grace, which grace, in order to its being obtained, is to be sought in certain ways, by the performance of certain conditions, and through the aid of certain acts of service and worship, all prescribed or sanctioned by the Divine Author of our religion Himself. Now it is surely self-evident that such a system as this requires positive, didactic, and explicit teaching, with the enforcing of certain well understood methods of religious service and Divine worship. Therefore, all Christian teaching, to be explicit, must be what our Rev. Superintendent would call "sectarian ;" so all institutions of Christian worship must be the same, inasmuch as all earnestness in religion implies particularity, and such particularity is, in its very nature, exclusive of its opposite ; and this, again, in his idea, is "sectarian." In fact, all that men know of evangelical Christianity in its doctrines, worship, or practice, must be through some distinctive religious body. Hence, I appeal to all earnest religionists, from the scriptural Catholic down to the fanatic Shaker, for the truth of the remark, that, as an all but universal fact, wherever you find men unconnected with any body or "sect" of Christians, they are alike ignorant of its distinctive principles, and uninfluenced by its distinctive holiness. Thus then is my position proved—that "unsectarian" schools, that is,

schools freed from the particular influence of any particular denomination of Christians, must of necessity be *unchristian schools*. I therefore appeal to the honourable integrity of the Rev. Superintendent henceforth to fight his battles with those who desire denominational schools, on honest grounds, by confessing that he wishes to make the Common Schools of this Province, to use the mildest phrase, *non-christian*.

Having thus placed the controversy upon what I consider its right basis, I proceed to notice the attack which is made in the same section upon the supporters of Christian, or, as he terms them, "sectarian" schools. In doing so, the distinction which our Chief Superintendent draws between what he calls "a mere sectarian and a patriot," is well worthy of note, as it affords but too true a picture of the high value which, on this Continent generally, is placed upon *political* as compared with Christian earnestness. "The one" (i. e. the sectarian) he says, "places his sect above his country and supports or opposes every public law or measure of government just as it may or may not promote the interests of his own sect, irrespective of the public interests, and in rivalry with those of other sects; the other (i. e., the patriot) views the well being of his country as the great end to be proposed and pursued, and the sect as among the instrumentalities tributary to that end." Now, if what I have previously said respecting Christianity's being only earnestly known to individuals through their connection with some denomination, be correct, it follows, that in the above charge, for "sectarian" we must read Christian, and for "his sect" his Christianity;—and then what is the real meaning of the charge thus urged by the Chief Superintendent against the earnest-minded Christians of various denominations in this Province? Simply this, that they place their Christianity above their earthly country! Is this then such a glaring inconsistency in the followers of Him who declared "he that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me," that they deserve to be branded, and that by a Reverend

Doctor of Divinity, throughout the length and breadth of the Province, as being selfish and unpatriotic ?

Christian patriots, moreover, believe the promise of their Divine master to be of universal application, where He says, "Seek ye FIRST the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these (temporal) things shall be added unto you." Again : they remember where it is written, that "Righteousness exalteth a nation," consequently their patriotism is of too high a tone to permit them to yield one inch of ground to those who would nationally train the children of their people, utterly excluding that "righteousness" by which alone, as the Most High Himself declares, the true glory of their land can be secured.

Consequently, it is evident that the earnest-minded in Canada must, no less as patriots than as Christians, firmly oppose every Provincial act which is either subversive of the supremacy of Christ, or tends to prevent the spread of his righteousness among the people. And both these wickednesses they know are committed in our Common School law.

But, allow me to ask, while on this subject, will the earnest-minded Christians of this Province continue to permit a government official to *hold up to public scorn as bigotted traitors to their country* those scripturally-zealous individuals whose reverence for God and whose love to their country and their country's youth, cause them to demand a national system of education in which the honour of God, the immortal interests of their children, and the "righteous exaltation" of the nation, shall not be altogether treated with contemptuous neglect ?

2. In his second section, after a fanfaronade respecting *his* conviction of the necessity of religious instruction—only it must not interfere with him and his school,—he proceeds thus : "The history of modern Europe in general, and of England in particular, teaches us that when the elementary schools were in the hands of the Church, and the State performed no other office in regard to schools than that of tax-

assessor and tax-gatherer to the Church, the mass of the people were deplorably ignorant and therefore deplorably enslaved." When the Chief Superintendent framed this sentence *he* was either "deplorably" ignorant or "deplorably" dishonest. Till within a very few years there was no general Government aid at all for Schools in England, and consequently when the poor were taught it was by the aid of private benefactions, or in Sunday Schools; and that the vast majority of these, and incomparably the most efficient of them, were in connection with the Church, is too common to fame to need to be insisted upon. To the efficient use which the Church makes of her present educational means, let the Wesleyan Dr. Hannah, quoted in my last, be a sufficient witness. Now, if the Rev. Dr. Ryerson knew these facts, is it not most painful to hear him speak of the "tax-assessor and tax-gatherer" for Church Schools, when no such taxes, and therefore no such officers, were in existence? If he did not know these things, was he not shamefully reckless in stating as facts, for the apparent purpose of slandering England and her Church, statements which were entirely without foundation?

His pitiful remark respecting the "deplorable enslaving" of England's peasantry, we might fearlessly leave the freest nation upon earth to answer! I must, however, permit myself to ask what *is* the meaning of these *ad captandum* slanders of England? I remember England's poor for between 30 and 40 years, north, south, and east; my parents before me were Saxon and Norman English, from different parts of the kingdom, my connections both in the Church and among Dissenters are numerous, and I declare my utter ignorance of the enslaving of any portion of England's people for centuries past. If indeed the want of a vote at elections be slavery, then truly England's peasantry not only were but *are* slaves, in common with the vast proportion of Canadians, yea, and even many Americans, notwithstanding their "Universal Suffrage." Indeed, that such an insinuation is an

unworthy slander, apparently used as a political *clap trap*, is further evident from the fact that the repeal of the Test and Corporation Act, the passing of the Romish Relief Bill, and especially of the Reform Bill, were forced upon the country by these “deplorably enslaved” masses, against the earnest convictions and strong opposition of the well-informed yeomanry and gentry. But of one fact I can assure the Chief Superintendent, that *since the poor were taken from under the care of the Church and of the Church’s gentry* by our giant manufactories and union workhouses, something a vast deal more approaching to a “deplorably enslaving” of the people will be found than for ages previously; and this “enslaving,” be it remembered, has taken place during the, alas, Anglican, democratic, mammon-worshipping, church-oppressing, movements of the 19th century. I recommend the Rev. Dr. when next he travels, if he wishes to see the nearest approach to British degradation and “slavery” to visit the manufacturing and mining districts of Britain, the masses of which are freed from all authoritative church control, and to a painful degree, are separated from the effective influence of the sons of the Church.

In proof however, that my assertion, made a little while back—that the consistent earnest-minded Christian is the only true patriot—is as applicable in the matter of Common Schools as in every other case, let the following statistics, taken from Sir ARCHIBALD ALISON’S new work, be the painful proof; since they do most unanswerably manifest not only the morally, but the *nationally* ruinous effects of mere secular education, *when alone*. He thus writes—“The utmost efforts have for a quarter of a century been made in various countries to extend the blessings of education to the labouring classes; but not only has no diminution in consequence been perceptible in the amount of crime and the turbulence of mankind, but the effect has been just the reverse; *they have both signally and alarmingly increased*. Education has been made a matter of State policy in Prussia, and every child is, by the

compulsion of government, sent to school, and yet serious crime is about *fourteen times* as prevalent, in proportion to the population, in Prussia as it is in France, where about two-thirds of the whole inhabitants can neither read nor write. In France itself, it appears from the 'Statistique Morale de la France,' that the amount of crime in all the eighty-three departments is, with one single exception, in proportion to the amount of instruction received. By far the greater proportion of the ladies of pleasure in Paris come from the districts to the north of the Loire, the most highly educated in France. In Scotland, the educated criminals are to the uneducated as $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 1; in Ireland they are about equal. In America, and in most of the States of the Union, three times the uneducated. These facts, *to all persons capable of yielding assent to evidence in opposition to prejudice*, completely settle the question." "Experience has now abundantly verified the melancholy truth so often enforced in Scripture—so constantly forgotten by mankind—that intellectual cultivation has *no effect* in arresting the sources of evil in the human heart;" but that, *while it alters the direction of crime, it also increases its amount*. Hence, "the precept of our SAVIOUR was to preach the Gospel to all nations, *not* to educate all nations."

With these unanswerable facts and conclusions staring us in the face, would it not be the height of unpardonable presumption—a very tempting of the judgments of a holy God—allow me respectfully to ask—for the Christians of this Province to permit the dearest interests of their children to be any longer sacrificed to so unholy a method of instruction; one which has already been productive of so much evil in other lands? I say "permit," because, I repeat, if we are earnestly united in the matter, we *have* the power constitutionally to wrest a better system from the hands of the Government.

LETTER III.

ON DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS.

Plan for—Expense of present system—Unsatisfactory working of—Separate Schools better cared for and less expensive—The right of the poor—Opinion of Popish Paper.

DEAR SIR:

I proceed to notice the Chief Superintendent's most certainly reckless assertion that Denominational Schools would "not only cost the people five-fold (!) what they have now to pay for School purposes, but would leave the youth of minor religious persuasions, and large portions of the poorer youth of the country, without any means of education upon terms within the pecuniary resources of their parents, unless as paupers, or at the expense of their religious faith."

I beg particular attention to the three assertions in the above statement of the Chief Superintendent—that Denominational Schools would cost *five-fold* as much as the present system—that they would be oppressive to "the minor religious persuasions," and to the poor, by leaving them without education, unless indeed as paupers, or as traitors to their faith! Believe me, these assertions were not made but as the result of subtle consideration: for if true—and who would doubt the word or the accurate information, on such a subject, of the Reverend Chief Superintendent!—the mass of an irreligious people—and are not all people majorically irreligious?—would never consent to Denominational Schools, were they proved to be holy as Heaven and necessary as the Gospel. No one knows better than the Rev. EGERTON RYERSON, D.D., the telling effects of such insidious statements, containing appeals to the low arrogance of idle pauperism, to the bitter pride of the mere sectarian, and even to the sincerity of the pious amongst the "minor religious persuasions." Alas that he should condescend to use such weapons, regardless of the great inaccuracy of his assertions.

The gross impropriety of the statements under consideration I intend to prove in this letter, by showing—

1st, That Denominational Schools will NOT "cost the people five-fold more than they now pay."

2nd, That "the youth of minor religious persuasions" will NOT "be left without the means of education, save at the expense of their faith;" but that on the contrary *they* will have more educational and religious advantages than under the present system.

3rd. That a "large portion of the poorer youth of the country" will NOT "be left without the means of education save as paupers;" but that, on the contrary, the education, secular and religious, of the poor, will be much more efficiently cared for than under the present system.

I will proceed then, first, to state a plan for combining the religious and secular education of our youth by the establishment of Denominational Schools—a plan which will, if it be ever fairly carried out, I am convinced, vindicate the accuracy of these statements. I propose then, that a Provincial School-law shall be enacted in substance as follows:

1st. That any religious denomination, or separate congregation, which desires to establish a Common School of its own in any particular locality, shall have the legal right to claim for that purpose the school assessment of its own members, and their corresponding share of the Provincial or local educational grant.

2d. That the appointment of the Teacher, with all other internal regulations of such school, shall be in the Minister and lay officials, "as churchwardens, elders, or class leaders," &c., of said denomination in such locality.

3d. That such Denominational School shall not interfere with the right of the school-section in which it is situated to establish other denominational, or non-religious schools.

4th. That where in any school-section there are only Denominational Schools, then, the parents or guardians not belonging to the denomination or denominations unto which such school or schools belong, shall have a legal right to send their children to such denominational schools, provided there

be no other within——distance : Provided always, that in such a case the school assessment of parents so sending their children, and their corresponding share of the Provincial grant, shall then be paid to the denominational school to which they send their children ; such parents also paying their equal share of such further tax as the managers of the school may find it necessary to impose.

5th. That parents or guardians not belonging to the Denomination to whose school they send their children shall have a legal right to require that they learn no catechism, or other religious formulary, the Bible only excepted, but such as they, the parents, approve.

6th. That the poor shall, without payment, have the same legal right with those who pay to send their children to any school, upon their solemn declaration of their inability to pay : the authorities of such school having a claim upon a public fund, to be established for that purpose for a certain rate of payment for all such scholars. In case of supposed imposition, an appeal laying to the council of the township in which such school is situated.

7th. That where there is but one school in a section, whether it be denominational or otherwise, it shall have the right to the use of the schoolhouse for the time being ; but that, where there shall be more than one school, and only one schoolhouse, it shall rest with the majority of the inhabitants of such section to say, from year to year, which school shall have the use of it.

8th. That parents or guardians, not belonging to any denomination which shall have established a school of its own under the sanction of this Provincial law, shall *not* have a legal right to send their children, under the exemptions aforesaid, to said school, if there be a school of their own denomination, or one non-religious, either in their own or a neighboring school-section, within——distance. Nevertheless, be it enacted that, if such parents shall be content to subject their children to all the regulations and teachings, religious or

otherwise, of such school, then they *shall* have a legal right to send their children to said denominational school, even though they, the parents, do not belong to that particular denomination—subject always to payments hereinbefore provided in such cases.

9th. That where no denominational school is established, then the majority of the inhabitants shall have a legal right, as now, to establish a school on such basis as they see fit, and to assess *all* the inhabitants for its support, excepting only such persons as may be sending their children to some neighboring denominational school, under the conditions hereinbefore provided.

10th. That all Common Schools, denominational or otherwise, shall publish annually, in the nearest newspaper, a statement of their entire receipts and expenditure.

11th. That it shall be competent for the Government to appoint inspectors of *all* schools receiving public money, denominational as well as others, whose duty it will be to see that the teachers are of competent ability, that the schools are properly conducted, and that the advance of the pupils in secular knowledge is satisfactory.

Such is the outline of the plan for denominational schools, which I earnestly recommend to serious and unprejudiced consideration. I do not, of course, pretend that it is perfect in all its details—still less do I think that it is all that Christians, and Christian legislators ought to desire; but I do most earnestly contend, that it is immeasurably better than our present system, and capable, even in this religiously-divided land, of being beneficially and satisfactorily worked.

That the scheme I have thus propounded fully supports the statements with which I set out, to the complete confusion of the startling assertions of the Chief Superintendent with which this letter commenced, is, I hope, sufficiently clear; a little additional evidence on some of the particular points I wish to substantiate, and a few further explanatory remarks, however, may not be thrown away.

First, as to the expense. The plan I have proposed, instead of "costing the people five-fold more than the present system does not ask one farthing more than *their own just proportion* of the public funds. Again; where there are not children enough to form two schools, and yet a denominational school is established, I provide that such school shall be bound to receive the rest of the children in such school-section; consequently there is no plea for increased expenditure; the only difference in such case, between the present system and the one I propose, being that the school is under especial religious direction, instead of being entirely secular. While in towns or villages no increased expenditure will be needed, because there will be a sufficient number of children of different denominations to form schools abundantly large, especially including the children of the minor sects, and those of no denomination, who would from choice attend the denominational schools.

But it seems probable, taking into consideration the vastly increased efficiency which would be given to our Common Schools by the religious supervision I am advocating, that their cost would be *absolutely less*, perhaps very much less, than under the present system; and for these reasons; first because the ministers and lay officials, taking a much deeper, because religious interest in the schools, than is done by the present township superintendents, trustees, &c. &c., the Schools would be much more efficiently and economically managed; and secondly, because from the personal efforts of the various Ministers and their friends, excited to exertion by the *religious* as well as intellectual advantages which they would hope the children would derive from their schools, *a much larger average of attendance would be secured throughout the Province than is now the fact*; and thus the average expenditure would be *lessened*, instead of increased five-fold, while the benefits of a sound education would be much *more generally* diffused than at present.

The fact is, that our present Provincial system of Common

School Education is most expensive, and is causing great dissatisfaction throughout the Province.—From the manner in which the Report of Common Schools is published, it is perhaps quite impossible for the people in general to arrive at a knowledge of what is the real cost to the Province of education in proportion to the instruction given.

For instance, from the uncertain manner in which the returns are made, the real attendance of children cannot be discovered; so, from the like uncertainty, in the account of local school expenses in the different sections, the actual average expense is a mystery; all of which incertitude is most fortunate for the reputation of the Government Education Office, and especially of its principal Official, the Chief Superintendent! But, that it is so costly that Denominational Schools may be sought on the score of mere economy, two or three brief facts may show.

In 1849 the Chief Superintendent of Education gave the average of attendance on the schools throughout the Province at $8\frac{1}{2}$ to 10, and the average cost of education for each child as 15s. $1\frac{3}{4}$ d. per annum. Now a friend of mine, a staunch Reformer, deep in the mysteries of local legislation during the short-lived days of District Municipal Councils, was startled at these returns, believing them, from his previous knowledge, to be totally incorrect; he therefore probed the matter thoroughly as respects the Niagara District; and found the results, from the public returns of the "Niagara District School Report," to be as follows:—

Average of attendance as 4 to 10, and the average expenditure per child to be £1 10s. $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. per annum. And this is exclusive of the cost of fuel, school-houses, and superintendence, local and general.

The gentleman who kindly gives me these statistics, declares that 40 per cent ought to be added for extras, the average expense given above being merely calculated from the teachers' salaries. These statements he has published in numerous letters, and defying contradiction, has not received it, as to any of his staple facts.

The expensive and at the same time the very unsatisfactory working of our present School system was also ably exposed in a letter of Mr. ANGUS DALLAS, a few weeks ago, to the *British Colonist*. He states that in Toronto the average of the attendance of the children between 5 and 16 years of age upon the Common Schools is only 18 per cent.! In Hamilton only 16 per cent.! In Kingston only 25 per cent.! While the average cost of Common School education, exclusive of the expense of School apparatus, rent, repairs, building, and Government Educational Machinery, is in Toronto 18s. 8½d. per head; in Hamilton 33s. 2½d.; in Kingston £2 1s. 11d.! "These are the facts," he adds, "with respect to the average attendance and the cost, agreeable to the criterion established by the Common School Act." He quotes as follows from the Report of the Toronto City School Superintendent: "Mr. BARBER says 'It will naturally be expected that in my official capacity I should express an opinion regarding the Free School system, and I do not hesitate in doing so. As regards numbers, one of the effects of Free Education has been to place upon the rolls of our schools a much larger number of pupils than was exhibited when the rate-bill system was in operation; but as regards average attendance, the comparison of those who regularly attend schools with the gross number on the rolls, is greatly in favour of the latter. It will be perceived that the large number of 3,059 pupils are returned as being on the roll, while the average attendance under the most favourable circumstances of season exhibits only 1428. In fact, the average attendance under the Free School system has been so irregular and disproportionate as to call for some decided action on the part of the Board to check the evil. As regards the average attendance at our schools, another effect of Free Education has been to deteriorate its character: that is to say, the more advanced, the more respectable, and the older pupils have to a considerable extent withdrawn from our Common Schools, leaving their places to be supplied by very young children, and a large number of pupils whose

parents have omitted or neglected to take care that their children were regular in attendance, or properly supplied with the books necessary for their improvement."

But further, my own experience more than corroborates these statements. In my immediate neighbourhood, I should say, the expense of the school upon actual attendance was about £2 10s. per child. While in the village near me the returns, as accurately as I could get them, for the last year but one are as follows: Number of children of school ages 255; the number attending 108, far short of half. The average cost of education per child £1 12s. 3d. And this, be it remembered, is in a large village, where of course the average of expense ought to be much less than in the country. (I have given the attendance from that year's average, as I could not get that of the succeeding year.)

Surely Mr. Editor, Denominational Schools are not going to "cost the people five-fold" *this average*, or verily, I grant, they will be a ruinous affair. Truly, however, I think we need be under no apprehensions but that the ministers and members of the different denominations will manage their schools at least as economically as the Chief Superintendent of Education.

I think I have also fairly shown that Dr. RYERSON's second assertion—that if Denominational Schools were established "the youth of minor religious persuasions would be left without any means of education save at the expense of their religious faith"—is totally without foundation; since they would be admitted into the schools of the larger denominations without the slightest interference with their own religious principles. Indeed, on the contrary, I have proved, as I stated I would, that such youth would be in a far more desirable condition, as respects their education, than at present: for that they would be members of a school, the intellectual status of which would be more efficiently looked after than under the present system, while its moral securities would be incomparably greater than is possible on the non-religious plan;

and that even the religious training of the child would be cared for, so far as non-interference with the particular religious views of its parents would admit.

The last of the three assertions of the Chief Superintendent which I undertook to answer was, that denominational schools "would leave a large portion of the country without any means of education save as paupers;" this, I think, I have successfully met by showing how they would be admitted, without payment, into religious schools. But there is a *cunning* in this objection unpleasant to a disingenuous mind. For, while it is calculated to flatter the pride of the unholy poor, it is not honestly a denominational, but a free-school objection; as in non-religious schools, if not free, the poor must be educated by a charitable rate, just as much as in denominational schools. Hence, the respectable Superintendent would meet this difficulty, by educating the whole province as paupers.

In fact, Denominational Schools are the peculiar RIGHT of the poor; because in the church of GOD the faithful poor are not regarded as paupers, but as fellow members with their wealthier brethren of CHRIST; hence they and their children are cared for as brethren! Yes, give us religious schools, and we will answer for it, that the children of the poorest would not only have an education they now too often do not know how to value, offered them; but they would be sought out by the ministers of the different denominations, if sometimes with a mixture of sectarian zeal, yet still oftener, I trust, with the holy and patient earnestness of faithful and loving shepherds. In either case the poor would profit, being by the persuasion of love brought under secular tuition combined with religious training. Oh, non-religious schools, whether Free or otherwise, are a heartless fraud upon the rights and the happiness of the poor! But more of this in my subsequent letters. Surely it will not be considered as a valid objection to this scheme, that sometimes the children of smaller denominations would have to be educated at the schools of the

larger ones ; especially as I have provided that their *doctrinal* teaching shall not be interfered with ; and surely some religious training is better than none ! Permit me, on this point, to quote authority whom none will accuse of being too unsectarian, or too liberally inclined. Listen to what the *Shepherd of the Valley*, a Popish journal of the United States, says, on this theme : “ It would be better to send children to Methodist or Presbyterian schools, if such were in existence, than to these educational institutions of the State. The reason is plain. At the one, your child will be taught that a false religion is true—at the other, that every religion is false.”

Again, the same journal says—“ It is not lawful to take that which is holy and cast it to the dogs. Your children are the children of God by baptism—members of the sacred and mystical body of which CHRIST is the head. Education for them must not be mere learning to read and write and reckon up. This may do for those who accept this world and the things of this world as man’s last end and greatest hope. God does not require that your children should know these things, and he will not send them to hell for ignorance in these respects. The education of a Christian child must be the teaching what he must do for his soul’s health, and the acquisition of those habits whereby a Christian life is secured. That your children must learn those things at home, is very true ; but that they must not be made to unlearn, and laugh at you for teaching them, at school, is another truth which it will not do to overlook.”

O sir, I blush to think how much more scriptural and evangelical are these sentiments, than those low and earthly principles from which our *Protestant Common School law sprang*. Adieu.

LETTER IV.

The "Westminster"—Importance of incidental religious teaching.—Duty of School Teachers.—Tyranny of Chief Superintendent.—Inefficiency of Sunday Schools.—False charge against the Clergy.

"Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breast.

"For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, here a little and there a little."—*Isaiah*.

"Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or *whatever ye do*, do all to the glory of God."—*I. Corinthians*.

Sir,—Let religious educationists thank God and take courage; for not only have they the Church, the whole Church, but most assuredly they have also the Bible, the whole Bible, on their side; hence, since He who inspired the one and dwells in the other, knows no change, without all question they are fighting the battle of the Saviour, of the Church, and of the Bible, and must therefore, if true to themselves and to their cause, be ultimately successful.

The truth of this statement is strikingly exemplified in a recent article on "Secular Education" in the semi-infidel *Westminster Review*. The *Review* takes the impudently honest ground (and verily in these days of *humbug* honesty in any shape is refreshing!) that a religious education is not fitted to suit men for the active duties of life. Thus he says, "The leading aim of Bible religious instruction is to communicate such principles of faith and practice as may insure the salvation and happiness of the life to come. That of secular instruction, to impart such knowledge and habits of action as may conduce to well-being in the world in which we now live." O, ye fools and blind! Either Christianity is a lie, or the surest method of securing those habits of serious reflection and enduring energy of action which are necessary to temporal success, is to imbue the mind deeply with a feeling of Christian accountability, Christian hopes and Christian love. Hence, however, in undeniable consistency with the views

above enunciated, the reviewer draws this bold conclusion against religious schools and their managers: "Moreover, from the overwhelming importance attached by the Clergy to eternity in comparison with time, they would lie under a constant temptation, often unperceived by themselves, unduly to subordinate secular to spiritual instruction." I had thought to put portions of the above sentence in italics, but it is all too significant of "secular education" tendencies, as dissociated from religious training, to admit any distinction of its parts. Yet a little further, and the reviewer, who evidently feels that Christian faith and the Bible are sore obstacles in his way, thus writes; "After a few generations shall have enjoyed this improved instruction, modifications in religious faith may be expected to follow. The Bible is undergoing a criticism of reason such as it was never before exposed to, and the discoveries of the science are daily shaking the established interpretations of it to the foundations."—Thus since, thank God! the religious tone of England forbids the ribald sneer, or open contempt of Christianity and its Bible, both are to be "modified," that is, in plain English, to be explained away, to be deprived, by neological rationalism, of all authority, of all hope, and of all salvation! And all to clear the way for secular education! Such, be it remembered, are the sentiments of one of the great organs of the party, who, with our Reverend Superintendent of education, supports secular, as *separated* from religious education. I do not say as *opposed* to religious education, for even our deistical reviewer would, like the Revd. Doctor, graciously permit separate religious schools! How significant is the fact that the almost sneering critic should be equally ready with the Revd. Doctor to sanction religious training, if only he be permitted to secure his non-religious teaching first! Yet how sad is such a fact; for does it not prove that the sceptic feels that he need not fear what must be the feeble efforts of Christian training when thus separated. Yes, unquestionably the sceptic is wise in his generation; for most certainly the natural tendency of the

separate secular education scheme is to ignore Christianity, and to make the Bible despised. How bitterly are the men of this generation proving themselves children, "after their own likeness and image" of those, who, preferring *intellect* to *love*, eat of the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

The above observations have been suggested by the third "remark" of the Chief Superintendent, in the extract from his report which has called forth these Letters. It is to this effect—"but the establishment of denominational schools is altogether unnecessary, because common schools are not boarding but day schools." Hence he argues that time sufficient will be left for religious instruction to be given by parents and pastors in the morning, or after schools are dismissed, and upon Sundays. What does the Chief Superintendent understand by religious training? Surely *he* does not suppose, as the "Westminster" appears to do, that it merely consists in teaching the creed and catechism, albeit these may be important portions of its foundation.—Religious training pre-eminently requires to be given in the manner intimated by Divine wisdom, in the passage placed at the head of this letter—"precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little," and this training is to begin, be it remembered, as Jehovah there commands, with the youngest, "those weaned from the milk and drawn from the breast."

Of religious instruction that which is *incidentally* given is, perhaps, the most effective; and for this, the hours spent at school afford the fairest opportunity. Thus the routine reading of Holy Scripture must afford frequent opportunities of plainly enforcing, on the young mind, its practical teaching; such as their own connection with the privileges it declares, the duties it enjoins, and the hopes it reveals. Of course I am not supposing or wishing any course of polemical instruction to be given by our school masters, but it cannot be safe to our children's feelings of veneration, nor reverential to Almighty God, to permit His Word to be read by a pupil to his

tutor, and that tutor, to be either unable or unwilling to use it, as opportunity serves, for his pupils' religious benefit. So in all their reading aloud to their master, what innumerable opportunities of profitable remark, in elucidation of exclusively christian principles, must occur? Also the intercourse of scholars one with another,—their courtesy, their evil tempers, their brotherly kindness, their integrity, &c., will all call, almost hourly, not only for moral, but Christian instruction. For what is the only true foundation, for instance, of love either to God or man, but this, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but He loved us, and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins."—I might, of course, go on multiplying examples without end; for how few moral and religious positions, of which a child is susceptible, are there in which he may not be sometimes placed, even in a day school: but let these suffice. Can then such exclusively Christian training as this be received under our present school system? And yet it is nothing but bare Bible Christianity!—

Nor, let it be answered that I am extravagant in expecting such teaching from denominational school teachers. I do not expect, nor indeed desire, I repeat, that in Church Common Schools, for instance, we should have teachers who would give theological treatises to the children upon the doctrine of the New Birth, Episcopacy, or the Resurrection; but I do expect and desire, that we should obtain teachers who, when a child had committed some flagrant fault, would endeavour to bring him to repentance by reminding him Whose child he was; or, who, when a Confirmation was approaching, would speak to the children of the great privileges of such a rite and who in hearing their catechism would impress upon them, if only by one word, the nature of the vows which they were about to take. In short, in Church Schools, I should hope to see Christian teachers, who, like Christian parents, would seize every suitable opportunity of making Christian impressions upon the minds of the children entrusted to them. To such schools, from the parish to the university, England, under

God, owes most of her greatness and of her reverence for Christianity. But, had religious schools been the failure which some falsely pretend, even that could form no defence of a legislature for enacting—much less of a Christian minister for suggesting,—a system of national education in open opposition to Christian accountability, and in scornful neglect of the holiness of Christian training.

Really to a sincere believer in Christianity the matter may be brought within a nut shell. What is a man sent here for? Is it not first to bring glory to God; secondly, to use this life so as to procure for himself an inheritance in a better? Is it reason then, to loose sight for a moment of the higher motives, to expect such a believer to be willing to place his child during those years when it is most susceptible of impression, for seven or eight hours daily, where the glory of God, and that eternity which give its value to its own present life, are practically forgotten? But we take higher ground and ask, can a Christian do so and be guiltless? Would not such conduct be a flagrant violation of that positive command,—with which I have also honoured this letter by placing it at its head—“Whether therefore ye eat or drink, whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God?”

But the Reverend Superintendent dwells much upon the importance and sufficiency of Parental and Pastoral instruction. It is well! most important are they, and it is precisely for interfering with these that we denounce our present Common School system. Our Chief Superintendent, in effect, says to the parent—You may train your child in religion as you like on the Sabbath and during the mornings and evenings of other days; but on the chief part of each week day I will have him taught as I see fit! So to the Clergyman, he says, —It is your duty to teach the child religion, but I will only allow you to do so, as best you may, on the Sabbath; all the rest of the week I will appoint such teachers for him as I choose! If this be not the bitterness of tyranny—a tyranny most recklessly interfering with the closest relations of life—I know

not what is. I am quite aware that our Educational Despot may answer:—It is not I, but the trustees, who appoint the teachers. I acknowledge the fact; but he is the author, and the hand that guides the helm of the whole system, and therefore he is personally responsible for its whole effects.—But, especially are his remarks with respect to the Pastoral instruction of our youth a mockery. This will appear by considering:

1—That his own Common School system is greatly subversive of Sunday-School influence. In England Sunday-Schools have been so popular and useful because they are the only means offered to a large body of the people of attaining any education at all; hence it is natural that they should be numerously attended; and although a very considerable proportion of the parents are actuated by secular and not religious motives, happily this does not prevent their children from receiving the benefits of the religious instructions there given. But in this province the ease with which secular instruction is obtained in our Common Schools does away with this motive for parents sending their children to Sunday-Schools; consequently, as most parents are not religious, (I suppose Dr. Ryerson will admit *this!*) and do not therefore care for their children being religiously taught, it is but a small proportion of those unhappy little ones who need such teaching most, that can reasonably be expected to attend them. I indignantly complain, therefore, of the disingenuousness which proposes to rely so much on Sunday religious teaching, when the very circumstances to which it mainly owes its success and usefulness at home do not exist here.

2—That by preventing the connection of ministers with Common Schools, the law takes out of their hands one very chief means of causing the children to attend their Sunday religious instruction. In the Canon which the Chief Superintendent so unfairly quotes, setting forth the duty of the Clergy to catechise, it is also declared to be the law that parents and masters and mistresses shall cause their children and servants

to attend. Upon this part of the law he carefully says nothing ; but in England, even since law has ceased to enforce these things, the relation of the Clergy to the parochial schools has been a great means of enabling them to secure attendance on their Sunday teaching. Now all such influence is, by our iniquitous school system, denied to the ministers of this Province. The Reverend Egerton Ryerson, D. D., will surely admit the truth of the scriptural declaration, that "men love darkness rather than light;" what then, when all the motives connected with secular instruction are withdrawn, is to induce irreligious parents to send their children to receive "the light?"

3—That the Clergy are so few, and so over worked, that—even if the attendance of the children could be secured—they have seldom the time or the strength, on a Sunday, to comply with the most desirable requirements of the Canon, at least in any satisfactory manner. The Reverend Superintendent himself belongs to a large and respectable body of Christians; I would respectfully ask him how many hours, in a week, month, or even year, the ministers of his own denomination devote to the exclusive religious teaching of the youths of their flock? If then, as I venture to believe, his own brethren find little or no time, and least of all on Sunday, for this duty, is it Christianly honest, does it manifest that godly jealousy for the glory of God and the salvation of his fellow men becoming a professed minister of Christ, to offer such Sunday teaching as a substitute for religious or denominational schools?

Equally hollow and hypocritical is the semi-infidel plea that Sunday-School tuition will meet the religious wants of our children. I say semi-infidel, because, if there were any force in the argument, it would go far to show that, with adults Sunday religion is sufficient to serve for the whole week! Nay, but, as regards our poor children, it is even more cruelly inapplicable than to adults; for, from their young minds, impressions, especially of a serious nature, are but too certain to pass away as the "morning cloud and early dew," unless

they are hourly renewed, and they themselves almost momentarily watched over, to guard them from the snares, and to snatch them from the power, of temptation. But the whole pretension is as false as it is foolish, since it must be known to those who make it that it is a mere fraction of the children of the Province who attend Sunday Schools at all.

Once more I must quote the Chief Superintendent, and then I have done trespassing on your patience for this week. He says, "the demand to make the teacher do the canonical work of the Clergyman is as impolitical as it is selfish." This is simply an unworthy slander; and such, I fear, Dr. Ryerson knew it to be when he penned it. In truth, the ministers of any denomination, in contending for distinctive schools, are thereby seeking to increase their own labours, since they will be greatly responsible for the conduct of both master and children; having the oversight of both the secular and religious training of the latter; attending certain days of the week to give special religious instruction, &c, besides the public catechising on Sundays, which there might then be some hopes of accomplishing with profit, both to the children and to the congregation.

LETTER V.

Despotism—Secular Governments no right themselves to educate the people but should aid with friends—Better done by private efforts—Folly of Canadian Government—Opinion and vote of Canadian Church—Non-religious because ir-religious education—Infidelizing effects of, in United States.

DEAR SIR,

In the fourth section of the appendix to the Chief Superintendent's Report for 1851, which I am thus hastily reviewing, he says—"But, it may be asked, ought not religious instruction to be given in the day schools, and ought not Government to require this in every school? I answer," he proceeds, "what may or ought to be done in regard to religious instruction, and what the Government ought to require, are two

different things." After declaiming upon the difference in the powers of despotic and free governments, in a manner the point of which, as respects the moral obligation to give religious instruction in day schools, I confess myself unable to discover, he concludes, "who then are to be judges of the nature and extent of the religious instruction to be given in schools ; their parents and pastors, or the Executive Government, &c., &c.?" Oh, Dr. Ryerson! Dr. Ryerson! when will you argue with Christian simplicity and manly openness? Right well do you know that it is this very privilege of parents and pastors to educate their children as they choose for which we who advocate Denominational Schools are contending: and, with equal clearness you ought to know that by denying us such schools you are, in the present divided state of the religious world, forbidding us to exercise the most common and yet dearest right of Christian freemen—the power of educating our own children in the way and manner that we ourselves, their parents and pastors, consider most conducive to their present and eternal well-being. O, most execrable oppression! Other despots may occasionally require an oppressive degree of state service from the sons of their subjects, but *your* despotism seeks to *compel us*, if possible, either to leave our sons and daughters uneducated, or to yield them to be taught under a system, which we believe most injurious to the noblest faculties of their souls in his life, and awfully perilous, if there be truth in nature's aphorism, that "as the twig is bent, the tree inclines,"—to our hopes of rejoicing over them in the "life to come" And this bitter religious tyranny is the boasted freedom of democratic Canada in the nineteenth century!

But I proceed to notice the mistake in principle, with respect to Government interference in education, into which the Chief Superintendent falls, in his remarks. Because the Executive, from its own non-religious character, and the multitudinous sectarian division so unscripturally existing amongst us, is unhappily prevented from adopting any uniform

system of Christian training in our common schools, he seems to regard it as a necessary consequence that therefore they can in no way be subjected to a distinctive religious teaching. The fallacy of this supposed consequence, I have however, I trust, successfully proved in my third letter, wherein I laid down a scheme of Denominational Schools, which, notwithstanding the sore evils above alluded to, while it aids the government in securing the best secular education of the people, secures at the same time distinctive Christian training.

1—But the Chief Superintendent's error lies deeper. He does not seem to know that the education of the human mind is in every department, and at each progressive step, a distinctively religious work; as is most clearly proved by the express teaching of Holy Scripture, and by all but common consent of mankind, whether Jewish, Christian, Mahomedan or Pagan, in every age of the world. And that such universal consent is in strict accordance with every reasonable and honest understanding of true Christian obligation I have previously shown in these letters. Consequently, *where a government ceases to be distinctively religious, it loses every right—save that of oppression—to interfere with the details of the people's education*; hence that must, in common consistency, be left to those to whom such government has abandoned the moral and religious care of the people. It follows then, that in such a case, and it is that of this Province, the only office of the rules in the matter of education, is to assist the various religious denominations from public funds in establishing schools, and to see that the aid so granted is honestly and efficiently used, so far as the secular instruction given in such schools is concerned. The only exception to this principle would be, where the Clergy and their people so neglected their duty as not to establish schools when they had the ability to do so, then perhaps it might be permissible for a government, through its own officials, to establish a mere secular school; if indeed, even then, such a non-religious school would not be more of a curse than a blessing; for

we repeat, that "knowledge is power," for evil as well as for good; and that naturally "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."

It may, however, be objected that if a government is not to direct the education of its youth, it ought not to be expected to assist such education from the public revenue. But this objection is based on an entire misconception. Our argument is not, that the education of the people can be a matter of indifference to any rational government, but that when a government is itself grounded on no positive distinct Christian principle, and presides over a religiously divided people, it is, both in its own nature, and circumstantially, unable to conduct such education; and it is so, from this fact, that vitally important as is a right religious and intellectual education of the people to the well being of a nation, yet, there are so *indissolubly* connected with it, interests of so infinitely more important and holier a nature, that mere secular politicians may not dare to guide it, nor may a spurious liberalism presume to drop various portions of revealed truth in order to vaunt a system of barely nominal Christian education, in the hope of securing the support of discordant sects. Still, though from these causes governments, such as that of this Province, are unable themselves to direct the education of the people, they must have their people educated, and *rightly* educated, or the nation is ruined; consequently, their only alternative, is to help the different religious bodies to educate their people, *since, by training them as Christians they are taking the surest method of making them good citizens!* Hence, the wisdom and political honesty, as well as the moral obligation, of even non-religious governments to assist Denominational Schools out of the public revenue.

2. Again: It is the grossest folly in any Government to *make public works of those matters which would be more efficiently accomplished, and at less eventual cost, by private energy and skill.* Now this is precisely what the government of the Province has done in regard to Common Schools.

It has sanctioned a very expensive central establishment, it pays Local School Superintendents all over the country ; it puts power to expend the public money into hands of illiterate men as school trustees. The consequence is, that school-houses are built in unsuitable situations and at unnecessary cost, and other useless expenses are incurred from want of due knowledge ; by the patronage also, which Government has given to Free-Schools, a premium is offered to the drunken and idle, at the expense of the hard-working man, especially of the farmer. No wonder therefore that the people are miserably dissatisfied ; and more especially as the *real* average attendance is after all, as I have shown, most unsatisfactory. All this extravagance is the result of having the schools in the hands of those who have no high principled interests in their welfare. Did the Government really understand the true educational interests of the country, and care to save the Provincial revenues rather than to increase its own patronage by the multiplication of unnecessary offices, a very large proportion of this official educational expenditure might be saved by having the Common Schools, as far as possible, in the hands of the different religious denominations ; at the same time, the interests of the schools would be a vast deal better attended to than at present. Thank God, with all our evils we are not yet a sceptical people ; whatever may be the amount of the genuine piety of the land, certain it is, that the religious feelings of our people are the strongest which they possess ; hence when our common Schools shall be connected with those feelings, or may we not say principles, they will take an incomparably deeper interest in them than at present. But especially, will the minister and official members of the different sects feel both their religious affections and personal honor concerned in the success of their various schools. Thus, by establishing denominational schools, instead of our present inefficient and most expensive system, the Government would secure a numerous body of the most respectable and earnest-minded men of the province

as the *unpaid* officials and guardians of the common schools, with the certainty of their expending upon them an amount of earnest zeal and personal care which no mere money could ensure. If, therefore, our Government longer refuse the demand for denominational schools, will they not prove themselves as selfishly reckless in their political economy, and as regardless of the real educational interests of the people, as they will be scornfully tyrannical in their religious oppression?

With two or three general remarks, I will close this letter.

3. The Chief Superintendent has publicly made this statement, "I do not believe that even a considerable *party* can be fomented in the Church of England itself, much less in the country at large, against our system of Public Schools."—This assertion very forcibly reminds me of the days when the same reverend gentleman used so recklessly to speak of the Church in this province as "a miserable faction, not a tithe of the people," &c. &c. He is still remarkable, I see, for the *cautious accuracy* of his assertions! Let us however look at the facts.

The Church of England is probably one-fourth of the population of Upper Canada, while the Romish Communion is upwards of one-sixth; these two denominations therefore, together, form considerably above *one-third* of the entire population, and they have already decidedly expressed their deep conviction that the care and oversight of the education and training, both for time and eternity, of our youth can only be safely or scripturally entrusted to their Pastors. The former, in the Diocese of Toronto, after having earnestly petitioned, without avail, to have distinct schools, did at her semi-Synodical meeting, composed of her Clergy and Laity, in May 1851, *unanimously* pass the following resolution, which was moved by the Rev. J. E. Boswell, Rector, Williamsburgh, and seconded by Lawrence Lawrason, Esq., of London.—"That this meeting desires to express its sense of the paramount duty of connecting religion with secular

education; and, in order to carry out this obligation, they deem it to be necessary to petition the Colonial Legislature to permit the establishment of separate Church Schools; and that the assessments ordinarily paid by Churchmen for the support of Common Schools to be applied to the maintenance of such as are in connection with the Church, where such appropriation is practicable and desired; and that the Committee aforesaid be empowered to draft the same." The Romish Communion in Canada West has recently advocated the same principle through its Bishop. But, Clergymen act as school superintendents, trustees, &c., Dr. R. will say. True, I have done so myself; but let not the Chief Superintendent suppose that we therefore approve of the system. Far, very far from it; but we sought to stem, as far as in us lay, the torrent of evil. I, for one, however, have long ceased to be connected with a system, that I have been compelled conscientiously to believe is hopelessly, irremediably, bad; nor did I ever meet with one Clergyman, or one earnest-minded Church layman, amongst the numbers I have known connected with the Common Schools, who, so far as my memory serves me, did not think the system radically defective. Thus in a letter which I have lately received from a Rector, who is at this moment, I believe, acting in his township as school superintendent, he says, speaking of our present common school law, "anything would be an improvement upon the *miserable* system we have at present." And this sentiment—Dr. Ryerson to the contrary notwithstanding,—is, I think, largely shared by the well-informed and earnest-minded men of other denominations; as indeed several of my former statements tend to show.

The fact is, that sincere and enlightened christians, in addition to their deep conviction of the necessity of positive distinctive Christian instruction in our common schools, are further satisfied that *non*-religious must, very soon, become *ir*-religious education; if indeed, the terms are not identical, as was taught by our blessed Lord himself, when he told his

disciples, "He that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad." Those, therefore, who, in the simplicity of their hearts, believe in the literal truth of their Divine Master's teaching, cannot choose but tremble as they contemplate our School system; since those teachers to whom we are required to commit our children's training for so long and important a portion of their lives are not even expected to aid in "gathering" them to Christ; consequently, if he who is "the Truth" is to be believed, such teaching *must* tend to "scatter" our little ones "abroad" from him! Yea, and already does our experience of the present School system most painfully teach the same melancholy truth. My decided impression is, *that only a small proportion of our teachers are regular attendants upon any place of worship, and that a mere fraction of them are accredited members of any religious body*; for the most part, they are young people, without any fixed religious principles, with whom the Sunday is a mere holiday; while not a few of the older ones are more or less given to intoxication. Consequently, the children under such teachers have the continual irreligious example of Sunday desecration, if not of other flagrant vices; while it is evident that the teaching must be most chillingly void of any thing approaching to Evangelical purity and truth. And the crowning evil is, that these teachers and schools being freed by law from all ministerial or other religious control, no correctives can be administered at the fountain from which the evil flows.

As irreligion, even in its mildest form, necessarily leads to contemptuous dislike of Christian truth, our painful conviction is, that, if persevered in, our present Common School system must eventually raise up a large body of ill-informed sceptics, puffed up with the miserable cant of a maudlin rationalism. *Such appears already to have been some of its effects in the neighboring States, where, it is stated, that there are already 7,000,000 who make no distinctive profession of Christian faith; and I fear it is beyond a doubt that*

the proportion which these semi-infidels bear to the entire population is rapidly increasing. In truth it is but too evident, as the wise and good in all ages have taught, that, if God is to be honored and man blessed, secular and religious instruction must go hand in hand. Never was there a more dangerous or a more foolish idea propounded, by men professing to believe Revelation, than that mere intellectual culture will make men morally better: man never did, and never will, “by wisdom find out God.” Nothing naturally increases the unholy pride of man’s heart like the consciousness of intellectual power. Hence, where this power is imparted, unaccompanied, and therefore unrestrained, by religious instruction, it is at once almost necessarily dedicated to the service of self and Satan. *Unsanctified intellect*, despoiled Heaven of one-third of its glorious hosts, desolated Paradise, and, it is awfully to be feared, has destroyed not a few of the mightiest minds among the sons of Adam. O ! Sir, shall we not put shoulder to shoulder in order to drive this subtlest scourge of Hell from the land, ere it prove our children’s ruin !

LETTER VI.

Effect of non-religious Schools in the United States.—Illiterate Managers, &c.—Answers to common fallacies and objections.—Vauzhall Factory Schools.

DEAR SIR,—Fearing to weary the patience of your readers, I last week omitted to notice one of Dr. Ryerson’s chief arguments in favor of his non-religious Common Schools, namely, their *supposed success in the United States*. This is indeed the common topic with all the advocates of our Provincial Common School law ; when every other argument fails, they triumphantly point us to the United States as affording the most satisfactory evidence of its excellence. To this test, then, I am perfectly willing to bring the controversy between merely secular and religio-secular education ;

and only regret that in doing so I shall be compelled to give so dark a picture of a nation whose Church I love, and so many of whose people I do very highly esteem. But the unpleasant task is forced upon me, by the incessant appeals which are made to the supposed excellent effects of non-religious education in the neighbouring Republic.

I admit, then, that in the United States, *mere intellectual instruction*, dissociated from all religious training, has accomplished, to an extraordinary degree, the object for which it was instituted ; and that the Americans are distinguished by a mental activity, alike remarkable for its acuteness and its general diffusion—a character not inaptly styled by themselves, *smartness*. But alas ! for the *contra*. How deplorably deteriorating to their high principle, and to the moral tone of their national character, has this miserably worldly training in their Common Schools proved. Thus—Is there any people of equal commercial wealth, in the trading honor of whose majority there is less confidence ? Is there any people amongst whom filial affection and reverence are so low ? Is there any amongst whom wealth is more generally the sole object of pursuit ? Is there any nation in which the Christian Ministry, amongst all denominations, has so little influence in guiding the people in their daily walk and conversation, or where they are, in general, *so miserably supported* ? Is there any portion of the Anglo-Saxon race, so large a proportion of whose males *are habitual neglectors of public worship* ? Is it not the fearful fact, as I stated last week, that the very profession of distinctive Christian Faith is numerically *decreasing* amongst you, as compared with the *increase* of population ? Is there any people amongst whom human life is so recklessly risked for the sake of commercial speculation ? Finally, is there any Protestant communion in which personal violence is so frequent amongst, what ought to be, the respectable classes ? Alas, then, for the effects of mere secular education upon the masses. Indeed Legislators seem to have forgotten that the immorality most destructive to a

people is not that which comes within reach of the criminal law. It is very possible, yea probable, that the general diffusion of even bare human wisdom may so increase the cunning of the wicked as to enable them to keep their necks out of the halter, without making them one whit better members of civil society ! From the following extract, however, which I lately cut from one of the United States *liberal* papers, it would appear that non-religious education, notwithstanding its intellectual excellence, is rather filling than emptying their prisons ;—" In one State Prison of our Union are twelve graduates of colleges—a greater portion to the whole number of convicts in the prison than the entire number of college graduates in our country to the whole American population. Everybody knows that the most depraved beings in our country are among those upon whom most is expended for their education ; also, that thieves, midnight assassins, and incendiaries, have come from our schools by hundreds and thousands."

In view of these astounding facts, all must agree that our schools are not so good as they ought to be—probably not so good as they may be. If so, the great question is, how they can be improved."

It becomes not creatures to guide their conduct, in matters of principle, by its apparent results for good or evil. We are under *the law of implicit obedience* to what God commands ; and he has commanded us to begin, continue, and end *all* our works in them, and especially in every possible way and under all imaginable variety of circumstances, invariably, and at *all times* to train our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." But yet, so far as it is lawful for us to judge by *results*, I mourn to think that the United States already afford a melancholy proof of the ruinous effects, moral and religious, of mere secular education ; and that they are apparently, if Providence does not graciously interfere, rapidly sinking into a condition that must for ever silence the advocates of non-religious State education. Indeed, America

affords powerful evidence of the striking correctness of the principle laid down by one of the ablest writers of the present day, when he says—"Education (non-religious) and civilization, generally diffused, have a powerful effect in softening the *savage* passions of the human breast; but they tend rather to *increase than diminish those of fraud and gain*, because they add strength to the desires, by multiplying the pleasures which can be attained only by the acquisition of property."

2. A minor, though still very serious objection to the present Common School laws of this province, is, that they almost necessarily throw the management of the Schools into the hands of illiterate people. They do this because not only the most uneducated, but also the idle and the dissolute, vote on all school matters, and hence, as like loves its like, they delight to exalt one another into office; or at least to appoint those who will do their bidding; thus, as is notorious, the more educated portions of our community are not generally connected with our Schools, and this evil is deeply felt amongst the better disposed, because, in small localities, many persons fit to fill school offices, are not to be found: were, on the contrary, the management in the ministers and official members of the nearest prevailing denominations, such ignorant, injurious management would be greatly avoided.

I beg further to observe, that the following are amongst the most common fallacies adduced by our opponents:

1. They lose sight of one of the chief ends of government, which is, to secure the contentment and happiness of the people, *by maintaining inviolate their personal and social rights*. Now they may cut a canal or lay down a railroad in opposition to my wishes, without interfering with either of these rights; but they cannot compel me to educate my child contrary to my own principles, or even tax me for this purpose so as to render me unable to educate him in any other way than that provided by them, without trampling under foot my dearest social rights.

2. They confound mere worldly preferences and the deep

religious principles of conscience. I may not approve the railroad which the Legislature projects, but that is no reason why I should be exempt from paying my share of its cost, because it can neither offend my conscience nor does it interfere with my personal or social privileges. But if the government compel me to support a Roman Catholic school, for the very purpose of educating my own and my Protestant neighbor's children at it, even though they think it—as a Roman Catholic Government certainly would, for the benefit of the country at large—would not our opponents consider this as oppression and religious tyranny of a very flagrant description?

3. They charge the advocates of religio-secular schools with resisting the right of Government to apply public money for the purpose of education. This is a strange mistake. What we complain of, is of ourselves being specially taxed for education, and then the taxes being applied to schools which we cannot use. The Churchman or Methodist is educationally taxed, *not* to accomplish some national object, such as a railroad or canal, which cannot be obtained without his bearing his share of the burden. On the contrary, the school-tax is distinctly designed to educate the children of those who pay it, for the poor are too few to affect the argument. To tax, therefore, four or five hundred thousand people for educational purposes which *they do not approve*, in order to please a like number, of opposite sentiments, who could accomplish for themselves the objects they wish, without the aid of the former, is, I repeat, sheer high-handed oppression; and this, I need not to say, is exactly the case with the common School Question; as those who wish to have mere secular, non-religious, Schools, could have them even though the religious portion of the community obtain the right they so indignantly claim of Separate Schools,—I speak, of course, of the general working, not of exceptional cases.

4. They assume the monstrous fallacy that, if the State

does not educate after its own fashion, the youth of a country, they will go uneducated. Why, I have already publicly stated, and do so again, on behalf of all the advocates of separate schools, that we, willingly, nay, desiringly concede to government the right to see that every fraction they give, or even sanction, for the support of sectarian schools, is properly and efficiently used.

5. They lay down a principle which they devoutly hope the Autocrat of all the Russias would blush to acknowledge. They say, "the duties of a government and a legislature are, in our opinion, to adopt such constitutional means as they shall deem most proper for securing the safety and happiness of the community they rule, and in their choice of means, *to be influenced by nothing, save their own judgment.*" Why, really, sir, I am almost out of breath at the sight of absolutism so fearful. What, are there no eternal laws of justice? no natural rights, superior to all legislation? Suppose a Lower Canadian Legislature, for instance, were constitutionally to confiscate all Protestant Lower Canadian property to the use of the Romish Church, because in their bigotted wisdom they thought it for the good of the whole Province. Would that be equity? And yet, sir, that would be law, and not much more flagrant robbery than that of our Common School Law, which forcibly takes my property, professedly to establish a school for my own children, although I am all the time protesting against it, as being contrary to my wishes and conscience to send my children to such a school as the Government is establishing, with *my* means and *those* of my neighbours who agree with me in sentiment.

Finally. One of the most popular objections against Denominational Schools is—that they will increase the bitterness of religious party strife. It appears to me that the objection is so groundless, that it must be made either in culpable thoughtlessness, or, hypocritically; especially as the parties making it are often those who most vehemently urge the influence of Sunday Schools as a substitute for

week-day religious instruction. But clearly, *if Denominational Schools on a week day will increase religious strife, they must do the same on a Sunday!* I repeat, then, the objection is little better than clear hypocrisy! But what is the design of religious instruction? Why, however seriously the different denominations may differ as to the means of accomplishing it, their aim is *one*; namely, to implant in the human bosom LOVE to GOD and man. Where sin yet lurks, earnestness, on any subject, will sometimes produce bitterness towards those who oppose it. But in order to remedy this evil, shall we train our children *in utter indifference*, not only to all distinctive religious truth, but to whatever else can excite any interest in either head or heart? And yet this indifference is the only method by which those who advocate secular, as opposed to religious training, can hope to lessen party strife. Verily, the cure is infinitely worse than the disease! Nay, rather, let the Christians, Pastors, Parents, and Members of the Province, insist upon religious and secular training being inseparably combined, as the only true method of uniting, in our youth, the meekness with the earnestness of CHRIST.

Allow me again to remark, that against the common objections, of increased expenditure, of the clashing of religious interests, of the minor denominations being neglected or oppressed, or of small and religiously divided places being left without schools, under the Denominational School system, against all these evils, I flatter myself, I have satisfactorily guarded in the scheme propounded in my third letter.

Permit me, in conclusion, to point your readers to a beautiful example of the happy effects of religio-secular teaching, and that under circumstances exceedingly adverse. I allude to the "Vauxhall Factory Schools," a sketch of which will be found in the London *Quarterly Review* for January last. Mr. JAMES WILSON, the managing director of PRICE'S Patent Candle Company, Belmont, Vauxhall, "thought it possible," says the reviewer, "without loss or hurt to the candles, to

humanize and christianize 'the hands' that made them ; and circumstances enabled him and a brother, his co-manager—both of them still young—to carry such views into practice, in a manner which deserves, we think, the attention of statesmen and churchmen, as well as of our merchants and manufacturers." Thus, under the encouragement and *personal supervision* of these most excellent brothers, the schools of this Candle Factory, which commenced in 1847, have progressed until in 1851-2 they were confidently expected to comprise 800 boys and girls ; and, with cricket-ground, chaplain, chapel and chapel services, at the personal cost to Mr. JAMES WILSON of £3,280 ! The admirable feature of all this is its manly religion. The boys work till about 6 p.m., but still the school in the evenings was closed with prayer, the New Testament of course being a text book ; nay, during the cholera, even the boys' games on the cricket-ground were closed by Mr. WILSON himself with a short prayer for the preservation of themselves and friends from that awful pestilence ! This noble manager also gave the boys frequent tea-meetings and annual excursions. Last year at the invitation of the Bishop of WINCHESTER, he and five hundred of 'his hands' visited the Bishop, for a day's holiday, at Farnham Castle, "the stately old palace and picturesque grounds" being thrown open to them ; in all these excursions, service in Church, about midday, seems to have formed not the least part of their enjoyment, the whole company chanting the Psalms. But I must forbear, earnestly recommending the whole account to all those who *really* love the poor ; content with the further statement that so thoroughly satisfied was the Board of Directors, of the excellent effects of the entire system, *even viewed in business light*, and so grateful were they to Mr. WILSON, that they earnestly wished to refund him his outlay (which he only accepted on condition that it should be expended in building a church for the use of the factory hands), and they adopted his whole scheme including a Chaplain for the factory, "at a cost of some £1,200 a-year !"

of which £900 appears to be for the schools. In proposing this grant, one of the principal Directors remarked, "The good effects of that (school) system promote and pervade the entire working of the factories. Not long since I took a friend, himself a manufacturer on the largest scale, over our factories. But I shall not soon forget his words and looks on entering our night-light factory, where the large proportion of our child-labor is employed: as he looked on the healthy and happy faces and clean and tidy dress of our girls, and watched their intelligent and smiling faces, as (evidently amused at our inspection of their work) they looked from the tasks which busied their rapidly glancing fingers, he exclaimed, 'I never even imagined that factory labor could present a scene so cheerful and so pleasing!'" So much for the blessed results of religious training as connected even with factory labor and *factory night-schools*.

I should very much like to see the entire article extensively copied into the papers. If an evil generation,—too proud to be taught, too ignorant to know,—will be jealous of the teachers whom God has sent them, perhaps they will listen to this *layman*; and those who fear the *cost* of religion may perhaps be captivated by the "*gain* of godliness," as evidenced in the case of the Vauxhall Factory Schools!

LETTER VII.

DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS DEMANDED BY POLITICAL CONSISTENCY AND DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS.

Democratic education in France—Man born to labor, hence nature of true education.—Democratic rights to Separate Schools—not interfere with others.

DEAR SIR:

In bringing before your readers the momentous subject of the Christian Education of the masses, and especially of the

youth of our Church as it is affected by our Common School law, I have hitherto argued the question on what are, perhaps, the only proper grounds—those of moral necessity and sound Christian principle. To-day, however, I propose to prove our right to separate schools on the score of political consistency and democratic rights—pleas which, I regret to think, may be more powerful with some of our rulers than those higher and holier principles which I have before adduced.

And first, as evidence of the *political and social* inexpediency of the ultra-democratic School system at present existing in Canada, and indeed on this continent generally, let me invite attention to the following very striking extract from the *liberal*, Free-Church *North British Review* for February last. It is taken from the article on “The Prospects of France and the dangers of England.”—“Those who have watched the interior workings of society in France, long and close at hand, are inclined to attribute much of *that uselessness and discontent which is one of its most striking features, and which is the despair both of the friends of order and the friends of freedom*, TO THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION! This is considered to embody two characteristic errors, both of which are dangerous and both of which operate in the same direction—it is too literary and too little industrial and utilitarian, and it is too uniform for all classes. The great proportion of those who attend it acquire, it is said, a smattering of literature, just sufficient to give them a distaste for the humble and useful occupations of their parents, a desire for intellectual excitement of a miscellaneous and often of a low description, and a conceit of their own fitness for careers and professions which demand a really liberal and comprehensive education. *Then members of various grades and classes in the social scale are instructed together*, in the same schools, in the same modes, and on the same subjects, to a degree of which we have no example here. If the peasant, the grocer, or the tailor can scrape together a little money, his son receives his training in the same seminary as the son of the proprietor whose land

he cultivates, whose sugar and coffee he supplies, and whose coat he makes. The boy who ought to be a labourer, or a petty tradesman, sits on the same bench and learns the same lesson as the boy who is destined for the bar, the tribune, or the civil service of the State. This system arises out of the passion for equality, and fosters it in turn! The result is, *that each one naturally learns to despise his own estimation, and to aspire to that of his more fortunate school-fellow!* The grocer's son cannot see why he should not become an advocate, a journalist, or a statesman, as well as the wealthier and noble-born lad who was often below him in the class, whom he occasionally thrashed and often helped over the thorny places of his daily task. Hence numbers who might have remained useful, respectable, and contented citizens in their own humble line, are tempted to 'rush out of their sphere,' and emulate those whose wealth and social position give them most advantages in the race. Defeated competition with those of higher rank becomes in their ill-regulated minds conspiracy against the rank itself, and the state of society to which they attribute their defeat. Instead of following their parents' career, they aspire to that of their companions, and their parents' ambition often stimulates them to the unequal strife. They go to Paris or some large provincial town, become students of medicine, or of law, or, if still more ambitious, and gifted with any superficial cleverness, attempt the ruinous and disappointing channel of the press. They fail from incapacity, indolence, imperfect education, dissipated habits, or want of means to continue the struggle; they become *hommes manques*, and degenerate into *emeutiers*, *chevaliers de' industrie* (Anglicé sharpness), or malignant penny-aliners!"

Such then is the effect of ultra-democratic, mere "superficial" secular education in France! And do we not already see abundant evidence that such also *must* be its results on this Continent; our ample territory being all that has saved us from its ruinous effects hitherto? It must be so; even a

merely *rational* philosophy teaches us that it must be so. Man, as the rule, is born to labor,—to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow,—the *merciful-judgment* has gone forth, nor can all the proud efforts of unhallowed intellect turn aside its fulfilment;—the masses *never can* be learned! Hence that education which indeed can alone make even princes *blessed*,—the prime element of which is the “fear of the LORD,” “to do our duty *in that state of life* to which it has pleased God to call us,” *this* education is essential for the multitude, as the alone basis of public security. Such education is only to be certainly obtained by Denominational Schools,—we therefore demand such schools *on the ground of political expediency*.

Again, we further claim separate schools for all those denominations that desire them, on the ground of *Democratic Right*. Self-government is the acknowledged idol of the self-styled “liberal,” or more properly, the “democratic,” party, at present governing this Continent. This self-government implies, we suppose, that there will be as little interference as possible with individual feelings or wishes, and that the rights of one class of the community shall, in no case, be sacrificed to the wishes, or for the advantage, real or supposed, of any other class or section of the commonwealth. Thus, should the Lower Canadians, for instance, being the large majority, desire to force *all* the inhabitants of that Province to attend *Mass*, under the impression that it would tend to the well-being and cordial peace of the entire community to compel them to worship the one way—the theory of democracy, not now to speak of higher principles, would at once denounce any such attempt as being a most unwarrantable interference with that liberty of conscience which is the undoubted right of the minority equally with the majority. Or, should they attempt to pass a law compelling all Lower Canadian children, British and Protestant as well as French, to attend schools superintended by the Romish Priesthood, on the same ground, that the harmony of the whole popula-

tion would be thereby increased, how indignant would be the opposition of all the sincere democrats in the House ! In fact, if democracy be not altogether a *lie*!—if the boasted liberalism of our present Canadian Government be not altogether a *selfish, hypocritical sham*! its principle is that it abhors *class legislation*, or the oppression, either in their conscience or their estate, of any portion of the citizens, at the pleasure, or for the benefit of their oppressors.

Upon the principles of democracy, then, I take my stand, and demand SEPARATE SCHOOLS for the members of the Church of England. The ultra-democrats and infidels have demanded schools, *from the routine instruction of which religion shall be excluded*. With *this* demand the government has *cheerfully complied*. And, considering them as democrats, who govern, *not* as the servants of the only wise God for His people's good—but as the slaves of the people, receiving their thousands simply to carry out the people's will—we say, considered as democratic rulers, we blame them not—they could do no other. Their only law is and must be the *will of the people*. But then, let their obedience be even-handed. We, the Church of England, as a portion of the people, and neither a small nor an uninfluential portion, also demand our separate schools. No matter whether our request be wise or unwise—whether the education we wish to give be the most degrading superstition or the purest wisdom. With this we contend, that on their own principles, our rulers have nothing to do. Democracy asks not, what is wise—but what is the will of the people ?

We do earnestly contend that all that American or Canadian governments, as at present constituted, have a right to ask, if they have any political consistency whatever, in matters which concern the consciences of the people is, “do they in their requests seek to interfere with the rights or privileges of any other portion of the community ?”

To this, as Churchmen, we fearlessly answer—No! and challenge successful contradiction. We leave to the infidel

his godless school—we say, give the Romanist, the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Baptist, &c.—give all who desire it, and can raise the requisite number of children—separate schools; only do not, with a tyranny worse than that of the Sultan, compel us to support, and, therefore, if poor, to send our children to schools that, in our deepest souls, as men answerable to a holy God, we thoroughly condemn, and at the thoughts of the effects of which, upon the present and eternal interests of our children, we sincerely tremble. We repeat, you may esteem us weak and foolish, but we call upon you—the Ministry of this Province—since we may evoke no holier motive, by the sincerity of your principles, as a Liberal or Democratic Government, to give us these SEPARATE SCHOOLS to which, as a portion of the Canadian community, we have an undoubted right, and which, upon our honor, as gentlemen, and our faith, as Christians, we positively declare our consciences require.

And now, dear Sir, in drawing these letters to a final close, I beg to thank you for permitting me thus to bring this most important subject, at such length, before your readers. I do indeed most earnestly wish, according to my poor ability, to aid “in stirring up the pure minds” of all sincere Christians upon this question of the *combined* religious and secular instruction of your youth. In it, I must believe, is involved the destinies, “for weal or woe,” of this entire Continent! Where the glory of God is concerned, *there* the purity of His Church and the welfare of the nations must be deeply, awfully concerned. Much do I rejoice to see the movement already taking place both in the United States and in this Province, on this question; may it be speedily brought by the blessing of Almighty God, to a speedy and successful issue.

Yours, as ever,

Diocese of Toronto, July, 1853

A. T.

P O S T S C R I P T.

The Law concerning Separate Schools.

There seems to be an idea abroad that the supplementary School Act of 1853 has made the establishment of separate religious schools easier than heretofore. *The opposite is the fact*; and in this the Reverend Superintendent apparently exults in his "Journal of Education" for June last.

It is true that where a Romish teacher is employed, Protestants *en masse* may establish a separate school; but no distinct denomination, excepting Romanists, can do so! In truth, the whole thing, as regards the Church of England, is not only gross oppression, but a *decisive insult*.

1st. We protest against being classed, in the matter of our schools, under the general term "Protestant," with every sect who, in common with ourselves, acknowledge that negative appellation. We can assure the Reverend concocter of our most insidiously irreligious Common School Acts, that Churchmen have consciences *almost* as tender concerning distinctive religious truth, as those of the followers of the Papacy; and that, consequently, we would sooner entrust our children to the care of even the idolatrous worshipper of the blessed Virgin than to the cold neglect of a Protestant sectary who would keep them from the arms of their Saviour, by denying them the blessed Sacrament of baptism. Or, that we would immeasurably prefer their being educated by a believer in the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, than by a member of a Protestant community which denies the divinity of the Lord that bought them! we protest against,

2ndly. The supporters of separate schools being placed, as it were, under the ban of the law, by refusing to let their school rates be collected by the proper municipal officer. Do they not pay their share of that officer's salary, even as others?

3rdly. The uncertainty attending the continuance of aggregate Protestant schools, makes even them a mockery, inasmuch as the moment the Romish teacher is withdrawn, it appears that the right to separate Protestant schools ceases. In fact, had the object of the Reverend Dr. Ryerson and his coadjutors, our Sabbath desecrating Provincial Ministry, been to devise the bitterest insult which they could offer to the religious earnestness of the Province, they could scarcely have

been more successful than in their laws respecting separate schools. Truly, I am very much of the opinion of a Free-Church Presbyterian friend, who remarked to me that he would rather see the establishment of openly infidel schools than the present system, which will admit of socialism or any other abomination being inculcated, and that under the hypocritical pretence of a religious sanction.

We repeat, then, our demand as loyal British subjects and conscientious Christians, for Protestant DENOMINATIONAL Schools—schools which shall not only be sneeringly *permitted* by law, but which shall receive *every aid and support therefrom*; that it gives to those secular schools that are uncorrupted by the least taint of positive religious influence; especially seeing that the advocates of distinctive religious schools are, at least, as loyal, peaceable, well-informed, and conscientious as their opponents.

Since the foregoing letters were written, the evidences increase upon me of the almost despairing feeling of many of our neighbours in the United States, as to the ultimate effects of their own irreligious Common School System. I much regret that want of space prevents my adducing any of them here. I cannot therefore better conclude, than by the following extract of a note I lately received from a high dignitary of the Anglican Church, who has personally witnessed the system he so severely condemns, and whose name, were I in circumstances to obtain his leave to use it, would add no small weight to his opinions. The italics are his own:—

“To educate immortal spirits on exclusively wordly principles, or what is speciously called *morality not absolutely nor exclusively built upon the Gospel*, is, in my opinion, to train him up, not for God or Heaven, but for the world, the flesh, and the devil.”

October, 1853