

*The Irish Education Question.*

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A VINDICATION  
OF THE PAST COURSE AND PRESENT POSITION  
OF  
THE IRISH CLERGY  
IN REFERENCE TO  
THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION FOR IRELAND,  
IN  
A SPEECH  
DELIVERED  
AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CHURCH EDUCATION SOCIETY,  
HELD IN DUBLIN, APRIL 11, 1866.  
BY JAMES THOMAS O'BRIEN, D.D.,  
BISHOP OF OSSORY, FERNS, AND LEIGHLIN.

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## P R E F A C E.

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IF I had been able to deliver the whole of the following Speech, I should probably have been contented with the circulation which it would have had through the Dublin papers. But when I had spoken for above an hour—being then so much fatigued myself as to be quite capable of understanding that my hearers might feel very weary too, though they were kind enough not to give any indications of it—I resolved to bring what I had to say to a close, at the first convenient stopping point. Such a point seemed to be reached at p. 53, where the direct argument in defence of the views of duty on which the Clergy acted ends. I therefore brought the Speech to a conclusion there, passing at once to the special address to the younger Clergy present, which commences at p. 73, and goes on to the end.

I was aware—and I said so—that the object of the Speech suffered materially by this abridgment of it; for that even if the defence of the Clergy which I had undertaken did not require any substantive addition, it stood at a great disadvantage in being left without the confirmations, especially in the way of answers to objections, which I had intended to subjoin. And as I was anxious that all who took sufficient interest in the question to consider the argument should have it within reach, complete and with the needful safeguards, I resolved to publish the Speech *in extenso* as I had intended to deliver it.

I found it necessary, for various reasons, to add some Notes at the end. I think it likely that both the Speech and this Appendix might be safely left to explain themselves; but

still I hope that I shall be doing something to render it easier to my readers at least to enter into their connexion by adding here a few words with reference to a very important crisis in the history of the Society.

In the year 1860 the friends of the Society were startled and pained by the publication of a Letter from the late Primate, in which he recommended those of his Clergy *who had not themselves and who could not by any exertion procure the funds which would be necessary to render their schools really efficient*, to seek for aid from the Commissioners of National Education.

The Letter was addressed generally to all of his Clergy who had schools connected with the Armagh Church Education Society, and through them to the lay patrons of Church Education Schools in the diocese; but the recommendation to which I have referred was strictly limited to those who were actually in the circumstances described—those whose schools were in a languid and depressed state from want of funds to carry them on efficiently. Indeed, as regarded the schools to which this description did not apply, his Grace was express in advising that they should be kept up and carried on in conformity with the principles on which they were founded, and that they should be further improved for the advantage of the poor: and to aid and improve such schools he would have the Church Education Society maintained without any change in its fundamental rules.

There could be no doubt that, guarded as it was, the recommendation was in effect a surrender of the principle on which the founders and supporters of the Society had from the first rested for the justification of their rejection of the National System, and the establishment and maintenance of an antagonistic system. They justified their rejection of the System established by the State upon no lower ground than their conscientious conviction that its fundamental Rule concerning religious education was one to which they could not lawfully submit. And they did not establish schools upon a different

system, and establish a Society to render these schools efficient, merely because they regarded such schools as preferable to schools conducted upon the principle of the National Board, but because they felt it to be their duty—their duty to God and to the children whom He had committed to their care—to conduct their schools upon the former principle, and not upon the latter. It was plain, indeed, that the advice to which I have referred was, however unconsciously on the part of him who gave it, an abandonment of the principle on which the Society was founded, and on which up to that time it had been maintained. And then as to its practical effects, the most immediate and obvious ones were quite serious enough to raise painful apprehensions in the friends of the Society; but it required but little consideration to see how very much farther such results were likely to reach than his Grace intended or anticipated. I do not mean merely that his advice would be acted upon by Clergymen beyond the limits of his own dioceses—for though it may well be that that effect was not designed, it was so obvious and natural a consequence of the publication of his Letter that it could hardly be that it was not anticipated—but that both within and beyond these limits it would be acted upon by Clergymen of a very different class from that to which it was expressly confined by his Grace. When once it was settled that principle ought to give way to considerations of expediency in one case, it would very soon be discovered that there were other cases in which the claims of expediency were just as urgent. If it were right for a man to do that which he held to be *a total violation of a conscientious duty*, in order to enable himself to give a better education to the children of his poorer parishioners, it would be hard to persuade others that it would be wrong to do the same to enable themselves to give a better education to their own children: and this further step once allowed as legitimate, it would not be easy to say where this downward course was to stop; but it would seem certain that it could not end

until it had done a great deal to corrupt and degrade the Church.\*

I did all that I could to prevent the publication of the Letter. The Primate, with the kindness which I always largely experienced from him, informed me of the course which he was meditating, more than a month before he actually decided upon it. And the opportunity which this communication afforded of dissuading him from this proceeding, I used to the utmost of my power; fully setting before him, and earnestly pressing upon him all the objections which occurred to me against the proposed recommendations, both on the ground of principle, and of its results to the Society and the Church. I am quite sure that these considerations might have been presented much more forcibly. But however much I must regret that the cause which I pleaded had not an abler advocate, I have nothing of which to accuse myself for its ill-success, for I pleaded it as strongly as I could. But all my dissuasions were vain. The Letter was published in spite of them. And when the blow was actually struck, I could not doubt what it was my duty to do. Scarcely anything could have been more painful to me than coming forward in public opposition to the late Primate. But I felt that I had

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\* By God's goodness to the Society and the Church, the evil effects were much lighter than there seemed to be good reason to apprehend. The events of the early part of the year, indeed, were found at its close to have done very little to alter the numbers of the two unequal sections into which the question had previously divided the Church. It is stated in the Report of the National Board for the year 1860, that 230 schools, under the management of 186 individuals, were added to its lists during the year; and that of these patrons 30 were clergymen of the United Church. How many of these clerical patrons had had their schools previously in connexion with the Church Education Society the Report did not state, and from the different ways in which the returns of the Board and of the Society are kept, it is by no means easy to compare them satisfactorily. But even if we were to suppose that the whole of the thirty clergymen had had their schools under the Society, the number could not but appear very small, at least to those who knew all the forces which were in action to shake the steadfastness of the supporters, and most especially the clerical supporters, of the Society.

no choice. I felt that,—in justice to the principles of the Society,—which were my own principles; and to protect, first my own Clergy, and then the Clergy of the country generally from being led into an abandonment of those principles, to which they were so deeply pledged, and which they could not abandon, as I believed, without incurring great guilt for themselves, and bringing down great injury and disgrace upon the Society and to the Church,—I was bound to declare publicly my dissent from the recommendation offered by his Grace, and of course to state distinctly the reasons upon which my dissent was grounded.

This was done in a letter to my Clergy, that is, to all of them whose schools were in connexion with the Diocesan Church Education Society—comprehending almost all the Clergy of my united dioceses—in which I stated distinctly my own steadfast adherence to the views of the question, and of the duties of the Clergy in reference to it, upon which we had so long acted together; and endeavoured to show the insufficiency of the reasons which were alleged in vindication of the change recommended by the Primate, and already adopted and warmly advocated by some, both of the Clergy and laity, in private, and in the public prints.\* And to this Letter I had the great happiness of receiving a prompt reply, signed by all to whom it was addressed, with but two or three exceptions, in which they gave me a clear and decided assurance of their cordial agreement in the principles laid down therein, and of their firm determination to abide by them.

To all who felt as strongly as I did, how deeply the best interests of the rising generation, and the efficiency of the Church, and its reputation among men, and its favour with

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\* 'A Letter to the Clergy whose Schools are connected with the Diocesan Church Education Societies in the United Dioceses of Ossory, Ferns, and Leighlin. By James Thomas O'Brien, D.D., Bishop of Ossory, Ferns, and Leighlin.' 1860.

God, were involved in the fidelity of the great body of the Clergy to the principles which they had so long and so earnestly professed, the steadfastness with which they generally adhered to those principles at that time ought to have been, and I trust that it was, matter of great thankfulness. And I hope that I felt, as I certainly ought, the special cause of thankfulness which I myself had in the fact, that nowhere was this steadfastness more strikingly manifested than in my own dioceses.

After my Letter was published, and if not expressly in answer to it, at least with direct reference to it, several pamphlets appeared in defence of the change of views which I so earnestly deprecated. I do not mean to speak disparagingly of these publications; but I must say that they did add not much to the stock of arguments already existing on the side of the question on which they were written. For the most part, the arguments which were put forward in them were just as well grounded in themselves, and would have been just as good for the course which the writers recommended, at any time for twenty years before, as they were at the date at which they came out. And, accordingly, most of these arguments were to be found in the many publications which had appeared during that period in support of the National System,—some in one of these publications, some in another. That they appeared to the writers who reproduced them to have a force then they could not discover in them in former times, could only be due to the altered state of their own feelings. And I thought that there was no great reason to fear that these old arguments would produce much effect, unless where a similar predisposition to receive them favourably existed: while, wherever it did exist, there seemed to be but little use in reasoning against it, as the weakest arguments which fell in with it would be sure to prevail against the strongest that ran counter to it.

But, indeed, it did not need this special reason to show the

fruitlessness of re-arguing points which had furnished the matter for argument for so many years. New arguments could hardly be brought forward at so advanced a stage of the controversy. And as to the old ones, most persons had either been convinced by them, or had become too weary and impatient of them to attend to them. If I had had much more time, therefore, than I had for such work, I should have thought that it would be ill-spent in reviewing these publications in detail. And though I was led, notwithstanding, to notice one of them publicly,\* it was only because, from some adventitious circumstances connected with it, it seemed likely to do more mischief than the others, whose effects depended more upon their intrinsic merits, which did not seem to give much reason to apprehend any very serious results from them.

I was very glad to be able to come to the conclusion that there was no such reason to apprehend any serious danger from them as would justify me in entering into a detailed review of them. It would be a tedious and irksome occupation, leading through the whole controversy in the most desultory and unsatisfactory way. If this *labor improbus* appeared to be necessary for the vindication of the Society's principles, or the protection of its supporters, though I cannot say that I should have undertaken the task willingly, I do not think that I should have declined it. But I was quite sure that enough had been said and written upon the question by myself and others to protect any reader, who chose to avail himself of it, from being misled by any of these publications. And having already had a great deal more than enough of the controversy, I willingly excused myself from keeping it up at the time.

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\* 'The Education Question. Thoughts on the Present Crisis.' Dublin, 1860. It appeared first anonymously, but was reprinted with the name of the author, Right Hon. Joseph Napier. My review of it was published under the title, 'Some Remarks on a Pamphlet entitled, "The Education Question: Thoughts on the Present Crisis."' By James Thomas O'Brien, D.D., Bishop of Ossory, Ferns, and Leighlin.' 1860.

But the way in which I was led upon the late occasion to speak of the leading points in the controversy, seemed to make it advisable to take the opportunity of looking back upon those publications in which the same points are discussed. And, accordingly, my readers will find in the Appendix (Note A) some notice of some of the pamphlets referred to.

Meanwhile, however, there is a point put forward in them upon which it may be convenient to say a few words here, even though I should be obliged to return to it in the Appendix.

In every one of the pamphlets referred to, some portion, larger or smaller, was directed expressly against my Letter, which was charged with faults of various kinds,—errors,—defects,—fallacies,—and misrepresentations. But having a comfortable persuasion that I was as little likely to suffer from the part of these publications which was especially dedicated to me, as the cause of the Church Education Society, from the part in which it was directly concerned; and having felt that the latter might be safely passed over, I was at least as little disposed to take any public notice of the former.

In all of them, it was made a ground of complaint that the Letter contained no proof of the unlawfulness of submitting to the Rule of the National System for the regulation of religious education. The omission was commented upon in different ways, according to the temperament and habits of the different writers, but by all or almost all of them it was noticed as a grave defect. I did not think, nor do I now, that this was a reasonable complaint: indeed, I think it could hardly have been made, if the object of the Letter, and the persons to whom it was addressed, had not been entirely lost sight of.\*

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\* It may seem that, at such an interval from the publication of the Letter the question whether this complaint against it was well or ill founded, can

The National System of Education was from the first rejected by much the greater part of the Irish Clergy, but never by the entire. There were, from the first, some who differed from the great majority of their brethren in the view which they took of the System and in the course which they pursued with reference to it. Of this minority, there were some who seemed to think the System entirely unobjectionable, and who therefore adopted it without any scruple or compunction. Others acknowledged that it was open to serious objections; but they thought that these were not such as ought to prevent the Clergy from availing themselves of the great advantages which the adoption of it procured for their schools. It was not all that they could have desired; but it was as good, they thought, as, under all the circumstances of the case, they could reasonably expect: and they, too, adopted it accordingly. Thus the Clergy were from the first divided upon the question. The division was, as I have said, a very unequal one—the greater being something between two and three times more numerous than the smaller—and though, as years went on, some of the larger division from time to time saw reason to join the ranks of the smaller, they were upon the whole few, and did little to alter the proportion of the two sections.

Now, my Letter was not merely not addressed to this smaller section of our body, but it was plainly not intended for it. It was, as I have said, expressly addressed to the Clergy in my own dioceses whose schools were connected with the Church Education Society. It will be said indeed that, though addressed expressly to them, it was plain that it was to be regarded, at least when it was published as a pamphlet,

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not be of much interest. And such, no doubt, is the case so far as the question itself only is concerned. But it is connected with matter of so much importance as to warrant me, I think, in expending upon it the few moments' consideration which I give it.

as intended for others also. This is, no doubt, true. But it was made equally plain that the others for whom it was intended were persons who had taken the same view of the National System as those to whom it was directly addressed, and who stood in the same relation both to the National Board and to the Church Education Society.

And this, I think, must have been forgotten when it was made a ground of objection against my Letter that it contained no proof of the unlawfulness of adopting the distinctive Rule of the National System. Such an objection could hardly have been put forward if it had been remembered to whom the Letter was addressed and for whom it was intended. They were—and it was made clear that they were—men who had declared for themselves that this very Rule was *so fundamentally objectionable, that while it should continue to be the principle of the system, they could not conscientiously connect themselves with it, though all other ground of opposition to it were taken away.*\* They were men on whose behalf it had been

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\* PRELATES' ADDRESS, 1845.—I have often quoted the passage which is given above, as evidence of the principles on which the Clergy professed to act, in rejecting the National System of Education. Nor have I on such occasions felt it to be necessary to state the grounds on which I regarded myself as warranted in making such a use of the Address, because I thought that they were universally known, and that wherever they were known they must be admitted as abundantly sufficient. I was mistaken, however, at least as regards this last point. It has been said, "The Bishop of Ossory assumed that all the members of the Church Education Society were bound by the Prelates' Address as conclusively as if it had been the Charter of the Society and his exposition of it were final." ('The Education Question: Thoughts on the present Crisis.' 2nd Edit., p. 13.)

Now, any one who read this passage without any previous acquaintance with the case and with the writer, would not unnaturally say: 'Well, that certainly seems unfair; indeed, doubly unfair. What right has any one to regard the Clergy as bound by any statement of their principles that the Bishops may have made on their behalf? And what right has the Bishop of Ossory to insist upon his own interpretation of the statement, as if it were to be preferred to that of any of his brother Prelates who signed the Address, or indeed of any one capable of reading it intelligently?'

These are very natural questions, but I do not think they are very difficult

declared, on what appeared to be unquestionable authority, that they held *that the restriction upon the use of the Bible in education, which this rule imposes, would be a grievance to their consciences—a grievance as real, though not as great, as if it were imposed upon them to teach error; that they felt that there was an obligation upon them, first as Christians, and then as Protestants, and then as Churchmen, and then, still more, as Ministers, to hold forth the Word of Life, without any restriction, That they might use discretion in particular cases as to holding it forth, but that to give a pledge to abstain from holding it forth at certain times and from certain persons altogether, would be a total violation of a conscientious duty.\**

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to answer. And, to begin with the last, I may truly say that I was entirely unconscious that I was guilty of any such assumption as I am charged with, for I never heard of a second interpretation of the statement referred to, nor ever suspected that there was one; and moreover, that, looking at the passage now, I am unable to understand what room it offers for two interpretations.

As to the other point, which is more important, I have to say that I have never quoted the Prelates' Address, as evidence of the principles of the Clergy in any other way, or to any greater extent, than as it was acknowledged by the Clergy themselves as expressing their principles. As soon as the Address was published, a very large majority of the Clergy met in almost every diocese to consider it; and their adoption of it, as expressing the principles on which they had acted, and by which they were determined to abide, was prompt and cordial; and resolutions and declarations of their entire concurrence in the views and principles put forward by the Prelates on behalf of the Church were everywhere voted unanimously.

The number of Clergy who signed such documents was 1661; and as the circumstances of some few dioceses were, at first, thought to throw some difficulty in the way of such meetings, a general declaration to the same purport as that of the separate declarations above referred to was drawn up, and being left for signature at a time when there was a large number of the Clergy in Dublin, about 1500 names were attached to it in a very short time. I cannot but hope that this will be received as a justification of the use which I have made of this important document.

\* This is taken from the evidence given before the Lords' Education Committee in 1854 by the Rev. Hamilton Verschoyle, then one of the Honorary Secretaries of the Church Education Society, now Bishop of Kilmore. ('Evidence,' 6766, 6767.) The witness had, from his official position and in other ways, as good means of knowing the views and principles of the Clergy in

Such were the views of the nature of this Rule, and of their own duty with reference to it, which were held by those to whom my Letter was addressed. And could I have supposed that it was necessary to supply *them* with a proof that to adopt and carry out this Rule in their schools was unlawful?—that is, that it was necessary to supply them with a proof that it was unlawful to do that which they had declared *they could not conscientiously do*; to do that which they held to be a *total violation of a conscientious duty—of their duty as Christians, as Protestants, as Churchmen, and as Ministers!* I cannot think that in omitting to supply such a proof, under the circumstances, I am fairly chargeable with having left my Letter wanting in anything which it ought to have contained, or which any one could have reasonably expected to find in it.

Being fully satisfied in this way of the utter unreasonableness of this complaint, I settled, almost as a matter of course, that nothing ought to be done in consequence of it. But I am now disposed to think that in this I was mistaken. For the complaint came from men who had themselves made the professions to which I have referred—some of them as strongly and as repeatedly as any of those for whom my Letter was intended—but who, having recently discovered that, under existing circumstances, it was lawful and right to adopt the

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reference to this question as almost any Clergyman of his time. And looking back upon his testimony six years after, he thus deliberately confirms it:—“This was the statement which I then made of the chief objection which was entertained to the National System. I believe it was a correct one, as applied to the great body of the supporters of the Church Education Society, with comparatively few exceptions. It did not, of course, apply to two who were then, or had been, Presidents—the late Bishops of Derry (Ponsonby) and Meath (Stopford)—who also supported the National System, nor to some lay and clerical members who were like-minded with these Bishops, but it did apply to the great majority, including myself. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that it is as applicable to myself to-day as it was on the day that I made it.”—*A Statement of his Case, 1860.*

Rule which they had inveighed against so loudly and so long, were labouring, with the proverbial ardour of young converts, to make proselytes to their new faith; and who, moreover, were doing this under the profession of unabated zeal in the cause of Scriptural Education, and unabated attachment to the Church Education Society! [Appendix Note B.]

This was a very new state of things; and it must be felt that it brought new and great danger to the steadfastness of some of those for whom my Letter was intended. That under such temptations so few fell away, was a happy proof of the sincerity and the strength of the principles upon which the great body of the supporters had been acting; but it ought to have been remembered that their trial was not at an end. The pressure from the struggle to maintain their schools still continued to make itself sensibly felt; the mode of relieving themselves from it still lay open; the specious sophistry which can make the worse appear the better reason was always at work; while the *res angusta domi* never ceased importunately to second its pleadings. I was well aware that not a few of my reverend brethren were subject to this hard trial; and I hope that I felt in some measure, as I ought, that all who were so tried had a strong claim, not only upon my anxious sympathy and my earnest prayers, but upon all the assistance that I could give, to enable them to resist the very strong temptations by which they were assailed.

But it did not occur to me, in time, that one of the ways in which this assistance might be rendered was by acting upon this demand as if it had been a reasonable one, and supplying the proof called for, however little those who raised the cry were entitled to call for it either for themselves or for others. I have often, however, thought since that it would have been better if the call had been answered, not for the sake of those who made it, but of some who felt no want of such a proof, but who yet were liable to misinterpret the reasons

for withholding it, and so to be perplexed and shaken when they saw that the loud demand which was made for it was not answered.

And besides these, there were some who in ordinary times would never have stood in need of such help, but to whom it might not have been entirely superfluous, under the very peculiar temptations which some of the changes at the time brought with them. And this is not entirely a story of the past. If it were, there would be nothing to be done, as regards the proof called for, except to regret that it had not been given in time. But the temptations continue, with scarcely if at all abated force, and the class most likely to be affected by them may still be found among the sincere supporters of the Society; and this being the case, I was glad when the subject which I had been led to choose on other grounds, naturally led me to engage in such a review of the past as contained a proof of the unlawfulness of submitting to the distinctive Rule of the National System,—a proof which, if it be not such a one as will satisfy those who make the demand (as no doubt it will not), will, I hope, notwithstanding, commend itself to the minds of those whom I feel to be much more legitimate objects of concern.

There are many now, as there always have been, who require no such proof, but who are themselves well able to defend the principles on which they have been acting, against all assailants. But there are also, as there always have been, others who have acted upon the same principles with the same sincere convictions of their soundness and their importance who are little able to defend them argumentatively from subtle objections, or even so to state them as not to give needless occasion to such objections.

But such minds, nevertheless, are often capable of taking so firm a grasp of plain reasons in support of a right view of a question of duty, that no amount of sophistry, however little

they may be able to answer it, will shake their convictions or make them in any way uneasy in acting upon them. Such plain reasons in support of the view of their duty upon which the supporters of the Church Education Society have been acting, I hope that what is said in the following Speech will supply; and I trust that the Appendix will provide all the confirmations and illustrations of which the proof given in the Speech may be felt to stand in need.



## A SPEECH, &c.

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MY LORD, LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN,—

The common saying, *Union is strength*, is as true, and, in its own sphere, I believe, as important, as the more celebrated aphorism, *Knowledge is power*, is, in the higher sphere to which it belongs. The principle is well understood at the present day, and extensively acted upon, both for good and for evil. I shall not say anything of its use for evil. But the various religious and benevolent Societies which exist in such numbers among us, and which are specially brought before us at the present season, are happy and striking examples of the application of it for good. Such associations keep zeal alive, when without them it would soon die out in the breasts of unconnected individuals. They systematize and concentrate exertion so as to make it far more effective than the uncombined efforts of the same number of individuals could possibly be. And the smallest contributions,—which separately could do little to relieve distress, and nothing at all to advance religion,—they make available to promote the greatest works which are carried on in the world for the temporal and eternal interests of man, and thus connect with these works the very humblest and poorest members of society: so that, looking at all that is being done for the good of mankind in time and in eternity, it would be very hard to overrate the amount of its success that is due to the strength which union gives.

And I suppose it is hardly more certain that Societies are

effective instruments in promoting the interests of humanity and religion, than it is that meetings like the present are highly useful, if not absolutely essential, means for maintaining their efficiency. Insomuch that I believe even the longest established and the best supported of them would decline in prosperity, and lose its hold over the great mass of its supporters, if its managing Committee gave up assembling them at stated intervals to render an account to them of what it had been doing since the last meeting, what its success had been in obtaining funds to carry on its operations, and how it had used those which it had obtained.

But there is another use of these annual meetings, which has been more present to my mind since I came into this room, I mean that of reminding us of the lapse of time, and of the changes and chances which it brings with it as it flows on. The early years of a Society, like our own early years, do little to suggest such thoughts; but long before it has attained the mature age which our Society has reached, they must force themselves on such occasions upon the minds of at least all its older members. At each successive meeting we miss some face which we have been accustomed to see year after year: and such blanks, of course, become more numerous at each meeting, as years wear on.

This is only the natural effect of time, and it must be the experience of the members of all Societies. But there is something special here, as regards our Society. Its ranks have been thinned from other causes also. And some of the gaps which are to be seen in them awaken feelings of a more painful kind than even those which death has made. And an old member like myself can hardly let his thoughts run upon the past, without falling into something like the dream which Scott so vividly describes as sometimes visiting a man at night, when the friends and scenes of distant times come back, so like what they were, that the dreamer feels painful perplexity as to which is the reality,—what he seems to remember, or what he seems to see!

The poet earnestly deprecates for himself such a dream, as *the worst phantom of the night*. And I can say that it is not a

very agreeable vision of the day either. But this is a world of compensations, my Lord, in which *one thing is set over against another*; and I believe that the pain of a day-dream of this kind, in which

“They come, in dim procession led,  
The cold, the faithless, and the dead,”

only enhances the pleasure of the reality to which one awakes, when he sees that there are so many old friends of the Society still alive, still faithful, and still warm in its cause!

It is with feelings of this kind, feelings of cordial satisfaction, that I see the chair occupied by one of them, as in times past; and that I see another, to whom all who value the Society feel that they owe a great debt of gratitude, still at his accustomed post as our Secretary; and many others, in different parts of the room, none of whom, I will answer for them, will feel aggrieved, when I place at their head my old and valued friend, the tried and trusted friend of the Society, the Bishop of Cashel, from whom the oldest of us may learn a lesson of steadfastness, and the youngest of ardour, in this good cause. I see, too, with pleasure of a different kind, indeed, but hardly if at all inferior, many of my younger brethren, some of whose faces I do not know; but upon all of whom I look with joy and hope, as not merely adding to our strength now, but as a store of future strength to the Society long after its older supporters have passed away.

This is, indeed, a cheering sight! But I should look upon it with very different feelings, my Lord, if I entertained a shadow of doubt of the soundness and the importance of the principle to which we have so long borne testimony, and to which we are assembled, I trust, to bear testimony once more. But I have no such doubts. I believe that the principle which this Society was founded to maintain is one which we could not have shrunk from upholding at the first, and one which we could not abandon since, or now, without a failure in duty—duty to God, and duty to man. It is because I firmly believe this, that I rejoice to see that this Society still commands the support of so large a portion of the Church—that so

many of the Church, both of the clergy and laity, who have held by it in times past through many difficulties, and discouragements, and disadvantages, hold fast to it still with unshaken convictions of its truth.

Few even of the bitterest of our opponents have ever expressed any doubt of the sincerity of the supporters of the Church Education Society. But not a few regard the course that they have pursued as unwise, not merely as regards their own interests, but as regards the interests of Education and of the Church. This has been often said and often answered,—so often, indeed, that I should not think of noticing any repetition of it at the present day, if there were not something in the quarter from which it came to give it special importance. But it has been lately repeated by one whose position and character combine to give great weight to all his deliberate opinions. You will understand, my Lord, that I refer to what was said upon the Irish Education question by his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin in his Primary Charge. That Charge was heard when it was delivered, and has been read since it was published, with a larger measure of interest than Episcopal or even Archi-episcopal Charges generally succeed in attracting to themselves. It has, no doubt, made a serious impression upon a wide circle of hearers and readers; and the great importance which hence attaches to every expression of disapprobation which it contains is my reason, and I hope will be a sufficient justification, for noticing a few points in our case upon which his Grace has passed an unfavourable judgment.

I wish, however, to say at the outset, that I did not resolve upon commenting upon this portion of the Archbishop's Charge on the present occasion, without having first satisfied myself that I may say all that is necessary, in order to do justice to our Society, without uttering a word which can be offensive or painful to his Grace. I should belie my own feelings, indeed, if I spoke of him in any other than the most kindly and respectful terms: and I am very sure that any other tone in reference to him would be as little in accordance with your feelings as with mine.

And I wish also to say distinctly, that whatever ground we may have to dissent from, or to regret some things which his Grace has said, he has not afforded us any just cause of complaint by anything that he has said or done in this matter. If he had not made up his mind upon this vexed question before, it was clearly his duty to do so, when he was elevated to so high a station in the Church which the question has so long divided. That he set about this inquiry under a deep sense of responsibility, and conducted it with conscientious patience, no one who knows him can doubt. Neither can it be reasonably doubted that, whatever were the conclusions to which the inquiry led him, it was his right and duty to make it public; and that in embodying it in his Charge at his Primary Visitation, if no fitting opportunity occurred earlier, he chose a proper occasion of publishing it, can hardly be questioned. And finally, that there was nothing in the manner of discharging this duty which could pain or offend those who were most concerned need hardly be said, as his Grace's character and habits give full assurance that such a duty would be discharged by him considerately and delicately. I repeat, then, that however much the friends of our Society must regret that they have not the happiness and the benefit of his Grace's countenance and help in the struggle in which they are engaged, there is nothing either in the position which he has taken with reference to us, or in his manner of taking it, which furnishes them with any reasonable ground of complaint.

Indeed, though unfortunately we cannot count his Grace upon our side, the supporters of the National System seem to have little warrant to reckon him upon theirs. For though he disclaims any conscientious objections to the distinctive Rule of the System, he points out with discrimination and candour some of its evil effects in practice. He has done more, too, than most persons to dispel the miserable delusion that it has been the means of extending Mixed Education in Ireland—a delusion which, more than anything else, has served to procure supporters for the System, especially in England. And, finally, his testimony in favour of the application of the English system to this country, I must for myself regard as

very valuable,—though I think that that system might advantageously undergo some modifications to adapt it to our circumstances. So that, on the whole, I cannot but think that the interests of the Society ought to be regarded as rather served than injured by what he has said upon the question.

Still, the fact that a careful consideration of our case by such a man had ended in a deliberate disapproval of the course which we have taken as unwise, and of the principle on which we have acted as mistaken, could not fail to exert an unfavourable influence upon the minds of many who had not previously arrived at a decision upon the question. There are a great many in both countries who are little able, and not a few, particularly in England, who are little disposed to qualify themselves, by a careful consideration of the question, to form a judgment upon it for themselves, and who, from indolence or modesty, will feel that the safest, as well as easiest, course is to adopt the conclusion of one who has so fully investigated the subject, and who is so cautious and so wise. And having reason to apprehend such results from what the Archbishop said upon the question, I feel that I am justified in reviewing it, not in a critical spirit or a controversial tone, but simply with a view to obviating or remedying the injury which it seems calculated to inflict upon the cause of our Society.

There are but three points in the Charge, however, to which I shall feel it necessary to direct attention. The first occurs at p. 42, and is as follows:—

“ And first, while I can enter to the full into the feelings of the Clergy of Ireland, who saw, in 1831, the whole education of the people of Ireland suddenly taken out of their hands; while I can quite understand their inability at once to realize and to adapt themselves to a new condition of things, in which their part was so limited and so subordinate, I ought not, at the same time, to shrink from saying that, so far as I can judge, I should have accepted the assistance of the State with the conditions which it imposed; that I should not have counted this a sin, any more than I should now be acting against my conscience in accepting the same assistance, which, were I the minister of a parish, where I could not support a thoroughly good school from other sources, I should certainly do.”

This is very temperately and forbearingly expressed, and I have no doubt that it was kindly intended; but it has been so interpreted as to convey a very serious charge against the Irish Clergy. It has been interpreted as if it meant that in the original opposition offered to the National system, the Clergy were chiefly, if not solely, under the influence of feelings of mortification at the great change which it made in their position, by suddenly taking the whole education of the people of Ireland out of their hands, and assigning to them a very limited and subordinate part in the work. Now, though the Archbishop does speak of this feeling in the minds of the Clergy at the time, and does not speak of any other, and so this does not appear an unnatural interpretation of his words, I am fully persuaded that this meaning of them could not have been before his mind when he uttered them, for in this sense they convey a charge which I am very sure he did not mean to bring against the Clergy. If the circumstances of the case were really as they are assumed to be, in the passage which I have read, that the Clergy should have entertained some such feelings of mortification as are ascribed to them would be in no wise unnatural or blamable. But that they should so far have given way to these feelings as under their influence to reject the system of education devised and established by the State—to have held aloof from it, and for so many years opposed it, and all the while to have professed that they were acting under the influence of other and higher motives,—that they were struggling to maintain the honour of God's Word, and to keep it in its proper place in the education of the people—this, I say, would have been base, and I might say blasphemous hypocrisy. And I am thoroughly persuaded that the meaning of the Archbishop's words, in which they convey so grave a charge, could not have been present to his mind, or he never would have uttered them.

However, as this sense has been put upon them,\* and

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\* I was aware, from private communications on the subject, that this was the impression which this passage made in my own dioceses, when the Charge was delivered. I had not seen, however, any reference to it in print until

as substantially the same charge has been brought independently against the Clergy,\* I think it advisable to show

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within a few days before my speech was delivered, when I received, through the author's kindness, a copy of a 'Sermon on the Irish Education Question,' by the Very Rev. William Atkins, D.D., Dean of Ferns. The following reference to the passage in the Archbishop's Charge shows sufficiently how it was understood by the Dean:—

"At the first, nothing was thought of, nothing would be listened to, but the overthrow of the whole system; and no wonder, indeed, that the Clergy of that Faith which was accustomed to ascendancy in Church and State, who saw their political influence gone by the Emancipation Act, no wonder that they, in a few years after, could ill brook the loss of their ascendancy in directing the education of the people of Ireland.

"This has been so lately set forth in the primary Charge of his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin, that I rapidly pass it over. Fully does his Grace enter into the feelings of the Clergy of Ireland, 'who saw, in 1831 the whole education of the people of Ireland suddenly taken out of their hands.' It is easy to understand their inability at once to realize and adapt themselves to a new condition of things. 'Yet,' adds the Archbishop, 'I ought not at the same time to shrink from saying that, so far as I can judge, I should have accepted the assistance of the State with the conditions it imposed.'"—*Sermon*, p. 27.

\* In a very bitter and very unfair article on the 'Irish Church' in the last 'Edinburgh Review' (April, 1866), it is said:—"But nothing contributed so much to her weakness as the conduct of her clergy on the Education Question. Thirty years ago they flung their moral power wantonly away. The Catholic Clergy as well as the Presbyterians, were wise and patriotic enough to discern the advantages of a system which, for breadth and completeness of organization, for the variety and liberality of its appliances, and for the wisdom of its provisions for religious instruction in a divided country, could hardly be paralleled; while the strange spectacle was seen of a bigoted Protestant clergy, who had, up to that period, kept almost the entire education of the country in their own hands, allowing the vast teaching power and appliances of the State to pass over into the hands of their greatest enemies. The National System offered no advantage to the Protestant over the Catholic, or to the Catholic over the Protestant; and as the one party had always been accustomed to inferiority and the other to ascendancy, the Priests as eagerly accepted as the others angrily repudiated a system which was not based upon a recognition of superior or exclusive claims. The Churchman, however, was only standing upon his ancient ecclesiastical policy of allowing no education whatever in the country that was not distinctively Protestant—that is, of allowing no education whatever except upon conditions that the masses of the people would indignantly repudiate; and he would have kept them to this hour ignorant and demoralized if the State had not undertaken to do—in the only way possible in Ireland—what it ought to have attempted three hundred years ago."

Every one who is at all acquainted with the history of education in Ireland must know that this statement is entirely at variance with the facts of the case, and that the education which was given to our poor, with the cordial help of the clergy and laity of the Church, was for years received with gratitude on

not only that the charge is actually false, but that from the circumstances of the case it could not possibly be true. But as, curiously enough, this is a point which I was led to notice in the first speech that I ever made in support of the Society, now seventeen years ago, I shall take the liberty, with your Lordship's permission, of reading the portion of the speech referred to.

After having said that the Clergy always professed not only that it has their earnest desire to aid Government, and to act with and under Government, in the work of educating the people, but that they felt it to be their duty to do so—a duty from which they could not be relieved unless, from whatever cause, it became impossible to discharge it without violating a higher duty,—I add as follows:—

“Such, my Lord, has been the uniform language of the Clergy; nor was it mere profession on their part. They had an opportunity of evincing the sincerity of their profession, and of giving a very conclusive proof that they would not suffer themselves to

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the part of the people, and with acquiescence at least on the part of some of the Roman Catholic Bishops, and of a considerable number of the Priests, until it became their policy to excite the poor of their communion to opposition against the system, in the hope that if it were overthrown its place would be supplied by one more favourable to the interests of their Church and more under their own control.

In a pamphlet published in 1844, entitled ‘A Defence of the Irish Clergy,’ Archdeacon Martin showed, from Education Reports and other documentary evidence, that in 1824 there were from 210,000 (at the lowest) to 260,000 poor Roman Catholic children daily receiving Scriptural instruction—“daily and voluntarily reading the Scriptures, with the general acquiescence and consent of both children and parents, and without one expression of dissatisfaction that can be proved on the part of either.”

He shows in the same way that in 1831, just before the foundation of the National System of Education, 300,000 poor Roman Catholics were daily receiving education, and he adds the following most important remark:—“And these striking facts were the more encouraging, because, as was remarked in 1827 by two of the Education Commissioners, of the 6058 daily schools in which the Scriptures were read, only 1879 were connected with societies; in the remaining 4179 schools the Scriptures were adopted by the voluntary choice of the conductors and teachers—the latter of whom were generally dependent on the pleasure of the parents. ‘A signal proof,’ say the Commissioners, ‘that there is no repugnance to Scriptural instruction among the people;’ and an illustration of the effects produced by the example of better institutions upon the common schools of the country.”—p. 5.

be prevented from rendering such assistance to Government by any minor objections, or by any selfish considerations.

“I do not mean to claim credit for them in this way, my Lord, for their co-operation with the State in the earliest attempts that were made in this country to extend the blessings of education to the poor, because the Church then enjoyed a monopoly of State favour, and no conditions were laid upon it with reference to this matter, except such as it was easy to bear. But this state of things did not continue, my Lord, up to the introduction of the National system of education. It was altogether changed when Government adopted the Kildare-place system. The Clergy then saw themselves deprived of the prominent place which they had theretofore held, and which many thought, and still think, it was their right to hold, in devising, directing, and conducting the State system for the education of the poor. The Church was wholly set aside in the new system. It was not that it had not the principal place in the system—it had no substantive place at all! This was a very great change, and one not very easy to bear. But, though in taking up the Kildare-place system the State seemed to have overlooked what was due to the Church, it did not overlook what was due to the honour of God’s Word, and to the best interests of the people. The Kildare-place system did not rob the children whom it educated of the inestimable blessing of an early acquaintance with the Word of God; nor did it aid or countenance others in robbing them of it. On the contrary, it embodied and set forth the great principle that the Word of God is to be the basis of the education of the people; and that not merely because it is the depository of all saving truths and the source of all sound religion, but because it is the foundation of all pure morality.

“This was one principle set forth by the Kildare-place system; and there was another—namely, that it is the right and duty of all to read God’s Holy Word, and that no man or set of men—no power, civil or ecclesiastical—has a right to forbid the reading of God’s Word. God may have given—no doubt He has given—to those whom He has set over us, the right, in various degrees, of restraining our natural liberties and abridging our social privileges and advantages, or, if need be, taking them wholly away. But He has given to none—He cannot—we may say it with reverence, He cannot have given to any—the right of preventing us from discharging our duties. And they who lay claim to such a right give sufficient proof that their authority is not from Him. Up to that time, the State had never recognised

this authority ; nor did it then. The Kildare-place system, in fact, as I have described, was a direct practical protest against the assumption of any such powers ; and, in adopting that system, the State repeated the protest which it had from the time of the Reformation always made against the usurped and abused authority of the Church of Rome.

“The Kildare-place system was by no means a perfect one ; and in particular it was, as I have intimated, by no means the system which the Clergy would have chosen. But it offered due reverence to the Word of God. It upheld the right and the duty of all to read that Word ; and it secured to all to whom it gave secular education the blessing of some knowledge of that Word. And, therefore, after a short period of estrangement, which was nothing more than was natural, considering the great change in their position which it introduced, the great mass of the Clergy joined in carrying out that system, and co-operated with the State in extending it through the land.

“But when the National system was introduced, both the great principles to which I have referred were abandoned. . .”

It is unnecessary, however, to read what I say upon the contrast which the National system furnished as regards both principles. It must be universally admitted, and my purpose does not require me to enlarge upon it here. The point which I was concerned to establish is, that in rejecting the National system, the Clergy not only were not, but that they could not have been, under the influence of feelings of mortification at the great change which the new system made in their position with reference to the education of the people. And I do not think I need trouble your Lordship, or the meeting, with anything more in order to clear up this point.

In fact, such a charge against the Clergy would be, as I dare say has occurred to your Lordship, in the most important respects, very like the old calumny against the great German Reformer, viz., that the motive by which he was led to the opposition to Indulgences in which his great work commenced, was a feeling of resentment at the transfer to the Dominicans of the lucrative and otherwise important office of preaching Indulgences, which, in Saxony, had previously been usually enjoyed by his own Order. This statement was passed on from one historian to another, with the indolence of which they

are sometimes guilty, until at last it came to be supported by a number of high names (amongst which is that of David Hume), and was of course received by ordinary readers without scruple or examination. It is to be hoped that there were at all times not a few who entered sufficiently into the real elevation of Luther's character to reject as absolutely incredible such a representation of the motives under which he engaged in his glorious work. That, if the facts are true as assumed in the story, he was likely to feel resentment strongly, and that when he felt it strongly he was likely to express it warmly, if not violently, no one could doubt. But that, if such were his real motive, he would have professed to have been actuated by a different one; and that more especially, while he was actually under the influence of such a motive, he could have professed to have been influenced by zeal for God's honour, and indignation at the daring impiety of those venders of Indulgences, no one who entered into his real character could believe.

But, on the other hand, it cannot be doubted that such reasons had but little weight with many, probably a majority of readers, because there were always many who thought too unfavourably of Luther to see any improbability in the story; and among those who did him less injustice, there were, doubtless, not a few who would think that apparent improbabilities drawn from the personal characters of parties are too uncertain in their nature to be allowed to outweigh what seemed to be the evidence of facts. But a little investigation of the kind that ought to have been carried on at the first put an end to the necessity of discussing these different views; for it speedily appeared that the historical foundation of the story was altogether unsound. There was no such custom as was alleged: it was, on the contrary, clear that the office had been given at different times to all the mendicant Friars, whether Franciscans, Dominicans, or Augustinians; and it was so far from being true, as stated, that these last had enjoyed any special favour in the selection, that the office had been held by the Dominicans, with scarcely a single exception, from a very early

period. So that the question was settled, not on the ground that Luther was incapable of being actuated by such motives, which many would deny, and many would regard as uncertain, but on the unimpeachable ground that the facts of the case left no room for such motives.\*

And it is just so, my Lord, with the question, Whether, in rejecting the National System at the first, the Clergy were influenced by feelings of mortification at the great change which it made in their position in reference to the education of the people. That question, as we have seen, is decided, not on the grounds that the Clergy were incapable of acting upon such motives in a matter of such moment,—in a matter in which they ought to have been, and professed to be, actuated by higher motives,—a mode of settling the question, to which many would demur,—but upon the ground that there was, in fact, no room for such motives; for that the System made no such change in the position of the Clergy. If they had adopted the National System, their position under it would have been substantially the same as it was under the System which preceded it. Under neither, had they any place in the higher office of appointing the course of education,

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\* The statement as to the usual mode of disposing of the office of preaching Indulgences, which was the foundation of this calumny, seems to have originated with Father Paul, as we call him (l. i., c. i.). He does not found any imputation against Luther upon it; but, on the contrary, states that he was first led to oppose Indulgences by the gross misconduct of the vendors of them at that time. But, on the other hand, Pallavicino, though he corrects Sarpi's mistake, and shows very clearly that no such usage existed (l. i., c. iii.), ascribes confidently nevertheless the opposition to Indulgences to the jealousy of the Augustinian Mendicants (the Hermits of St. Augustine). And Bossuet does not hesitate to say that it was notorious not only that the movement sprang from "la jalousie des Augustins contre les Jacobins qu'on leur avait préférés en cette occasion," but that Luther came forward as the chosen champion of his Order. (*Hist. des Var.*, l. i., c. vi.) Bold as these statements are, Moreri advances fearlessly upon them:—"Cette commission appartenait aux Augustins; et Jean Staupitz, leur Vicaire-Général en Allemagne, indigné de leur voir supplantés par les Dominicains, qu'on leur avait subrogés, donna ordre à Luther de prêcher contre les nouveaux Quêteurs." The charge is successfully and satisfactorily disposed of by Dr. Maclaine, the translator of 'Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History,' note upon book iv., sect. i., chap. ii., subsect. iii. The later editors have not added anything of importance to what he had said. See also Courayer's note upon the place in his translation of the *Istoria del Concilio di Trento*.

devising or enacting the rules for carrying it on, and directing and controlling the whole administration of the System, and in both the same subordinate position, with the same attendant advantages, were open to them. They were accepted and welcomed as patrons of schools under the Kildare-place Society. But so they would have been, under the National Board. They would receive books and school requisites and salaries from both, with no other difference than that the supply from the new body was likely to be an improvement in all respects upon that which the old gave. So that in fact the change which the Clergy are supposed to have resented had really no more existence than that which was said to have roused Luther's ire; and the cause being equally imaginary in both cases, I suppose that the effect in both must be regarded as equally imaginary too.

But upon this point enough, and perhaps more than enough, has been said. And the next which I feel it necessary to notice is, the reason which the Archbishop gives for regarding the course which the Clergy adopted of *standing aloof, and protesting*, as a *mistake in point of policy*. It is that if they had accepted the Government offer, it might have been hoped "that such parts of the system as galled and offended might little by little be modified by those working within it, while the same persons would be altogether powerless, merely protesting against the whole scheme from without."—p. 43.

The same judgment has been often passed upon us, and the same reason for it in substance assigned, not only by those who are hostile to us, but by many who are by no means unfriendly. It is a very common feeling, in England more especially, that had we joined the Board at the first we should have exercised great influence, if not, as the Archbishop thinks, in making it materially better, at least in preventing it from becoming so much worse as it has become. And when men look at the case from a distance, and form their judgments chiefly upon general principles, with little or no acquaintance with the local circumstances which so materially affect their operation, it is not unnatural that they should fall

into this mistake. For an utter mistake I am persuaded that it is. I am thoroughly satisfied that, on the contrary, the amount of success which this system has had amongst Roman Catholics has been in a great measure due to the fact that the great majority of our Clergy felt it to be so opposed to their principles that they could not avail themselves of the great advantages which it offered them. I am perfectly persuaded that if they had joined it in anything like the numbers in which they have stood aloof from it, Roman Catholic priests would have suspected from the first, and before long would have discovered, more causes of dissatisfaction in it than under the actual circumstances they have ever yet found: that they would have pressed even more frequently than they have actually done for alterations favourable to their communion, so as to increase the difficulty of the administration of it, to make it much more unequal, and to render it much more difficult for the Clergy of the Church who had joined it to adhere to it.

This is only matter of speculation, and admits of no absolute proof. But the reasons upon which we dissent from the view to which I have referred—that is, the view that, had our Clergy joined the Board from the first, they would have had the power of modifying the System so as to have removed a great deal of what was most objectionable in it,—these reasons do not rest merely upon speculation, but also upon painful experience of the way in which such questions have long been decided in this country. I have no doubt that the Clergy, had they taken the course indicated, would have been cordially welcomed by those who administered the System and by the Government, and that there would have been in both a disposition to make such modifications from time to time (of course not touching the fundamental principle) as might make their position in supporting it and carrying it out, more comfortable, and so bind them more closely to it. But whether this disposition could be acted upon or not, would depend entirely upon the view that the Roman Catholic Hierarchy took of these modifications. If they, too, approved of them, or were indifferent about them,

they might no doubt be effected. But if they opposed themselves to them, all the exertions of our Clergy to obtain them would be necessarily unavailing.

The fact is, my Lord, and I know of no reason why it should not be distinctly stated, that such questions, as they arose, would not be decided by reason or by principle, or by the judgment, or even by the inclinations of the Ministry, but by their necessities. A majority in the House of Commons is essential to the existence of the Ministry. But the great parties of the State are so nearly balanced that the members—whether Roman Catholic or Protestant—returned under the influence of the Priests in this country are quite numerous enough, if they acted steadily together, to determine in most cases to which side the majority should belong. Now that they do act together steadily, at least in all cases in which the interests of the Roman Catholic Church are concerned, is well known; and that in all such cases they should act under the direction of those by whose influence they have been returned, and to whose influence they must look to be returned again, is very natural and almost unavoidable. In all such cases, therefore, it is clear that the Romish Ecclesiastical powers in this country will command the Ministry. They command those upon whom the majority depends, and will therefore command those who depend upon the majority.

I should suppose that what I have said must be sufficient to show how chimerical it would be to expect that our Clergy, supposing them to have been in connexion with the National Board from the first, could have carried any modifications of the System, except such as the Roman Catholic Hierachy and Clergy approved of, or were indifferent about. And what amelioration of the System was likely to be effected in this way I may leave it to all who are acquainted with the parties concerned to determine.

But before I pass from this part of the subject I wish to say, as briefly as I can, that what I have inferred as the necessary result of an opposition between the two forces under the circumstances supposed, has been not only proved, but, I think, proved *à fortiori*, by actual experience.

Everyone knows the services which the late Archbishop of Dublin rendered to the interests of the National System of Education in this country. It is hardly possible to overstate their importance. It might be perhaps too much to say that they equalled those of all the other supporters of the System put together, but I will say, without any fear that any one acquainted with the circumstances of the case will dispute or doubt the truth of the assertion, that there was no individual supporter of the System either here or in England, whose labours in its behalf could be compared to his. His great talents and his great energies were devoted to the maintenance of the cause; and all the great influence which his rare powers of mind and force of character, aided by his elevated position, had won for him, was unceasingly employed both in public and in private to defend and advance it. And he, too, was *working from within*, and under the most favourable circumstances possible. His position within was not the subordinate one which the Clergy would hold, of mere connexion with the Board as patrons of National schools; he held the important and influential post of a member of the Board to which the government and direction of the System had been entrusted. Yet how entirely powerless did he prove to be when he came into collision with the Roman Catholic interest! And it is to be remarked, for it greatly strengthens the case, that he was not defeated in an attempt to improve the System by the introduction of any change in the course of education, in the rules of the Board, or in the administration of them: it was in an attempt to resist a change which he opposed, as inconsistent with the principles of the System, and likely to be most injurious to its interests, and moreover, as a breach of faith with the Government, with Parliament, with the patrons of these schools, and with the public at large;—so that if the change were carried, he felt that he could not retain his place at the Board without forfeiting his own respect and the respect of others as an honest man! Yet his opposition to the change, though given in this emphatic form, was altogether unavailing. His devotion to the cause, his

long and important services, his character, his station, did not weigh a feather when Archbishop Cullen's influence was in the other scale. And he was allowed to leave the Board with scarcely an effort to retain him, and to leave it avowedly upon the grounds which I have just stated, which must be felt to have added so much to the importance of the act.

I may mention that he was accompanied in his retirement by two members of the Board, less eminent, indeed, but still of great respectability and weight, the present Lord Justice of Appeal, and the late Mr. Baron Greene, who agreed with the Archbishop in his objections to the proposed change in the rules, and who attached so much importance to it, that when it was carried against their united opposition, they felt that they ought to retire with him. From their position and their character as men of remarkable sobriety of judgment, their retirement added not a little to the weight of the Archbishop's testimony against the proposed change, and so furnishes additional evidence of the strength of the influences to which their united forces were obliged to give way.

Further evidence of the same kind might be found in the unavailing opposition given by the Bishop of Derry, also *working from within*, and with the great advantage of being a member of the Board, to the extension of aid to the Convent schools. And the Bishop of Down's unsuccessful attempt to procure an alteration in the rules of the Board is an additional example in support of the same point. He did not, indeed, *work from within* in the same sense as the Archbishop of Dublin and the Bishop of Derry, for he was not a member of the Board; but he worked from within in the sense in which the Clergy would have done if they had joined the Board, having been throughout his whole Episcopate a steady supporter of the System. He was sustained by a considerable number of his Clergy in an application for a concession which he and they regarded as very trifling in itself, but which they represented as fraught with the most important consequences to the interests of the System, as calculated to remove objections, and to add extensively to the number of its supporters.

But the application, as you know, was refused with very little hesitation, and though urgently repeated, was again and most decidedly refused.

It is quite unnecessary, however, to look for such additional confirmations. The case of the late Archbishop is independent of them, and is, as I said, a proof *à fortiori* that the clergy, *working from within*, would have been just as powerless as they have been *protesting from without*, to procure any modifications of the System, except such as the Roman Catholic Hierarchy and Clergy approved, or at least took no interest in opposing.

I trust I have said quite enough to settle this point—many will no doubt think too much, when I am obliged to confess that after all the time that I have taken to set it right, the settlement of it is really of no importance to the main question, which is, Whether we were right or wrong in the course which we took at the first, and have taken ever since up to the present day. For that course was adopted and has been persevered in, not upon a calculation of what was beneficial or disadvantageous in probable results, but upon a conviction of what was right or wrong in principle. It was this conviction which determined us, independently of all such calculations, to adopt the course which we have pursued. There are cases, it may be, in which no question of duty seems to be involved *à priori* in the course which we are to take; cases in which, looking at the two paths which lie before us, there is nothing that we can see to make it our duty to take one rather than the other; and then our rule of conduct is to be derived from a consideration of consequences—of the effects of this course or that upon our own interests, or the interests of our family, or some wider interests committed to our care. But if we see beforehand that one course is right and the other wrong,—that one course is innocent and the other sinful,—one in accordance with God's will as revealed in His Word, and the other opposed to His will,—then, whatever be the consequences, it is our duty to take the former, and to shun the latter. Then, however great, and however clear may be the advantages to ourselves or others to which the

latter will conduct us, and however great and however clear the disadvantages to which the former leads, it is our duty to pursue the former and to shun the latter.

And I do not apprehend, my Lord, that we have here any difference with the Archbishop; because, while he frankly declares that, if he had been a parish clergyman in Ireland, he would have accepted aid from the first on the terms on which it was offered by the State; and that he would do so still, if he were not able to keep a good school without such aid, he also expressly declares that he would feel that in neither case *was he guilty of any sin*; a plain intimation, as it seems, of what indeed must have been understood if no such intimation were given, that if he felt otherwise upon that question he would act otherwise; that if he felt as we did upon it, he would have acted as we did. The difference between us and him, then, is not that he thinks that under our views of duty we were wrong in acting as we did, but that our views of duty were mistaken. He thinks, that is, that we might have accepted at the first the aid that was offered by the State on the terms on which it was offered, and that we might do so still, *without committing a SIN*,—the only difference between then and now being, that the advantages which might have been confidently expected, if this course had been taken at the first, could hardly be looked for now.

This is the Archbishop's view of our position and its duties: ours was different. We thought that we could *not* submit to the terms upon which only State aid could have been obtained, *without committing a SIN*; not in the narrow and false sense in which the word is applied only to a violation of some of God's express commands or express prohibitions, but in the larger, and I must maintain the truer, sense of the word, in which every act in opposition to, or at variance with, the known will of God,—in whatever way His will may have become known to us,—every departure from our duty to Him,—however we may have learned what our duty to Him in a particular case is,—every neglect of duty, and every shortcoming in duty,—is a SIN.

I wish to make this explanation distinctly at the outset,

because it is a point upon which a good deal of misconception seems to prevail. Many of those who call for a proof of the unlawfulness of adopting the distinctive Rule of the National System relating to religious instruction, evidently expect, and some of them indeed expressly say that they do,\* that their demand will be answered by quoting some express Divine law, of which the adoption of this Rule would be an open violation. Now this is, I think, plainly an unreasonable expectation in such a case. No controversy which has been kept up for any considerable time, between parties who agree in acknowledging the supreme authority of the Word of God, can be decided in this simple and easy way,—by some command or prohibition expressly applying to the case, and admitting of no doubt or evasion. In fact, if such means of deciding the question at issue existed, any controversy to which it could have given rise must have been short-lived. And indeed it is only in comparatively few of the cases in which a question of duty can be raised at all, that it admits of so expeditious a settlement. In general, we must be content to collect the will of God from less explicit indications of it. But, in whatever way His will becomes known to us, the rule which it furnishes is equally binding on the judgment and the conscience.

This is a truth, my Lord, which every one acknowledges whenever it is distinctly stated. But, universally admitted as it is, it is impossible not to see that there is often great unsteadiness and inconsistency in the application of it; and that when men are left to these less direct modes of collecting the will of God, they often deviate from it with less scruple and compunction than when it is expressly declared. It is unnecessary to use any argument to prove how un-

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\* Thus: "To reason a man into a penalty is not allowed by law; to convict him of a sin, without showing the law that has been transgressed, or proving the offence at all, cannot be reconciled with reason nor with Scripture."—*The Education Question: Thoughts on the present Crisis*. 2nd ed., Preface, p. 14. And again: "Is it a sin? Of what law of God is it the transgression."—*Ib.* p. 22. Upon this professional demand, my readers will find some remarks in the Appendix, Note C.

reasonable and presumptuous such a distinction is, because those who are oftenest guilty of acting upon it in practice would not attempt to defend it in theory. But we require to be often reminded of the truths which we are least disposed to question. And in like manner, though it would be needless to state the fact, for the purpose of giving information—for no one can be ignorant of it—it may be useful in the way of reminding some who might otherwise forget it, to say that, as a matter of fact, it is not for the most part by express declarations for each particular case that the Bible supplies us with guidance, but by general rules and principles which are explained and illustrated, expanded or limited, by examples. These general principles are to be applied by us to each case in which we need Divine guidance; and, however numerous and diversified such cases may be, these principles—comparatively few and simple as they are—are found to furnish honest inquirers with a sufficient rule of life in all.

It ought to be felt, therefore, that we have no reason to be surprised or dissatisfied if we find, in the particular case with which we are immediately concerned, that we are not supplied with express directions, express commands, or express prohibitions, which admit of no doubt or evasion; but are left ultimately to determine what is right or wrong, lawful or unlawful, sinful or innocent, in the more usual way.

It will shorten and simplify what I have to say, if I confine myself to the case of our parish Clergy, in relation to their own schools. It is the case in connexion with which the question was first raised, and it must always be, in many respects, the most important case. I am very far from wishing or intending to draw any broad or rigid line of distinction between the duty of the Clergy and that of the laity in the matter of education; and I believe that those laymen who are most interested about the education of the poor, and who have been most engaged in it, will be least disposed to draw any such

line themselves. I am sure, indeed, that most pious laymen, who are providing education for the poor whom God has made dependent upon them for that great benefit, will feel that a great deal of what I have to say of the duty of the Clergy applies also to themselves. But though there is a great deal common to the two cases, what is peculiar to the Clergy is of no light importance. And as my immediate object is to vindicate the view of duty on which the Clergy have acted from the first and all through in this matter, it seems better to treat their case distinctly, as there might be some risk of confusing and weakening what has to be said upon it by combining it with another, which however much it has in common with it, is yet not identically the same. Nor do I apprehend that much will be lost in the end by confining what I say to their case. I am not afraid that there are many conscientious laymen in this meeting who will think that the conclusion to which I come rests so much on what is peculiar to the Clergy that it does nothing to bind, or in any way touch themselves. And even if there should be some who think so, I have little doubt that they will find that they have at least this concern in it, that whatever is proved to be the duty of the Clergyman in reference to the education of his people, it is their duty to support him in the faithful discharge of it.

A parish Clergyman is not only the religious instructor of all, both old and young, committed to his care, but this is his first and most important relation to all, both old and young. Various duties with regard to their temporal interests rest upon him. Indeed it may be said that the duties of the relation which exists between him and his parishioners are very imperfectly understood, or very inadequately felt by him, if he does not regard himself as bound to promote their interests in this life in everything, and to the utmost extent that is compatible with due care for their interests in the life to come. But these are always to be the first and chief object of his solicitude and of his exertions—and the former are always to be kept in the subordinate place to which only they are entitled. He is never to forget, or, so far as he can,

to suffer his people to forget, that his primary relation to them is a *spiritual* relation; and that as their spiritual interests are infinitely their highest and most important interests, so to guard and advance those interests is his highest and most important duty towards them; and that however right and commendable, in its proper place, an anxiety on his part to promote their temporal interests may be, it is not kept in its proper place, and is not right and commendable, but very wrong and very blameworthy, when it is allowed to interfere with the full discharge of his duties in reference to their eternal interests.

To enter upon a proof of these statements, particularly in such a meeting as this, I should feel to be an occupation of time of which your Lordship and all present would be not unnaturally impatient. They cannot be strange or doubtful to any who hear me, more especially to my reverend brethren, who form so large a portion of the meeting, and whom they most concern. No Minister of the Church, indeed, who bears in memory the Ordination Service through which he has gone—the Exhortation then delivered to him,—the questions proposed to him,—the answers returned by him,—the prayers offered for him,—and the whole character of the rite, including the solemn words employed when the Holy Spirit was invoked on his behalf, and he received *authority to preach the Word of God, and to minister the Holy Sacraments*,—can doubt that the office to which he was then admitted was emphatically a *spiritual* office, that it connected him primarily with the souls of those who should thereafter be given him in charge, and that the duty of caring for, and endeavouring by all means in his power to make them care for, their immortal souls, was at that most solemn period of his life most solemnly laid upon him. And if this be the case, there can be just as little doubt that this duty—the duty of doing all that in him lies to secure and advance their spiritual interests—is his primary duty towards his people; and that it is as far above all other duties which he owes them,—all duties relating to the concerns of this life,—as Eternity is above Time.

The parish Clergyman is, then, by his office, the spiritual instructor,—the spiritual teacher and guide,—of all, old and young, committed to his care. And this, which is infinitely the most important duty of his office, he discharges for all, both old and young, by his public preaching. But those who are disposed to ascribe the greatest importance to the office of preaching—and I am sure that I shall always be found among them, rather than among those who depreciate its importance—will be ready to acknowledge that his duty as a public religious teacher will be very superficially discharged unless there be a supplement to his public preaching in teaching of another kind, given at other times, and in a different form.

This supplemental duty cannot be performed in the same way for all. The wants of the old and of the young, of the rich and of the poor, of the educated and the uneducated, are not the same, nor can they be supplied in the same way. The Minister cannot treat the old with the same authority which he properly uses in dealing with the young. He cannot have the same free access to the rich that he has to the poor. The educated are not dependent to the same extent upon his pastoral instruction as the uneducated. And so the supplement which his pulpit-teaching requires must be modified, in different ways and degrees, by a due consideration of the different elements of which his congregation is composed.

But I may confine myself now to the young of the humbler classes of his parishioners. How very large a supplement his public teaching requires as regards them, every parish Minister is soon made to know and feel. And I suppose that if every parish Clergyman in the kingdom were asked which, of all the various means that he employs to supply the necessary defects of his public preaching, with respect to this class of his hearers, does he regard as the most efficacious, there are very few, indeed, who would not unhesitatingly name their Schools. In saying this, I put aside that portion of the Clergy who have adopted the National system, as their Schools are conducted upon rules which, to say the

least, prevent the free and full use of them as auxiliaries in the discharge of their duty as religious teachers. But, setting them aside, I should feel sure that if the question were proposed to the rest—who are a large majority of the whole body—they would, with almost one voice, answer as I have said. And if the very few cases in which a different answer was returned could be investigated, I should anticipate that some special hindrance to making such a use of the school existed in every one of them,—as that the Clergyman himself was less than ordinarily disposed, or less than ordinarily qualified, to make such a use of his school,—or that there was something peculiar in the circumstances of his parish which limited the use of the school for any purposes—as that there were but a very small proportion of the children of the parish of the class which supplies scholars to the Parochial School,—or some other cause of the same kind, which made the case clearly exceptional. So that the general truth of the position would remain untouched,—that of all the auxiliaries of the pulpit which the Clergy have at command, as regards the young of the poorer class, their Schools are far the most efficient.

And even if this were not the case to the extent to which it actually is, it would be of little importance as to the question in hand. Because, whatever his Parish school may actually be, there is no room for doubt that, as regards the young, it is *capable* of being made the most efficient of all the aids that are at the command of the parish Minister. The children of the parish school are more entirely in his hands than any other class within his cure. In parochial visiting, useful and necessary as it is, there are great hindrances in the way of doing good, not merely from the extent to which the time and thoughts of the people are engaged by their worldly concerns, but from their ignorance, and from the sluggishness and hardness of their minds. Even in visiting the sick, though the operation of the first of these causes may be for the time suspended, the others remain to mar the effect of his labours. But in his parish school he has far fewer difficulties to dread. The children of his poorer

parishioners, from whom chiefly, if not exclusively, the attendants upon his school are drawn, are almost, if not entirely, dependent for education, both secular and religious, upon the means of education which his school provides. And they therefore are entirely subject to his judgment as to the mode in which, and the rules under which, they are to receive instruction. They are sent to him, too, before the cares of the world have begun to engross them, before commerce with the world has corrupted and hardened them, while their minds are still impressible, plastic, and ductile.

The secular education which they are to receive in his school will depend very much upon the Clergyman's circumstances,—I mean his pecuniary circumstances. For though the efficiency of a school is a good deal affected by the superintendence under which it is carried on, yet no supervision can make up for the want of proper qualifications in the master. And without the means of adequately remunerating him, a well-qualified master cannot be procured, and if procured by accident, cannot be long retained. But as regards the religious education given in the school, that will depend greatly, if not entirely, upon the Clergyman himself. The place, at all events, which religion shall have in the business of the school,—the rules according to which religious instruction shall be given,—the whole system and aim of the school in reference to religion,—all depend absolutely upon him.

And if the Clergyman really possesses this power, can there be any doubt how he ought to use it? Considering his relation to the children who are to attend the school, it can hardly be doubted, I should suppose, that his first aim ought to be to make his school an effective auxiliary in the discharge of what is his own first duty towards them, and in the advancement of their highest interests.

It is hardly necessary, I hope, my Lord, to say that this does not exclude from the school any one branch of general education which is suitable to such schools. It leaves to all such subjects their proper place; it only requires that they should be confined to that place. It is with a school in that respect as

with the actual life for which it is intended to prepare. The duties of active life are not to be laid aside or neglected in order that men may devote themselves wholly to religious exercises. They are, on the contrary, to be discharged diligently as a part, and an important part, of their duty to God. And while it is the business of education generally to enable men to discharge these duties efficiently, it ought to be the special business of Christian education to prepare them to discharge them as the servants of Christ. And as the actual duties of life are not to be allowed to put religion out of its proper place in the scholar's maturer years, so in his youth the preparation by secular studies for the future discharge of those duties is not to be allowed to occupy time and thought in any such way or to such an extent as to shut out or to consign to an inferior place that instruction which is to fit him for the discharge of the duties of his highest relation, and which will dispose and fit him to discharge all lower duties in the spirit that makes them, too, a part of his duty to God.

No difference of opinion is to be apprehended so far—so long, that is, as we confine ourselves to general statements as to what the main aim of the Clergyman's school ought to be. Nor do I think that there will be much difference of opinion when we descend, as it is necessary for my purpose to do, to the details of the means by which this object is to be attained.

In the first place, then, I suppose that it would be universally admitted that religious instruction ought to be a substantive part of the *daily* business of the school. It is not merely that this is necessary in order that such instruction should be effectually given, but for this further reason, that unless this be the system upon which his school is conducted, it not only is not seconding and aiding him in his ministry, but is practically contradicting and effectually counteracting a most important part of his teaching, both in public and in private.

Unless the Clergyman be entirely ignorant of his duty, or utterly careless about it—neither of which cases it falls in with my purpose to consider—one of the first objects of his public and private teaching will be to impress upon the minds

and hearts of his people a practical conviction of the infinite importance of the immortal soul and its eternal interests, and of the comparative insignificance of the shortlived concerns of the perishing body. But if in his own school, while its proper place is found for every branch of the general education which its course comprehends, religion has no place, or only the occasional place which belongs to a matter of subordinate importance, what must be the result? I do not ask this question now with reference to his flock generally—though it is a question, both with regard to them and him, of very great importance,—but with reference to the children who receive education in his school—very many of them the only education that they ever receive in their whole lives. And with respect to them, can it be expected that any declarations which they hear from their clergyman, in the pulpit or elsewhere—to the effect that religion is infinitely the most important of all subjects—can it be expected, I say, that such declarations, however earnest and reiterated they be, will countervail the effects of their daily training in his school from their earliest years, under a system which assigns a higher and a larger place to every other subject than to religion? How far, as regards their habits of mind and general tone of feeling, the effects of this *daily* training, gradual and insensible as they are in their progress, must exceed any that can be produced by any declarations that they hear, every one who knows anything of the human mind must know. And when the children so trained came to look coolly and rationally upon the past, what could be the conclusion at which they would arrive, but that either the Clergyman, who knew better than they did, did not believe his own solemn declarations to be true, or that if he did, the truth that religion is infinitely the most important of all subjects is consistent with giving everything else a more important place in practice?

So that if a Clergyman would not have his school efface all the lessons that he teaches elsewhere of the relative importance of time and eternity, of the body and the soul, its rules must at least secure that religious instruction shall be given

in his school on every day on which secular instruction is given. A great deal more will be needed to make his school as efficient an instrument as it may be and ought to be in preparing for, and enforcing, and seconding the religious lessons which he teaches everywhere else, *both publicly and from house to house*, but so much seems to be absolutely necessary in order to guard against its effectually counteracting those lessons.

This is the first point that I would lay down, and without much fear that it will meet with any serious opposition. And the second point is, that whatever else this *daily* religious instruction may comprehend, direct instruction in the Word of God should form a part of it.

Most persons now are ready to acknowledge that all education ought to be based upon religion, and that all true religion must be based upon the Word of God. At all events, such is the professed belief of all our Clergy. And whether we consider their relation to God or to man, it would seem evident that their schools ought to exhibit, in their constitution and rules, the principles which they maintain, both as to the true place of religion in education, and the true place of the Bible in religion. One who really believes what all our Clergy profess to believe upon both these points, must feel that he is bound to assign to direct instruction in the Scriptures a substantive place in the religious instruction which is given daily in his school, and a place in some measure proportioned to its practical importance in relation to the other subjects in which religious instruction is given.

And this would be no small place. For I hope I need hardly say that the true connexion of religious teaching with the Bible is not that its foundation is to be derived therefrom, and that the materials for the superstructure are to be sought in other books,—or to be evolved from the fundamental truths in the way of development,—or to be drawn out of the builder's brain. Holy Scripture is to be made to supply directly, or by inference, every part of religious instruction, and to sustain every part: so that, while the children are learning the great truths of religion, they are taught, not so much didactically—

by formal statements of the fact—as by the natural effects of the course of Scriptural instruction which they are receiving, that all the great truths of religion are drawn from the Word of God: that His Word is the ultimate source from which the doctrines, and the principles, and the precepts of religion are to be derived.

Whatever be the amount of religious teaching in the school, unless it be given thus,—in its true connexion with the Word of God,—it not only will be miserably defective, but it can hardly fail to be dangerously misleading. The children will not only be kept in ignorance of the true place of Scripture in religion, but will either be left without any sense of the obligation of believing the religious truths that they are taught, or be trained habitually to rest that obligation on something short of Divine authority. This grievous error would not, of course, be directly inculcated, but it would not the less be certainly learned. Can it be thought, then, that a Clergyman, whatever be the nature or amount of religious instruction given in his school, is discharging his duty to God, or to the children committed to his charge, unless instruction in the Word of God be also given there? Assuredly, one who on right grounds makes religious instruction a part of the *daily* business of his school, will take good care that the Word of God shall be one of the subjects in which instruction is given. Other books will of course be employed, but the Bible will always be one.

The children in such a school will be directly instructed in the Catechism and formularies of the Church. But these ought to be taught in direct connexion with Holy Scripture, so as to show that they have their foundation therein. The same applies to all other books which may be used in religious instruction; all ought to be brought continually to the Word of God for support; and after all, His Word ought to be itself, as I have said, besides, a distinct subject of instruction. And it must be plain that a book so long, and of such varied contents, to say nothing of the special difficulties of particular parts, cannot be taught efficiently by anything short of *daily* reading and instruction.

The Jews were commanded first to lay up in *their own hearts* all that God had said to them, and then to teach it diligently to their children; to talk of it to them *when they sat in the house, when they went by the way, when they lay down, and when they rose up.* Such was the instruction, constant, reiterated, unceasing, and connected with the whole course of daily life, which the Jew was to give his children in the Revelation which God had vouchsafed to him. To us the same Volume is given, and, together with it, a large and most important addition. And can it be reverent or wise,—can it be safe for us, either as regards ourselves or others,—to settle that less than *daily* instruction in this larger Revelation committed to us may suffice for our children?

No one, I suppose, would hesitate to decide this question in the negative, antecedently to experience. And does experience suggest any doubt of the correctness of this decision? Is there anything in our actual experience of the work of education to suggest to us that such *daily* instruction is more than enough for its purpose, and that it may be safely abridged? Many of those who hear me are well able to answer this question. Every year children are leaving your schools where such daily instruction in the Bible is given. Is it not your experience that, every year, a large proportion of those children leave your schools most imperfectly acquainted with the Bible—I mean only with its contents, as with those of any ordinary book? And, speaking still in the same way, is it not also matter of experience that there is not one of those children who has such a knowledge of the Book as would not admit of being extended, and made much more thorough and exact? I am sure that most, if not all present, will be ready to acknowledge that such has been the case, year after year, in their schools. I doubt, indeed, if there be even one present whose school has furnished him with any grounds for bearing any other testimony. And if the conclusion to which we were brought by reason and Scripture needed confirmation from experience, could more decisive confirmation of it be desired?

But time presses too much to dwell longer upon what, after all, I suppose many will not be found to deny or dispute.

There is another—and but one other—rule which I shall mention as having a claim, upon the same grounds, to the place of a fundamental rule in the Clergyman's school; and that is, that, though there ought to be a fixed time for the *religious instruction*, including Scripture instruction, as for every other part of the stated business of the school, of which it forms a part, it ought not to be confined to that time and space. Without order in a school, it cannot be as efficient as it ought to be, either in communicating knowledge, or in giving habits of regularity, and of a proper division of time, in getting through the business of the day, which forms so important a part of early training. And this applies to religion as to the other subjects in which instruction is given. For the sake of order, a fixed time and space ought to be assigned to religious instruction, as to every other part of the stated daily business of the school. But there are good reasons why religious instruction should not be confined, as the other school business is, to the time specially appointed for it.

Occasions for the introduction of religion, and for reference to Holy Scripture will often arise from the conduct of the children themselves, or from something which has happened in the little world within which their observation is exercised, or from something which they come upon in the books which they are reading in the general business of the day;—in one or more of these ways something will often occur on which it is very important that the light of Scripture should be at once thrown—important not only for the present correction and guidance of the children, but for the formation of principles and character for the future. If such occasions are suffered to pass without rightly using them, by drawing from them the proper lessons, or applying to them the proper reflexions—and quoting the Bible, and referring to the Bible in confirmation or enforcement of what is said—an opportunity is lost of administering religious and moral instruction under circumstances which are specially calculated to make it understood and felt; and, moreover, the opportunity is lost of impressing practically on the mind the value and importance

of Holy Scripture as a guide, and its wide application to common life and its concerns.

This would be a grievous loss, which no Clergyman, one would suppose, would voluntarily inflict upon the children of his school, by adopting a rule which would prevent him—or his master, under his direction and control,—to whatever extent he thought him fit for the duty and chose to entrust it to him—from taking advantage of any such occasions as might present themselves at any hour of the day, to introduce religious thoughts, religious principles, religious precepts; and to refer to Scripture for proofs, or confirmations, or illustrations of all that was said. He ought, one would say, on the contrary, so to frame the rules of his school that whether he is instructing or correcting, commanding or forbidding, praising or blaming, he should not be restrained from giving the sanction of religion to all that he says, and from referring in confirmation of all that he says freely to the Bible, as the source of authoritative rules of life, and principles of action. And so, while important moral lessons are impressed upon the children at the times and under the circumstances in which they are likely to sink deepest, religion will be made, as it ought, to leaven the whole mass of their education; and they will not merely be daily instructed in Holy Scripture at a fixed time, but they will be made, day after day, to see and feel the application of the great truths and the weighty lessons which it contains, to all that they are doing themselves, and to all that they see others doing around them, and to all that they read, whether of God's Word or men's acts, of the present or of the past, and of the future.

The rules, then, as to religious instruction, on which a Clergyman's school ought to be carried on are—1. That religious instruction is to be a part of the daily business of the school. 2. That of this religious instruction, reading the Word of God and instruction therein are to form a part. And 3. That though such religious and Scriptural instruction is to be given at a certain period and to occupy a certain

time every day, as is the case with every other part of the daily business of the school, neither religion nor the Bible is to be confined to that time, but to be freely introduced through the day, *as need shall require, and opportunity shall be given.*

And this is enough to vindicate the view of their duty upon which the Clergy acted in refusing *to accept the assistance of the State with the conditions which it imposed.* For if it were their duty to conduct their schools upon the rules as to religious instruction which I have laid down, it would be clearly a violation of their duty to submit to the conditions which the State imposed in giving aid through the National Board—conditions which would have prevented them from carrying on their schools according to these rules, and would have obliged them to adopt rules directly opposed to these both in letter and in spirit.

I might end with this direct proof of the point which I undertook to prove on behalf of the Clergy in reference to this important question; but I should be doing the work imperfectly if I left this conclusion without any notice of the objections by which it is sure to be assailed; and therefore, though I am conscious that I have already tasked the patience of the meeting too severely, I must beg for further indulgence, while I look at such of these objections as I am able to anticipate.

It will no doubt be objected that this conclusion is drawn from an imaginary state of the case. 'It may be freely admitted,' it will be said, 'that this is the system, and even that these are the rules, on which it would be the duty of the parish Minister to conduct his school under the circumstances supposed—that is, when he has nothing to consider but what is best for the poorer children of his flock who are to receive education there, and who are ready to receive it on any conditions on which he offers it, and according to any rules that he thinks fit to lay down. It need not be disputed that this is the system by which he will best discharge his highest duty to the children under his care, and therefore that he is bound to adhere to it, so long as there is no sufficient reason

for altering it and taking up a different one. So far there is no occasion for any difference of opinion as to the Clergyman's duty: the difference arises under a very different state of things, in which there appear to be strong reasons for a different system,—we do not say sufficient reasons—that is the point at issue,—some thinking that they are sufficient, and some that they are not. But the point which it is important to notice is, that it is under this state of things, and not under that which is assumed as the foundation for the conclusion just drawn, that the existing difference of views upon the question of Education has arisen amongst the Clergy. And to make any conclusion with reference to the duty of the Clergy in this matter of any practical importance, it must be drawn from a consideration of the circumstances in which they were, and are actually placed, and not from a state of things which is so widely different.'

If this be said, and something of the kind will no doubt be said, I would reply that I am perfectly aware and am ready to admit that what I have said does not amount to a decision of the Education question which has divided the Church; but I think it will be found to be a most important step towards it. I think that, in having determined the rules upon which it is the Clergyman's duty to act in the simplest case, and also the grounds on which his duty rests in that case, we have provided most important help towards the determination of the further questions, viz., Whether there is anything in the more complex case with which he has to deal which would warrant a parish Minister in altering or relaxing these rules? and if there be, How far he is at liberty to alter or relax them? It must be seen, I think, that in the decision of these questions, the decision of the practical question which has for so long divided our Church is involved. I shall be anxious, therefore, to consider them as fully and fairly as I can.

The question about the modification of these fundamental rules was likely to arise first, and, in fact, did first arise, from the desire of the Clergy to extend the benefits of their schools beyond the limits of their own people. That such a

desire should be felt by the Clergy was natural and almost unavoidable. The Reformed Church in this country is, as has been often proved, the National Church, not only by the law of the land, but by all ecclesiastical principles which apply to the case.\* But though it is the Church of the nation *de jure*, it is from various causes *de facto* the Church of a very decided minority of the nation. The majority which lies outside its limits comprises many who are very poor and very ignorant, and more particularly very ignorant of the Word of God. It could hardly be but that the Clergy should desire to impart to the masses who surrounded them under such circumstances, the great benefits which their schools were imparting to the children of the poorer members of their own flock. The rules, however, in reference to religious instruction which they had adopted for their own schools were likely to throw a serious obstacle in the way of carrying out this benevolent design. It was clearly their duty to adopt these rules when the children of the Church only were to be considered. But when it became an important object to make provision for others, and these rules raised an obstacle to the accomplishment of this object, the question necessarily arose, Can this obstacle be taken away? or if not, can it be materially lessened?

The question has, as you know, my Lord, been differently answered. Some had no hesitation in answering it in the negative, and in determining that these rules were not to be touched,—that they admitted of no modification. But by far the greater number of the Clergy felt that it ought not to

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\* I have more than once attempted to draw public attention to this important fact, in a Letter to my Clergy on what was called the Papal Aggression, in a Speech on the Education Question at a meeting held in the Hanover Square Rooms in the same year, and in other publications. But it had been previously brought before the English public in an excellent Sermon for the Distressed Irish Clergy, by Dr. Hook (now Dean of Chichester), in which the case was very clearly and forcibly stated. It was afterwards put forward with great power and effect by Dr. Wordsworth, in a course of Lectures on the Irish Church, in which its past history, its position, and its prospects are treated with full research and great ability. And for full information connected with this and everything relating to the history of our branch of the Church, within a moderate compass, I may refer to the 'Primer of the History of the Irish Church,' by the Rev. Robert King.

be decided in so sweeping a way. The religious instruction given in their schools consisted of two distinct parts, one being instruction in the formularies of our Church, and the other instruction in the Word of God. There was no doubt that the former was an essential part of the education of the children of the Church; but could the same be said of it, with reference to the education or the religious instruction of the children of other denominations? Would it not be worth considering whether it might not be left out of the religious instruction which formed a part of the daily business of the school, at which all the scholars were obliged to attend, as at other parts of the regular business of the school?

So far as they were concerned, such an omission did not appear open to any serious objection. But of course it was necessary to consider what would be its effects as regarded the children of the Church. Such a modification of the rules does not by any means infer that the children of the Church are to lose the benefits of instruction in the formularies of the Church and in the Church Catechism. It is the duty of the Clergyman to give such instruction on Sundays, and it is generally felt to be his duty to give it in the week too; and he may make the occasions of performing this duty as frequent as he thinks necessary or useful. And considering that the subjects are well defined, that the text which forms the foundation of the instruction is not of any great extent, and moreover that instruction in it will be greatly facilitated and aided by the daily instruction that will be given as before in the Holy Scriptures, which lie at the foundation of all our formularies, it would seem that a Clergyman might easily secure, without unduly tasking either himself or the children of the Church, that they should suffer no real loss from the change.

And how vast would be the gain of the Roman Catholics who were led by such a concession to attend the parish schools! If all that they gained thereby were that they would read the Scriptures daily, and that so they would be made acquainted with that blessed Book, which is so sedulously kept from them, and which they are taught to look

upon as pregnant with danger to them, they would receive what was no light advantage in itself, and one from which a great blessing might be expected often to arise. But the benefit actually received by them would be far greater; they would be daily instructed in the Bible,—taught in it, and from it, the saving truths which it contains, not controversially—not with a design of drawing them out of their own Church, or of drawing them into ours,—but with the *bonâ fide* object of making them acquainted with the true meaning of God's Holy Word. [Appendix Note D.]

What a blessing in life and death, and after both life and death are over, even for ever and ever, ought such instruction to be to them! How ought it to furnish their minds with all the great truths of religion, and with all the practical lessons which the Divine Word contains, lessons to guide them in perplexity, to strengthen them in temptation, to sustain them in trial, and to comfort them in sorrow. To bestow such a blessing upon those who are bound to us by so many ties would seem well worth all that it could cost, either in the way of exertion or of sacrifice. But we have seen how very little of either it demands.

Some have doubted, however, whether we have a right as Churchmen to make such a change in what ought to be the fundamental rules of Church Schools. And I do not mean to say that there are no grounds for raising such a question, or that it is one of light importance. But I am sure, even if I had more time at command than it would be reasonable to count upon now, your Lordship and the Meeting would feel that it is a question on which I could not be expected to enter here. In the first place, it has been decided in the affirmative by all the Irish Bishops,—for those who maintain the National System must be understood to agree so far with those who support the Church Education Society,—the only difference being that the former go further than the latter. And then, for the same reason, it must be taken as decided, in the same way, by the whole body of the Clergy, with the very insignificant exception (I mean insignificant in point of numbers) of those who reject both Systems,—both ours and the National

System. It is seldom, I think, that it is useful or wise to reopen a question which has been settled in the same way by such a vast number of persons of widely different views.

But I have still better reason for avoiding a discussion of the question here; that is, that in defending the Irish Clergy, the question with which I have to deal at this point is not whether we were warranted in going so far, but whether we were warranted in refusing to go further. 'You exempt,' it is said, 'the children of Dissenters from the obligation of receiving instruction in the formularies of the Church, in order to induce them to attend your schools. But as long as you keep Scripture in its place, as a part of the daily business in which all are to receive instruction, the work of concession can hardly be said to be half-done. The concession may be enough, so far as Protestant Dissenters are concerned, and some Roman Catholics, it may be, will also be satisfied with it, and will permit their children to attend the schools in which it is made. But the vast body will stand aloof from them. With them, or rather with those who rule them, the part of religious instruction which you retain is as great a stumbling-block as the part which you have taken away. While it remains, Roman Catholics cannot be expected to attend your schools in any considerable numbers. If local circumstances or any other accidental causes dispose them to attend, you furnish their priests with means of which they will not be slow to avail themselves of withdrawing them again. Why, then, not complete the work which you have begun, by withdrawing the Bible, as you have withdrawn the Church formularies, and making the same provision for giving Scriptural instruction to all who wish to receive it, that you have made to secure Church instruction to the children of the Church?'

This is the point from which we and our opponents decidedly diverge. This is, in fact, the difference between the supporters of the National System and the supporters of the Church Education System. And when, by such questions as I have just repeated, we are put upon our defence for stopping short, while our opponents go resolutely on, we say that, however similar the two cases may seem to be, they are really

essentially different, insomuch that though we felt warranted in making the former concession, we could not *salva conscientia* make the latter. And in justification of this distinction we say that, in the concession which we have actually made, there was no surrender of principle; there was no real injury inflicted on those who are the first objects of our care; and that a great, an incalculable benefit was conferred upon those who have the next claim upon our good will and our good offices.

This we say and maintain concerning the concession which we have actually made. But of the further concession which we refuse to make, we say, that we could not make it without surrendering a great principle, and one which we are especially bound to maintain; without failing in our highest duty to the children of the Church, and injuring them deeply in their highest interests; while, so far as the concession succeeded, those whom it was professedly intended to benefit would really not be served, but most materially injured.

As I have already supplied the materials for a full proof of all these points, I may be content here with a very brief one, which will be much more suitable to the time at which we have arrived than a longer one.

In withdrawing the Church formularies from the subjects in which daily instruction was to be given in school hours, as part of the school business, we should be acknowledging, as I have said, nothing more than that they were not essential for a purpose for which they were not framed or intended,—i.e., for the religious instruction of Dissenters. Few will think that in this we are sacrificing any principle, or abandoning any position which we are bound to maintain. And this being the case, we are at liberty to look at the results of this change. As regards the children of the Church, it does not involve the loss to them of instruction in these formularies; which may be given to them, as I have explained, effectually, in another way. And as to the Roman Catholics, I will not add a word to show that the benefit is great indeed to them; so great that it would be hard to use any language in describing it which could fairly be regarded as exaggerated.

But we could not, as I said, go on to make the further concession which we are called upon to make, without sacrificing a fundamental principle. When, to meet the objections of Roman Catholics, not only instruction in the Church formularies is withdrawn from the business of the school, but all instruction in the Holy Scriptures also, we make practically the admission that instruction in the Holy Scriptures is not necessary for Christian education. And here, without going further, assuredly a vital principle is surrendered. But those who go so far cannot avoid going farther. When this last concession is made, on the same grounds others must follow. All occasional religious instruction, and every reference to Scripture, and every use of Scripture, must come to an end; and so every form of religious instruction, stated and occasional, disappear altogether from the school. And this, as you know, is the point to which that System of education has been brought which was originally framed to meet Roman Catholic objections, and which since has been modified as that object required. And now,—by what I have always regarded as a legitimate development of the fundamental principle of the System,—in National schools—such schools as our Clergy, at least all our poorer clergy, are earnestly recommended to keep, and severely blamed for not keeping—during school hours, the Bible is not permitted to be read, or to be quoted, or to be referred to, or to be seen!\*

Now every Clergyman, as I have said, professes to believe, not only that religious education is the most important part of all education, but that all education ought to be based upon it, and that it ought itself to be based upon the Word of God. And when in his own school,—a school, it is to be remembered, established for children, who, speaking generally, receive there all the education that they ever receive,—a Clergyman consents to leave out what he believes to be the most important part of education, and the true foundation of education, is there not an utter abandonment of a most important principle?

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\* Note E, Appendix.

And now let us look briefly at the practical results of this surrender of principle. I endeavoured to show the many and various advantages which were to be derived by the children, who were placed in a school in which there was stated religious instruction daily, including instruction in and through the Word of God—and such occasional application of religious principles, sustained and enforced by references to the Word of God, as circumstances at any period of the day might seem to call for, or to render expedient. I will not recapitulate what I said. But all who in any measure assented to it must feel that a heavy loss indeed would be suffered by the children of the Clergyman's flock, in being deprived of these great advantages. And it is to be remembered that it is not merely that these happy influences would be withdrawn, but that other influences would be called into action,—that they would be trained up in a system which would hide from them the true connexion of religion with common life, and inure them to live and act, to think and feel, independently of it. When, instead of being accustomed, day after day, to hear their own conduct and that of others referred to religious principles, founded upon the true basis of the Word of God, they were praised or blamed, punished or rewarded, without any reference to religion, and without any mention of the Word of God, what could be the result but the formation of an irreligious character,—a character, that is, in which the religious element is wholly wanting, or at least sadly deficient, and in which its place is supplied by some lower, if not absolutely erroneous, principle? Such training alas! will much more certainly result in the formation of an irreligious character, than better training will, in the formation of a religious character.

It will be said that this is supposing that, when it ceases to be a part of the business of the school, religion ceases, altogether, to be the subject of instruction to the scholars, and that they are kept, altogether, in ignorance of the Bible. Whereas, though this certainly may be the case, it as certainly need not be so. For it is plain that there are the same means and opportunities of giving religious instruction and

Scriptural instruction which were supposed sufficient for instruction in the Catechism and the formularies of the Church. And those at least who think that we may trust to such means for this latter part of the religious instruction of the children can hardly consistently regard them as wholly insufficient for the former part.

This will probably be said, but there are, notwithstanding, many very important differences between the two cases,—too many indeed for anything more than a hasty glance at them. In the first place, as has been already pointed out, the evil influences of a surrender of principle are confined altogether to one of them. In taking the special religious instruction in the Catechism and formularies of the Church out of the general business of the school, nothing is admitted, except that instruction in our Church Catechism and formularies is not an absolutely essential part of the education of children who are not members of the Church. In taking away the remaining part, and conducting the school without it, it is practically admitted that religious instruction, and instruction in the Bible, are not an essential part of the education of Christian children. These are very different admissions. Few will think that in the former there is any surrender of principle; while there are at least as few, I hope, who will not feel that in the latter there would be a surrender of a vital principle.

Again, as to the object of teaching, with a view to making the children acquainted with the subjects taught. The means proposed are instruction to be given out of school hours. Now, there can be no doubt that there is some disadvantage connected with such a mode of teaching, whatever be the subject to be taught, but it is a disadvantage which would be light, just in the degree in which the time so occupied was short; and heavy, as the time became longer. The children who were kept in for work, when the rest were dismissed to play, may be expected not to be in the frame most favourable for learning. But the amount of their impatience, and the extent to which it would be a hindrance to their learning would be comparatively trifling in the case of the formularies

of the Church, because a short lesson would suffice for the object. But when to this the Scriptures were added, the time must of course be materially extended. Less than an hour could hardly be thought enough to assign to religious instruction, when it included the object of bringing the children, in the course of their school education, through such a book as the Bible, read even as a common book. And how very reluctantly children would submit day after day to the addition of a whole hour's work to the business of the day; how very impatient they would be at being kept to work for so long, while others were let out to play; how often their minds might be expected to wander after their more fortunate schoolfellows, who had no such extra task, and who were amusing themselves while *they* were working; and under what a grievous disadvantage this branch of education must be carried on, in consequence,—all this is too plain to need being enlarged upon.

I have been speaking merely of the hindrance which this state of feeling would offer to learning the contents of the Bible; and everyone, I think, must feel that it would be a most serious hindrance even to the accomplishment of this lower object. But, assuredly, it must be felt to be a far greater impediment to the higher object of such instruction. Whatever hindrance it might be to getting the Bible into the head, it would be a still more serious one to its obtaining a lodgment in the heart. The state of mind—the distraction and impatience—which would hinder the children from learning, from understanding, and from remembering what they read, would be a still greater hindrance to their feeling it as they ought. While, supposing there were less reason to apprehend that the Bible would be imperfectly taken in, either into the head or the heart, in this mode of teaching it, still it is not to be forgotten that all the wholesome influences upon the children, of which I have said so much,—all the influences which the constant application of Scripture to the course of daily life might be expected to exercise upon them,—would be utterly lost. Nor would the evil effects of such a system be merely negative. On the contrary, as I have just

now endeavoured to show, it might be expected to exercise positive influences of a most injurious kind upon all who were trained up under it. And so his parish school, instead of aiding the Clergyman, as it might and ought, in the religious training of the young, would provide him with the arduous (may we not say? hopeless) task, not only of supplying the manifold deficiencies which the absence of all religious instruction in his school would leave, but also of counteracting the evil influences which such a want must necessarily exercise.

It would seem hard to conceive any amount of good to be done to Roman Catholics which would warrant a Clergyman in consenting to a concession which must inflict such loss and injury upon those who are in a more peculiar manner committed to his charge, and who ought to be the nearest objects of his care. But the truth is, that there is no such benefit to the former, to be set over against the injury to the latter. When the first concession was made to procure the attendance of Roman Catholics upon the Clergyman's school, there was the inestimable advantage bestowed upon them of an acquaintance with the Word of God; and of sound instruction therein, by which its great truths might be impressed upon their minds, and, it might be hoped, often upon their hearts; and, moreover, they were brought within the range of all those happy influences which I have endeavoured to show ought to be exercised by a system in which religion was brought to bear continually upon daily life, and the Holy Scriptures were referred to as often as any occasion for such references might arise. That was an inestimable benefit to all who would receive it. But if, to increase the number of Roman Catholic scholars, the Bible also were removed from the schools,—supposing that the change were effectual for its purpose—how different the result would be, we know; but let us suppose that the change effected all that it was intended to effect, and that large numbers attended the parish schools in consequence,—what would be the advantage to them, to be set over against the loss and injury which would be inflicted upon the children of

the Church? The schools which Roman Catholic children attended would no longer give religious education,—the children would not learn the Scriptures,—the whole advantage to them would be the secular education which they would receive. Suppose that were better than they would otherwise obtain, still, what right have we to say that we should be doing more good to Roman Catholics by giving the benefit of improved secular education to a large number of them, than by giving the benefit of the same secular education combined with a sound knowledge of Scripture and sound instruction therein,—to a smaller number of them? What ground or warrant have we to suppose that we should be doing as much good in the former case as in the latter? Surely we cannot maintain that we should, without forgetting the nothingness of time as compared with eternity.

Is it too much to say, that we are forgetting the real relation of time to eternity, when we set all the other advantages which Roman Catholics are deriving from our schools above, or upon a level with, the advantage of being made acquainted with those Scriptures which *can make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus?* Surely the right view of the case is, that the strongest reason for desiring that Roman Catholic children should attend our schools is, that they may obtain this knowledge. And if we sent those who attended them forth with an acquaintance with the great truths which the Bible contains, and, moreover, with such an acquaintance with the Book itself, as the great depository of these truths, that hereafter, in times of trial,—whether of temptation or sorrow,—they might not only call to mind some of the lessons and the principles which they had been taught out of the Bible, but might be disposed to turn to the Book itself for the strength or the comfort which it is able to give in our hour of need,—if we did this, I say, for the Roman Catholic children attending our schools, however few they were, can it be doubted that we should be doing more for the glory of God and the good of man than if we imparted the benefits of secular education to any number of them, however great?

But it is truly said in the Prelates' Address, that this question,—the question of retaining or withdrawing the Scriptures as a part of the daily business of the school,—is not merely one of the amount of good which will be done to the Roman Catholic children by keeping the Bible in its proper place, and the loss therefore that will be incurred by them, if it be not kept there, but, in addition, of the amount of positive injury which would be inflicted upon them, and upon our own children also, by the removal of the Bible from the schools of the Clergy, and more especially as the act of the Clergy themselves.

Of all the questions on which our Reformed Church and the Church of Rome are opposed, there is not one in which the opposition is more decided, nor one in which the interests at stake are of higher importance, than the question of the use of the Holy Scriptures. Under whatever circumstances a Reformed Church were placed, it would be its duty to uphold the fundamental principle of the Reformation with reference to this momentous question. But when such a Church is placed in the midst of Roman Catholics, it seems to be more especially called upon steadfastly to maintain the principle, and to be watchful that it does not, by any of its acts, or any of its omissions, impair in any degree its power of maintaining it effectively. And our Church, which is unhappily so placed, has always distinctly and firmly declared the right and duty of all to read the Word of God, and rejected and protested against the authority which the Church of Rome claims of restraining her members from exercising this right and discharging this duty.

This great principle of the Church, all her members, in their respective places, are bound steadfastly to maintain. But the obligation rests more especially upon her Clergy. It is a service which they owe to God, the Author of that Word; and to man, to whom that Word is given, *to be a light unto his feet, and a lantern unto his path*, all the days of his dark pilgrimage here below. It is alike for the glory of God and the good of man that the Word of God should have *free course*. And every man's best interests and his weightiest re-

sponsibilities are involved in the humble and diligent use of this divine gift. From such a use of it, our Roman Catholic fellow countrymen are restrained; and the best hope of delivering them from the usurped authority by which they are deprived of their rights lies in the steady maintenance of this great Protestant principle by the ministers of the Church.

The spiritual tyranny in this regard under which Roman Catholics suffer is often defended and enforced by representations of the dangers which the free reading of the Scriptures brings, at least to the unlearned and the young. And our Clergy have therefore been often, and are still continually, called upon to support the principle which they maintain, by refuting such calumnies against the Bible, and showing, both from its nature and from its own testimony, that it is fitted and intended for the young and the simple, as well as for the aged and the wise,—that its true character is, that it *giveth understanding to the simple*, that it *maketh wise the simple*, and that it enables *the young man to cleanse his way*. But how would it weaken the force of all his testimony to the truth and vital importance of this great principle, and of all his professions of zeal for the maintenance of it, if, in order to have a larger attendance of Roman Catholic children in his school, a Clergyman were to enter into a compromise to withhold the Word of God from them and from the children of his own communion too during school hours,—and at such times to avoid any reference to it, and to keep it carefully hidden from the sight of both!

To the Roman Catholic children who were allowed to attend, what direct injury would be done, by the sanction which would thus be given to all that they had ever been taught of the dangerous tendencies of the Bible, when they found that the rules of the Clergyman's own school were framed in accommodation to the false principles and unfounded claims of the Church of Rome! Whatever he might say against it upon other occasions, would not his acts effectually contradict his words? Would he not be giving by his acts, more impressively than he could by words, his sanction to this false principle; and

would he not be aiding, more effectively than he could by words, the tyranny which is exercised to enforce it? And would he not be, at the same time, running a fearful risk of impairing the reverence with which the children of his own flock had been taught to look up to the Word of God, and of weakening or confusing their sense of the duty of reading and hearing it?

This the great majority of the Clergy resolved that they would not do, *God being their helper!* They resolved that, though they could conscientiously, and therefore would, concede so much to the unhappy religious divisions of the country as not to make instruction in the Catechism and formularies of the Church a part of the daily school business, so as to require the children of other religious communions who were in attendance upon their schools to learn them, they could not with a safe conscience, and therefore that they would not, make the same concession as regarded the Word of God. They resolved that instruction in the Word of God was to be daily a part of the business of the school, to be received by all children in attendance, as instruction in the other subjects which the school course embraces.

And I trust that this review of the grounds of their decision is abundantly sufficient to vindicate it. I trust, indeed, that it has shown not only that it would be unquestionably the duty of the Clergy to carry on their schools upon this Rule, if only the children of the Church were to be provided for, but that the extension of their schools, so as to include Roman Catholic children in their operation, offers no reason or warrant for any change in the Rule. On the contrary, it has, I hope, appeared that, if it were allowable to determine the question of rescinding or maintaining the Rule altogether by the amount of good that is to be done to Roman Catholics by our schools, there ought to be no doubt whatever of the duty of maintaining it. Their highest interests, no less than the highest interests of the Church children, are involved in the maintenance of it. And the conclusion to which we came, as to the duty of the Clergyman, when we considered only the case of the latter—the case of the children of the flock,

who are the nearest objects of his care—is so far from being overthrown or shaken by looking beyond these to the children of Roman Catholics,—who are in the next degree objects of interest to him,—that on the contrary it is thereby strongly confirmed.

But it will be said that neither is this conclusion derived from a consideration of the actual state of the case with which the Clergyman has to deal. ‘In fact, it not only leaves out a part of the case, but that which is by far the most important part—that part which has led to the change of opinion which has been referred to, and upon which chiefly that change is justified by those who have avowed it. It is not for the sake of Roman Catholic children, but for the sake of the children of the Church, and for the sake of the Church itself, that they have been led to think that the Rule ought to be no longer insisted upon. It has cut us off from State aid. The Society, which was framed to aid the Clergy in carrying on the schools in which this Rule was established and conducted has done its utmost for the objects for which it was founded, and the Clergy have made large sacrifices in the same cause. But, in spite of all exertions and all sacrifices, the means of supporting our schools are often miserably inadequate. Many of these schools are in consequence very inefficient; and the evils of the defective education which they give to our poorer children are augmented by the state of the schools in which the children of the same class of other communions are receiving education. For while, under the disadvantages of inadequate funds, the schools of the Church Education Society have been deteriorating, those in connexion with the National Board, which has unlimited funds at its command, have been improving, so that now their superiority is universally acknowledged, and the children sent forth from them must, in all the walks of life in which hereafter they meet the children of the Church Education schools, have the advantage over them which a superior education gives. Such an advantage must have been great at all times, but it never

was so great as in our own times. And surely it cannot be right for us to subject those children, whose well-being is to such an extent committed to us, to such grievous disadvantages,—disadvantages which they must feel all their life long, and under which the Church of which they are members must suffer so severely. Few in numbers, low in political power, how can the Church sustain itself, if the mass of its members, man for man, are inferior in education to the members of other communions in the same class of life ?’

This is a line of argument which cannot be new to any one present. From the very beginning of this most unhappy movement, none of the means employed to detach the Clergy from the cause of the Society seem to have been more relied upon than alarming representations of this kind, of the injury which their adherence to it must inevitably entail upon the Church. But these efforts to mislead them have not been left without some attempt to counteract them. In the Letter to which I have so often referred, I endeavoured to show—1. That the superiority of the National Schools to those of the Church Education Society was greatly overrated in such statements, and that consequently the disadvantages which the Church was likely to suffer from the inferiority of the education given to the children of the Church were greatly exaggerated. And 2. That even were such representations correct in both particulars, it did not follow that the interests of the Church would be injured by the adherence of the Clergy to the Society, and that they would be promoted by their transferring their Schools to the National Board. This inference could only be sustained by keeping out of view a most important part of the case. And I endeavoured to show that, when the whole was taken into consideration, it would be found to lead to a directly opposite inference; so that, in fact, if it were allowable to decide the question, which of the two courses the Clergy ought to take, by a comparison of the consequences to the Church which were likely to follow from them respectively, there would be the most decisive reasons for abiding by the one which they had so long pursued; and

that they could not abandon it, as they were importunately urged to do, without inflicting not only deep discredit, but deadly injury, upon the Church.\*

But though I thought it right and necessary to show that these alarming predictions rested upon no good foundation, I was much more anxious to impress upon all to whom my Letter was addressed, and upon all, indeed, into whose hands it might fall, that, were such predictions ever so well grounded, they ought not to be influenced by them, but that, whatever were to be the consequences, in this life, of their perseverance, and to whatever interests, they ought steadily to persevere.

This, however, supposes that we are really in the path of duty; and that this is the case is what I have been endeavouring to prove once more to-day. I have endeavoured to prove to-day, that in adopting at the first the Rule in reference to religious education which is the leading distinction of the System upon which their schools are conducted, the Clergy acted as their highest duty to the children of their own communion who are committed to their care required them to act; and that they could not afterwards abandon or relax that Rule, as they have been so long and in such a variety of ways urged and tempted to do, without failing not only in their first duty to the children of the Church, but to the children of other communions also, and especially to the Roman Catholic children who might attend their schools; and, moreover, that they could not give way upon this point without also failing in one of the most important duties of their high office as Ministers of our Reformed Church,—a duty, in the faithful discharge of which, the best and most enduring interests of all their parishioners, young and old, Protestant and Roman Catholic, are most deeply involved.

It must be felt that these positions, if they were themselves established, would furnish a complete vindication of the views of

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\* *Letter*, pp. 29-45.

their duty, upon which the supporters of our Society have acted hitherto, and upon which they continue to act. And that they have been established, I venture to hope. I am well aware, indeed, that the proof of them which I have given might be presented in a more impressive and convincing form. But I cannot but feel confident that when what has been said is honestly considered, it will be found to amount to a full and satisfactory proof of them. It is needless to say that this vindication has not been entered into for the satisfaction of those to whom it has been addressed. Those to whom I have been speaking cannot be supposed to need for themselves any such formal justification of the principles on which they have been acting. They cannot but understand them thoroughly. For after they had long upheld them, under serious difficulties and disadvantages, they were called on to reconsider them not very long since, under circumstances that tried the sincerity and the steadfastness of all the supporters of the Society severely—some of them, indeed, too severely—and they then deliberately reaffirmed them, and resolved anew to act upon them.

Neither is it intended for the whole of the minority of our brethren who are not upon our side on this question, but only for what I fear forms but a small proportion of them. From a very great number of them, a fair hearing for a defence of our Society could hardly be expected. But there are some who only do us injustice through ignorance. And upon these a fair and full statement of the principles upon which we have been acting may be expected to produce some impression.

But, however that may be,—whatever be the effect that it may produce upon them, it seemed to be clearly called for by circumstances. When one to whom we owe and willingly render so much respect, and whose judgment must carry such weight, both in England and in Ireland, had, after careful examination of the case, pronounced, however mildly, an unfavourable judgment, both upon the wisdom of the course which we have taken, and upon the soundness of the views of duty upon which we have taken it, I think it cannot but

be felt that such a vindication of both as I have offered was due alike to ourselves and to our cause.

I hope that this plea will serve as a sufficient excuse with your lordship and the great number of my brethren, who must have been rather impatient of such a lengthened argument to prove what you know as well, and hold as firmly, as I do. And besides the reasons which I have given to justify such an occupation of the time of the meeting, it is not to be forgotten that it is wholesome and needful for us to have what we believe most firmly, and know best, brought back from time to time to our minds. And to those who have derived no other advantage from it, this review has not been barren of profit or of interest, if it has led them, as it ought, to thank God anew that He has enabled them to choose the path of duty in this matter, and to persevere in it hitherto; and to pray to Him, that He will enable them still to go on, and to tread it steadfastly to the end.

I ought to have ended long since, but I am unwilling even now to sit down, without saying something more directly to the portion of the meeting which, as I said at the beginning, I felt to be an object of special interest, and which I may now add, I cannot look upon without special solicitude,—I mean my younger brethren, who, knowing, as they must know, under what difficulties and disadvantages the great cause of Scriptural education has been supported hitherto; and knowing, as they must also know, that all who will support it for the time to come must encounter the same difficulties, and suffer the same disadvantages, have, nevertheless, cast in their lot with the older supporters of the cause,—prepared to labour with them, and, if need be, to suffer with them, while they remain, and to take their place when they are gone.

It is in no distrust of the entire sincerity in which they have embarked in this great cause, but under a deep sense of the severity and subtlety of the temptations by which they

will be assailed, that while I offer a prayer for them that they may be kept steadfast, I address to them a word of warning and advice upon one of the ways in which their steadfastness will be tried. Any of my own Clergy who are present will recognise in what I am about to say, the substance at least, of exhortations and warnings already addressed to themselves. But I hope they will be no less disposed to listen to them attentively than those who hear them for the first time.

The arguments to turn you aside will not be drawn from the injury which perseverance in the course on which you have entered is likely to inflict upon your own interests. They will appeal—as has, been the course of temptation since the very beginning—to higher principles and higher motives, which are less calculated to alarm the conscience. The appeal will be, as I have already stated, on behalf of the interests of the children committed to your care, which are sacrificed by your perseverance in a cause that cuts you off from the means of giving them an efficient education, and on behalf of the interests of the Church, which are imperilled in various ways by the same obstinate adherence to this desperate cause. I gave this appeal fully before; and I at the same time stated that there was very gross exaggeration in the statement of the evil consequences of your perseverance—whether the evil spoken of as actually experienced, or as to be apprehended,—and that I had elsewhere attempted to prove that this was the case. But I said that I was much more anxious to make it understood and felt, that if these statements were nothing beyond the simple truth, it would still be your duty to persevere. And it is this last point which I am anxious now to expand and enforce.

When we have to choose between two lines of action, and there are no considerations of duty or principle to determine which we should take, our choice may and ought to be determined by a comparison of the consequences to which they are likely respectively to lead. But when we are able to see that by taking the one course we are maintaining, and by the other abandoning the maintenance of some principle which God's Word, or His voice within us, teaches us that it is our

duty to maintain, then there can be no doubt that it is His will that we should take the former course, and leave the consequences to Him. And however clear may be the prospect that is set before us, that the consequences of taking what we have thus learned to be the right way will be injurious to our own interests, or to any other interests, public or private, we may be sure that this foresight is not given to us to keep us back, but to try and exercise our faith. And if, in the course of Divine Providence, the result should justify our anticipations, and we should be made to suffer or to witness the consequences which we have foreseen, we are just as little to suppose that this experience is sent to us to drive us back or to turn us aside. We may be, and ought to be, assured that it is intended further to try and exercise our faith and our patience. And whatever be the extent of these evil consequences, and whatever interests they may affect, we are not to be led for a moment to doubt that we ought to have entered upon the course that we have taken, or to repent that we did not attempt to avert its disadvantageous consequences by turning back while there was time. We ought to feel sure, on the contrary, that we have acted according to God's will in incurring all these consequences, whatever they may be, rather than in endeavouring to escape from them by going aside in any degree from what He has taught us is the right way.

Whenever, then, we have reason to think that by persevering in what revelation or conscience thus points out to us as the right way, we shall endanger our own interests or any other interests, private or public, for which we feel as for our own, we ought to pray earnestly that we may be enabled to resist the temptation of endeavouring to avert the danger by abandoning our duty, or by taking any apparent mode of escape, which we have not the same warrant for regarding as right and lawful. This we ought to do, even if it were certain that the irregular or wrong way of escape to which we are tempted to have recourse would really avert or lighten the evil. But the truth is that it will, much more frequently, only draw down the evil more certainly upon us, or greatly aggravate

its severity. If such means could secure the end for which we employ them, and turn aside the calamity that we dread, whatever it may be, this would be but a poor recompense for the displeasure of God, which we should have incurred by having recourse to them. But the result will be far more frequently that we shall incur both evils,—that, besides displeasing Him, we shall render the calamity that we fear more inevitable or more severe.

What impressive lessons to this effect do we find in that Book in which *the things that happened to men of old for our ensamples are written for our admonition!* What a lesson and a warning of this kind—to take but a single instance—does the case of Saul at Gilgal supply! If ever there were a case in which a man was constrained to do wrong,—if ever there were a case in which the necessity of doing a little wrong, in order to protect great interests from injury or even to preserve them from destruction, might be pleaded, here assuredly was one!

We are told that the Philistines, in great wrath against the king and the whole nation, had assembled against him a mighty army, *tens of thousands of chariots, and thousands of horsemen, and people as the sand on the sea-shore for multitude.* The force that Saul had collected together on the opposite side, was from the first a half-armed, almost an unarmed, rabble, and it melted away like snow at the approach of this mighty host. They fled in terror, and hid themselves *in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places and in pits.* Some even crossed the Jordan, and left the land altogether in their dismay. A small band alone remained with the king; and they, we are told, *followed him trembling.* Saul was to wait for seven days for Samuel, who was to offer the sacrifice by which Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, was to be propitiated, and His blessing asked upon the war. Nothing but His favour and support, and His outstretched arm, could give them success, and how could they hope for this, until the sacrifice was offered?

Samuel delayed his coming; and at any moment, the host of the Philistines might fall upon them, and force them to

engage before the offering was made: and then what could avert their destruction? The courage of the few who had hitherto held together, sank still lower, and they too began to scatter. All seemed in danger. Not his own throne only, but the very existence of God's Church and people, seemed hanging in the balance. Everything seemed to depend upon keeping together the few that still remained with him, and keeping alive their courage. Yet how was this possible, while they knew that the burnt offerings and the peace offerings were not yet offered? The day was advancing, and still Samuel did not appear. Could it be wrong for Saul to perform the office himself? No doubt, in ordinary cases it would be better to do exactly as he was commanded—neither less nor more. But this was not an ordinary case. It was one of those desperate cases, if ever there were one, which dispense with all ordinary rules. He might be justified in daring the manifest consequences of delay, so far as they affected himself;—perhaps, even so far they affected his posterity. But there were still higher and more sacred interests concerned: and could it be right to hold back, when the well-being, nay, the very existence of God's Church, was at stake? Does not God convey His will to us by the circumstances in which His providence places us, as clearly as if it were expressed in words? And did not the circumstances in which His Church and people were then placed declare distinctly that it was not His will that the offering should be longer delayed?

Thoughts like these, no doubt, were rushing through the mind of the impatient king, and bearing down the scruples which held him back from disobeying the Divine command. And they prevailed. Samuel still delayed; and, then, Saul *forced himself*, as he said, *and offered a burnt offering*. You know what followed. The act of disobedience had hardly been committed when, on the instant, Samuel appeared. The rash monarch had, therefore, displeased God to no purpose. Had his patience endured but for a little longer, all that he had done irregularly would have been done

regularly; the end would have been attained by lawful means, and the sin escaped. But this was not all. You know that not only was God's displeasure emphatically declared against the act, but that it was declared to be as foolish as it was sinful. That the Prophet testified to him in God's name, that this act of disobedience had actually brought upon him the very part which touched him most nearly, and which he dreaded most, of the whole evil which it was committed to avert,—that if he had continued patient and faithful in the trial to which he had been exposed, the kingdom would have been confirmed to him and to his posterity; but that now it had passed away from him and them, as the punishment of his faithless impatience: "*And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue. . . . because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee*" (1 Sam. xiii. 13, 14).

What an impressive lesson does this read to us! And how ought we to pray, and especially at this season, for ourselves and our brethren, that it may be imprinted deeply upon our hearts; and that whatever dangers may seem to threaten the Church, we may be preserved from the folly and the sin of endeavouring to avert them, by deviating, even in the slightest degree, from the path in which we have satisfied ourselves that it is the will of God that we should tread!

And if we offer such prayers in sincerity, we shall be careful to avoid everything that is calculated to bring about the evil that we deprecate. When we have once deliberately determined, in the present or in any like case, what it is the will of God that we should do, I do not say that we ought never to reconsider the grounds on which we have come to the conclusion, but I do say that we ought to be very slow to engage in such a reconsideration, under the influence of circumstances which make it desirable that we should find out reasons for coming to an opposite conclusion. If by any

new circumstances which have become known to us, or any new arguments which have been brought before us, an honest doubt has been raised in our minds of the soundness of the reasoning which conducted us to the conclusion, we have sufficient grounds for considering the question again. But if it be the apprehension or the experience of the consequences of acting upon the conclusion,—if it be apprehension of the injury which it is likely to inflict, or experience of the injury which it is actually inflicting, upon any interests private or public, our own or others'—if it be such fear, or such suffering, that is urging us to reconsider the foundation on which the conclusion rests, we are entering upon a perilous course when we engage in such a revision. It is, in fact, keeping the Moabite messengers in the house *for this night also, that we may see what the Lord will say to us more*. We know what He did say to him who first tried this dishonest course. And if, like him, we have inquired and have found out what God would have us to do in this matter, and if, for whatever reason, we are, like him, shrinking from doing it; and if, like him, in the hope of escaping from the necessity of doing it, we inquire once more what is God's will, have we not reason to fear that we shall be answered in the same way? And if we do discover some flaw in our former reasoning,—find some new arguments on the opposite side,—or see new force in the old arguments; if we find reason to suspect that we were mistaken,—and at last see clearly that we were,—see clearly that it is lawful for us to do what we before saw clearly that we could not lawfully do,—if this be the result of our second inquiry, have we not good grounds to fear that it may be but an answer given in God's displeasure, and that, as in the case of Balaam of old, what seems to us to be an expression of His will, is really but a permission, given to us in His anger, to act upon our own?

We are to be *apt to teach*; and that we may teach soundly we must be ready to learn. But we are not to be *ever learning, and never coming to the knowledge of the truth*. We are to *prove all things*. But it is that we may find *some good*

*thing* which we may *hold fast*. We have had ample time to *prove* the two systems between which we have had to choose. I hope we have done this work honestly,—that we have *proved* them cautiously, patiently, prayerfully. And having, as we trust, found *that which is good*, in God's name, let us *hold it fast!*

## APPENDIX.

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NOTE A.—*On some of the publications referred to in Preface, p. 10.*

I READ most, if not all, the publications referred to as they appeared—some of them hastily, and some carefully; and in going through them, made notes upon the statements or arguments which seemed most to require animadversion or correction.

These notes ran out to a considerable length; but when I determined, for the reasons stated in the Preface, not to take any public notice of the pamphlets in question, they were of course laid aside. It is hardly necessary to say, that I do not take them up now with any view of drawing from them the materials for a detailed review of the publications to which they refer. The interval which has since elapsed adds great force to the reasons which I thought sufficient to justify me in declining to undertake such a review at the time; and I trust that the foregoing pages may be regarded as making a substantive addition to those reasons. Indeed, if I have succeeded in the vindication of the conduct of the Clergy with reference to the National System, which I have attempted in my Speech, it might seem to relieve me altogether from noticing publications, the object of which was to impugn the past course and the present position of the Irish Clergy with reference to the System. But there were not a few points, of more or less importance in themselves, and in their bearing upon the main question, which were discussed and settled (as I think) erroneously in those pamphlets: and some of these points I think it desirable to reconsider. I endeavoured to keep them in view in the proper places in my Speech; but I could not deal with them directly there, without interrupting disadvantageously the course of the argument, and marring its effect. The publication of the Speech, however, seems to offer an opportunity, of which it is advisable to take advantage, of making more direct use of the notes referred to,—and I shall give in this place a selection of them, of course with such alterations, additions, and adaptations as I find necessary. I shall confine myself to a few pamphlets which, for various reasons, it seems most important

to notice; and, among the notes upon them, will choose chiefly those which seem most likely to be useful, either in the way of confirming and guarding the arguments of the Speech, or of correcting the misrepresentations or fallacies connected with the question, which have most misled, or seem most calculated to mislead, the ordinary class of readers. And if I should be sometimes tempted to include some things which appear to concern myself or the author immediately under consideration more than the merits of the question, I hope such instances will be found rare, and that it will be seen that, even then, the more important object is not entirely lost sight of.

I shall begin with the pamphlet upon which, I understand, that a considerable proportion of those who have changed their views upon the question are disposed to rely, as furnishing a justification of the change.

“IS IT A SIN?”—*An Inquiry into the Lawfulness of complying with the Rule of the National Board relative to Religious Instruction.* Dublin, 1860.

The author of this pamphlet represents himself as *having long and anxiously considered the bearings* of the subject which he proposes to discuss, and as having at last ended in satisfying himself that the question in his title-page is to be answered in the *negative*. This pamphlet contains *some of the arguments which weighed with him* in coming to this conclusion; and they are published, he informs us, *in the hope of dispelling some of the misconceptions which even yet prevail* with reference to this protracted controversy.

The great majority of the Irish Clergy, as I have stated (p. 38), have agreed to answer the same question in the *affirmative*, as regards themselves. They do not pass any judgment upon others; but for themselves, as I have said, they have decided, that *to comply with the Rules of the National Board relative to Religious Education* would be a *sin*,—not in the narrow and false sense in which the word is limited to the violation of some express command or express prohibition, but in the larger and truer sense, in which every act that is against the will of God,—however His will be made known to us,—every departure from duty, every holding back from duty, and every short-coming in duty, is a *SIN*.

It is the object of the foregoing pages to explain and vindicate this answer; and if they have attained their object, they supply the best refutation of this pamphlet—a refutation which would

obviate the necessity of any examination in detail of the arguments which it contains. Still, I do not think that it ought to be passed over altogether. The author evidently comes forward to settle a controversy which has been long kept up by heated and prejudiced disputants, who have been going on arguing intemperately and loosely, without coming to an end, and who, without some such interposition, might go on interminably in the same way. He betrays no misgivings as to his qualifications for the task in which he engages, or as to his success in the performance of it. He seems, indeed, never to doubt that he is throughout reasoning dispassionately, and closely, and conclusively; and that if only he can find readers accessible to argument, they must be convinced.

How far he is right as to the ill success of his predecessors in the controversy, I will not attempt to settle; but I am obliged to say, that I think he forms rather an over-estimate of his own fitness—morally or intellectually—to supply their deficiencies.

And, first, I cannot but think that he is mistaken as to the freedom from passion and prejudice, which he seems to regard as one of the points in which he has clearly the advantage of most who have gone before him in this controversy.—The style of his pamphlet is certainly, for the most part, calm: but I do not feel able to say the same of the spirit in which it is written. When a man has seen reason to abandon a cause which he has long maintained, one could not be surprised if his defection raised some feelings of irritation in the minds of those who continue unchanged; but one would hardly anticipate that he would feel in the same way towards them. And yet, as a matter of experience, we know that this is even a more sure result of such defections than the other. Whether it is that the steadfastness of those who abide by their principles is felt to be a reproach to one who changes them; or that there is a certain soreness of feeling, without any external provocation, connected with such changes; or whether it is a particular case of the general law (however that law is itself to be accounted for) that we find it harder to forgive an injury which we inflict than one which we suffer;—it is certain that one who abandons a cause which he has long upheld almost invariably looks with feelings of bitterness—more or less, according to his temperament—upon those who abide by it. And, under great calmness of style, there are not wanting very clear indications that the author of the pamphlet before us is not exempt from this common frailty.

Then as to his arguments—which is a matter of more importance—there is an amount of looseness, confusion, and inconsequent reasoning in the pamphlet, which would be really curious in so deliberate a publication, even if it were not put forward in evident good faith as at all points unassailable.

But that it exercises such an influence upon others, it would be little worth while—at least for any one who has any serious occupation for his time—to take any trouble to disturb a writer's good opinion of his work. It is often necessary to do so, however, to guard others from being misled; for arguments which are put forward with a quiet confidence in their conclusiveness by an author, are often unsuspectingly received by more than half his readers as if they were all that they ought to be. I believe that this has been the case to some extent in the present instance, and I think, therefore, that a brief examination of some of the arguments which are very confidently relied upon in this pamphlet as establishing the *lawfulness* of compliance with the distinctive Rule of the National System, may be a very useful and, for some readers, a necessary supplement to what is done in the Charge to establish its *unlawfulness*. I mean to confine the examination to a few leading specimens, and shall be anxious to make it as brief as I can.

The argument of the pamphlet may be said to open with the following passage:—"The State having, then, come to what seems a *final* decision on this matter, it only remains for us to consider—what all along was the most pressing question, as it respects our own duty—*whether we can lawfully accept the aid of the State on the proposed terms?* The question, thus put, is limited to the case of the *non-vested* schools. The duty of the Clergy in reference to the *vested* schools, as the Archbishop of Dublin has truly remarked, does not admit of a doubt. In availing themselves of the opportunities which the rules of schools of the latter class afford, to give religious instruction to the children of their own communion, they enter into no engagement, and make no compromise."—(p. 8.)

Here seems rather an ominous stumble at the threshold. The question, *Whether the Clergy can lawfully accept the aid of the State on the proposed terms*, has been always understood to mean, Can they lawfully take the aid towards supporting their schools which the State offers through the National Board, on the condition of conducting them according to the Rules of the National System? This is the question. But there are two classes of schools to

which it refers—*vested* and *non-vested* schools. The author, however notes that *the question thus put is limited to the case of the latter*. Why? It is surely equally necessary to settle it as regards the former. No doubt it is; but then it appears that with respect to them it is already settled. “The duty of the Clergy in reference to the *vested* schools, as the Archbishop of Dublin has truly remarked, does not admit of a doubt.” Well, that is what a great majority of the Clergy have long settled for themselves. The conditions imposed upon the patron of a *vested* school are the same as those to which the patron of a *non-vested* school is subject, with an addition to which both Protestant and Roman Catholic patrons object, and which, indeed, many regard as more objectionable than all the rest put together. In *vested* schools, “Such pastors or other persons as shall be approved of by the parents or guardians of the children respectively shall have access to them *in the school-room*, for the purpose of giving them religious instruction there, at convenient times, to be appointed for that purpose.”—(*Rules and Regulations of the Commissioners of National Education*, sec. iv. sub-sec. 8.) Now, this is regarded as in the highest degree objectionable, not merely by the opponents of the National System, but by many of its supporters; insomuch that many who have no scruple in becoming patrons of *non-vested* schools, would absolutely refuse to take the same office in connexion with *vested* schools. (*Evidence, Lords’ Committee, 1854. Cross, 332, 339.*)

This being the case, one could not be surprised to hear that even the writer of this pamphlet regards the question as settled, so far as *vested* schools are concerned. But on looking a little farther, it is seen that he regards the question as settled, not in the negative, but the affirmative! However, the wonder and perplexity which this discovery is likely to raise are abated, though not without being succeeded by the same feelings on other grounds, when one sees that the question which he regards as decided affirmatively, is really not a question of the lawfulness of a Clergyman’s becoming himself the patron of a *vested* National School, but of his going into a *vested* National School of which another is the patron, to give religious instruction to any Church children who may be in attendance, as the rules for *vested* schools allow him to do, at certain convenient times, to be fixed on beforehand for the purpose.

This is, no doubt, an important question in its place, but it is entirely different from the question proposed—*viz., Is it lawful*

*for the Clergy to take aid from the State on the terms proposed in the National System?* And, in point of fact, among those who agree in answering this latter question in the negative, the other has been always an open question, and has been settled by them, each for himself—by one in one way, and by another in another. I have nothing to do with it here. I only wish to remark that this is really the question decided affirmatively in this place by the writer of the pamphlet. And that the question which it would appear more natural, and more important to decide here, and which, accordingly, some of his readers probably think that he has decided—viz., the question of the lawfulness of a Clergyman's taking aid from the National Board for a *vested* National School of which he is himself the patron—is not decided affirmatively, or at all. or even considered either here, or so far as I can see, anywhere else in the pamphlet.

Leaving the question, then, as to *vested* schools apparently settled, but really untouched, the author proceeds to the consideration of the question with reference to *non-vested* schools, and sets about his work with great exactness, beginning by dividing the terms on which aid is offered to us by the State into two conditions: "What, then, are these terms? In the first place, *every child* must be allowed to receive the benefit of the *secular* education given in the schools, and of *that only* if his parents forbid more. And, secondly, the managers and teachers must undertake to refrain from religious instruction during the hours set apart for united secular teaching. Let us consider the former of these conditions."—(pp. 8, 9.)

And here is his mode of considering it:—"The State has offered large means to aid us in carrying on our schools, and it gives us, moreover, large discretionary powers in their management. It only requires, as a primary condition, that the children of all denominations shall share in the benefits of the *secular* instruction given them, and in *these only* if their parents forbid more. Is it *unlawful* in us to submit to this condition? In other words, is it wrong to communicate a temporal advantage to a fellow-creature, unless we are at liberty to accompany it with a spiritual blessing?"—(p. 9.)

To this last question the author confidently answers—"No candid and thoughtful person will say that it is." This would seem to be a very safe position; but the author, to make assurance double sure, proceeds to fortify it by reasons drawn from various sources: (1) "Such a maxim is contradicted by the whole course

of daily life"—for, as he truly says, "There are few who would withhold bread from the hungry unless they consented to receive the Bible with it;" and (2) "the teaching of our Lord Himself accords with this"—especially in the parable of the good Samaritan of which an analysis is given; but I suppose it is not necessary that I should transcribe it; (3) and, thirdly and lastly, "the conduct of the Irish Clergy in their respective parishes is, and always has been, a noble refutation of the supposed principle we are considering;" as is shown more especially by their benevolent and unproselytizing exertions in times of famine and sickness, to which, in conclusion, a just tribute is paid.

This demonstration, albeit it is only threefold, might almost satisfy the poet who extols the

"Commentators plain,  
Who with no deep researches vex the brain;  
Who from the dark and doubtful love to run,  
And hold their glimmering tapers to the sun;  
Who simple truth with ninefold reasons back,  
And guard the point no enemies attack."

No reasonable reader, at all events, will be disposed to complain of the proof as insufficient. But there probably will be not a few who will think that some of the pains which have been bestowed upon it would have been more profitably expended in proving what is rather more doubtful, and what the author was certainly concerned to prove. But, as the caustic bard from whom I have just quoted sly hints, the class of writers whom he describes are apt to compensate for their redundancy upon the plain and certain by some deficiencies upon the doubtful and difficult. And certainly our author furnishes here a striking illustration of this compensatory process.

The proposition which he was concerned to prove is, that it is not unlawful for the Clergy to carry on their schools under the condition that all children who present themselves shall be admitted to receive the benefits of the *secular* education given therein, and no more—that is to say, none of the *religious* instruction given therein—if their parents forbid. This he proposes to prove, not directly, but by proving what he gives as an equivalent proposition; the same, in fact, *in other words*. Of course, if the two propositions are equivalent, proving either is enough. But it seems very strange that the author should imagine that he might take for granted that they are. He says, truly, that the proposition which he proves, *ex abundantia*, is one to which every candid and

thoughtful person will assent. But it may be hoped that he is not himself so uncandid and thoughtless as to deny that some candid and thoughtful persons may be found among the supporters of the Church Education Society,—particularly if, as it seems may be collected from his pamphlet, he was himself to be numbered among its supporters until very lately. And he must know that while they, as he truly says, are ready to assent to the second proposition, they deny the first. *They* therefore do not consider the two propositions as equivalent. And as it is with them that he has to do, would it not have been wiser if, instead of proving so elaborately what he knows that they are prepared to admit without proof, he had endeavoured to prove to them what he knows that they are equally prepared steadily to deny?

The task which he has chosen, however, if it be somewhat less necessary than the one which he declined, is certainly far easier, as he would have found if he had tried the latter. He would have found it very hard, I think, to prove, though he has found it so easy to assume, the equivalence of the two propositions. And, in fact, in assuming it, he has been guilty of such a breach of the most elementary rules of technical logic as a very slight tincture of that useful though humble art ought to have secured him from committing. But, indeed, it ought not to require any acquaintance with the artificial rules of reasoning to enable a man to understand, that, in such a case, something might depend upon the relation between the parties; something, upon the nature of the *temporal* good; something, upon the nature of the *spiritual* good; and something, perhaps, upon other circumstances connected with a particular case, which might make an act or mode of proceeding right in that case, while yet no one would say that the same act would be right universally; or which, *vice versâ*, might make an act wrong in a particular case, which no one would maintain to be wrong in all cases.

And if there were any one for whom even this mode of considering the question was too abstract, still it might be supposed that a very moderate endowment of common sense would be enough to suggest to him that it might be very right in all the cases enumerated by him, and in others too, to be satisfied with conferring a temporal benefit, without insisting upon bestowing also a spiritual benefit upon the same objects; and yet very wrong to allow of the same severance in the case with which we are concerned. It might be very right, for example, for one who had bread to spare to give some to a hungry fellow-creature, even

though he refused to take a Bible at the same time ; and very right for the good Samaritan to have relieved the wounded Jew, without requiring him to worship in Mount Gerizim ; and very right,—“when the destroying angel made havoc of human life,” and “when famine stalked through the land,” very right for the Irish Clergy, in their respective parishes, to have done all that they did to relieve want and sickness among their Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen, without insisting upon their becoming Protestants ;—that all this might be very right, and yet that it might be very wrong for the Clergy in their respective parishes to accept aid for the support of their parish schools upon terms which would oblige them to admit into them the children of these Roman Catholics, allowing them to receive the *secular* instruction, and (if their parents so wished) to withdraw from the *religious* instruction, given therein—even if these terms did not bind them, as they do,—while these children were in attendance, not only not to read the Bible to them or to any others, but not to quote from it, nor to refer to it, nor to permit it to appear in the school!

Whether this would be right or wrong, I do not mean to consider here. I have endeavoured to settle that question elsewhere. My object here is merely to direct attention to the quality of the reasoning which the author employs to settle it in another way. And outside the pages of his pamphlet, I do not think it would be easy to find anything approaching to the foregoing specimen : within them, however, we have not to go far for a close parallel to it.

My readers will remember that the *second* condition which the author found in the *terms* was, that “the managers and teachers must undertake to refrain from *religious* instruction during the hours set apart for united secular teaching.”

The question for the Clergy is, Is it lawful to submit to this condition? The object of the author is to show that it is ; and here is the way in which he sets about it :—

“Let us now consider the second question, upon the solution of which our duty in this matter depends—the question of the lawfulness of refraining from Scriptural teaching, at any time or under any circumstances.”

Here, again, it is very hard to believe that any ordinarily constituted mind, even were it altogether without dialectical training, could regard this interchange of questions as legiti-

mate. Still I am not disposed to doubt that the interchange is made in good faith; but certainly if it be, I am obliged to regard it as a very remarkable example of the blinding power of prejudice, for I cannot believe that the author would pass unsuspectingly a similar proceeding on the side to which he is opposed. If one who was attempting to prove the *unlawfulness* of submitting to the restriction imposed by the National System had said, 'The question of our duty in this matter depends upon the solution of the question, Is it lawful for us to refrain from Scriptural teaching, at *all* times and under *all* circumstances?' he would have figured, I have no doubt, in the author's pages as an instructive example of the extent to which men are deprived of common sense by the heat of controversy. And yet it would be precisely his own process, *mutatis mutandis*. The question of the duty of the Clergy in this matter depends upon the solution of this latter question, just in the same sense, and to the same extent, that it does upon the question on which the author says it depends. If the general question which he substitutes for the question really at issue could be answered in the *negative*, the question of the Clergyman's duty in this particular case would be determined in the same way. But, in like manner, it would be determined in the *affirmative*, if the question which I have given as a parallel question on the opposite side could be answered in the *affirmative*. The only *solution*, however, which the former admits of is an *affirmative* one, and the only *solution* which the latter admits is a *negative* one; and when they are so solved respectively, the real question is so far from being solved, that it is just where it was before! It is lawful to refrain from Scriptural teaching *for some time*, and *under certain circumstances*. It is *not* lawful to abstain from Scriptural teaching *at all times* and *under all circumstances*. But whether it is lawful or unlawful in the actual or any other particular case, can only be determined by a consideration of all the circumstances, or at least all the distinctive circumstances, of the case; so that we are so far from solving the particular question by having solved the general one, that to arrive at a solution of the former, we should have to go through precisely the same process that we should have had to go through for the purpose, if the latter had never been solved or proposed!

Indeed, though the author propounds his mode of dealing with both conditions with just the same confidence— as he very well might, for the one is not a whit more erroneous than the other—

he betrays, I think, some misgivings about the process in the second, of which there was no indication with reference to the first; for, though he sets about the *solution* of the general question, he soon brings in considerations which belong to the particular question—the one which the Clergy have actually to determine. These are chiefly intended as a refutation of some arguments of “the opponents of the National System;” but, for the reasons already stated, I do not mean to consider them. I am satisfied to leave them to the answers which they have received elsewhere.\*

The reader who has gone fairly through the specimens which I have given of our author's mode of dealing with his subject will hardly be surprised to hear that he from time to time lights upon what is popularly known by the name of *Nidus Equinus*, and that upon such occasions, he exhibits a full measure of the satisfaction which is commonly felt by the discoverers of that natural curiosity.

Here is a notable instance of the kind referred to, which I select because I believe that the mistake which the author commits is not absolutely confined to him:—

“But there are some who will maintain that there is an essential difference between the cases above mentioned and that of the National Board. A patron who connects his school with the Board is required, it may be said, to enter into ‘an engagement’ to comply with the rules of the System; while in most of the cases to which we have referred, no such ‘pledge’ is required, and the recipient is free. This view was put forward at the late meeting of the Church Education Society, by the nobleman who occupied the chair. We feel sure that, in maintaining this distinction, the speaker was quite sincere; and we know that there are those whose consciences revolt at such a pledge, while they would probably consider themselves at liberty to act under the restrictions imposed if there were no such engagement. But have these persons fairly considered their position? They *know* the rules of the system with which they connect themselves, and they *accept the aid* granted by the State; and yet they do not hold themselves bound, because they have given *no formal*

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\* One of them, with reference to the operation of the distinctive Rule of the System where the misconduct of a scholar requires rebuke on the part of the teacher, will be considered in a more convenient place, in connection with another pamphlet, in another Note.

*engagement!* And surely their case is not improved if they believe that they are free, and yet do not avail themselves of their freedom. We feel sure that the same persons would reject such reasoning as this in the ordinary business of life, in which their judgments were not warped by erroneous views of moral duty.”—(pp. 21, 22.)

I should think that very few indeed, besides the author himself, can need to be informed that all that is here said, from beginning to end, is founded upon an entire mistake, and a mistake which no one had any excuse for committing. It is true that, in stating the objections of the Clergy to the National System, the unlawfulness of *binding themselves* not to give Scriptural or religious instruction to a certain class of children attending their schools has been much insisted upon, and that, in speaking on that point, the words *engagement* and *pledge* have been often used. But in all such cases, the *engagement* and *pledge* intended are the *implied engagement* and *pledge* to obey the rules of the System, which every one gives who voluntarily puts his school under the Board, and accepts aid for its support. Mr. Verschoyle, (now Bishop of Kilmore) for example, in his Evidence before the Lords' Education Committee, states on behalf of the Clergy, that this is the principal objection by which they have been kept from adopting it: he says, that the Clergy felt that *to give a pledge that they would abstain from holding forth the Word of God at certain times, and from certain persons altogether, would be a total violation of a conscientious duty.* And referring to this testimony afterwards in a pamphlet, he says that it was intended to apply to the great majority of the supporters of the Society, *including himself*; and he adds, “I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that it is as applicable to myself to-day as it was in the day that I made it. I feel, *for myself*, that *to give such a pledge* as that required by the National System would be ‘a total violation of a conscientious duty.’”—*Statement of his Case*, p. 5. These statements must have been known to the author of ‘Is it a Sin?’ Does he regard the person who made them as one of those whose judgments are so “warped by erroneous views of moral duty,” that while their consciences revolt against such a *pledge* as the Board requires, because they feel that they would be thereby bound to conform to the rules of the System, they would yet have no scruple in taking aid from the Board to carry on their schools if no such “formal engagement” were necessary, because they would then feel themselves at liberty to observe the rules or not, as they

saw fit? Judging by the direction in which the writer's sympathies seem to flow, I should suppose that he would hardly put the Bishop of Kilmore in this category. And yet, certainly, in his statements of the objections by which the Clergy, and he himself too, were prevented from connecting their schools with the Board, the *pledge* has as distinct and as prominent a place as it has in the speech of the nobleman who presided at the Church Education Meeting in 1860, or in anything written or spoken by anyone else, at any time, or in any place.

I believe that the passage to which I have referred in the Bishop of Kilmore's evidence was received at the time, and that it has been ever since regarded, as a correct statement of the views of the Clergy on whose behalf it was made. And I believe that neither at the time, nor since, did any one understand the *pledge* spoken of to be anything but the *implied* pledge to observe the rules of the System, which, as I before said, everyone voluntarily applying to have his schools taken into connexion by the Board, and accepting aid to carry them on, must be understood to give. I can say for myself, that I heard the evidence delivered, read it afterwards in the Report of the Committee, transcribed it for the press when I was writing my Letter to my Clergy, read it in the printed Letter, and more than once since, and that it never once occurred to me that it had any other meaning. Indeed, I can hardly think that any one could read the whole passage without seeing that the difficulty which was felt by the Clergy was created by the Rule; that it was presumed that in connecting themselves with the System they came under the obligation of the Rule, and so became *pledged* to refrain from giving to certain children in their schools any religious instruction, or making them in any way acquainted with the Word of God.

That the same was the meaning of the noble Chairman to whom our author refers cannot be reasonably doubted. I have no report of his address to the great meeting at which he presided, but I was present and heard him; and though I do not remember the exact words that he used in reference to the *pledge* given by all who connected their schools with the National Board, I can be sure that I should have noticed them and have remembered them, if they conveyed or suggested anything substantially different from what I had so often before heard and read in relation to the same subject. And I can be therefore

sure that the sense put upon them in the pamphlet under consideration entirely misrepresents their real meaning.

I do not, however, mean that the misinterpretation was designed. I am more inclined to think that the author was somewhat perplexed as well as irritated by the unexpected immobility of those who retained their old views upon this question, when he and some others saw that the time had come for taking up new ones; and that he could not see any way of accounting for their blindness and obstinacy, except by the fact that their judgments were "warped by erroneous views of moral duty."

He accordingly evidently regards himself as called upon to administer to *these persons* some moral lessons, intermingled with grave reproofs; and looking about for an occasion to deliver one of these lectures, he has rather hastily caught at this word *pledge*, and discourses upon it, as we have seen, under the view of its meaning which would justify his lecture, without sufficiently considering whether it was the sense in which it was used by those for whom the lecture was intended. I should suppose that I have said enough to satisfy most reasonable readers that the occasion was rather ill chosen; and even the author himself will probably be of the same opinion, when he learns the following fact, which seems to have an important bearing upon the point under consideration.

The only form in which the Clergy could seriously entertain the question of connecting their schools with the National Board would be as non-vested schools. But from the patrons or managers of such schools no express "pledge" or "formal engagement" of conformity to the rules of the Board is required. In the case of a vested school, the premises are vested in the Commissioners, in their corporate capacity; and in the lease by which the site is conveyed to them, there are covenants which are intended to secure that, whatever changes may take place in its patrons or managers, the rules of the National System shall be strictly observed in the school. But when a patron connects his school with the Board as a non-vested school, the connexion is terminable at the pleasure of either party; and the Commissioners do not seem to have thought it necessary to secure the observance of their rules, while the connexion subsists, by any express *pledge* or *formal engagement* on the parts of the patrons or managers. There is no mention of any such *pledge* or *engagement* in the *Rules and Regulations*, under the head of *Aids to Schools previously*

*Established*; nor is there any requirement of any such *pledge* or *engagement* in the *Instructions* for making application for such aid; nor is there any, in the FORM for the Inspector's Reports on such an application; nor any direction to him to require any such *pledge* or *engagement* from the applicant. The Commissioners seem to have regarded the *implied pledge* which is involved in such an application as enough to warrant them in taking the school in connexion, and making a grant towards its support; and if the implied pledge is then broken, they have the remedy of dissolving the connexion and withdrawing the grant. At all events, the actual state of the case is, that they have not required in such cases any *explicit promise*, any *direct pledge*, or any *formal engagement* to conform to their rules. If, therefore, the supporters of the Church Education Society, or the portion of them, whatever it be, for whom the author's lecture is intended, were, as he very rashly and most untruly represents, persons who only regarded their *formal engagements* as binding, and thought lightly of *implied pledges*, they would have had no reason for holding aloof from the Board, for nothing beyond the latter would be required of them.

When the author has satisfied himself upon this point, he will probably be disposed to regret that his lecture was delivered. I do not mean that he will not continue to think that the obstinate men for whom it is intended are not proper objects of the moral indignation with which he is filled towards them; but he will probably think that he would have done more wisely in keeping it in, until he found a more fitting occasion for giving vent to it.

Here is another specimen of our author's success in this line of discovery. In my Letter to the Clergy who were patrons of Church Education Schools in my dioceses, their actual position and the position in which they would find themselves if they went over to the National Board were contrasted in the following passage:—

“The Rule [of the National System], therefore, as I before said, wherever it operates, imposes all these restrictions. In your school now, the Bible is read every day, whether you visit it or not, by all the scholars, as a regular part of the business of the day. And you can yourself go into it at any time, and make any use of the Bible, or any reference to the Bible, which you may feel to be necessary or useful; and you may accommodate such use and references to what you know of the character and

circumstances of the children, or any of them, so as to meet and provide for any special evils or weaknesses in themselves, or any special danger arising out of their circumstances. You may be, in short, all that a Christian patron would desire to be to children committed to him, some of whom have no other instructor, and others, it may be, worse than none.

“But if you connect your school with the National Board, all this liberty is at an end. You will not only engage to restrain your teacher from reading the Bible, or having it read, during the hours of the ordinary business of the school, when all the scholars are assembled, but you will bind yourself, during all that time, to abstain from all and every use of the Bible in the school, either in the way of reading, or citation, or reference. You can neither instruct, nor advise, nor admonish, nor rebuke, nor warn those immortal beings who have come to your school to be taught, and who are all assembled before you. You must know that they all need to have the Word of God so applied to them. And you may know that some of them stand in special and urgent need of such a use of the Word. But you cannot minister it to them. You must keep the Book closed, and your lips closed, until the hour comes when the Rule allows you to open them. And then you may see all those whose need of such instruction you know to be the most urgent go away without receiving it. And this may go on day after day, until they pass out of your school into life, with all its temptations, and trials, and sorrows, without ever having been made acquainted with the Blessed Book, which was given for every child in the school, to be his guide through life, to shield him against its temptations, to support him under its trials, and to comfort him in its sorrows,—without ever having heard a word from you of their guilt, and their pollution, and their spiritual wants, and of the Saviour and of His all-sufficiency,—without ever having heard one word from you, in fact, which they might not have heard, if Christ had not come down from heaven; or if God had not given us a Book to tell us that He had come down,—what He did and what He said, and what He suffered and why He suffered, while He was upon earth.”—(pp. 18-21.)

The author refers to this passage, having discovered a curious blunder in it, which he thus triumphantly exposes:—“Now, who would suppose, in reading the earnest words in which the Bishop has portrayed the spiritual condition of these children under the rule of the System, that, *as respects their religious teaching*, the school

of the Church Education Society and that of the National Board under a Protestant patron are similarly circumstanced? and yet it is so. For the case contemplated is that of the children whose parents would *withdraw them* from the National School during the hour in which the Bible is read. Such children, it is plain, *would not be permitted to enter* the Church Education School *at all*; and the only difference between the two cases is, that while they are excluded altogether from the latter school, they are permitted to receive the benefit of *secular* instruction, at least, in the former. When the parents do not object to have their children taught the Bible *they may be taught equally in both schools.*"—(p. 25.)

This notable discovery evidently gives entire satisfaction to the author; and I dare say that many of his readers have been as far from suspecting, as he himself was when he wrote it, that it is really founded, from beginning to end, upon an utter misapprehension of the meaning of the passage to which it refers. "And yet it is so." I do not mean to dispute the point, that when a patron of a Church Education School transfers his school to the National Board, the Roman Catholic children, whom he would be thenceforward restrained, by the rules of the System, from instructing in any way or to any extent in religion, would have been equally without religious instruction, if he had kept his school under the Church Education Society. They probably would; because they probably would not have gone to it. I am not disposed to question this. But I venture to ask, supposing it to be true, What application has it to what I have said?

If a man were shrinking from accepting an office, on the ground that he could not hold it without aiding, or abetting, or causing, sin in others, or without inflicting suffering upon others, it would hardly be thought a very reasonable mode of meeting his scruples, however true it might be, to say that if he did not accept the office, somebody else would; and that so there would be just as much sin and misery in the world if he declined, as if he accepted it. He would be likely to reply: 'That is all very probable. I fear, indeed, it is morally certain. I am very sorry for it: but I cannot help it. I can, however, help taking any part in causing the evil, and that I mean to do.'

This is really, in all that is most important, a parallel case. If I had attempted to dissuade the clerical patron of a Church Education School from placing it under the National Board, by pressing upon him the fact that, when his school was connected with the Board, any Roman Catholic children who attended it

might be, and in point of fact would be, withdrawn at the hour of religious instruction, and that so they would be kept in ignorance of the Bible, it might be a pertinent answer to say, 'They will be just as ignorant of the Bible if he keeps his school under the Church Education Society, for the parents who would withdraw their children from religious instruction in his National School would not allow them to attend his Church Education School at all.' But what I have said does not seem to be open to any such answer; for I have not argued against such a transfer, on the ground that any Roman Catholic children would be thereby placed in a worse position, but on the ground that the patron himself would be placed in a worse position—so much worse, that I found it hard to believe that when the real state of the case was distinctly set before the patrons of Church Education Schools, any of them would exchange the freedom, as regards religious instruction, which they enjoyed in their schools, for the rigorous restraints under which they would be placed, if they connected them with the Board. I felt confident that they would say, 'We can do little,—perhaps nothing,—to enlighten Roman Catholics, young or old, but we will at least refrain from being active agents in keeping them in darkness;' that they would, in fact, reiterate the profession which was made on their behalf, and adopted by them, twenty years ago:—"*The Clergy may be able to do but little towards delivering their Roman Catholic countrymen from bondage, but they can at least keep themselves from the guilt of becoming instruments in riveting its chains upon them; and this, accordingly, they resolved to do.*"—(Prelates' Address, 1845.)

In this anticipation I was not disappointed. But, however important that is, it is beside the matter immediately in hand; that is confined to the meaning of the passage in which the author of 'Is it a Sin?' has found an egregious lapse. And I trust I have said enough to show that this discovery belongs to the class in which his success chiefly lies; and that, however good his point might be against something which I did not say, it has really no application whatever to anything that I have actually said.

It would not be difficult to add to these specimens, but more can hardly be necessary to exhibit the true character of this pamphlet. Indeed, I feel that I have already given too much time and space to that object already: still, before I leave it, I am tempted to add a single passage. It is one of the practical suggestions which the author offers to the Clergy as to the

modifications in the National System for which they ought to exert themselves, and which he thinks that, by united exertion, they may possibly obtain :—

“The Archbishop of Dublin has pointed out the fact, that the National System of education has deteriorated. The common religious element, which it was agreed—almost by a solemn compact—should form part of its *united* teaching, has been seriously lessened; and the Roman Catholic hierarchy have left no doubt of their intention, if it be possible, to remove it altogether. Its condemnation has been pronounced by the Synod of Thurles; and the Roman Catholic Commissioners of the Board have endorsed the sentence. If the Clergy of the Established Church were prepared to act together in this grave juncture, they might, perhaps, hope that Government would consent to restore the System to its primitive condition. The heads of the Irish Government have expressed their willingness to consider any modification of the System which was consistent with its fundamental principles; and what more reasonable modification could be proposed than that of *restoring it to its integrity*? And if they look elsewhere, they cannot fail to find abundant reasons for such a restoration.”

It must be owned that the author speaks cautiously, and avoids committing himself to any very confident anticipation of success in the application which he recommends. Still the expectation which he holds out, doubtful as he allows it to be, will, I think, be regarded as still more doubtful, or rather as absolutely chimerical, by most persons who remember the circumstances connected with the introduction by the Board of the changes referred to, and their confirmation by the Government. But, however that may be, it is not the point to which I meant to draw attention in the passage. What I thought specially worthy of notice in it is the very strange means by which the author expects to unite the Clergy, and animate them to combined and energetic action. He tells them that if they will so unite and so exert themselves, they may, he thinks, perhaps, succeed in bringing back the System to its primitive condition—that is, to the condition in which three-fourths of them twenty years ago deliberately rejected it, and declared that, so long as it remained in that condition, they could not conscientiously connect their schools with it!—a declaration which they have often renewed in various forms since, and which they have all along resolutely acted upon!

Considered as a practical suggestion, offered evidently in good faith, this is certainly a curiosity in its way!

But instead of pursuing this subject, or adding other specimens of this class, I shall proceed to consider two points to which much importance is attached in this pamphlet, and of which a great deal has been made in all or almost all the publications which have appeared on the same side.

And I may begin with the case of Trinity College, Dublin, which is put forward by the author, as it is by all who support the same views, as furnishing a weighty authority against the Church Education Society.

He says, p. 18 :—"The practice and usage of Trinity College with respect to religious instruction—practice and usage which have all the weight of law—are those prescribed by the National Board to the patron and teacher of the non-vested school." This strong assertion is sustained by the following note :—

"This agreement has been pointed out by many who possessed every qualification to enable them to form a judgment concerning it—such as the late Dr. Elrington, who was Professor of Divinity in the University, and who had been connected with the Irish Education question as Honorary Secretary to the Church Education Society, and the present Provost of Trinity College. (See Report of the University Commissioners, p. 291.)"

On this mode of supporting the author's statement, I will only say, that I do not think that the question of the correspondence of the two Systems is one which is to be settled for us by authority; or one in which we are obliged to resort to authority to help us to settle it for ourselves. For the points, upon both sides, upon a comparison of which it is to be decided are neither numerous nor complicated, nor in any respect doubtful; so that we have no good reason, and, indeed, no good excuse, for not comparing them for ourselves, and deciding for ourselves whether they agree or disagree. But as this author has, by a reference to Dr. Elrington's pamphlet, revived—I think rather unnecessarily,—the recollection of a very painful passage in this long controversy, I may be permitted to name one of the many answers which the pamphlet to which he refers occasioned at the time—viz., "*Brief Remarks upon the Principles of National Education,*

*occasioned by Dr. Elrington's Suggestions to the Clergy.* By John Frederick Lloyd, A.M., Curate of Kilmore, Diocese of Armagh." I can promise my readers that they will find in this pamphlet most of the points put forward in the publication which gave occasion to it, very satisfactorily handled, and in particular this one of the alleged agreement between these two systems, as regards religious instruction.

The case is made to supply an argument *ad hominem*, applying specially to all who are or have been concerned in administering the system pursued in the University; and an argument *ad verecundiam*, which is of still wider application.

I mean to consider the case fully in both uses of it.\* I have no wish to escape from the argument which it supplies in the former use of it; and I am too dutiful a son of the University to have any disposition to detract from the importance of its authority.

Both uses of the case rest upon the alleged correspondence between the rules of the University and those of the National Board in reference to religious instruction. I think, however, and I shall attempt to prove, that no such correspondence as is alleged really exists. But I will first say, in passing, that even if it did, it would not warrant the use that is made of it. The

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\* I think it well to note, though it is more in the way of prudent precaution than from any knowledge that there is actually any reason practically to insist upon the distinction, that in all that I say of rules and usages I do not refer to the present time, or to any time beyond that at which my own connexion with the University terminated. I do not know or believe that any changes have since taken place in the mode of carrying on lectures which would in any way weaken the answer that is furnished by my recollections of my own day. But if any such changes have taken place, it is plain that I have no concern with them in dealing with the argument *ad hominem*. Even as an argument *ad verecundiam*, the practice or rules of the University can hardly be relied upon as of much force in the controversy, unless they existed previously to the introduction of the National System into this country; for the policy of Government since that period has confined the office of Provost to supporters of the System:—the first provost appointed after that date having been one of the original members of the National Board. And if the practice or rules of the University have made any approximation to those of the National System, under the presidency of those who support that System, it cannot be supposed that those who have deliberately and perseveringly taken a different view of the System would regard the new rules or practices as entitled to the same weight as the old, which grew up independently of such influences. I do not know, as I before said, of any such changes, and have no reason to believe that any such have taken place. But if there be, I trust that I have said enough to account satisfactorily for not having taken notice of them.

difference of the circumstances under which primary and higher education, most especially University education, are given is so great, and the relation of those who give and those who receive education is so different in the two cases, that it is perfectly intelligible that a man might, without scruple, carry out rules similar to those of the National Board while he continued a College tutor and lecturer, and yet feel, when he became the incumbent of a College living, that he could not conscientiously carry out the same rules in his own parish school. And, in fact, it will be seen that the reasoning by which I have endeavoured to show that it would be his duty, in this latter relation, to adopt the rules of the Church Education Society, and that it would be a violation of his duty to adopt the rules of the National Board, does not apply to the former relation in the same way or to the same extent, and that an important part of it does not apply at all.\*

But this is a subject which I need not pursue here, because however often and however confidently this case has been used by our opponents, I think it may be very clearly shown that, in point of fact, the rules of Trinity College in this matter really correspond, not with the rules of the National Board, but with those of the Church Education Society. The principle in both cases is plainly the same. The Church Education system comprehends two kinds of religious instruction—one general and the other special. The former is, by the rules, appointed for all, without distinction; the latter, only for the children of the Church. The system of the University is the same. The general religious instruction, which forms a part of the course, is ap-

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\* When the Bill for the establishment of the Queen's Colleges was passing through Parliament, the leading supporters of the Church Education Society in the House (Mr. Shaw and Mr. Hamilton, the University members) did not oppose it; and in giving the reasons for the course which they adopted, this distinction was much insisted upon. Mr. Hamilton said: "He thought, further, that looking at the question practically, there was a material difference between a system designed for the entire education of the lower classes, and a system of partial instruction in certain branches of education designed for other classes in society. In providing education for the children of the lowest classes, whose parents you suppose to be ignorant, and who have no opportunities of instruction at home, you are bound to provide a complete education; and this being the case, their education in religion becomes a paramount consideration in their school education. But the case of the education of youth of other classes of society is somewhat different, and it cannot be denied that, practically, the case is differently dealt with in most of our public educational institutions."

pointed for all alike; it is only from that which is special that Dissenters, Romanist and Protestant, are exempted. It is very true that the portion of the general course which can properly be called *religious* is very limited. But how little its extent has been regulated by the principle of the National System appears sufficiently from the fact, that it has not been in any way diminished since the admission of Roman Catholic students; but that, on the contrary, it was less in the earlier than it is in the later and present course. But limited as it is, it is neither unimportant in itself nor in its bearing upon the argument; and its importance in both ways is nowhere better stated than in the pamphlet by Mr. Lloyd, to which I referred at the outset.

I may transcribe the passage:—

“The cases are not parallel.

“First, as I said before, the University imposes no obligation on her officers to repress the expression of Divine truth before any individual, whatever his creed may be, as the Commissioners do upon the patrons and teachers of their schools. This is a most important distinction, sufficient in itself to overthrow the supposed analogy.

“Secondly, Roman Catholics, as well as Protestants, are required, on their entrance into Trinity College, to be acquainted with the Gospels of St. Luke and St. John and the Acts of the Apostles, in the original, and to submit to an examination in them. And no Roman Catholic or other student can obtain a degree unless, during his progress through the College course, he has studied Bishop Butler’s ‘Analogy’ and Paley’s ‘Evidences of Christianity,’ and, in an examination, satisfies the authorities of the College of his acquaintance with them.

“In thus learning the proofs of the Divine origin of Christianity, he is guarded against infidelity. But this is not all. The fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith are clearly set before him in these treatises; and in the second part of Bishop Butler’s *Analogy* he is made acquainted with one of the most able expositions of the scheme of Christianity to be found in the English language, while, at the same time, he is taught the duty of searching the Scriptures for himself. Let the reader turn to the concluding passage in chap. 1., Part 2, of Butler’s *Analogy*: ‘The account now given of Christianity most *strongly shows and enforces upon us the obligation of searching the Scriptures*, in order to see what the scheme of Revelation really is.’ Let him turn to that noble chapter, the fourth, ‘*Of Christianity, considered as a*

*Scheme or Constitution, imperfectly comprehended,* and to that still more interesting chapter, the fifth, '*Of the particular system of Christianity, the appointment of a Mediator, and the redemption of the world by Him*'—a chapter which contains an epitome of the Gospel of Christ, drawn from the words of inspiration, and thickly studded with references to the Scriptures. Let him then turn to Paley's invaluable work, in which (chap. ix. sect. 2) he demonstrates that the Scriptures were regarded from the beginning of Christianity 'as possessing an authority which belonged to no other books, and as conclusive in all questions and controversies among Christians;' and let him say whether this education, which is *compulsory* on Roman Catholic students in Trinity College, is 'precisely analogous' to what is given to the children of Roman Catholic peasants in National Schools, who, before their admission into the school, have never perhaps had a copy of the New Testament in their hands, and who may pass through every class without being taught the duty of searching the Scriptures, or being made acquainted with their supreme authority, or with the doctrine of a 'Mediator, and the redemption of the world by Him,' or being protected against that infidelity to which mere secular knowledge, without religious instruction, would leave them exposed. How can these Systems be called analogous?

"Let the Protestant patron of the National School bring the question to a practical test. Let him teach the Roman Catholic children the 'obligation' which lies upon them to 'search the Scriptures;' let him teach them that the Scriptures are the 'conclusive' standard to which an appeal is to be made in 'all controversies,' and he will soon find that the Roman Catholic priest of the parish will lodge a complaint against him with the Commissioners for having violated the rules of the Board. And yet, although it is *compulsory* on the College tutor to teach these truths to the Roman Catholic undergraduates, while it is *contrary* to the rules of the Board to teach them to the Roman Catholic children in a National School, it is maintained that these two systems are analogous!" (*Brief Remarks*, pp. 27-30.)

This is Mr. Lloyd's answer to the statement of the agreement between the University and the National Systems as regards religious instruction, which was made in the pamphlet noticed by him, and which has been referred to and adopted by the author of '*Is it a Sin?*' And I should be very much surprised if any dispassionate reader now did not feel that the answer was

a conclusive—I might say a triumphant—one. I should not think of adding a word to what Mr. Lloyd has said so well, but that he has confined himself to showing that the rules of our University, with reference to religious instruction, correspond not with those of the National System, but with those of the Church Education Society, *in their requirements*. This was quite enough for his purpose; and is enough, indeed, for all important purposes. But it is not less true that the rules of the University in this matter agree with the rules of the Church Education Society, and differ from those of the National Board, *in their exemptions also*. And as this is a point upon which the opposite view may be maintained with some show of reason, I think it desirable to say a few words to clear it up.

It will probably be said that Catechetical lectures and examinations have no fair claim to be regarded as *special* religious instruction; that, on the contrary, as it is the Bible that furnishes the chief subject of those lectures, they ought, according to the principles of the Church Education Society, to be regarded as *general* religious instruction, to be received by all; and that, in exempting Dissenters from attendance upon them, the University really acts upon the principle of the National System.

It is not unnatural, perhaps, that this should be maintained by those who are concerned in obtaining all the support that they can for the National System, and that it should be admitted without question by many upon whom it is urged. But, on closer consideration of the facts of the case, I think it will be seen that, however plausible this view may be, it is very far from being well grounded, and that the exemption in question was not granted on the principles of the National System, but in perfect accordance with the principles of the Church Education Society.

The first notice, I believe, that we find in the records of the University, of the office of Catechist is in 1613, and his duty then consisted strictly in a weekly lecture on the *Church Catechism*, expounding a portion one week, and examining in the same portion the following week; and thus, by exposition and examination alternately, going through the whole Catechism within the year. This seems to have continued down to 1809—at least, it was in that year that the Catechetical lectures were first extended so as to comprehend any portion of the Scripture; so that when, in 1794, Roman Catholics were admitted into College, Catechetical lectures were still, as they had been for nearly 200

years, lectures on the Church Catechism; and there could have been no more thought of requiring Roman Catholics to attend them, than of requiring them to attend Divine service in the College Chapel. These lectures continued, as I have said, unaltered for the next fifteen years. During that time, they must have been fully established as a part of the course exclusively for members of the Church; and when, at the end of that time, and subsequently, they underwent alterations, it was not natural that students of other religious denominations should have been, nor is it at all likely that they were, considered. But I must add, that had it been otherwise—had the question of requiring the attendance of Roman Catholics upon these lectures been formally entertained, I think it would almost certainly have been decided in the negative.

For these lectures had for nearly two centuries been exclusively employed in giving instruction in the principles of the Church to its members; and though the range of subjects had been extended, nothing had been done to exclude this object. And, moreover, nothing had been done to make provision for the object in any other way. The Catechetical lectures were still, under the actual arrangements, the only part of the College course in which such special instruction could be given; and it is plain that Dissenters could not be obliged to attend them without interfering materially with this use of them, if not altogether preventing it. So that, if the question of taking away the exemption from attendance upon them which Dissenters enjoyed were regularly entertained, it is not likely that it would have been thought right or warrantable to make a change which would have deprived the members of the Church of a benefit which they had so long enjoyed, and to which they seemed to be so clearly entitled.

This is a point on which we cannot have absolute certainty, nor is it necessary; for the facts which are certainly known furnish, as we have seen, a very sufficient answer to this favourite argument.

I have been looking at what has been alleged with respect to the rules and practice of our University, only in the second of the two uses of them which I mentioned at the outset. This is much the more common use, but that is only because the occasions for pressing it as an *argumentum ad hominem* are comparatively rare: for, whenever they do occur, they are duly improved.

It is, however, really no better grounded than the other. But before I consider it, I think it well to say that even when arguments *ad hominem* are well grounded, they are of little real value: I do not mean of little value as controversial weapons—for there is no doubt that they are of considerable value for the purpose of silencing or embarrassing an opponent—but as arguments addressed to the reason, with a view to produce serious conviction. If a man is convinced on good grounds that a certain course is wrong, and therefore refuses to adopt it, and if it be proved to him that something else which he has done, or is doing, is equally objectionable, or objectionable on the same grounds, it seems to be thought that this ought to be received as a proof, not that his conduct is or was wrong in the latter case, but that his scruples in the former case were unfounded; and that the practical result is to be, not that he is to cease to do the wrong he has hitherto done, or, if it be all over, repent of having done it, but that he should dismiss his scruples, and do what he has hitherto refused to do, because he felt it to be wrong! This is too unreasonable to be put into words, but it seems, notwithstanding, to be generally the real object of the argument, whenever it has any more serious purpose than that of silencing or embarrassing an opponent.

But whatever be the worth of the argument, there is, as I said, no foundation for it in the facts of the present case. When it was first asserted that the situation of a patron in a non-vested school was precisely analogous to that of a tutor in Trinity College, Dublin, who had Roman Catholic pupils under his care, the author of the valuable pamphlet, from which I have before quoted upon this question, replied—“The analogy fails in more than one respect, and especially in the very particular for which the comparison is instituted. The University does not impose upon the College tutor the obligation to withhold the truth in any case whatever, as the Commissioners do upon the patrons of a non-vested school. The tutor of Trinity College is indeed bound to instruct his Roman Catholic and other pupils in the ordinary branches of academic training, and in some very important religious subjects also, but he is not pledged to abstain from the expression of religious truth. In this respect he is left at perfect liberty to ‘reprove, rebuke, exhort,’ as his own sense of duty shall dictate to him.”—(*Brief Remarks*, p. 26.)

This is, so far as I have always understood, a true statement of the position of a College tutor. But Mr. Napier presents the

case rather differently. He says—"On the effect of this restriction in the tutor's chambers, the Bishop of Ossory might have made a comment like to that which he has made in the case of the National School. In his own chambers, when he was a tutor, he could not lawfully have made any use of the Scriptures to instruct, rebuke, or exhort any Roman Catholic student. No tutor ever attempted to do this; and although there is no express rule subscribed, there is, under the Statute, the Royal Letter, and the System of the University, a restriction as morally binding on every tutor as if it were set forth in the words of the Rule of the National Board, and subscribed under hand and seal."—(*Thoughts*, pp. 38-39.)

How much of this very confident passage is true, and how far what is true is of any value in the argument, the following plain statement of the facts of the case will, I hope, enable my readers to judge for themselves.

The tutors' lectures were confined entirely to the Science and the Latin of the course, the Greek being left to the public lecturers. The lecture for each class occupied an hour daily for five days in each week during term, the greater part of the hour being given to the Science. It would happen, of course, from time to time, in reading the Latin author for the term, that something would occur which might naturally suggest a reference to Scripture—some moral reflexion or principle for example, sound or unsound, which might profitably be confirmed, or corrected, or in some way illustrated by a reference to the Bible. How often the references so suggested were actually made, and how often omitted, I will not venture to say; but I am very sure that when they were omitted it was not because Roman Catholics were present, but either because the opportunity was not perceived, or because there was no disposition to take advantage of such opportunities, or for some other cause which would have operated in just the same way if no Roman Catholics had ever been admitted into the College.

As to the Science, which as I have said, occupied the greater part of the hour, it hardly comes into consideration here; for the usage was, that tutors' lectures were not given to students in the fourth year, in which, as mentioned above Butler's 'Analogy' and Paley's 'Evidences' formed the principal part of the Science; and the Sciences of the three first years—Logics, Mathematics, and Physics—to which tutors' lectures were confined, were not likely to furnish any occasion for any religious reflex-

ions or references to Scripture. I will not presume to say that such reflexions and references were not made when occasions for them arose, or how often they were made or omitted; but of this I am sure, that whether they were made or omitted at any time depended upon the character and habits of the particular tutor, and not upon the presence or absence of Roman Catholic pupils in his chambers.

But these tutors, it is to be remembered, were public lecturers and examiners, and in the discharge of the duties connected with these offices, they both lectured and examined in the text-books of the fourth year, which, as has been pointed out, contained most important religious principles and abounded in references to Holy Scripture. And I do not suppose that any one will pretend that there was one system of lecturing and examining for Roman Catholics, and another for members of the Church. In fact, it would constantly happen that a lecturer or examiner did not know whether he was questioning a Roman Catholic or not, or even whether or not there were any Roman Catholics in his division: so that if he were disposed to adopt so preposterous a plan, he could hardly carry it out. But the truth is, I should suppose, that no lecturer or examiner ever conceived such a thought. The object of the lecturer was to make those with whom he had to do as thoroughly acquainted with the book in hand as he could; and the object of the examiner was to ascertain how far those under examination had such an acquaintance with the book. This was done as a matter of duty; and adopting the use which Mr. Lloyd (see *ante*, p. 104) most fairly makes of this fact, we may add, that if this instruction which it was the *duty* of the Fellows of the College to give to all classes of students were given to the children of different denominations in a National School, it would furnish a just ground of complaint against the patron, as a clear violation of the rules of the System—and as such it must be condemned and forbidden by the National Board, who would be bound, if it were persevered in in a Vested School, to put a stop to the practice by proceeding on the Deed of Investment; and if the school were non-vested, by removing it from the list of National Schools.

So much for the correspondence between the position of a College tutor and the patron of a non-vested National School, as regards religious instruction.

But Mr. Napier further informs his readers that *in my own chambers, when I was a tutor, I could not lawfully have made use of*

*the Scriptures to instruct, rebuke, or exhort any Roman Catholic student.* And, in his style of making assertions just as largely and as positively, in matters which are necessarily altogether beyond his knowledge, as in those which may possibly be within its range, he adds, "No tutor ever attempted this."

After what I have said, I need add but a few words in answer to this. It has been seen that to instruct his pupils, whether members of the Church or not, in Scripture, was no part of the business of a tutor in his chambers; and that, on the other hand, when the business in which he did instruct them led to any incidental reference to Scripture, it was neither suppressed nor modified because Roman Catholics happened to be in the room; while the term lectures and examinations, which were conducted by tutors, as I have noticed, were the same for all, not only when the subjects had no direct connexion with religion, but when they were directly and closely connected with it.

So that, as regards the stated instruction given, there was really no such restraint upon a tutor, with reference to the Roman Catholic students, as Mr. Napier asserts; and there is little, if any, more foundation for the assertion if it be understood of other duties which occasionally devolved upon the tutor. Thus he might be called on to speak to a pupil with reference to some part of his conduct which required advice or reproof. The character of such communications would, of course, vary with the nature of the case. The admonition would most frequently be merely of a prudential character, but there might, no doubt, be occasions on which it would be right and necessary that it should be made to rest upon moral or even religious grounds.

I will not so far emulate Mr. Napier's boldness as to assert that, in my time, every tutor would have delivered faithfully to all his pupils, Roman Catholics and members of the Church, the kind of admonition, whatever it were, which was called for by the circumstances of the case. But I believe I may venture to say, that every tutor then, who would have discharged this duty faithfully towards the pupils of his own communion, would have discharged it in the same way towards his Roman Catholic pupils. The same is true, as far as the argument is concerned, of the references to Scripture which it might be desirable to make in confirmation of what was said. But here, for exactness of statement, though not for any purpose of the argument, it is necessary to make a distinction. It would be natural to refer more sparingly and reservedly to Scripture, in speaking to a

Roman Catholic than to a Protestant, because it would be unreasonable to count upon the same acquaintance with Scripture in the former as in the latter. No one who was admonishing members of the Church, if his single object were to produce an impression upon their minds, would refer to Scripture in the same way, and to the same extent, to the young and to the old, to the ignorant and the educated. And just the same prudential consideration of the very different degrees in which the Bible was likely to be known by his Roman Catholic and his Protestant pupils, would restrain a tutor from quoting it as freely to the former as to the latter, under the circumstances supposed. But no difference which was caused and regulated by such considerations would have any place in the argument, because no such difference would afford any ground for asserting the identity or similarity of the system of the University and that of the National Board, either in practice or in principle. The patron of a non-vested school is absolutely restrained from referring to Scripture in admonishing a Roman Catholic, or a Protestant in the presence of Roman Catholics. No such restriction was laid upon a tutor with reference to his pupils, nor any restriction whatever except such as his own discretion imposed. It is true, not only that it might be fairly presumed beforehand that his discretion would restrain him from any attempt to proselyte his Roman Catholic pupils, but that this presumption has been fully verified, and that no instance of any such abuse of the opportunities which the relation of tutor and pupil afforded has been ever alleged. But here there is no difference between the case of the University and that of the Church Education Society; on the contrary, there is a distinct and important point of agreement, and one, I may add, which was distinctly put forward and insisted upon by Mr. Napier before the *rectification* of his opinions. After saying, "a reference was made to Trinity College, Dublin, but all that was said about that University was in the absence of argument," he points out some important differences between the National and the University System, and then proceeds to this agreement of the latter with that of the Church Education Society in the following passage, in quoting which I take the liberty to print part of it in italics in order to secure for it the attention which I cannot but think it deserves:—"And I can say, as regards the system of education that is pursued by the Church Education Society, that the people have the fullest confidence in the candour and integrity of our Clergy, that no attempt will be made to

proselytize their children beyond the intrinsic influence of simple knowledge of Scripture. I may say, in Trinity College the opportunities of the tutor are never used to proselytize. I say, that *while there is no antecedent restriction on any tutor as to any religious instruction or use of the Scriptures*, there is no attempt made on the part of the tutors to proselytize. This has been always conceded; they take no advantage of their position for any such purpose; and so it is under the Church Education Society."—(SPEECH, House of Commons, 1848, p. 38.)

I may stop here upon this head, for I hope that quite enough has been said to establish the truth of the statement with which I set out, and to show that, as regards religious education, there is no such correspondence as has been asserted between the System of the University and the National System, and that the agreement really lies between the former and the System of the Church Education Society.

We may now pass to the second point which I intended to notice—the argument derived from the state of Primary Education on the Continent. This writer seems to have taken some pains to inform himself upon the facts of the case, and so far, no doubt, he deserves to be commended. But the commendation requires some qualification; for his information is not always accurate; and, even when it is, I do not think that he makes the best or fairest use of it.

He begins with Prussia, and states that there, "wherever a *mixed* school is established, the children whose parents are of a different religious denomination from the teacher of the school must be allowed to absent themselves during his religious lessons," and that "this is done without the slightest difficulty or obstruction on the part either of the people themselves or their religious ministers. No clergyman, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, questions the lawfulness or the equity of this rule."\* "A similar rule," he says, "is enforced in nearly every other State of Central Europe. . . . The most perfect toleration exists in the teaching of the young, and that toleration is carried

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\* This may possibly be true. But how the ingenious author (or indeed any individual upon whose testimony he may rely, if there be any such) can have become acquainted with the fact, so as to be able to state it so largely and positively, it would not be easy to guess.

into effect, in their mixed schools, by a rule corresponding to the distinctive rule of the National Board. . . . It is impossible but that this should raise a doubt, at least of the tenableness of the position taken by so many of the Irish Clergy. When we find the same law enforced by so many States, with populations mixed in various proportions, and under Governments of every form, from that of an absolute Monarchy to a pure Republic, it is not easy to doubt that it is fundamentally just and righteous."— (pp. 15-17.)

So far as the foregoing purports to be a representation of the rules with regard to religious instruction in Primary Schools upon the Continent, though it is certain that it is not true to the full extent of the author's statement, it is probably true to a considerable extent. But it is by no means easy to ascertain the exact state of the case. I took some trouble myself to determine the point some years ago, and read all the books within my reach which seemed likely to throw light upon it; but there were some cases with regard to which I was not able to satisfy myself. The difficulty arises in this way. With respect to most countries one finds it expressly stated, that, in the Primary Schools, the children of parents who do not wish them to be present at the religious instruction are allowed to absent themselves. But in some instances, at least, it is certain that what is meant by *the religious instruction* is the instruction which is given *in the doctrines of a particular Church through catechisms and orally*. And it must be doubtful whether this is not what is meant in every case, unless when the statement is so framed as to leave no room for the doubt, or when it can be removed by some other evidence. But our author has not attended to this distinction; he disregards it, indeed, where the statement is so framed, in the authority from which his information is derived, as apparently to render it impossible to overlook it.\* And when once it appears that he has

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\* It cannot be said that the author is ignorant of this distinction, though much the greater part of his pamphlet might be read without suspecting that he was aware of it. And his knowledge certainly does not appear where it ought, to qualify his statement of the facts of the case, and to regulate his reasoning upon them. But towards the end he says, "There is hardly a country in Europe in which the religious element does not temper *more largely* the education which is given to all in common. In Holland, which affords, perhaps, the most perfect example of united education, the Bible is made the basis of religious and moral instruction in the school; and those portions of it in which all Christians are agreed, are taught to all in common. And the same is true, to a greater or less extent, in most other countries of

made a mistake even in such a case, he cannot be relied upon in others. What he states may be true, but it is plain also that it may not.

To give an example. He sets down Switzerland by name, as among the countries in Central Europe *in which toleration is carried into effect in the mixed schools, by a rule corresponding to the distinctive rule of the National Board*, the rule which prevails having been expressed more explicitly a little before—viz., that the managers of the school must receive a child *if his parents require it, "and give him the benefit of the secular instruction imparted in the school, while they permit him to leave it during the hours of religious instruction."*—(p. 17.)

In proof of his statement that a rule *similar to this*, and therefore *corresponding to the distinctive Rule of the National Board*, is enforced in Switzerland, he refers to KAY *On the Social Condition and Education of the People in England and Europe*, which is throughout his leading authority. I read this work, or at least the principal parts of it, some years ago, but I have it not at this moment within my reach. But in BARNARD'S *National Education in Europe*, there is an account of the educational institutions of Switzerland, which is described as *abridged* from Kay. As it is marked by inverted commas, I presume that the abridgment consists merely in omissions, and that what is actually given is in Kay's language. But, however that may be, I can hardly doubt, with regard to the rules for religious instruction, that if they be not literally transcribed from Kay's work, they at least fairly represent what is stated there. It is said, "Those who differ in faith from the master of the school are allowed to absent themselves from the *doctrinal lessons* given in the school, and are required to attend one of their own Clergy for the purpose of receiving from him *their doctrinal instruction*."—(KAY ap. BARNARD, p. 343.) And again, in speaking of the Cantonal Schools, it is said, "The children of those parents who differ in religion from the master of the school are permitted to absent

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Europe. Scriptural instruction is *restricted* indeed, but it is not *excluded* from the united teaching" (pp. 35, 36). This is very true; but it conveys an inadequate idea of the truth, and I think that those who read what follows upon the subject in this Note, will have a juster apprehension than they could derive from the above statement, of the wide difference in this most important respect between the systems of primary education established by the different Continental States and that which the Imperial Legislature has granted to Ireland.

themselves from *the doctrinal lessons*, and are required to obtain instruction *in the doctrines of their own creed* from clergy of their own persuasion.”—(*Ib.* p. 347.)

I have marked the important parts of this statement by putting them in italics, though, even without the precaution, my readers could hardly overlook the great difference between them and the one in the pamphlet before us, as authority for which they are referred to. So far as Switzerland is concerned, then, it actually appears, by the authority referred to by the author of ‘Is it a Sin?’ that there toleration is carried out in mixed schools, *not as he states it to be, by a rule corresponding to the distinctive rule of the NATIONAL BOARD, but by a rule corresponding to the distinctive rule of the CHURCH EDUCATION SOCIETY!*

How many more of the countries enumerated by the author of ‘Is it a Sin?’ as enforcing the Rule of the National Board, would be found in fact, like Switzerland, to be really carrying on education upon the Rule of the Church Education Society, I will not attempt to settle here. But instead of entering upon such an investigation, which I have no means of bringing to a satisfactory conclusion, I shall give some particulars with respect to primary education in a remarkable case, in which the Rule of the Church Education Society is certainly acted upon.

The case to which I refer is that of Holland, and it is one of very great importance; for there is no country in Europe in which more unlimited religious toleration exists, nor is there one in which popular education has been more extensively or more effectively carried out.\*

Kay (quoted by Barnard, p. 606) makes the following statement as to the difference between the systems of education in France and Germany, and that in Holland, in reference to the rules for religious instruction:—“In France and all the German countries, the schools are the auxiliaries, so to speak, of the churches; for whilst the schools are open to all sects, yet the teacher is a man trained up in the particular doctrines of the majority of his pupils, and required to teach those doctrines during certain hours, the children who differ from him in

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\* In illustration of this latter point, it is stated—“In Haarlem, with a population of 21,000 in 1840, there was not a child of ten years of age, and of sound intellect, who could not both read and write. And this is true throughout Holland, according to the testimony of intelligent travellers.”—(BARNARD, p. 596.)

religious belief being permitted to absent themselves from these religious lessons, on condition that their parents provided elsewhere for their religious instruction. But in Holland the teachers are *required to give religious instruction to all the children*, and to avoid most carefully touching on any of the grounds of controversy between the religious sects."

This statement is so far calculated to mislead, that one would not naturally collect from it, that, in Germany, the master carries on everywhere, as a part of the general school business, moral and religious instruction out of the Scriptures, in addition to the dogmatical teaching which he gives to those of his own faith. But this is a point on which I shall have to say something by-and-by. At present I will only add one or two extracts on the Dutch schools.

There is an account of these schools in Dr. Bache's Report on Education in Europe, under the head of 'Primary Schools in Holland,' from which I take a few sentences:—"The next point is in regard to religious instruction in the schools. There is unbounded toleration of religious creeds in Holland; and while the necessity of religious instruction in the schools has been strongly felt, it has been made to stop short at the point at which, becoming doctrinal, the subjects taught could interfere with the views of any sect. Bible stories are made the means of moral and religious teaching in the school, and the doctrinal instruction is given by the pastors of the different churches on days appointed for the purpose, and usually not in the school-room."—(p. 207.) Further information will be found at pp. 214, 215. But instead of transcribing more from this work, I will give one or two quotations from Cousin's celebrated Report.

To what an extent the children of various denominations were intermingled in the Dutch schools is strikingly exhibited in his account of a school in the Hague, consisting of 1,000 children, from five to twelve years of age:—

"Pour me bien prouver qu'on reçoit à cette école, comme dans toutes les autres, les enfans de tous les cultes, M. Wynbeck parcourut avec moi plusieurs bancs, en demandant à chaque enfant de dire lui-même, à haute voix, la religion à laquelle il appartenait: le même banc contenait presque des échantillons de toutes les communions chrétiennes avec leurs nombreuses variétés, des catholiques, des calvinistes, des luthériens, des remontrants, des anabaptistes, ainsi que des juifs entre-mêlés au hasard avec des chrétiens. Cette école était déjà pour moi l'image anticipée

de la Hollande, et de la tolérance sans borne qui y règne.”--  
(COUSIN, *de l'Instruction Publique en Hollande*, p. 7.)

The principle on which religious education is carried on in these mixed schools, and the limits within which it is confined, were very distinctly stated to the author by M. Prinsen, Director of the Normal School in the same place. But as I have not space for both, I prefer giving what is most important, in the course of a conversation upon this point which Cousin held at Haarlem with M. Van den Ende, the Inspector-General of Primary Instruction, who was regarded as the father of education in Holland:—

“De peur de trop fatiguer M. Van den Ende, je n’ai voulu consulter son expérience que sur un très petit nombre de questions, parmi lesquelles je mets au premier rang celle de l’enseignement religieux dans les écoles primaires. M. Van den Ende m’a dit: ‘Oui, les écoles primaires doivent être en général chrétiennes, mais ni protestantes ni catholiques. Elles ne doivent appartenir à aucun culte en particulier et n’enseigner aucun dogme positif.’ . . . ‘Il ne faut pas tendre à la division des écoles, et avoir des écoles spéciales catholiques, et des écoles spéciales protestantes. Une école du peuple est pour le peuple tout entier.’ . . . ‘Oui, vous avez raison, l’école doit être chrétienne, il le faut absolument. La tolérance n’est nullement de l’indifférence. Il faut développer l’esprit moral et l’esprit religieux des enfans par un bon choix d’histoires bibliques; surtout il faut que cet enseignement soit mêlé à tous les autres enseignemens, qu’il se trouve dans la lecture, dans l’écriture, dans l’histoire, etc. . . . Je n’approuverais point que le maître d’école fit aucun enseignement religieux dogmatique: un pareil enseignement appartient aux ministres des différens cultes, en dehors de l’école.”

When it is stated, therefore, as it so often is, that upon the point in which the Church Education Society and the National Board differ, the practice of the whole Continent of Europe, under all the diversities of religion and government which are found in its different States, is against the Society and on the side of the Board, I hope it will be remembered that, besides the cases which, for the reasons given above, must be regarded as doubtful, there are some cases which are of undeniable importance, and in which it cannot be doubted that the practice is directly the opposite—that is to say, in which the Rule is *actually that of the Church Education Society*.

But supposing the fact were as it is stated in the pamphlet under consideration, it remains to inquire whether it could be

legitimately used as it has been so freely used in this controversy. It is used against the Clergy who refuse, upon conscientious grounds, to connect their schools with the National Board. It is said all, or almost all, the Protestants of the Continent of Europe submit contentedly to a rule similar to the distinctive Rule of the National Board. Ought not this, in all modesty, to raise some doubts of the soundness of the objections upon which the opponents of the National System rest their refusal to adopt it?

We have seen that the force of this argument *ad verecundiam*, whatever it be, must undergo some abatement for over-statement of the facts on which it is founded. But waiving that point, and taking the facts with regard to the Continent as they are stated, let us inquire what is their bearing upon the practical question at issue.

But first I must correct a misapprehension under which the author seems to lie, and which even if his reasoning were sounder than it is, would materially qualify the conclusion to which it conducts him. He regards, apparently, the permission which the National System requires to be given to all children whose parents do not wish them to be present at the religious education given in the schools, to absent themselves while it is going on, as *the* distinctive Rule of the System; whereas it is but a part of the distinctive Rule or Rules, and, most persons would hold, by no means the most important part. With this permission, and in order to give it full effect, a prohibition is joined, against which, if they are to be considered distinctly, the more serious objections lie. During the hours appointed for the general business of the school, religious instruction is not to be given in any shape or form; and the Bible is not to be read, or opened for reference, or to be referred to without opening it, or to be kept within sight in the school! This, the prohibitory part of the rule, ought to be regarded as even more distinctive of the National System than the permissive part, inasmuch as in those Continental States in which the permissive part obtains, there is nothing corresponding to the prohibitive. But what is important to notice here is, that though we object to both parts, it is to the prohibitory part that, from the first, the supporters of the Church Education Society most strongly objected.

In the Prelates' Address (Jan. 1845) it is stated, on behalf of the supporters of the Church Education Society, that while there were various grave objections to the National System of Educa-

tion, about the relative importance of which its opponents might differ, there was one upon the paramount importance of which they all were agreed: "The rule by which the *Holy Scriptures* were to be excluded from the schools, during the hours of general instruction, was treated by all as so fundamentally objectionable that, while this should continue to be the principle of the System, they could not conscientiously connect their schools with it, even though all the other grounds of opposition were taken away." Above 1600 out of over 2000 clergy adopted this statement of their principles, so as to make this distinctly above all others the ground of their refusal to connect their schools with the National Board. What reason have we for supposing that the great body of the Protestants of the Continent, both ministers and people, would not subscribe *ex animo* to the same declaration? Do they submit to an educational system under which the *Holy Scriptures* are excluded from the schools during the hours of general instruction? It is not required or desired that they should do so; there is not a single Protestant country on the Continent in which such a system has ever been established. But though this statement is perfectly true, and quite sufficient to show the unfairness of presuming that Continental Protestants, lay or clerical, would submit to the Irish National System, it would leave a very inadequate impression as to the wide and important difference as regards the use of the Bible which exists between the German State Schools for primary education, and the National Schools in this country.

Dr. Calvin E. Stowe, a professor of Biblical Literature in Ohio, visited Europe in 1839, and on his return made a Report to the General Assembly of the State, *On Elementary Education in Europe*, from which BARNARD, referred to above, extracts an account of the course of instruction pursued in the primary schools of Germany, particularly of Prussia and Wirtemberg.

Very interesting information, both upon the whole course of instruction in those schools and upon the mode of teaching, will be found in the extract referred to; but we are only concerned with what is said of the religious instruction which is given in them, as a part of the regular school business.

His general statement on this part of the subject is: "The exercises of the day are always commenced and closed with a short prayer; and the Bible and the Hymn-book are the first volumes put into the pupils' hands; and these books they always retain and keep in constant use during the whole progress of their education."—*Stowe ap. Barnard*, p. 49. This general state-

ment would be quite enough to show how widely these schools differ from Irish National Schools. But this difference comes out more distinctly and strikingly the more that we enter into details.

The whole course extends over eight years, divided into four periods of two years each. In the first division, in which the children are from six to eight years of age, the *religious instruction is oral, and includes the singing of hymns*. In the second, consisting of children from eight to ten, *religious and moral instruction is given from select Bible narratives*. The third division includes children from ten to twelve, and in it *religious instruction in connected Bible history is given*. And in the fourth division, including children from twelve to fourteen, there is religious instruction in *the religious observation of nature ; the life and discourses of Jesus Christ ; the history of the Christian religion in connection with the contemporary civil history and the doctrines of Christianity*.

The examples of the mode of teaching the appointed subjects in each of these divisions are very interesting, but they are much too long to be transcribed. I must, however, give a few specimens.

In the first stage, the instruction seems to be given in connexion with some of the subjects on which the pupils are interrogated, with a view to the exercise of their powers of observation and expression. Thus, when a *garden* is the subject of the lesson, a specimen of the questions asked about its products, &c., is given, and it is then added,—“The teacher may then read to them the description of the Garden of Eden in the 2nd chapter of Genesis; sing a hymn with them, the imagery of which is taken from the fruits and blossoms of a garden; and explain to them how kind and bountiful God is, who gives us such wholesome plants and fruits, and such beautiful flowers, for our nourishment and gratification.” Another example is, when the subject is the external heavens; and, when some of the leading phenomena are gone through, it is said,—“In this connection *the teacher may read to them the 18th and 19th Psalms, and other passages of Scripture of that kind*; sing with them a hymn celebrating the glory of God in the creation; and enforce the moral bearing of such contemplations by appropriate remarks. A very common lesson is the family and family duties—love to parents, love to brothers and sisters—concluding *with appropriate passages from Scripture, and singing a family hymn*.”

In the second division, in which the scholars are older, the

general account of the mode of teaching is as follows:—"In this branch of teaching the methods are various, and the teacher adopts the method best adapted, in his judgment, to his own school, or to the special objects which he may have in view with a particular class. Sometimes he calls the class around him, and relates to them, in his own language, *some of the simple narratives of the Bible, or reads it to them in the words of the Bible itself, or directs one of the children to read it aloud*; and then follows a *friendly familiar conversation between him and the class respecting the narrative*: their little doubts are proposed and resolved, their questions put and answered, and the teacher *unfolds the moral and religious instruction to be derived from the lesson, and illustrates it with appropriate quotations from the didactic and preceptive parts of the Scriptures*. Sometimes he explains to the class a particular virtue or vice, a truth or a duty; and after having clearly shown what it is, he takes some little narrative which strongly illustrates the point in discussion, reads it to them, and directs their attention to it, with special reference to the preceding narrative."

Several examples follow, showing the free use that is made of Scripture within the prescribed limits, which only exclude all controverted points; and at the end it is said—"It is recommended that the teacher employ in his instructions the translation of the Scriptures in general use among the people; but that he occasionally take the original Scriptures and read to the children in his own translation, and sometimes use simple translations from different authors, that children may early learn to notice the diversities in different faithful translations, and see what they really amount to."

If I could give fully the examples of the lessons under this head as they stand in Dr. Stowe's Report, they would deepen the impression which even this general statement must make of the attention which this part of education obtains in these schools, and the extent to which the Bible is used in carrying it on. But they would extend too far this Note, which I find it hard to keep within proper limits. I must be content with the quotations which I have made, adding, however, a single example under a different head, to show how freely the Bible is referred to in illustration of anything in the course of the secular education that seems to call for it or admit it.

Under the head *Real Instruction, or Knowledge of Nature and the Eternal World, &c.*, it is said,—“Instruction on this head is

directed to the answering of the following questions—namely, What is man as respects his corporeal and intellectual nature?

“Here come anatomy and physiology, so far as the structure of the human body is concerned, and the function of its several parts.

“Also the simple elements of mental philosophy. In this connection appropriate texts of Scripture are quoted, as Gen. ii. 7; Ps. cxxxix. 14-16. An appropriate hymn is also sung.”—(p. 56.)

Such are the schools which the German States have provided for their people. And I think that, as I said, these details fully bear out Professor Stowe's general account of the place which moral, religious, and Scriptural instruction has in the ordinary business of the primary schools in Germany. The reading of the Word of God, and moral and religious instruction founded upon it, and directly drawn out of it, are made an essential and most important part of the general school business. And no restriction is put upon reference to the Bible in the course of the secular business, except the prohibition of controversial teaching, which applies even to the use of the Bible, in the direct religious instruction which is given as part of the school business. But, subject only to this restriction, the Bible is referred to, quoted, opened, and read, whenever the teacher thinks that appropriate and useful illustrations of the subject in hand may be derived from it. And what reason can any one have for imagining that those who have enjoyed such a System—a System in which religious instruction has so high and so large a place, and in which God's Word is used so freely and so highly honoured—would submit to a System which, instead of assigning to religious instruction its true place in the general business of the school,—a high place and a large place,—gives it no place at all there; and which, instead of honouring God's Word, and giving it free course in the school, forbids that it should be read, or referred to, or be kept within sight during school hours, if there be even a single child in attendance whose parents do not wish him to read the Bible, or to hear it read?

Could systems of education be framed upon much more widely different principles, as regards religious instruction? And does not this wide difference deprive the small party which the author of 'Is it a Sin?' represents and defends, of all claim to the countenance and support of Continental Protestants, whom they so confidently and so unwarrantably reckon upon their side? This claim is founded upon the alleged fact that the Continental

Protestants offer no resistance to a rule similar to one in the National System, to which we refuse to submit—the rule, that is, that all children whose parents object to their being present at the religious instruction given in the schools should be allowed to absent themselves while it is going on. I have already shown that this statement requires some qualification to make it agree with the truth, even as regards the permissive part of the Rule of the National System; for that, in some cases at least, the permission referred to really relates only to the special dogmatical instruction given in the schools, and that it is therefore nothing more than the rule of the Church Education Society, by which the children of Dissenters, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, are exempted from the obligation of receiving instruction in the formularies of our Church. But supposing that, in every state on the Continent, the permission extended to the general religious education given in the schools, and that so, upon that point, all Continental Protestants differed from us, how small would be this difference compared with the points upon which they agree with us in this matter; and how far would the fact of this difference be from proving or rendering it in any way probable that they would differ from us upon the practical question which lies between us and the author of ‘Is it a Sin?’ and his friends. He maintains that we may, *salva conscientia*, connect our schools with the National Board. We say that we cannot—that the rules of the System are framed upon false principles with regard to the nature and use of God’s Word, which the Church of Rome holds and enforces, and which we reject and resist—that they put restrictions upon the use of the Bible, and upon religious instruction in general, which are in principle wrong, as dishonouring God’s Word and religion, and which in practice must be deeply injurious to the best interests of the children in the schools—that we cannot conscientiously carry these rules out—that we cannot consent to banish the Word of God and all religious instruction, direct and indirect, from the general business of the school, or allow children to attend our schools for secular education whose parents will not allow them to receive the religious instruction given therein.

This is what we say. What side would the Protestants of the Continent take in this controversy? Some of them, no doubt, would say, ‘We do not go with the Church Education Society in this last objection. We would admit such children to the benefits

of secular education in our schools, and throw upon their parents the responsibility of depriving them of the benefit of the religious instruction which we give there, if they thought fit to do so.' Some of the Continental Protestants, no doubt, perhaps many, would say this. I am willing to admit that all would. But can it be doubted that all who did would add, 'But though we would allow those who dislike or dread the Bible to prevent their children from reading it, and receiving instruction in it, or from receiving any religious instruction in our schools, we would not allow them to rob our children of the inestimable benefit of reading the Word of God, and receiving instruction therein, as a part of the regular business of the schools in which they receive their education. We would reject and resist any system of education for the people in which religious instruction in and through the Word of God had no place.'

No one, who considers what a place such religious instruction—religious instruction in and through the Bible—holds in the education of the people in Germany can doubt that such would be their decision, if the question which lies between us and our opponents were submitted to them. And, in fact, though the Roman Catholic Church is everywhere in Protestant Germany restless and aspiring, and though it has in some places wrung concessions from the State, and, in particular, the concession before referred to—that children may be withdrawn by their parents while the religious instruction is going on—yet, in no State has the concession ever been carried to the length of abridging the amount of religious instruction given as a part of the regular business in the schools, or of interfering with the freedom with which the Word of God is used, both as an instrument in direct religious instruction, and in occasional references in the course of the general instruction at other times. It is only in the British Empire, and in this part of it, that a Protestant Government has been led to establish a system which protects the Roman Catholics from religious instruction, and from the Bible, by banishing both altogether from the general business of the State schools!

The case of the Continental Protestants has been very confidently quoted against us, not in this pamphlet only, but in other publications on the same side; and there can be no doubt that many readers are seriously influenced by such a confident appeal to what is felt to be high authority, while very few are able or disposed to ascertain for themselves how far the appeal is war-

ranted by the facts of the case. It seemed very desirable, therefore, to show distinctly that it is wholly unwarranted; and this could only be done by making the place which the Bible holds in Primary Education upon the Continent distinctly understood. It has been my object to make this perfectly clear; and I trust that what I have written will be found enough to enable all who read it to form something like a right estimate of the extent of the difference which exists upon this most important point between the mixed schools which are provided for the people by Protestant States upon the Continent, and those which, under the name of National Schools, the Imperial Government has provided for Ireland, and that thus my readers are in a position to judge how very unwarrantably the case of the Protestants of the Continent is referred to, as if they bore testimony against us in this controversy, by accepting contentedly a system of education like that which we perversely reject.

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These two cases—that of the Trinity College, Dublin, and of the Primary Schools of Protestant States upon the Continent—have been made to play so important a part in the controversy, that I was anxious to examine both of them thoroughly—particularly the last, which, being a much nearer parallel to the case in question, is far the more important of the two—with a view to showing that they by no means warrant the use which has been so confidently made of them by the supporters of the National System, but that, on the contrary, they have a very important bearing in favour of the Church Education Society.

I trust I have succeeded in showing this conclusively, though at the cost of more space than I fear most of my readers will think warranted even by the importance of the object. The result, however, is, that the review of the pamphlets under consideration has run out to a length which not only is wholly disproportionate to its importance but which forbids any attempt to carry out my purpose of reviewing in the same way, with the help of my notes, a selection of the other publications which appeared at the same period on the same side. This is in one way little to be regretted, for the chief object of noticing any of these publications now would be to examine and exhibit specimens of the kind of arguments on which the apologists for the National System rely. But the one actually reviewed has furnished such

specimens in sufficient numbers to enable us to dispense with any addition to them; while, from what I have heard and believe of the estimation in which the particular pamphlet is held by the supporters of the System, they will not be disposed to complain of the source from which the specimens were taken. Still I cannot but regret that I am unable to look at some of these publications: those, I mean, in which a special class of arguments are to be found, which are less apologies for the System than for the writers themselves; and which it would have been useful to examine, not for their bearing upon the characters of the individuals, but for the general principles which they involve. If I could think that these principles had been fairly stated or fairly used in the publications referred to, I could be well content under the necessity of passing them over unnoticed. But I believe that, in some of them, principles of great importance have been so misstated and so misused as to do great injury, and to threaten still more injury, to the cause of religion and morals in the country. When men who have held a high place in public estimation, and more especially a high place as religious men, abandon a cause which they have long and strenuously maintained upon religious principles, their defection cannot but give a serious shock to public morality—if public morality be concerned in sincerity in the profession of principle, and in steadfastness in abiding by it. But it may be doubted whether such acts do so much, on the whole, to weaken and disturb public principle, as the casuistry by which they are defended, when they are called in question, as they are sure to be. A large amount of such pernicious casuistry has been put into circulation in connexion with some of the most startling of the defections in this case. A great deal of this sophistry would have come under examination, if I had been able to carry out my intention of reviewing, in this Note, some of the other pamphlets referred to in the Preface, and other examples of it would have been considered in the Notes which were to follow. But the reason which obliges me to end the first Note here, restrains me from printing the others to which reference is made in the foregoing pages. I regret very much the curtailment of this Note, and the suppression of the others, because I think that the discussion and correction of the fallacies to which I have referred would have rendered a needful and important service to the cause of religion and morals amongst us, and I cannot hope that so favourable an opportunity of rendering this service will again occur. But I

feel that I could not add to the bulk of this publication without running the risk, if not incurring the certainty, of defeating its object. I submit, therefore, though with reluctance and regret, to the necessity of holding back the other Notes which I promised, with the exception of one, which I print, not because the error that it corrects is of more importance than those which would have come under consideration in the other Notes—it is, in fact, less important than some of them—but because the Note is shorter than any of the rest.

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NOTE C.—*On the proof which has been called for, of the unlawfulness of adopting the National System, p. 39.*

I HAVE said that I think that the complaint that my Letter contained no formal proof of the unlawfulness of compliance with the Rule of the National Board in reference to religious instruction was unreasonable. And I hope that I have shown that it would have been unreasonable, from whatever quarter it might have come. But there were some persons by whom it was made with a peculiarly bad grace: and among these, Mr. Napier takes unquestioned precedence. The omission of this proof—which, with mild facetiousness, he calls “the missing link”—is commented upon by him at considerable length in the Preface to the Second Edition of his ‘Thoughts,’ pp. 13-15.

In my ‘Remarks’ upon his pamphlet I gave extracts from two of his speeches, which must be quite sufficient to show that the author was not exactly the person who could be supposed to have stood in need of a proof of the unlawfulness of compliance with the Rule of the National Board, for himself, or really to have thought that such a proof was needed by the Clergy. If my readers do not remember, they will see, by a reference to my ‘Remarks,’ that he declared on the part of the Clergy, that they regarded the National Board as “founded upon the principle of concession to the Church of Rome;” as “founded upon a principle which is the denial of the principle of the Protestant Church;” that they believed that the principle on which it is founded is “a most unrighteous one.” And as this was their view of the principle of the system, it seemed to follow naturally, and almost necessarily, that their opposition to it was a matter of conscience. But that this was actually the case is not merely

stated by him expressly once for all, but is reiterated in almost every variety of expression in which the fact can be conveyed. And not only are all these statements made in such a tone as naturally to lead to the conclusion that the writer cordially sympathises with and approves of the sentiments which he records, but in making some of the very strongest of them he takes occasion to express distinctly that this is the case,—that he is stating his own views and principles as well as theirs.

Whether men who really hold such views of the National System could adopt it without an utter sacrifice of principle, might have been safely left to the common sense and common honesty of his readers. But the writer does not leave his judgment on this question to be matter of inference. He states explicitly that if the Clergy adopted the System, they would not only *compromise their principles, and do violence to their consciences, but that they would lower and destroy their character, so that neither their labours nor their example could be useful to society.\**

It would be easy to find in the right honourable gentleman's speeches very much more violent testimony against the National System, which no one, so far as I know, has ever denounced in language of such unmeasured violence and bitterness. But without going farther, I think my readers will be of opinion that it required not a little hardihood in the author of the foregoing passages to complain, either on his own behalf or on behalf of the Clergy, of the absence of a proof—a Scriptural proof—"that the rule of the Board was in itself so unlawful that to submit to it under any circumstances would be sinful."

I have not only given in the foregoing Speech what I hope is a sufficient proof of the unlawfulness of submitting to the Rule of the National System, but have also given in the preface what I hope is a sufficient reason for not having attempted to furnish such a proof before. But as the proof which I have offered is very different from the kind of proof which Mr. Napier thinks it reasonable to expect, it may be well to consider the passages in which his views and expectations are expressed. I have already quoted them (p. 39, footnote), but I think it better to set them down again here, than merely to refer to them:—

"To reason a man into a penalty is not allowed by law; to convict him of sin, without showing the law that has been transgressed, or proving the offence at all, cannot be reconciled with

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\* See the references and quotations in 'Remarks,' pp. 42-48.

reason nor with Scripture.”—*Thoughts*, 2nd ed., *Preface*, pp. 14, 15. And again: “Is it a sin? Of what law of God is it the transgression? If it were a sin, why has the Bishop laboured to the last with comparisons and consequences?”—*Ib.* p. 22.

This sufficiently explains what the author's view is as to the nature of the *proof of the offence* which he thinks he has a right to demand. And it is the more necessary to notice what he has said upon this point, because some at least of those who have adopted his new views upon the question generally seem to agree with him in holding that this offence is to be regarded as, at least, *not proven*, unless we are able to point out the law of God of which the act in question is the violation. The justification of this requirement is, that “to *reason* a man into a penalty is not allowed by law,” that is, the law of the land; and it seems to be expected that it will be tacitly inferred that neither ought it to be allowed in the judgments which we pass upon actions in reference to the law of God. But such an inference, whether it be made tacitly or openly, is hasty and unwarrantable, as a very little consideration cannot fail to satisfy every dispassionate person.

The rule referred to is a rule of evidence in the administration of criminal law. It is, that where the law annexes a penalty to a certain act, before a man is subject to the penalty, he must be proved to have actually committed the act specified. It will not do to prove that he has committed a similar act; or an act of equal or greater moral guilt; or even an act equally injurious or more injurious to the interests of society. Nothing will justify his conviction but proof that the specific offence to which the penalty is annexed by the law has been committed by him.

This is the rule referred to, and it is universally admitted to be a right and useful rule, and one in full accordance with the nature and end of human law. But to transfer it, as Mr. Napier proposes to do, to the domain of morals and religion, is to forget what is universally known of the different nature and end of the law of God and the law of man. The end of human law is the well-being of society. This end would be most effectually attained by the establishment of right principles of action in the minds of those who are subject to the law. But what is within is beyond the legitimate range of criminal law: nor could its prohibitions and penalties be extended to motives, principles, and dispositions, without becoming a most formidable instrument of oppression and injustice. Criminal law must confine itself to the regula-

tion of outward actions; and even this lower object it has but limited means of securing. It has no force at command but punishment in different forms and degrees; and it must rely chiefly upon the fear of punishment as the means of restraining from such acts as are injurious to the interests of society. To inspire and keep alive this fear, therefore, is a very important object in the administration of criminal law; and one which must be kept steadily in view in framing the rules of evidence. But, however important it is, it cannot be made the exclusive object of these rules. Both as matter of duty to the higher power, from which all human authority is derived, and to which it is responsible, and also as a matter of policy, with reference to the main end of human law, the object of protecting the innocent from conviction must be kept in view, as well as that of securing the conviction of the guilty. Both objects ought to be combined in the rules of evidence; and the more perfectly that they are combined, the more perfect will these rules be. But it is not to be forgotten that, according to the humane principles of the British Constitution, the former is the higher object, and that wherever both cannot be secured, the latter is to give way.

Now when all this, with regard to the nature and end and mode of operation of criminal law, is kept in view, it must be seen that the rule of evidence in question is a wise and well-considered rule. But it is intended to regulate judicial proceedings under the law of the land, not our moral judgments upon actions in relation to the Divine law. Indeed, it does not regulate our moral judgments, even with reference to offences against that law to which alone it properly applies. The judge and jury who, under this rule, acquit a prisoner, and the bystander who approves of the acquittal, may all have as strong a moral certainty of his guilt as if the evidence had been such as to warrant his conviction. The reasons which make it right to require a certain kind of evidence, before a man is convicted under a penal statute, have no weight in the inner forum. And as it is only our moral judgments which are in question in this case, the misapplication of the legal maxim on which Mr. Napier relies would be sufficiently apparent, even without taking into consideration the difference between Divine and human law. But it is when this difference is brought into account that the utter inapplicability of the maxim most strikingly appears.

The law of the land, as I said, only concerns itself with

outward actions, while the law of God extends to the principles, motives, dispositions, and affections of the agent, and treats them as an integral and most important part of the action. Under the former code, a man is innocent so long as he abstains from forbidden acts; but under the latter, no such abstinence, of itself, constitutes innocence. Indeed, as we are taught by the Blessed Lord Himself, even the Decalogue, the part of the law of God which most resembles the law of the land in form, differs very widely from it in substance. And this difference is such as decisively to forbid the application of the rule in question even to it. For though, like human law, the Decalogue expressly prohibits certain actions, yet, unlike human law, its prohibitions are not to be limited to the particular actions specified, but are to be extended to all similar actions, and all internal principles which are the source of such actions, and all acts and even words which express such principles in ourselves, or which provoke or lead to such actions in others.

So that even if the Ten Commandments comprehended the whole rule of life given to us by God, this authoritative exposition of their nature and range, which shows how *exceeding broad* they are, would be enough to prove that we cannot be regulated by this rule of evidence in judging of actions and agents in reference to the Divine Law. It shows in fact, that the very kind of proof which human law absolutely rejects, the nature of the Divine Law not only admits but requires. But it is well known that the law to which we are amenable is not confined within these limits, wide as they are, and that the cases in which God's Word provides us with express directions as to what we are to do, and what to refrain from doing, are few compared with the great number in which we are obliged to decide and act. In a great majority of cases we are left to the guidance of general principles by the honest application of which we are to determine what it is the will of God that we should do or refrain from doing. This is too well known to be dwelt upon. And no more is needed to show how narrow and erroneous is the view of duty which refuses to admit that an act or a course of conduct is wrong, unlawful, or sinful, in the sight of God, unless a Divine law can be quoted which distinctly forbids it.

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