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ARTICLE I.

DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION.

The connexion of the Church of God, with the general education of the people, is a subject in regard to which more is said, and felt, than thought. It is a subject at all times, and every where, of immense importance; and no where, and at no time, more so than at present in this country. Perhaps it may not be useless, to attempt an examination of the question, as one of principle, and to make an effort, candidly and thoroughly, to estimate the grounds upon which its determination ought to rest. It is certainly a very serious thing for the Church as a body, or any Denomination, in particular—either to omit a high duty—or to intrude violently into matters belonging to other authorities not less divinely instituted than itself. And it is therefore not without its value to recall public attention, from exhortations and emotions, delivered and excited upon this subject, as if it were one settled past doubt, in a particular way, to a serious revision of the original grounds of decision in the case, and a fair estimate of the great principles which must control it—or if they are neglected, must ultimately defeat all our attempts to control them.

There are several aspects in which our duties are obliged to be considered. if we would arrive at clear views in relation to them. We are under obligations to do many things, and to abstain from doing many things, considered merely as separate and individual beings; beings created,

each, as a power in the universe,—an activity, a personality, and in these respects, in the image of God, as remarkably as in any other: and all the issues of the eternal world will fall upon us, as do most of the great things of this present life, in this precise aspect of our being. Then we are bound together as parents and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants, guardians and wards, constituting the first and primary aggregation of individual persons—over whom rules, with divine sanction, the appointed head; and to this little state, sacred and complete, are committed countless duties, upon the right discharge of which are staked boundless results. Above this, in the weight of its power and the wideness of its reign, is that universal brotherhood, which we call the State: meaning thereby, not the government, or authority at any time existing, nor the particular form, as free or despotical,—but the great commonwealth itself: an institute of God, for the general and boundless developement of man—for his security, for his advancement, for his use and power, in all things temporal, which are beyond the sphere of his primary commonwealth—his own fireside. Neither above, nor beneath, nor to the exclusion, nor as embracing all three of these preceding conditions of being—but co-ordinately by the side of them, and for a new purpose, gathering some from all—stands the Church of the living God; not of the world, but in it—a peculiar state erected by God for special ends, all terminating in another and a higher state of being; taking no direct cognizance of any thing that is not spiritual—and taking cognizance of things, partly spiritual and partly not, only so far as they are spiritual. These are all the conditions of man, as he exists here below. He is an individual, he is a member of a family, he is a citizen, he is immortal. Whatever he can do, or ought to do, he can and ought to do, as a personality, as a member of a family, as part of the State, or as one of the household of God. In like manner, the family, the State, the Church, can do and must do, all that is capable of being done, all that is proper to be done, by any force or combination of forces, in this life, superior to the force of individual man; these being the only combinations of the force of individuals, recognized by God in this world—the only aggregate powers he has ordained—and

these so ordained as to exhaust completely, the susceptibilities and powers of man, when united with his fellows, and to comprehend absolutely, all his duties and obligations, that are not purely individual.

It is not uncommon, in our day, to hear it asserted with great emphasis: that the Church of God—nay that every particular fragment, into which, for our sins, God has allowed his Church to be broken,—is under the clearest obligations to take upon itself, and that in the widest sense, the entire education of the children of its members,—to the total exclusion of the civil power; that this duty is a strictly religious duty; and that to neglect it, is to fail grossly in duty, and incur great and lasting injuries. If this be so, then it is equally clear that the civil power is under no obligation to provide for the education of its children generally, for otherwise the Church could not be bound to interfere with the State, much less to exclude it. God is not the author of confusion. The duties of the State are civil, not sacred; the duties of the Church are sacred, not civil. To exclude the State from the control of general education, and to exempt it from the duty of providing the means thereof, it must be shown that education is of the nature of religious things, and that the duty of superintending it, is in its nature spiritual. Is not a man bound to educate himself, as an individual person? Is not every family bound to educate each other, and the head of the family peculiarly bound to educate the members? If so, are these obligations which arise out of our individual personality, and out of our family relations, in any degree at all; or do they spring solely, or chiefly, out of our obligations as members of Christ? Is a christian more bound,—or is he chiefly bound—or is he exclusively bound; they are three degrees of the same proposition—to acquire and to impart knowledge, which has nothing to do with religion, but much to do with temporal success, and temporal usefulness; all the positive sciences for example,—simply or mainly, as a christian, and because he is christian? or is he bound, chiefly or at all, to do so, from any considerations drawn from his individual position, or his relations to his family or his country? These are considerations, and there are many more like them, that require to be deeply pondered, before we arrive at the sweeping gene-

ralities, which assume and assert that Denominational Education is the only safe and true conclusion of this "high argument."

Let us turn our attention to the obligations of the government to its people; or in other and larger terms, the obligations of the community to itself. Considered in its broad light, the commonwealth is manifestly bound to provide for its own security, for its own progress, for its own perpetuity, for its own highest possible developement. It is, naturally, the very end of its existence, to do these things: it is, philosophically, the very mode of its existence, to be occupied in doing them; it is, morally, the very ground of the divine sanction for its existence, that it shall do them. Of the things that tend to promote these objects, some are of that kind that falls more immediately under the sphere of individual effort, and these, the commonwealth will best use and promote, by leaving them to individual control: some fall more immediately under domestic superintendence, and these may be left, most properly, there; some are in their nature chiefly or wholly religious—the former may be, the latter must be, left to the conscience—as being out of the reach of the State; but such as fall under neither of these catagories, must, in the nature of the cause, and by the severe logic springing out of the very conditions of the existence of the commonwealth, fall under its direction, and be found in the immediate sphere of its duties. Is the education of mankind, one of these? Is it a matter purely or chiefly appertaining to the Church—or if the other statement be thought more candid, purely or chiefly falling out of the proper duties of the State, that men should be taught to read and write, and be furnished with the means of education, and be encouraged to use them? Can any community, as such, safely, justifiably, omit to provide for the universal education of the people? Can it—we were going to say, be *guilty* of this omission? the very phrase, and every phrase that fully expresses the idea, showing the instinctive judgment of most unprejudiced and enlightened minds; that such an omission is really criminal—that is, that the performance of the opposite, is instinctively judged to be a duty. But if this be so, then it is not possible, that it is the duty of the Church, of the family, or of individuals, to proceed upon an hypothesis, that excludes the State from the right to perform one of its high and

manifest duties, or upon a different hypothesis, which assumes that the State has no such duty. It seems to us, it can be clearly shown, that this duty on the part of the State is manifest and transcendent, and that those common and instinctive judgments, to which we have alluded, are just and irrefragable; and, this being shown, the duties of all others, must necessarily take their complexion from this established fact; unless it can be shown that some or all others, are equally bound to provide for universal education, to the exclusion of the State, upon principles and proofs so clear and exalted, as to crush all countervailing claims and obligations; or unless it can be shown that it is nobody's duty to make such provision.

Education is an affair purely civil, purely temporal. It cannot be shown that the processes of acquiring the art of reading and writing, have any thing more to do with the spiritual operations of our being, than the processes of acquiring any other arts; for these are merely arts—arts by means of one of which, when acquired, we may ourselves proceed indefinitely in the acquisition of knowledge, and by means of the other of which we may act indefinitely in communicating knowledge. Nor can it be shown, that the processes by which any one part of knowledge, not purely moral, is acquired, is any more religious, or has any more relation to religion, than any other part of knowledge; so that every means by which any mortal acquires any knowledge, is as much liable, as the District school, to be engulphed by the Church; as indeed all have been in past ages. Nor can it be shown, that a company of boys at school, is more liable to spiritual injury, than a company of boys at a tannery or a carpenter's shop; nor that unsanctified study, as they express it, more demands, upon principle, the supervision of the Church, than unsanctified play, or unsanctified work. Nor can it be shown, that all the learning under heaven, or any part of it, except only that obtained by sitting down at the feet of the Saviour of sinners, has the least direct religious tendency whatever, or any power to make us, in God's sight, any better or any worse; the very highest attainments having nothing more to do with our spiritual condition, than the very lowest. Not only can none of these things be shown, but the very opposites of every one of them, can be clear-

ly and plainly established. If therefore there be any one thing, for which the State might venture to provide, without the remotest possibility of intruding into the province of the Church, it would seem that a provision for the universal education of the people, might be the thing.

If it is alleged that the moral influence of those who impart instruction is so great that the Church cannot safely trust the selection of them out of her own hands; then the obvious reply is, that this puts an end to society itself, and makes the Church the only power that can exist; since all that is necessary is, for any officer, or any power, to be capable of moral effects, or influences, in order to put it under the dominion of the Church. The moral influence of judges, governors, presidents, nay even sheriffs, coronors, and constables, is as real, and may be far more extensive, than that of school-masters. The moral influence of wealth, manners, tastes, is immense; that of domestic habits—nay even personal habits, often decisive. For this reason, shall the Church session sit in judgment, upon all possible conditions, all possible relations, all possible interests, that are capable of being perverted to moral evil? If not, upon what principle shall they appoint the school-master? Is he a Church officer? Are his functions ecclesiastical? The true security lies, not in putting the school under the power of the Church session, nor the appointment of the school master in that body, any more than the remedy for bad government lies in putting the Synod over the Legislature, and giving to that venerable body the appointment of Judges; but it lies in the universal diffusion of religious truth and influence, by other means, ordained of God—whereby school masters, as well as Judges and Legislators, shall become what it is fit they should be. And in the mean time, and in all possible times and circumstances, the pulpit and the fireside, the minister and the parent—not the school room and the school master, are the true and the authorised moral instructors of mankind; and in the mean time, and in all times, we must, as far as possible, avoid and discountenance bad school masters—just as we should avoid and discountenance, in all things, evil specimens of things in their own nature good.

Let it never be forgotten, when this view of the subject

is before the mind, that even the moral aspect of this question, to say nothing of its more legitimate bearings, has not proved wholly satisfactory when it has been most completely under the dominion of the Church. Has the Church—has any part of the Church, perfectly secured the object aimed at, by the most complete control of Schools and Colleges? Of what advantage to religion, has been the control of the Papal, or any other corrupt sect in past ages? Or rather, what a blessing would it not have been if no such control had existed! What has been the influence of the peculiar relations of the English universities, to the Church of England, upon the spirituality and orthodoxy of that Church? Even in Scotland, of what avail has it been, that school masters were obliged to be members of the established Church—when heretics and formalists ruled for generations the Church itself? In our own country, memorable examples are not wanting to prove that we have achieved very little in the way of giving to education a safe moral direction, when we have placed it most completely under ecclesiastical control. No delusion is more complete than that which seems to lie at the base of the present movement for Denominational control of schools and colleges, that a real security for religion is gained when the Church has a potential voice over the institutions of learning, and a profession of religion is made a fundamental condition of office in them. The real security, so far as any is needed or can be derived from the relations of education to religion, must be sought, as we have before intimated, in other quarters. If the Church cannot protect the purity of religion, without the control of education, she cannot do it by means of that control; and if she is not in a condition to do it, and that effectually, without the help of the schools, nay, we will add, in defiance of their opposition, if that were presumable, in a pure and efficient state of the Church—then her condition would be already such, that, if she controlled education, she would be at least likely to use it as a means of increasing the general deadness, formality or heresy, as in reviving the true knowing of God. This is, indubitably, the sum of the lessons which the past has taught.

We are far from saying, far from believing, that religion

is no part of education. It is the very best and greatest part of it. What we say is, that the Church has not and should not have the control of all things of which religion is the best and greatest part,—for then she would engulph the control of all things; and of most of them upon clearer grounds than general education. She should have the control of things strictly religious, and of none others; for her Master has given her this control, and no other; and right reason, as well as divine truth, limit her to this sphere as the one of her true and real power. Religion is an interest of the State; though the State, as such, is not part of the Church, still the commonwealth is ordained of God, and is as really a divine institute as the Church itself. Its office bearers are, in their place, for their appointed ends, servants of God; it may be, oftentimes, very wicked ones,—like too many in the sanctuary; but none the less really executing a divine authority on that account. It is part of their office to recognise God, and to obey him; and they omit it at their proper peril. But it is not—and this is the exact point—the duty of the Church to take away their office if they abuse it; to hinder them in any part of their vocation, or even to call them to account, except just so far as that account is purely personal to such as are members of her communion, and rests upon grounds absolutely personal.

Religion, as a distinct and most important part of knowledge; revealed religion, as the received religion of our country, so far from being excluded from general education, should be made a prominent part of it—from the primary school to the university. Divine revelation may be said to contain a distinct and authoritative republication of natural religion, and a new and further communication of the knowledge of God, and of spiritual things, such as without it, could never have been known. It is the voice of God, speaking with clearness and authority on the whole subject of man's origin, duty, destiny and hopes: the voice of Him, who ordained both the State and the Church. Most clearly, then, in a land professing to be, even nominally, Christian, this book should have a prominent place in every part of education. That it has been excluded from any system of general education, in this country, is to be attributed, mainly, if not entirely, to

two causes: first, that the Christian public has been faithless to its high obligations, and secondly, that schemes of denominational education, have withdrawn the attention of so large a portion of the Christian public from all proper regard to what was going on in systems and institutions, for which they felt but little interest or responsibility. There is no reason to doubt that the religious portion of the people, in every part of the United States, have it completely in their power, through the ordinary channels of influence accessible to them, to secure a result that ought to be perfectly satisfactory to them on this subject. In Maryland, ten years ago, by a simultaneous movement, the word of God was introduced as a reading book, first into the public schools of the city of Baltimore, and afterwards into far the greater part of the public and private schools of the State. Those who insist on going beyond this, and who require, as a part of public education, that the peculiarities of their particular sect, shall be publicly taught to all the pupils, in all the schools, manifestly require what they would not themselves be willing to concede to others, and which it is therefore absurd for them to expect that others will concede to them. For such there is no alternative but a sectarian school, and the result of the principle would be, if they could enforce it, a sectarian commonwealth as exclusive and as narraw as their sectarian school—as feeble in itself, and as liable to convulsion and decay. The narrowest of all sects, by the law of their being, are those most exposed to perpetual schism; and examples are not wanting of considerable communities, reduced to utter disorganization and dispersion, by this madness of sect—the most rabid of all madness. But all who are content to allow God to speak for himself in our schools, to the hearts and minds of our children—reserving for the fireside, the Sabbath schools, the pulpit, and the press, comment, elucidation, and thorough systematic instruction, may meet on a ground common to all, and satisfactory assuredly to most; which frees our systems of general education from the apprehension of a tendency to infidelity, which it has been diligently sought to instil into the public mind. At any rate all our arguments are for the power and duty of the State, to establish such a system as should be,—not such a system as should not

be. And it is for others to show that popular education, under the care of the State, is necessarily of irreligious tendency, before the State is robbed on that plea of a power most clear and beneficent; and to show further that popular education, under the care of the sects, is necessarily free from all similar and all equal danger, before those sects are invested with a power which does not necessarily, if at all, reside in them, and which, we must say, all past experience warns us to be cautious how we commit to their hands, while all careful consideration of the nature of things, and all large views of human progress, teach us they are not competent to wield.

Let us not be understood as intimating that the Church has no interest in the cause of general education, and no means of promoting it. Far otherwise. The Church has the utmost interest in the existence of sound and wholesome laws, and in their prompt and faithful execution, and vast influence in promoting both; but she has and should have no power, either to make or execute the laws. So as to many subjects, and amongst the rest, the one under discussion. She has the highest interest in the widest and most thorough cultivation of all mankind, and she has an immense power to promote it; it does not, therefore, follow that she should possess the power to control it, along with, much less to the exclusion of, the commonwealth; least of all, that she possesses this power and right, by a fragmentary investiture of it, in all the broken sects which disgrace her history. Very much beyond this may be said with perfect truth, when we assert, that it is the spirit of the new man, the spirit of true religion, which lies far down in the bosom of all that great movement for the temporal regeneration of mankind, which so remarkably distinguishes these latter ages. The great John Calvin is the veritable founder of the scheme of general, but let it also be carefully noted of *national*, not *denominational* education; and the baptismal vow required, in this country, of Presbyterian parents, that they will teach their children *to read* the word of God, has made an absolutely illiterate Presbyterian an almost unheard of thing—in the midst of the masses of popular ignorance, which everywhere deface our country; but this she has accomplished by an influence, not a power,

and through individual, not ecclesiastical effort. High, beneficent, transcendent, is her capacity—to advance this and every other righteous and glorious cause, but that capacity lies not in disturbing, but in holding sacred, the harmony of all things, which her master has ordained; in respecting, not obliterating, the great boundaries which define the powers and duties of man in his various positions,—boundaries, which none have a higher interest, or are under a more exalted obligation than herself, to preserve inviolate; and which it is one object of her mission to illustrate and enforce.

From this point, then, we may take a new departure. It has been shown, as we think, that the subject matter appertains strictly to the commonwealth; and even if omitted by it, rather to domestic, or even to individual than to ecclesiastical control. If the State will not do it, let it be the neighbourhood rather than the congregation. If the neighbourhood will not, let the minister do it—not as Pastor but as man. For, manifestly, the matter is not ecclesiastical; and if for reason of its incidental moral bearings, it may be made so,—so may any thing—every thing else. So also, it has been shown that the danger of evil, in the absence of ecclesiastical control, is purely imaginary, if the Church will faithfully execute its proper mission; and that when any danger really does exist, irregular intervention, nay, even exclusive control by the Church, has never and can never prevent it. And to sum up all, that there is no sort of necessity that the Church should undertake what can be otherwise better done,—seeing that her ability, to promote the very end in view, is really greater, if she will use it aright, than if she undertook to do the thing herself. Let the denominations then assume their true position—let them not call the State infidel because the laws do not teach the creed, nor the schools inculcate their peculiar dogmas; but content with the recognition of our common Christianity, admit the word of God to be sufficent for the schools, as the teacher of that part of public education which relates to religion; and unite in a common and glorious effort to advance the great interests of knowlege, and enlarge the deep foundations of freedom.

But it is not enough, perhaps, to infer the duty of the State, from its clear right to act in such a case. Its duty to provide for the general education of the people is, upon other grounds, extremely clear. The subject matter being once shown to appertain to the commonwealth, the transcendent importance of the thing itself places it among the highest concernments of the State. The value of education, in itself considered, is beyond all estimation. As a mere possession, irrespective of all things but its intrinsic excellence—the love of knowledge and the means of pursuing and imparting it, which are but the elements of education, can only be degraded by comparison with earthly treasures. Estimate, if you can, the value of education as an instrument by which other attainments may be made, and other enjoyments secured, and other victories won: its value as a training, by means of which we are fitted for higher efforts and severer labors, under capacities continually expanding in the pursuit of objects more and more exalted: its value as a distinction, the most pure and singular that is confined to this poor earth: its value as a security, and the greatest temporal security, against vice, and want, and degrading sin: its value as a solace, and the most precious earthly solace, under sorrow and disappointment and corroding care: its value as a trust to be used for the benefit of those around us—for the State itself, and for posterity: and, above all, its value as a developement of the precious stores which God's munificence has hid away in the deep secret chambers of the soul, bringing to open day his glorious handiwork, which else had lain buried in darkness forever! Oh! may not the State—*shall* not the State draw forth and cherish and hang like a diadem around her venerated brows, jewels so precious? Has the State no duty to perform except to our dying bodies, our perishing estates, our mad passions? Is nothing due to our purer and better part—to that lofty intelligence, which, though not wholly, yet more than the body, more than the soul, escaped the curse and ruin of the fall? Yea verily, we owe it to ourselves—all owe it to each—and what is that but the State owing it to every member of it—to rescue the general intellect from darkness, and to provide, to the utmost extent of its

capacity, that all may know whatever may be known — that all may be and do whatever knowledge can secure of good.

The magnitude of the work of educating the community, places it wholly beyond the reach of individual means and voluntary efforts. Even the humblest system of common school education, in which nothing but the bare tuition is estimated, and no supervision but that which might be required to keep the system in motion is contemplated — would, if it extended over one State of medium size, and proposed even to assist the poor, much less to instruct all the pupils by means of a common fund, be found, in all respects, beyond the power of private means and purely moral influences. To instruct 100,000 children in the rudiments of knowledge, six months every year, would require in the middle States, for tuition alone, from five hundred to eight hundred thousand dollars every year, and would demand about three thousand teachers. There are in the United States, at present, six or seven millions of children and youth, of suitable ages to be at school, and the number is increasing with great rapidity. Now it is a very simple thing and easily done, for a Church Court to pass orders recommending the establishment of good schools in all the congregations, and good Academies in all the Presbyteries, and good Colleges in all the Synods; and it is not very difficult to draw up and publish paper schemes, in which the work is done — and it is not impossible to get agents to pervade the Churches and solicit and collect considerable funds: and it may, with more difficulty, be achieved, that a few active, enlightened and philanthropic persons, in various localities, will go earnestly to work, to do something, and a good deal may be done; but whatever is done, we undertake to say, is done in most instances by the individual activity and wisdom of particular persons, and that the denominational control and power lay chiefly, if not wholly, in counsel and encouragement — not in creating or sustaining. But after all that can be done has been done by all the denominations, in this manner, does any one really imagine that a serious approach is made towards educating six or seven millions of persons — that the two hun-

dred thousand teachers who must be had, have been called into existence and designated to their particular fields of labor—that the edifices have been erected necessary to accommodate these vast armies of youth—that the means have been provided to procure libraries and other aids for the instruction of such multitudes—that the perpetuation and expansion of the system have been adequately secured—that any organization, deserving the name of *system*, has been effected, or that any adequate control, superintendence or direction has been provided? It is, as it appears to us, utterly absurd to make any such pretension. Education is so great a necessity and so great an attainment that many individuals and neighborhoods will have schools where it is possible to establish them by the means at their disposal; and the people of God see such clear and controlling reasons for promoting sound and extensive learning, that they will, by one means and another, provide colleges for the education of their youth, especially those who expect to preach the Gospel: and the power of the principle of association is so vast, that private means, under its operation, and stimulated by moral influences, may accomplish immense results—and, by the intervention of boards of trustees, charters, and other helps from the State, great efficiency and duration may be secured—not, however, without great risk. But what does all this amount to when we come to argue the great principles involved, and to contemplate the boundless and endless work of educating all mankind, through all ages, in all knowledge? Nothing short of the whole resources of commonwealths, laid under such contribution as the whole power of commonwealths alone can enforce, and directed with a unity and comprehensiveness which absolutely demand the presence and authority of the State—is adequate to the result professed to be desired. If we admit that general education is in any sense so important or desirable that any duty arises any where to make any attempt to secure it, that admission necessarily draws after it the consequence that this duty devolves on the commonwealth, not only because the whole case is exactly analogous to all other cases in which similar duties rest on the State, but because it is utterly beyond the power,

and absolutely heterogeneous to the nature and action of every other person, natural, artificial, political, or spiritual, that exists amongst men.

We do not hesitate to say, that a new proof of the existence of this obligation on the part of the State, is to be found in the very tendency of denominational and other insufficient efforts, to perform partially and amiss the great work, which the human race is so deeply interested in having performed fully and aright. If every denomination were to carry out at large, a denominational scheme covering the whole sect, and embracing the whole round of knowledge, which they might see fit to incalcute, the result would be better indeed than universal ignorance—but worse, in our judgment, than might have been achieved by the spontaneous action of mankind, to the exclusion both of the State and the denominations. In this country a very large part of the population would be excluded after all the denominations had counted up their hosts. Is no provision to be made for them?—or are they to be reduced to elect between ignorance and sectarianism?—or is the State to set up a separate scheme for them, or allow them to do it for themselves? which two latter things, as the remnant is no sect, and as the State has no business with education, might be excluded from the possibilities of the case. The sects, in every part of the Union, are mingled by residence amongst each other, in such a manner that when their schemes are carried out, we shall have school against School, Academy against Academy, and College against College—in the rich and populous regions; and then wide tracts of country sparsely peopled by the poor, left destitute. Let it be remembered also, that some of the sects are, according to the judgment of others—and certainly according to our own, wholly unfit to be trusted with the education of the people, an unfitness doubly manifest if the connexion between education and religion, which is really the only pretext for denominational education that has the least force, be brought into the account. In the midst of such a condition of things, the State has other considerations, if possible, still more important, to be weighed before she can consent to allow such miseries to afflict the community, through her neglect. Is it nothing to her, is it nothing to us all, that the whole community, from tenderest infancy to mature

age, should be trained up in the narrow and bitter spirit of sect? Has the State no interest in presenting herself to her children, as their common parent, and filling their young minds with sentiments of gratitude and reverence towards her, and binding their affections to each other, as brothers whose great strife is to be, who shall best serve and most love her? They have carelessly read the history of the past, who are not aware that the most serious difficulties in the conduct of human affairs, may spring from any heterogeneousness in the composition of society, from radical differences in religious opinions, or through alieneations upon religious topics, as fruitfully as from any other source. Is it the interest of the commonwealth that her people should be so trained as to promote in the very highest degree, the activity of every heterogeneous particle in her composition? If so, let her stand still, till the zeal of sect shall have done its work, with such an educational movement as that our age witnesses. In fine, what can denominations, comparatively small, thoroughly disunited, liable to constant change, actuated by considerations of their own particular interests, and altogether embracing only a part of the whole community, accomplish, of good or great, by separate action in such a field as this, compared with what may be accomplished, by the united, vigorous, consistent, sustained power of the State itself? Were it not better to prevent so great a cause, from being so signally abused? And is not the certainty of such a result, in the absence of all intervention by the State, a sufficient call to her, to enter earnestly upon it herself?

This great duty of the commonwealth, clear in itself, and of universal obligation—becomes more palpable and more stringent when it falls upon States peculiarly organized, or upon States placed in particular circumstances. The progress of society creates new obligations, and gives higher sanctions to those already existing. The developement of civilization places in new and conspicuous lights the value of knowledge, which is at once its deepest cause and its noblest offspring. If freedom is to be the heritage of man, knowledge must be so too. Free institutions, to become universal, must bear along with them universal education. If there be any exception to these statements

they are few and uncertain, and will be found to exist where a safeguard against ignorance in free governments has been sought, on the one hand, in some limitation of the Democratic element, or on the other, in a more exalted training of that part of the community that was trained at all. The lessons of experience, the meditations of philosophy, and the light from heaven, all direct us to the same career—by the same assured way. The fanaticism which despises the State, and the infidelity which contemns the Church—are both alike the product of ignorance and folly. God has established both the Church and the State. It is as clearly our duty to be loyal and enlightened citizens, as to be faithful and earnest Christians. Instead of promoting, we are sacrificing the interests of humanity, when we put at hazard great and lasting advantages, through an unwise devotion to interests which, though real, are less conspicuous, and which may be better secured, so far as it is right to secure them, in some other form. Is it better that all men were enlightened, and the tenth part of them Presbyterians?—or is it better that all but the tenth part of men remain in ignorance, and that tenth be exclusively and intensely Presbyterian? God is not honoured by our making devotion to some dogma not in itself fundamental—the means or even the occasion of robbing millions of his creatures of costly benefits, for which they sigh in vain, and in vain stretch out to us imploring hands. Religion is not honoured, and patriotism and humanity are outraged, when, on narrow and insufficient pretexts, we snap the great bond of human brotherhood, and deride our country as unworthy of our trust, in her just and noble efforts to promote lawful objects, to which we say we are devoted. Surely, here, if any where, in free and Christian America, the State is bound and the State may be trusted to occupy this vast field of exertion; and here, if any where, every hand should help her, every voice applaud her, every heart bless her for her work.

Of all the Christian denominations, it has seemed to us most remarkable that Presbyterians should be assailed with personal and sectarian appeals to separate themselves from the body of the people in their efforts to promote the spread of knowledge. What conceivable advantage are we to

reap from such a course? What part of our past history justifies such appeals? What portion of our principles invites such attempts? Shall a people, famous from the first, for their patriotic devotion to all States they have dwelt in, by some new impulse rebel against all States in one of the most beneficent of all attempts to exercise the civil power? Shall a people, renowned for its steadfast love of knowledge, and its great exertions to promote universal education, rise up in arms against the only possible method in which, and the only existing power by which its cherished desires may all be gratified? Shall a people, more capable than any other of doing good, by acting with all—and more certain than any other of suffering harm by separating from them, shrink from the sublime vocation of directing a great, and, in its consequences, interminable movement of the human mind, and establish for itself a voluntary and fatal paralysis, by drawing tightly around its noble and free proportions the cold and frigid bonds of sect? Never—never. The Presbyterian Church loves its creed, comprehends its interests as a denomination, is faithful to its peculiar mission among the branches of Christ's people, and will execute firmly and steadily its own special objects, in its own chosen way. But the Presbyterian Church in this country is composed of free citizens of free commonwealths—and her members will accept the mission which is given to them as patriots, no less than the mission given to them as Calvinists—their vocation as Americans no less than their vocation as Presbyterians. She will be true to her noble history, her high instincts, her exalted destiny; and throughout America a more cordial and unanimous support to every fair system of general education, and to every part of every such system will be accorded to no commonwealth, by any sect, than the great body of the Presbyterian people will give to all, every where. Narrow views may be put forth in her name; they are not hers. Idle fears may be expressed on her behalf; she does not cherish them. Unworthy motives may be held out to her; they will not move her. Weak, timid or selfish counsels may appear for a time to gain her consent, but the calm, final, settled purpose, the true, earnest, cordial action she will take at last, will be in full accord with the spirit of the age.

We do not pretend to say, that education by the State, or by the Church, or by any body else, can ever make man what he ought to become. But without it, he never can approach to his full stature. It is therefore one of the highest human interests. To place it on its true foundation—to commit its management to the proper authority—to urge forward its majestic progress—are points, therefore, of general and vast importance. It has been manifest, for some years past, that great efforts were to be made to divert the Christian public from all co-operation in the support of schemes of education and institutions of learning supported by the State, and enlist them, as far as possible, in schemes and efforts purely denominational. At first, the main argument was, that the State schools and colleges were not safe, in a religious point of view; more recently, it has been largely urged that it is the peculiar duty of the Church to establish and conduct schools. It is not therefore amiss to have inquired how far the very want of alleged safety in the public schools and colleges is not the fault of the Church herself—and to have shown that the pretension now set up for ecclesiastical control over general education is utterly absurd, and without the shadow of a foundation in religion, in reason, or in our political or ecclesiastical systems. General education, by means of denominational control, if not a contradiction in terms, is a pure figment of the imagination, incapable of practical execution, and destitute of all grounds of rational support; and its logical advocacy involves the denial to the State of some of its clearest rights, and the subversion of some of its highest obligations—while it sacrifices all hope of the general education of mankind, upon the altar of sectarian bigotry and cant.