

object of the other Bill is to enforce attendance at school. The following are its chief provisions:—

"1. Children between six and thirteen are to attend school at least thirty weeks annually. A week's attendance to consist of eight attendances of at least two hours; but children over eleven who pass the 6th standard are to be exempt. Inspectors are to hold two examinations in the year, and give certificates gratis to those who pass.

"2. Schoolmasters are to send every Monday to the local committee a list of absentees.

"3. The officer of the school committee finding children idling in the streets is to visit and caution the parents.

"4. The penalty (which cannot be inflicted without a previous visit) is not to exceed 5s. for the first offence, and 20s. for any subsequent one.

"5. No penalty is to be inflicted unless the absentee live within a mile and a half of a school where he can be educated free.

"6. Habitual truants are to be dealt with under the Industrial Schools Act."

The following extracts from speeches delivered at the first general meeting of the National Education League will show the views of this association in respect to compulsory education:—

"The Rev. Rowland Williams proposed that field or stable labour should be forbidden to children under ten, and that between ten and twelve children should not be employed without producing a certificate of instruction."

"Alderman Romney quoted Mr. Redgrave, Factory Inspector, to the effect that no child under sixteen should be employed without a certificate of attainments, mere attendance at school not being sufficient."

"Mr. Dixon, M.P., said 'attendance should be enforced by having a register of the children of each town kept, and opposite each name the school most convenient for the child to attend; that a list of the children who ought to attend each school in the town should be sent to the committees, and that the power of enforcing attendance should be given these committees.'"

"Mr. Mundella, M.P., said 'First, what are the subjects of this association?—The establishment of a system which shall secure the education of every child in England and Wales. How do we propose to effect it?—The means are, first, by making provision for education, and then compelling attendance at the schools provided.'"

"Mr. Paget, an employer of agricultural labour, stated that he found that employing boys alternate days, and sending them to school the other days, paid, and that the boys who had schooling every other day quite equalled in knowledge those who professedly attended constantly."

The following is a sketch of the main provisions of the Bill promised by the League:—

"1. The country is to be divided into districts, each of which is to be under the control of a school board, to be elected by ratepayers.

"2. The duties of these boards are—

"(1.) To provide schools.

"(2.) To levy the necessary rates.

"(3.) To enforce attendance.

"3. One-third of the expenses of the school board is to be paid by rates; the remainder by Government, subject to the inspectors' reports.

"4. Each board is to appoint a visitor, who is to see that all the children attend school, either as whole or as half timers. Parents neglecting to send their children are first to be summoned before the board, and cautioned; for the second offence they are to be brought before a J.P., who may caution or fine them; for the third offence they are to be fined from 1s. to 5s.; and 5s. additional for each subsequent conviction, up to 20s.

"5. Admission to these schools is to be free, and no creed or catechism is to be taught, but Scripture may be read before or after school hours."

At the meeting of the Society for the Promotion of Social Science, in 1868, the subject of compulsory education was discussed. Mr. Sandford, Inspector, Mr. Jesse Collins, and Dr. Hawksley, among others, supported it. Mr. Bremmer, Secretary to the Manchester Education Society, said that, "the attempt to remove the evils of ignorance by voluntary efforts had signally failed in Manchester, the cause being the apathy and carelessness of the parents, and not their poverty."

Canon Kingsley, in inaugurating the discussions on education at the last meeting of this Society, advocated in forcible language the necessity of secular and compulsory education. Referring to the inadequacy of the voluntary system, he said, "The only way of making them (the poorer classes) understand that educating their children is an indefeasible duty, is for them to be taxed by the State itself, and for the State to say, 'There is your money's worth in the school. We ask no more of you; but your children shall go to school or you shall go to gaol.'"

In a debate in the House of Commons, 12th March, 1869, Mr. Melly drew attention to the number of children growing up in the large towns without education. He referred to the statement of the Manchester and Birmingham Education Societies, as showing that many children did not attend school, not from the poverty, but from the carelessness of their parents, and advocated making attendance compulsory. Mr. Dixon, Professor Fawcett, and Mr. Mundella spoke to the same effect—Mr. Mundella quoting a return made by the Secretary of Legation at Berne, in which the universal ability of the people to read and write was attributed to education