

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.¹

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN this report was originally forwarded in May, 1885, I wrote as follows :—

“I had, until recently, hoped that it would have been practicable to include herein information obtained by me in the United States of America. But, in consequence of the continuous labour that I have found it to be requisite to bestow on the subject of education in Europe—which subject has necessitated close attention from the time I landed in England in January, 1884, up to the present date—it has been impossible as yet for me to visit America. It is still, however, my intention to do so soon; and, if thereupon my views upon national education there materially alter, I will communicate with the Government by sending a supplementary report. It may, however, be stated that the opportunities I have had of personal intercourse with Americans and others intimately acquainted with the subject; the advantages afforded by attendance at the conference last year; and the study of publications, including the latest official ones received by me from the Bureau, Washington, recently, enable me, with some degree of confidence, to arrive at conclusions.”

Since thus writing, I, in January last (1886), visited the United States; and, in consequence of personal inquiry and observation, now add more data, and confirm what was previously stated.

There are several very interesting questions which may with especial advantage be studied in connection with the United States; and as they are of grave importance, and especially deserving of attention in new communities—such as the Colony—where as yet institutions have not been permanently developed, some of the most prominent are here referred to :—

- (1.) Whether a system of complete gratuitous State primary education has a demoralizing tendency, as inclining to weaken a sense of parental responsibility and influence?²
- (2.) Whether the present scope of the popular educational teaching in force—for instance, in Great Britain and the Colony—does not tend to discourage manual pursuits, and thereby retard the general development of the material resources of a country?³
- (3.) If so, whether the giving of a greater prominence, in a national course of study, to all that which would tend to be useful in the practical development of such resources, would

¹ The following official publications (herewith) have been recently received from the Bureau, Washington :—

(a) Circulars of Information, 1884—

No. 1. Meeting of the International Prison Congress at Rome, in Oct., 1884.

No. 2. The Teaching, Practice, and Literature of Shorthand, by J. E. Rockwell. Second and enlarged edition.

No. 5. Suggestions respecting the Educational exhibit at the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition, U.S.A.

No. 6. Rural Schools—Progress in the Past; Means of Improvement in the Future.

No. 7. Aims and Methods of the Teaching of Physics, by Prof. C. K. Wead, A.M.

(b) Circulars of Information, 1885—

No. 1. At School Systems in U.S.A., by J. D. Philbrick, LL.D. (herein called Dr. Philbrick).

No. 2. Teachers' Institutes.

No. 3. A Review of the Reports of the British Royal Commissioners on Technical Instruction, with notes by the late C. O. Thompson, A.M., Ph.D., Pres. of Rose Polytechnic Inst., Indiana.

No. 4. Education in Japan.

No. 5. Physical Training in American Colleges and Universities, by E. M. Hartwell, Ph.D., and M.D. of John Hopkins University.

(c) Report of the Commissioner of Education, U.S.A., for Year ending 30 June, 1884, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1885, which is the last report published (herein termed C. rept., 1885).

In addition I have been favoured with a communication recently from the Bureau, which I have incorporated herein.

See also interesting statistics in “Journal of Ed.,” London, Oct., 1886, p. 419.

For Canada, see—

(a) Mr. Mather's rept. on America and Canada, R.C., vol. 2 (hereafter termed M. rept.), pp. 66-70, and for testimony to its value see R.C., vol. 1, p. 513; I.E.C., vol. 14, p. 68; and Amer. Commr. Rept. on Education for 1882-83, Government Printing Office, 1884 (hereafter termed C. rept., 1884), p. 151, &c.;

(b) “Sheffield and Rotherham Independent Newspaper” (hereafter termed S. and R.I.), 23 and 20 Sept., 1884;

(c) C. rept., 1885, p. 249-253; and 1884, p. 252;

(d) M.C.E.; and

(e) Paper on “The Recent and Prospective Development of Canada,” read by Mr. J. G. Colmer, at the Royal Colonial Institute, on 17 Jan., 1886—see “The Colonies and India,” 15 Jan, 1886.

² See “Quarterly Review,” April, 1875—“National Education in America” (hereafter termed Q.R.), pp. 456 and 458. See also R.C., vol. 3, 7783.

³ See—

(a) M. rept., pp. 47 and 64;

(b) C. rept., 1884, p. 157;

(c) I.E.C., vol. 14, espec. pp. 5, 51, 57, 67, and 571; vol. 13, pp. 159 and 162. But note vol. 14, p. 334;

(d) Prof. Huxley, R.C., vol. 3, 3061;

(e) R.C. rept., vol. 1, pp. 512, 513.