

1850

A LETTER
 RELATING TO THE RESTORATION
 OF THE
 NATIONAL SCHOOLS,
 OF THE
 PARISH OF DEDDINGTON,
 OXON.

ADDRESSED TO
 THE REV. WILLIAM WILSON, B.D.,
 CURATE,

BY JAMES BROGDEN, M.A.,
 VICAR OF DEDDINGTON.

DEDDINGTON:
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G.A. Oxon 8 1255 (1)

PREFACE.

THE following letter, regarding the National Schools, at Deddington, and addressed to the Rev. Wm. Wilson, was read, at a Public Meeting of the Inhabitants of that Parish, held on Tuesday Evening, the 19th of February, 1850.

As the Author has been favoured with a kind expression of thanks, from the Meeting, for that communication, he deems it right to print and circulate the same; as some acknowledgment, on his part, of affectionate respect towards his Parishioners is due.

He desires that his views and advice, for permanently ensuring the better Education of the Poor of Deddington, may be permitted to enjoy the considerate regard of all classes of the Inhabitants; and that if the Plan proposed be adopted, it may, under the blessing of Divine Providence, prove a lasting source of good, for the temporal and eternal interests of those to whom it is most humbly and most earnestly recommended.

VICARAGE,
 DEDDINGTON, OXON,
 20th February, 1850.

A LETTER.

My dear Sir,

I forward for your information, and for that of the Meeting, to be held on Tuesday next, a Statement, relating to the National Schools at Deddington.

Before I came into residence, and immediately upon my institution, I sent from London, to the Rev. Mr. Wenham (then the officiating Minister), some questions regarding the education of the poor of that Parish, with a request for his answers thereon.

Those questions, with the respective answers, are now sent. I perceived from them, that much was wanting to secure a permanent restoration and an adequate efficiency of the Schools, and in this view of the case I was soon corroborated by the Rev. Mr. Risley, who in a letter of about the same date (Feb. 23rd, 1848), writes thus;—
 "I shall have something to say about the Schools, which have never been conducted as I could have wished, or

as they ought to be, from peculiar circumstances.—They are both my property."

A subsequent communication from the Vicar's Churchwarden, Mr. Field, was conclusive to my mind on this subject, for on reading the School records from the time of their prosperous establishment in 1814, there appeared to exist a most deplorable decay, which the accompanying printed statement, shortly afterwards circulated by me, will briefly explain, and to which is appended the following remedy, proposed by me, namely, "to raise by public subscription, a sufficient Fund, for the immediate purchase, in the Parish, of adequate and well situated Freehold School accommodation, to be permanently secured for such object: to solicit Donations and Annual Contributions for the future efficient maintenance of the Schools:—and to apply to the National Society, the Diocesan Board, and the Committee of the Privy Council on Education, for grants, according to the Government Plan, in aid of the Deddington National Schools."

I applied accordingly to the National Society, and received at first an answer that the state of the Society's Funds would not authorize a grant, but on a repeated application I subsequently received the promise of a grant of £50. From the Committee of Privy Council on Education, I have reason to expect a sum varying from £300 to £400; and an application has also been made to the Ironmonger's Company, for Betton's Charity, regarding annual support from that source. An appeal

for aid is likewise in progress to the Diocesan Board.

The Donations offered to the Building Fund, (see list accompanying) amount to the sum of £160, and the additional annual subscriptions promised among the Parishioners in support of the plan recommended, already reach £22 10s.

The Dean and Canons of Windsor have been applied to for a site, not exceeding one acre of land, to be granted according to the facilities afforded by the School Building Acts, and I am happy to assure you that they exhibit no unwillingness to grant one.

You will observe from what I have stated in the above mentioned particulars, that the aid of Her Majesty's Government appears almost indispensable for a Parish like Deddington, wherein there is so much Church Property, the owners of which contribute nothing annually to any Charity of the Parish whatsoever, and wherein the educational and other wants of the poor, according to the description of the population, are so very urgent. I should add, that the demands already pressing upon the Ratepayers are heavy, and that in the present acknowledged depression of Agricultural Produce, it is neither fair nor practicable, to expect that occupiers of Land, will, by their voluntary contributions, supply what is so much wanting.

I have accordingly concluded, that the aid of Her Majesty's Government should be sought, not only on account of actual necessity, but upon principle, and that it should

be received with willingness and gratitude. Now, my dear Sir, as much misinformation exists regarding what is termed the "Government Plan" for the education of the people, I will endeavour succinctly to explain it.

Instead of being a plan to secularize Education, and exclude religion from National Schools, it is one for granting the National resources, for Educational purposes, in accordance with the Laws of England, and with the principles of civil and religious liberty, achieved at the Reformation, secured under the toleration Acts in 1688, and which are now happily forming the very spirit, and I may add, the strength of the Empire of Great Britain.

But before I enter into details, I must call attention, by way of contrast, to the plans previously proposed and rejected, for the settlement of what is acknowledged to be a difficult question.

These will be found in Appendix A, page 96, and Appendix B, page 98, of the accompanying Pamphlet intituled "The School in its relations to the State, the Church, and the Congregation." The first plan was for combined education, attributed to the Government during Lord Melbourne's administration; the second was contained (see Appendix B) in a Bill introduced by Secretary of State Sir James Graham, during Sir Robert Peel's administration: these plans both failed (see Chapter 1 of the Pamphlet referred to), which also explains (see Chapters 3, 4, and 5) the Government rules

In this way, the Management Clauses which relate to National Schools, for the Education of the Poor in the principles of the Established Church of England, are framed; they are four, numbered A, B, C, D.

The first two relate more particularly to Towns and Populous Districts; and the latter, C, D, to rural Parishes, containing fewer than five hundred inhabitants.

Clause B, which I will thank you to read to the Meeting, is therefore the one, according to the minute of Council, dated June 28, 1847, appropriate to the Parish of Deddington.

Clause D is the one I prefer; not on general grounds, because both appear to me unobjectionable, as by the constitution of *all* the four Clauses, the Clergyman is to have the superintendence of all the moral and religious instruction, and if any dispute shall arise on such subjects, between him and the Board of Management, of which he is constituted Chairman, with a casting vote, an appeal lies to the Bishop of the Diocese, whose decision is to be final. In matters purely secular, if a dispute arise, in the Committee of Management, "the minority thereof being not fewer in number than one-third of the whole Committee," may request the Lord President of the Council and the Bishop of the Diocese to nominate two Clergymen, to arbitrate in such matters, who when so nominated, shall jointly select one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace, being a layman of the

now existing regarding grants of Public money for purposes of education.

It was soon found that what was called combined education was very generally repudiated, and that all religious communities were unwilling to merge their differences, and abandon what they esteemed to be their principles, in one universal scheme for imparting secular knowledge.

The necessity for some better education of the people, was admitted by Statesmen of all parties, and the statistics collected by Archdeacon Sinclair, for the National Society, from the Manufacturing and Mining Districts, fully prove that the Church of England was roused to a sense of the emergency.

Under these circumstances, as plans for combined education had failed, some arrangement for separate grants to each religious community, became necessary, and accordingly the present plan is one for granting the Public money, for educational purposes, in proportion to money subscribed, and to the existing wants of the population.

These grants are made without imposing upon any religious denomination, any religious restraint whatsoever, except it may be regarded as one, that by Management Clauses they shall be bound down strictly, by Deed, to adhere to their own principles.

Church of England, as another arbitrator, whose award, in writing, shall be final.

When it is further remembered that for National Schools receiving Government aid, according to the before mentioned Clauses, each person appointed as a Member of the Committee of Management, *MAY* be required to be a *Communicant* of the Church of England, and *MUST* make a solemn declaration that he is a member of the same, and that all Schoolmasters and Schoolmistresses must be Members of the Church of England, and that they are responsible to the Minister or Curate, and dismissible by them, for any defective or unsound manner of instructing the Children in religion, it appears to me quite unaccountable, that there should exist, as I am sorry to observe there does, so much objection, among the Clergy, and I may add especially in this neighbourhood, to such Wise, Statesmenlike, and Churchmanlike plans, and Management Clauses, adopted by Her Majesty's Government, for the Education of the Poor of England.

It is only justice to the mistrusting parties to conclude, that they must have been imperfectly informed; or more correctly speaking be quite misinformed; upon this most important subject.

Having thus endeavoured to explain the general principles of the Government Plan, for Education, as far as it relates to Schools in connection with the Church of

England, I will now proceed to enumerate some of the special advantages which are available, through it, for the Parish of Deddington.

In the first place the grant (about £400) towards the Building Fund and the purchase of a Site, will be far larger than any present existing, or expectant, source of support for those objects.

Not only Freehold Schools for the good of the Poor will be secured, but houses of Residence (none are now provided) for the Schoolmaster and Schoolmistress will be obtained.

With these important and permanent preliminaries established, the funds for the *Annual* maintenance of the Schools are likely to receive a very large augmentation from the Government, in various ways, which will be regulated according to the degrees of efficiency found to exist in the Schoolmaster and Schoolmistress.

Their qualifications, to be teachers, will be carefully examined by Clergymen, appointed to inspect the Schools, under sanction of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

An efficient Schoolmaster (or Schoolmistress) will receive an addition of about one-third to the amount of his salary:—thus if you give £50 per annum, the Government will add £25 per annum, and so on.

He will likewise be in a condition to receive additional gratuities of £10 per annum, and £5 per annum, for

each Pupil Teacher or stipendiary Monitor, that is to say, annual apprentice premiums (see page 114) on an ascending scale, for the training of that much needed class of persons,—efficient, morally, and religiously instructed,—Schoolmasters and Schoolmistresses.

The actual amount to be expected on this subject is subjoined in a separate paper, relating to "Ways and Means;" but in general terms, I think I am rather under than above the amount of probable assistance, in stating that it will reach, at the very least, under judicious management, to £45 per annum.

I have only one more additional particular to mention: which, I am sure, your great experience will corroborate, namely, that the Poverty and Ignorance of Parents are, too often, great obstacles to the education of their children. I have observed this evil, for many years, in a straw-platting district; and it prevails to some considerable extent at Deddington:—the instant a child can earn anything, Education is abandoned, and the parents set the child to work, however small the weekly or daily gain.

Now Her Majesty's Government have, with benevolent foresight, provided against this state of things, by giving encouragement and pecuniary support to Schools of Industry. (See Appendix, page 116.) Of these, that best suited to Deddington, would be a "School Field Garden," for which the Government are likely to make an Annual grant, not exceeding one half the rent, so long

as the Inspector shall report that the Field is skillfully and industriously cultivated.

Thus parents, in a *pecuniary* sense, are likely to be *immediate* gainers, instead of losers, by the Education of their children.

But *pecuniary* benefits, great as they may be, have not been the sole object of my calculations. I have attempted to state, for I cannot venture to estimate, the large Moral and Religious advantages to be derived by the poor and the rich in various ways.

At present (see Appendix G, page 131), the annual cost of establishment for the suppression of crime amounts to upwards £2,000,000 sterling, and I trust it will be admitted that "the Statesman who endeavours to substitute instruction for coercion; to procure obedience to the law by intelligence rather than by fear; to employ a system of encouragement to virtuous exertion, instead of the dark code of penalties against crime; to use the public resources rather in building schools than barracks and convict ships; to replace the constable, the soldier, and the gaoler, by the schoolmaster; cannot be justly suspected of any serious design against the liberties of his country, or charged with an improvident employment of the resources of the State."

With an earnest Hope and Prayer, that your benevolent exertions, at Deddington, may be attended with the

Divine blessing, and with assurances of deep respect and regard,

Believe me,

My dear Sir,

Always faithfully yours,

JAMES BROGDEN.

To the Rev. William Wilson.

Deddington, Oxon,

16th February, 1850.

APPENDIX.

(A.)

Particulars relating to the National Schools, in the Parish of Deddington, in the County of Oxford:—

The Parish of Deddington, numbered, at the last Census, taken in 1841, a Population of 2025 Souls.

The Area of the Parish, *exclusive* of the Houses, the Roads, and the Stone Pits, consists of 4127A. 2R. 4P.

Of <i>this</i> :—the Church Property, extends	A.	R.	P.
over upwards	2580	0	0
the Lay Property, over.....	1439	0	0
the College Property, over ...	99	0	0

The Estimated Rateable value (which is £ s. d. below the "gross Rental") of the Parish was in the year 1847 7221 10 11

There is no person, *RESIDENT* in the Parish, possessing a Freehold Estate therein, amounting to 200 Acres.

There are no *permanently* secured Freehold School Rooms in the Parish; and therefore grants in aid of Education, from the *National Society*, and other *Liberal* Public sources, are scarcely attainable.

The *non-resident owners* of the above-mentioned Church Property, in this Parish, contribute, at present, nothing, in support of the National Schools, for Educating the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church.

The *Annual* Subscriptions, to these Schools, amounted, in the year 1815, to £141 Os. Od. They do not, at present, amount to £39 Os. Od.

The number of Scholars was then—Boys, 141; Girls, 94—Total, 235. The total number of Scholars does not now amount to 80.

Since 1815, the Population of the Parish has increased:—according to the Census of 1811 it was 1640; according to that of 1841—2025.

So that the *wants* of the Parish, in regard to EDUCATION, have *increased*;—with the *deplorable decrease*;

or rather the almost extinction, of the means of usefulness; which formerly existed, for this most important object.

To remedy if possible, this sad condition, of the uneducated Poor, in a Parish thus circumstanced, these facts are stated; in humble and respectful reliance, that they will not be permitted to be pleaded among the Charitable, in vain.

It is now proposed, to raise, by *Public Subscription*, a sufficient Fund, for the IMMEDIATE PURCHASE, in the Parish, of adequate, and well situated Freehold School accommodation;—to be PERMANENTLY SECURED for such object;—to solicit Donations and Annual Contributions, for the future efficient maintenance of the Schools;—and to apply to the National Society; the Diocesan Board; and the Committee of the Privy Council on Education, for grants, *according to the Government Plan*, in aid of the DEDDINGTON NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

Deddington, 19th July, 1848.