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FIRST REPORT

ON

THE INVESTED SUBSCRIPTIONS

TO DISCHARGE THE DEBTS OF, AND CREATE A CAPITAL FOR,

The British and Foreign School Society.

London, the 28th of February, 1815.

THE grounds upon which the Committee of this Society (formerly called the Lancasterian) solicit the support of the friends of religious liberty, and the advocates for universal education upon liberal principles, consist in the nature and objects of the plan, what it has accomplished in the last seven years, and what may be reasonably expected from it in the future.

The object of the plan is, by the general diffusion of education, to raise the moral character of the great mass of the people, to train them in habits of attention, subordination, and virtue, and thereby to contribute to the safety of the state, and the happiness of every individual in the community at large.

The British and Foreign System of Education has fully proved itself competent to this important task. By teaching from the Holy Scriptures in the authorised version, it inculcates the grand principles of the Christian religion, and the sublimest morality, while it offers a point of union for Christians of all denominations, and, by not admitting of any peculiar catechism, it excludes none from the blessings of education, so that schools upon this plan may be emphatically called *Schools for all*.

When instruction is to be thus widely diffused, economy and efficiency are objects of the first consideration, and here our system stands unrivalled. One master is sufficient for 500 or 1000 children; one book will serve a whole school, however large; and by the use of slates, the expense of paper and pens is reduced to a mere trifle. The school is divided into eight classes; and out of each class the best qualified lad is selected as monitor; he has printed rules for his direction, and is responsible for the conduct of his class: under him are assistant monitors, chosen from lads who have made the greatest proficiency: by taking precedence, and a judicious system of rewards, learning becomes a delight instead of a drudgery to the children, and a spirit of activity and attention is constantly maintained. In this way it is found that children will learn more in one year than in the old method in three, and at less than a fifth part of the expense. The business of the master resembles that of the general of an army: success will mainly depend upon selecting proper monitors in the first instance, and afterwards in seeing that each performs his duty.

The expense of a school on this plan consists in the salary of the master, the rent of the school-room, the outfit of lessons and slates, and in a trifling annual expense in keeping up the stock, also for fuel for warming the school in winter*.

The Reports of the Society annually published will show that when the Committee undertook the charge of the concern in 1808 it was greatly embarrassed, and but for the prompt and liberal assistance of individuals who duly appreciated its value, the institution and the plan itself must have been in a great measure lost.

The balance against the concern, though the premises were valued at far more than they would have sold for, was 3,485*l.*; in that year the donations and subscriptions were principally confined to those of the King and Royal Family, who, with a firmness which will for ever demand the gratitude and admiration of the country, were proof against all misrepresentations and prejudice, and have uniformly continued to countenance and support this most important work.

Since the year 1808, notwithstanding heavy expenses which the Committee could not adequately control, and notwithstanding many considerable subscriptions had been received and kept back from the Committee, they have been enabled by the generosity of the public, and particularly by the anonymous contributions of some benevolent characters, in sums of from 100*l.* to 500 guineas, to carry on the work to the present time: and it is only justice to those generous and public-spirited contributors to state, that without the seasonable and providential aid thus afforded, the Committee must have sunk under the weight of their burdens: they have had to struggle with much opposition, and with difficulties of a very peculiar nature. During this period, however, the plan has made rapid progress through this country, and has also extended itself to places in every quarter of the globe; many thousand

* Lessons, &c. for the outfit of a School of 100 Children.		For a School of 500 Children.	
1 Set of Lessons, Badges, Medals, &c.	£. s. d.	1 Set of Lessons, &c.	£. s. d.
100 Slates, about	3 8 2	500 Slates, about	10 0 0
	2 0 0		13 8 2
	5 8 2	For a School of 1000 Children.	
1 Set of Lessons, Badges, Medals, &c.	£. s. d.	1 Set of Lessons, &c.	£. s. d.
300 Slates, about	3 8 2	1000 Slates, about	20 0 0
	6 0 0		23 8 2
	9 8 2		

These articles may all be had either by personal application, or by letters (post paid) directed to John Pickton, Superintendant at the Royal Free School, Borough Road.

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children who would in all probability have grown up in ignorance and vice, have received the blessings of education, and have been taught their duties to God and their neighbour from the page of Divine inspiration. The reports which the Committee has received of the moral effects produced in places where schools have been established, are gratifying in the highest degree, and a source of strong consolation and encouragement. During this period also a powerful party has been excited to strenuous exertions for the education of children of their own sect, and they have raised a fund amounting to 60,000*l.* And though the Committee cannot but regret the limits those persons have prescribed to themselves by their exclusive plans, they nevertheless rejoice in this collateral assistance in the prosecution of their main object, which is, NOT TO LEAVE A SINGLE INDIVIDUAL IN THE WHOLE COUNTRY WITHOUT THE MEANS OF INSTRUCTION.

Much as has been already accomplished, much remains yet to be done: by the best information from different parts of the kingdom, and estimates of the population as given in to Parliament, it appears that hundreds of thousands of children are at this moment growing up in ignorance, and preparing as an easy prey to temptation and vice. In vain shall we enact laws, in vain shall we establish penitentiaries and houses of reform, in vain shall we build prisons and erect gibbets, if we do not attend to the root of the evil. Among the discouraging circumstances with which the Committee have had to contend, is the want of enlarged views in some who are undoubtedly friends to the cause; it has so happened in a few instances, that in places where the plan has been adopted and successfully practised, and even in cases where the Parent Institution, at no small expense, aided in the first instance in the establishment of the school, the Committee has been disappointed where they had naturally enough hoped for cordial support. The parties, having attended to the wants of their own town or neighbourhood, seemed to consider the business as done for the country, or brought to that state in which it would go on of itself. Much would the Committee rejoice if this were the fact, and most gladly would they cease from their labours with all the sacrifices they have made: but they know too well that they are only at the beginning of a great work, that in the metropolis alone tens of thousands are yet to be provided for, as the examination from house to house in some of the poorer districts has fully proved.

The Committee of the Parent Society, established in the metropolis, is a point of support for the plan throughout the kingdom. It receives Reports from the Local Committees relative to all improvements: it gives advice and assistance to those who wish to promote the education of the poor: it supplies masters and mistresses well qualified in the system, and furnishes lessons, slates, and all school requisites. It also maintains schools for both sexes, by way of model, which are open for the inspection of foreigners and natives; and in which teachers are trained: and, lastly, it gives every facility to the introduction of the system into foreign parts. These are the objects of the Parent Committee, and for which it claims the support of the friends of the cause.

The Committee trust that the most formidable of their difficulties are now surmounted, and that the measures taking at present will accelerate the progress of the work in a ratio beyond that of any former precedent. The only difficulty remaining is that which they have had to struggle with from the beginning—the want of funds; but they entertain the cheering hope, that as the value of the plan becomes increasingly known, it will meet with proportionate support. On examining the state of the concern at the end of 1814, it appears that, after all that has been accomplished, the debts do not greatly exceed what they were seven years ago; and if the sum of 10,000*l.* can be raised, the Institution will, for the first time, be brought out of debt, and the Committee will be encouraged to extend their labours with increased spirit and energy. The capital invested in the premises, and in lessons, &c. now furnished by a few individuals, would become the property of the public in general, and if the friends of the cause will generally make a moderate exertion, the whole expense of the establishment may be defrayed within every year.

The Committee cannot allow themselves to believe that this great cause, after all that has been done, will be suffered to sink, or that the public will be satisfied that an object so desirable as the universal education of the great mass of the people, an object which might be accomplished in a few years, should be protracted through half a century, while in the mean time many thousands of innocents must be given up to destruction, to suffer on the scaffold, to perish in jails, or be sent to expiate their crimes (*and for which society will be chargeable*) at the remotest parts of the earth. It cannot be. The friends to religious liberty, and those grand and liberal principles which are the glory and strength of this country, will surely come forward to place the British and Foreign School Society on a firm foundation, and enable it to extend the blessings of the plan without further loss of time to every corner of the kingdom, and throughout the world.

In order to raise the sum necessary to relieve the institution effectually, it has been proposed that 100 individuals should each subscribe or undertake to raise 100*l.* among their friends; and that, as the money shall be received, it shall be immediately invested in the public funds, in the names of Samuel Whitbread, M. P., Sir John Jackson, Bart. M. P., Samuel Hoare, Jun., and William Allen, as trustees; and if in the course of two years, reckoning from the 1st of January 1815, it does not with accumulated interest amount to the sum of 10,000*l.*, the contributors shall receive their principal and interest, if they desire it, or it shall be applied in such way as each shall direct. — The following sums have been already paid in and invested,

The Duke of Bedford	£.100	Brought forward ..	£.1193 16
Lord Webb Seymour	100	<i>By Richard Taylor of Shoe Lane</i>	
S. Whitbread, Esq. M. P.	100	<i>(in part.)</i>	
Sir John Jackson, Bart. M. P.	100	John Christie, Esq.	10 10
Richard Reynolds	100	Robert Christie, Esq.	10 10
John Scandret, Harford	100		21
William Allen	100	<i>By Halsey Janson, Bull's Head</i>	
Robert Owen, Esq.	100	<i>Passage, Wood Street.</i>	
By S. Hoare, jun. Lombard-Street	100	Thomas Nicholson, Esq. Round-	
		hay, near Leeds	10 0
<i>By Jonathan Backhouse of Darlington.</i>		Stephen Nicholson, Esq. Stam-	
Thos. Backhouse, Darlington ..	10 10	ford Hill	5 0
J. Backhouse and Sons	50 0	Anthony Horne, Esq. Bookham	
Edward Pease	10 10	Grove, Surry	10 0
Joseph Pease	10 10	John Barton, Esq. Chichester	10 0
William Janson	1 1	Stephen Hack, Esq. ditto	5 0
John Janson, jun.	1 1	William Hack, Esq. ditto	10 0
James Janson	2 2	Misses M. and S. Horne, Tot-	
William Cudworth	0 10 6	tenham	5 0
Joseph Sams	0 10 6	Wm. Horne, Esq. Clapham ..	10 10
Benjamin Flounders, Yarm ..	10 10	John Mallet, Esq. Mincing Lane	5 0
Anonymous	2 15	Thomas Horne Janson, Clapton	10 0
	100	Joseph Coventry, Bull Head	
<i>By William Corston of Ludgate Hill.</i>		Passage, Wood Street	5 0
Mrs. Mary Unwin, Castle He-		Halsey Janson, Stamford Hill	10 0
dingham	10 0	Joseph Janson, 32, Abchurch	
Mr. Laury Rowe, Brentford ..	10 0	Lane	5 0
Mr. M. Lowdon, Blackfriars Road	1 1		100 10
Mrs. E. Church, Bedford	1 0	<i>By Barnard Dickinson, Coalbrook</i>	
Messrs. Barclay, Tritton, & Co.,		<i>Dale, Shropshire.</i>	
Lombard-Street	21 0	Sarah Darby	31 10
David Bevan, Esq.	10 10	Joseph Reynolds	21 0
John Tritton, jun. Esq.	5 5	Rebecca Darby	10 10
Benjamin Angel, Isleworth ..	50 0	Hannah Darby	10 10
	108 16	Richard Darby	10 10
<i>By John J. Nivens of Leeds (in part.)</i>		Robert Barnard	2 2
J. B. Charlesworth, Leeds	5 5	Susanna Appleby	2 2
John Hebblethwaite	5 5	Ann Sorton	2 2
John Birkbeck, Settle	5 5	William Horton	2 2
Mary Birkbeck	2 2	Thomas Graham	1 1
Esther Birkbeck	2 2	Robert Ferriday	1 1
Samuel Clapham, Leeds	5 0	William Purton	1 1
George Banks	5 0	Ann Clark	1 1
Robert Elam	5 0	Daniel Rose	1 1
George Eddison	5 5	William Stanley	1 1
William Hey, Esq.	5 0	Barnard Dickinson	10 10
John Clapham	2 0	Anonymous	0 16
Abraham Dickinson and Son ..	5 0		110
William Smith	5 0	Robert Barclay, Bury Hill	100
Jarvis Benson	1 0		
William Aldham	1 1	<i>By the Treasurer.</i>	
John Blayds, Esq. Leeds	5 5	William Lewis, Stamford Hill..	10 10
Benj. Gott, Esq.	5 0	William Pryor, Broad Street	
Archibald Nevius	2 2	Buildings	10 10
James Brown	2 2	Robert Barclay, jun. Lombard	
William Naylor, Bramley	1 1	Street	10 10
T. S. B. Reade, Leeds	2 2	Thomas Furly Forster, Great	
James Arthington	1 1	St. Helen's	5 5
John Broadhead	1 1	Charles Barclay, M.P. Clapham	
Charlotte Fawcett	1 1	Common	26 5
Wm. Leatham, Wakefield	5 0		63
	85	By Luke Howard, Tottenham Green	100
Carried forward ..	£.1193 16	Dividend on 941l. 15s. 1d.	12 14 3
		Total 28th Feb. 1815 ..	£.1701 0 3

Subscriptions are received by Hoare, Barnet, and Co., Bankers, Lombard-street; by William Allen, Treasurer, Plough Court, Lombard-street; and by Joseph Fox, Secretary, Argyle-street, Oxford-street; also by all the Members of the Committee.

Table with columns for names and amounts. Includes entries like 'By Richard Taylor of New Lane', 'John Charles Esq.', 'Robert Curran Esq.', and 'Thomas Nicholas Esq.'. Totals are listed as £1100 0 0 and £1100 0 0.

Table with columns for names and amounts. Includes entries like 'The Duke of Devon', 'The Duke of Devonshire', 'The Duke of Northumberland', 'The Duke of Somerset', and 'The Duke of Wellington'. Totals are listed as £1100 0 0 and £1100 0 0.

April 4 " 1815
Receipt Book

Receipts are received by Messrs. Curran and Co., Bankers, Lombard Street; by William A. Curran, Treasurer; and by Messrs. Curran and Co., Bankers, Lombard Street; also by all the Members of the Committee.