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A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

THE
CHURCHMAN

DECEMBER, 1888.

ART. I.—THE FINAL REPORT AND PAYMENT BY RESULTS.

THE Royal Commission which was appointed early in the year 1886 to inquire into the working of the Elementary Education Acts, issued its "Final Report" on the eleventh of last August. The time occupied—over two years and a half—ought to be some guarantee that the Committee have endeavoured to do their work thoroughly. The fact that such a Commission was appointed goes very far to suggest a certain amount of dissatisfaction or disappointment on the part of the supporters of the Educational system, with respect to the working of the machinery and its immediate results; and, further, we may easily discover something of this spirit in the selection of the individual members of the Commission. No man, be his relation to the Education Acts what it may, can affirm that the make-up of the Commission is not varied or representative. We see in Viscount Cross, the President, one whose official experience is wide and deep; and he was supported by a group of peers, many of whom have held offices of great responsibility and importance; by the head of the Roman Catholic Church in England, by a liberally-minded prelate and three clergymen of high position in the Anglican Church, and also by two leading exponents of Nonconformist opinions, by a late Secretary of the Education Department, a late H.M. Inspector of Schools, and by ten laymen who have spent a great deal of time and labour in affairs relating to Elementary Education, one of whom is the champion of the school teachers.

No time was lost by the Commission in getting to work, and before six months had elapsed, the course of procedure had been selected, the heads of the inquiry tabulated, and sixteen

witnesses orally examined. Great public interest has arisen in the work and report, and the four volumes in which the latter is contained will be found a veritable store house of information by all those who are interested in the subject, whether in the structure, supply, instruction, inspection, or management of Elementary Schools. It has been truly pointed out that "not a single point of interest in the wide field of Elementary Education seems to have escaped their vigilant survey; and it is not too much to say that the public is presented for the first time with a comprehensive and at the same time intelligible account of the history, working and requisites of the public Elementary Schools in this country." The most striking feature of the Report is the vast area over which the Commission have extended their researches and the almost endless subdivision of the subjects with which they have dealt. There are twelve leading heads of inquiry, and these have something like a dozen sub-sections, all, by-the-by, beset with burning and thorny questions.¹

Different points brought forward in this Report will be treated by various contributors to *THE CHURCHMAN*; and I shall content myself in the present article with handling "Payment by Results."

When Viscount Sherbrooke (then Mr. R. Lowe) introduced the Revised Code and "Payment by Results," we were led by him to understand and expect that under his system Elementary Education would possess one of these two estimable qualities: (1) great efficiency; (2) economy to the State; that is to say, costliness would mean efficiency, and inefficiency would mean

¹ The whole of its twenty-three members were, as one might naturally expect, not unanimous on all points. In fact, only *ten* of them signed the report unreservedly: the Chairman (Viscount Cross), the Duke of Norfolk, the Earls of Harrowby and Beauchamp, the Bishop of London, Canon Gregory, Dr. J. H. Rigg, (Principal of the Wesleyan Training College), Rev. T. D. C. Morse (formerly member of the London School Board), Mr. J. G. Talbot (member for Oxford University), and Mr. Samuel Bathbone (Chairman of the Liverpool School Board). *Five* sign subject to certain reservations; these are, Cardinal Manning, Lord Norton, Sir F. R. Sandford (formerly Secretary to the Education Department), Archdeacon B. F. Smith (Diocesan Inspector) and Mr. C. H. Alderson (Charity Commissioner, and formerly one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools). The remaining *eight* sign a distinctly separate report (termed "The Report of the Minority"). This "Minority Report" is signed *in part* by Sir John Lubbock, M.P., Sir Bernhard Samuelson, M.P., Mr. Sydney Buxton, M.P. (formerly member of the London School Board) and *in full* by the Hon. E. Lyulph Stanley (formerly member of the London School Board), Dr. Dale, Mr. T. Edmund Heller (member of the London School Board, and Secretary of the National Union of Elementary Teachers), Mr. Henry Richard, M.P., and Mr. G. Sbipton (Secretary of the London Trades Council).

cheapness. But what do we see to be the result of all this? Economy has been so studiously kept in view by the Education Department, that last year the grant amounted to nearly three and a half millions of money, whereas in 1861 it was but three-quarters of a million. But let that pass. Has there been progress? Twelve months ago, Mr. Mundella, speaking in the House on the Education Estimate, rejoiced to say "that the codes of instruction adopted in 1883 had been continued with increasingly successful results;" and in the course of his remarks he pointed out two facts as showing what progress had been made during the previous ten years. These two facts are, to speak concisely, (1) the total number of scholars presented for examination in all standards had increased something like 114 per cent.; and (2) the total number of scholars presented for examination in the Fourth Standard had gone up 200 per cent. So far as these results go they are satisfactory, and show unmistakably that a gradual and steady advance has been made in the right direction. But, then, we have another side to the question. Let the following extracts speak for themselves; they are taken from the Petition which has just been presented to Parliament by the Executive Committee of the National Union of Elementary Teachers:

Your Petitioners, representing *fourteen thousand* of the Teachers in Elementary Schools in England and Wales, have observed with interest the report, etc., and have considered the recommendations therein contained. They have noted with satisfaction that the system of "Payment by Results" is condemned by most of the witnesses as injurious to real education, and that the Commissioners propose that it should be greatly modified. Your Petitioners heartily support the Commissioners in their condemnation of "Payment by Results" as applied to education. They believe that *under it intelligent education and examination are impossible*, and that it furnishes an unreliable and worthless guarantee for the effective expenditure of the money voted by Parliament for the purposes of national education. With the Right Hon. Lyon Playfair, a former Vice-President of the Council, they believe that "three-fourths of the Education Grants have been entirely wasted." They are entirely opposed to the system, and they believe that, if perpetuated, English primary schools will remain inferior to Continental schools, in which no such system exists, as to the ultimate results of education. Your Petitioners, being desirous that national education should be placed upon a basis which will secure the best possible return for the money expended upon it humbly pray your Honourable House, in any future legislation on the subject, to enact "that the system of 'Payment by Results' *should be abolished*, as injurious to education and incapable of being adapted to it."

It will be seen here that while the Teachers support the Commissioners in condemnation of "Payment by Results," they are desirous of going still further, and of completely abolishing the principle from the Education Code.

We see also that if we are to accept the opinions of the

schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, all percentages are fallacious, the attendance of the children is less regular, the time spent at school is curtailed, and their attainments are of a more evaporative and unsatisfactory nature than they were before the Revised Code came into force.

But Mr. Mundella's statistics hardly touch the somewhat heavy and sweeping charges brought, with marked unanimity, by the Teachers against the whole system. They attack the Code generally, and with particular emphasis "Payment by Results."

This "Payment by Results" is a false principle for these reasons:

1. Similar results may be attained by endlessly varied amounts of labour, skill, and perseverance in different places and under different conditions.

2. The results which can be got and tested with a view to payment are not the highest and most valuable results at which a teacher should aim.

3. Because the system of classification necessitated by preparing for such an examination creates both *over*-pressure and *under*-pressure; that is to say, the dolts are stimulated beyond their natural powers, while the "brilliant" are neglected because they are considered "safe and sure."

4. Because the prescribed tests are fallible, and are not applied in such a manner as to enable the inspector, with any degree of satisfaction, to gauge even the superficial results, of which alone cognizance is taken.

Now, the manner in which the Commissioners have dealt with this subject shows that there is a great deal of difficulty connected with it. Speaking generally, their Report is against "Payment by Results;" but, at the same time, it points out that there is a great difficulty in sweeping away altogether this system of payment. The real hard point is to define what results are. If we could only be sure what those results were, it is hardly likely that people would object to pay correspondingly. But according to this system of "Payment by Results" (which is defined by a Belgian schoolmaster as "the mechanical examination of mechanical knowledge imparted by mechanical methods of instruction") we have many evils arising, among which we may mention these: (1) to classify according to age; (2) to suppose all children to have exactly the same brain-power, and to pass the same examination in the same given time; (3) to expect teachers to put knowledge into the heads of the children when they are absent; (4) to punish managers and teachers for having dull or stupid children in their schools; (5) to prevent bright and intelligent children from making their easy and natural progress; (6) to cause underfed, poor,

dull, weak, or stupid children to be for ever spurred to make an unnatural progress.

Now, seeing that the Teachers are "dead against" this system, and also that the Commissioners themselves are anything but favourable to it, we are justified in expecting that some other method of payment will be forthcoming.

It is not modification or amendment of the system that the elementary teachers demand. In their petition they pray that "the system of Payment by Results" should be abolished, as injurious to education, and incapable of being adapted to it. But what is more important to the issue is to discover what they propose to substitute that will enable Parliament and the public to know what educational return the country is receiving for the expenditure of what the Royal Commission truly calls "large payments of public money to school-managers."

Mr. Yoxall, of Sharrow-Lane Board School, Sheffield, seems to be the chief Teacher who comes forward having the most clearly-defined views of the system upon which "grants in aid" should be made. To state his theory in a somewhat informal manner, we proceed as follows: Schools are necessary; schools must be efficient; schools cannot be made efficient without the supply of adequate funds; adequate funds should be supplied, and efficiency required in each case; so long as efficiency is maintained, there should be no doubt or delay about the supply of annual funds; the schools should be judged by a Government representative, in the presence of a local representative to see fair play. The details of this scheme he develops under three headings, thus: (1) the means to efficiency; (2) the tests of efficiency; (3) the cost of efficiency. Under the head of (1) *means to efficiency*, he asks for a fair chance and a free field while he emphasizes the following recommendations: (a) the standards should be carefully revised; (b) the teachers should have greater freedom in the instruction of their scholars; (c) managers and teachers should have due liberty to classify the scholars according to fitness; (d) several schemes of instruction should be laid down, so as to provide for various schools curricula varying with the numbers of scholars and the character and requirements of the populations which furnish them. In regard to (2) *tests of efficiency*. The inspections and examinations under the new order of things as proposed by Mr. Yoxall would be directed, not to the discovery of varying percentages of inefficiency, as now, but to the discovery of efficiency or inefficiency as a whole. (3) *Cost of efficiency*. So far as finances are concerned, the first step would be for the managers of each school, towards the end of any given year, to submit to the Department a detailed statement of expected local income, and an estimate of cost in

working the school *efficiently* during the year to come. The Department would examine the estimate, ascertain if the proposed staff and expenditure on books, appliances, etc., corresponded with the minimum requirements of an efficient school, and verify the balance. It would then pay over the balance of cost over local income to the treasurer of the school *before* the beginning of the year under estimate. Any over or under estimate would be rectified on the certificate of a Government auditor by carrying over the debit or credit balance to the next year's account. Such is a brief outline of Mr. Yoxall's interesting and ably-written argument.

In conclusion, I must admit that, as a manager of an elementary day-school, I do not regret the general condemnation of the system which compels teachers who wish to secure their positions, and even to earn their salary, to screw up the children to a point beyond endurance for immediate results in an examination of the least satisfactory kind. The system is cruel to teacher and scholar alike. "And we trust that this system of 'Payment by Results,' as it is rather unjustly called, is clearly doomed; and when we have got rid of that, and also found the best way to train eye and ear and hand, as well as the brain, we shall have reached a stage from which still further advance will be easy."

J. H. WHITEHEAD.

ART. II.—DEAN BURGON'S "LIVES."

Lives of Twelve Good Men. By JOHN WILLIAM BURGON, B.D., Dean of Chichester. Two vols. London: John Murray.

MANY years ago the late Dean Burgon gave to the world an admirable proof of his ability as a biographer in the pleasant memoir of Patrick Fraser Tytler, to which he gave the name of "A Portrait of a Christian Gentleman." Mr. Tytler's position in the world of letters was not, however, sufficient to secure a long life for Dean Burgon's able and loving record.

In the delightful volumes now before us a legacy has been left to all lovers of the Oxford of the last fifty years, which, we venture to think, will raise the Dean's reputation not only in the University, but in all places where the memory of good men is cherished. Dean Burgon, as all the world knows, was a hard hitter, and a resolute defender of his own opinions. In these pages the glow of enthusiasm and the warmth of heart so distinctive of the Dean are everywhere apparent. Many who have resisted the strength of his attacks on the Revised Version, and objected to the fierce tone of his polemical utterances, will