

the dark clouds of prejudice, and proved itself a good thing wherever the people had access to the fountains of learning. These remarks are applicable to the difficulties which education had to encounter in all countries.

When the foundations of our Government were laid, education and religion were recognized by the founders, as absolutely essential to its success and the happiness of the people. But notwithstanding, the lines have fallen to our generation in pleasant places, and our's is a goodly heritage; there always were, and still are, strong prejudices against popular education. In every State there was more or less opposition to the introduction of a system, which involved the expenditure of considerable sums of money. It is not our purpose however, to give a history of the progress of popular education from its rise to its present state of excellence, our object is simply to show that human nature is now what it always has been. Strange as it may seem, we find within the limits of our State, opposers to our existing school system, both among the ignorant and men of intelligence. There are men of affluence with little or no culture, who for the want of education, cannot appreciate the influence of our Public Schools upon society, and hence in view of the taxes which they must pay, lament that the good old times have passed away, when men were allowed to rear their children in ignorance and had nothing to pay. But it is still more singular that in communities where the people are generally intelligent, these same prejudices should exist, since any one given to reflection and observation, can easily perceive that it is far better to pay even a high tax for the support of schools in which children are intellectually and morally educated; where they are taught the dignity of man and the true object of life, where industry, morality and religion are inculcated, both by precept and example; thus preparing our youth for the various industrial walks of life, than to permit the rising generation to grow up in ignorance and vice. The school is a powerful agent in the formation of good men and good women, who by a virtuous course of life and by their industrious habits, become producers and not merely consumers, thus adding to the general wealth and prosperity of the community, by their exertions in lawful and honorable pursuits, of human activity. Contrast those who grow up in our schools, with the same class of children who are destitute of educational advantages, and permitted to grow up in ignorance, and we shall find the expense incurred by the education of the former, far less than the tax which is paid for punishing the criminals who mostly spring from the uneducated classes. Even upon such a basis of comparison, the friends of popular education occupy the vantage ground. But when we contrast the influence which these several classes exert upon the world, the sublime mission of the one and