

Principles.

this basis. They never contended that every man in the country was entitled to receive a gratuitous education, graded so as to provide for all that might choose to use it, the highest education to which they might aspire, whether literary, scientific, or technical. A few extreme *doctrinaire* politicians have of late years broached views which, if they mean anything, would carry their professors to such length as we have now described. But the common sense of the country generally, and especially of the Western States, repudiates with something like indignation such extreme views as these." And again: "It must be remembered, however, and this brings us back to the point from which we started, so far as regards education in the States, that the only really national and characteristic principle which can be asserted as to American education is the constitutional principle, held throughout all the States, that the citizens at large must have provided for them a certain minimum of necessary education, such education being altogether what we in England should call elementary or primary."¹

The Americans, however, by no means at present pursue such a restrictive policy.¹

With this reference to principles, I turn to the manner in which they are carried out. But the range of country is so immense, and the social conditions so diverse, that it is difficult to make general statements applicable to the States as a whole. The condition of education in each State or Territory must be judged on its merits.²

DIFFICULTIES OF ADMINISTRATION.

Very great allowances must be made in view of (a) the coloured-race element³—a result of the abolition of slavery, whereby some additional millions became entitled to claim State rights—and (b) of the vast number of immigrants of various nationalities continually pouring in, to whom the system of the majority has to be adapted.⁴ These facts colour State laws and administrations, and explain much that would be otherwise inexplicable.

GRATUITOUS, SECULAR, AND COMPULSORY FEATURES.

Gratuitous
instruction.

(1.) Primary schools afford gratuitous instruction⁵—may be termed secular—and attendance is not as a rule compulsory;⁶ and even where compulsory, is only so for a limited term.⁷

In high schools instruction is generally free; indeed in Boston "tuition at primary, grammar, high Latin, and evening schools, is gratuitous, and also all books and supplies are free."⁸

Religious
instruction.

"Sectarian instruction is not given in the public schools. It is quite a common prac-

¹ See Dr. R., pp. 4 and 8; also R.C., vol. 3, 7783. But see Dr. Philbrick, p. 27; and C. rep., 1885, pp. 30, 125-127, 131, 132, 481-591.

And for superior education of women, p. 135 and *seq.*

² For details relating to each State and Territory, see C. rep., 1885, p. 4 and *seq.*

³ See C. (1884) rep., p. 55; and 1885, table showing comparative white and coloured race statistics, p. 53 and *seq.*, and 59.

This element swells the statistics of illiteracy, and complaints were made to me at the Bureau that, in consequence, false impressions obtain outside the United States in respect of the value of the American system. See, for instance, Kentucky, C. rept., 1885, p. 97.

Note curious race laws in various States: thus, in Kentucky, "No tax may be levied upon the property, or poll, or any services be required of any white person to aid in building or repairing a schoolhouse for the use of coloured children; and the same provision is made to exempt the coloured people from aiding the whites."—C. rept., 1885, p. 99.

For interesting notice of benefit to negroes of education see "Sunday at Home," May, 1886, p. 296.

⁴ But note I.E.C., vol. 16, p. 182 and 183.

Respecting sparsely-settled sections of country where districts cannot combine their resources, see C. rept., 1885, p. 37.

⁵ See Statement.

For original effects, see Q.R., p. 457.

"Gratuity of instruction is a feature of our school system, for which we may claim a merit of a peculiar character.—Dr. Philbrick, p. 103. Again—

"Tuition in all public schools, whether elementary or high, is with us absolutely gratuitous. Public schools

are free schools. This is, without doubt, the distinctive characteristic of our system, of which we have the greatest reason to be proud."—pp. 103 and 104.

⁶ See Table, pp. 81, 82. This is admitted by (now ex-) Commissioner Eaton to be a defect. He says: "It is, however, the opinion of the most competent authorities in the matter, that a judicious and effectual obligatory system is necessary as a means of accomplishing the rudimentary education of all children. The absence of such a system is regarded, and properly regarded, as the chief cause of insufficient school attendance."—"Journal of Ed.," Oct., 1886, p. 420.

And see C. rep., 1885, p. 85.

⁷ See Table, pp. 81, 82, and compare with N.Z. Act, 1877 ss. 55 and 84, s.s. 2, and s. 95; and 1885 Act, ss. 3-5.

⁸ S. and R.I., 6 Sept., 1884. For full details, see Dr. Philbrick, *espec.* pp. 22 and 195. But Massachusetts is considered by many the model State. See, for instance—

(a) C. rept., 1885, pp. 86 and 128 and *seq.*; and S. and R.I., 14 Oct., and 6 and 9 Sept., 1884, for details Boston school system. For details Philadelphia system, see 7 Oct., and C. rep., 1885, pp. 89, 85 and *seq.*;

(b) R.C., vol. 3, 7812;

(c) Dr. R., p. 5. But see Q.R., p. 447, and S. and R.I. The law, however, has been lately altered to this extent—"heretofore school books and other material have been furnished to pupils in the public schools of that State, and the price taken out of the next annual tax. Now select committees are required to purchase the necessary text books, and loan them to pupils free of charge."—C. rept., 1885, p. 31. For Maine, p. 112; Maryland, p. 119.