

**HINTS ON AN IMPROVED AND SELF-PAYING
SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION:
SUGGESTED FROM THE WORKING OF A
VILLAGE SCHOOL IN HAMPSHIRE: WITH
OBSERVATIONS,
FROM PERSONAL INSPECTION, ON THE IRISH
NATIONAL SCHOOLS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649362097

Hints on an Improved and Self-paying System of National Education: Suggested from the Working of a Village School in Hampshire: with Observations, from Personal Inspection, on the Irish National Schools by Richard Dawes

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

RICHARD DAWES

**HINTS ON AN IMPROVED AND SELF-PAYING
SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION:
SUGGESTED FROM THE WORKING OF A
VILLAGE SCHOOL IN HAMPSHIRE: WITH
OBSERVATIONS,
FROM PERSONAL INSPECTION,
ON THE IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS**

0

HINTS

ON AN

IMPROVED AND SELF-PAYING SYSTEM

OF

NATIONAL EDUCATION,

SUGGESTED FROM THE

WORKING OF A VILLAGE SCHOOL IN HAMPSHIRE.

WITH

OBSERVATIONS, FROM PERSONAL INSPECTION,

ON THE

IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

BY THE

REV. RICHARD DAWES, A.M.

LONDON:

GROOMBRIDGE AND SONS,

FATERNOSTER ROW.

1847.

KING'S SOMBORNE
NATIONAL SCHOOL.

THE success of the National School of this village, and the mode of instruction adopted in it, having been such as to attract considerable attention, I am induced, in compliance with a wish repeatedly expressed by the Rev. Mr. Allen, her Majesty's Inspector of Schools, to submit an account of it to the public, under a hope that, in so doing, I am giving some assistance to those who have the same object in view as myself,—the establishing an efficient system of education in their own parishes.

There is no way of promoting an object of a practical kind, better than by explaining plans of working it out, which have been found by experience to be successful, as it must be admitted that what has been done in one case, may, under similar circumstances, be done in another.

Dr. Hook says, we live in an age when the question is, *not whether*, but *how*, the people are to be educated.

To the question, *how* the people are to be educated,

I conceive the plan adopted here, and now entering on its fifth year, to be a successful and practical answer, so far as regards my own parish, and that at no great expense to the State; how far this answer may be a general one, and apply to other districts, those who read will judge for themselves, but I can see no difficulty, wherever the trial is fairly made.

It has always appeared to me, that a system of National Education embracing the wants of the labouring classes, and those immediately connected with them, uniting both, might be established on something like a self-paying principle, and in this way a system, so far as education is concerned, better in its kind, and having a much stronger hold on the affections of the people of all classes, might be brought about, and with a greater probability of permanent success, than on any other plan of a less pretending kind, which confines itself merely to the education of the poor; but in order to effect this, it is necessary that the educational acquirements to be had at our schools, should be sufficient for all the wants of industrial life, and bearing upon their every-day occupations; for instance, in the rural districts, equal to all that is wanted by the occupying class of farmers, and such trades as are connected with the occupation of land, and although, in order to accomplish this, there are prejudices to be overcome, yet, from my own experience here, I know it can be effected.

In this way, and keeping in view the principle of uniting the education of the children of the labourer with those of his employer, I have endeavoured to supply the educational wants of my own parish, and, with the hope of inducing others to attempt the same, I venture to publish the result of the experiment.

That there is something of unwillingness, even amongst many of the educated classes, to extend secular education among the poor, there can be no doubt; but by raising the standard of secular acquirements, we should at the same time, by proper attention, promote the blessing of a sound scriptural education, in a much higher degree than on any system which aims at so small an amount of knowledge as that which is to be acquired in the great majority of our National Schools.

Of this unwillingness I had an instance, about the time of my commencing this school. Being present in a party where the education of the labouring classes was the subject of conversation, and a particular school being mentioned, in which the clergyman of the parish took great interest, one of the party very significantly observed, "Poor man, he is teaching the children geography!" and this, in a way as if the man was much to be pitied who could think of such a thing, and as I saw that the feeling of those present went with the speaker, it required an effort of courage on

my part, to avow that I intended doing the same, *and more.*

Such feelings are by no means uncommon, we hear less of them now than a few years ago, because the tide of education is against them.

Improved education for the labourer is not generally popular with the farmer. One wants to know if it will make a boy plough a straighter furrow ; another quaintly asks, if it will make his turnips grow (he knows hard work will) : and I actually know a case, where the farmers of a parish turned against the clergyman's plan, because he proposed teaching geography ; saying, " they would not have the labourers' toes treading on their heels ." such prejudices are fast giving way, and will in a little time give no trouble.

A common complaint among the middle classes of agricultural life, is the expense of education ; but, as soon as it is found that a better one is to be had at our National Schools, than they are in the habit of giving their own children, and at a much less cost, they will readily embrace the opportunity of sending them, and, in this way, not only benefit themselves, but indirectly assist in educating the children of those around them, and have the satisfaction of seeing that moral improvement among the labouring classes which in any other way it would be vain to expect. The classes above the labourer would always have the advantage of being able to send their children to

school to a greater age, and thus they would come out into the world, in point of education, in advance of those who in the social chain stand below them. In the school here, there is no difference whatever, either in the instruction or in the treatment of the children, arising from one class paying more than another; everything works and harmonizes well, on the principle, of those who are able to do so, sending their children for a longer period.

With respect to the standard of acquirements to be had at most of our National Schools, all seem to agree that it is far below what it ought to be, and that this is the case, no one of any experience can doubt.

I have myself been in some (and there are many of a like kind), where the more advanced children did not know whether the months of July and August were summer or winter months, and could not answer many other questions equally simple.

There are at present in the school here, three brothers lately come, who walk every day a distance of four miles, the eldest of them fourteen years of age, fine healthy lads, so far as the building up of the animal is concerned, and children of parents well able to pay for their education; these children have been sent to a village school more than three years, and actually cannot read fluently words of one syllable, and in every other respect equally ignorant; and this in no way owing to deficiency on the part of the children

themselves. How can parents be expected to take any interest in schools where such are the results?

This is owing, in a great measure, to the total unfitness of the schoolmaster; and, in one instance of a school which I visited, and on the building of which a great deal of money had been spent, making some observations to the master about a stove which was in it, he replied, "I likes he very well:" and his mode of expressing himself, on all other subjects, was equally incorrect.

From the daily working of this school, and from every observation which I can make, as to the interest which parents take in it, from the tendency which is shown on the part of those immediately above the labouring class, and who have hitherto never dreamt of schools of this kind, as places of education for their own children, but who now show a most lively interest in doing so, I should say, rather than aim at a system of state education of the labouring classes, apart from that of the class immediately above them, aim at a system of good practical and industrial education, bearing upon the wants of both, for, up to a certain point, the wants both of the labouring class and the immediate employer of labour are the same; let the labourer feel that by his own industry a good education for his children is within his power, and he will not only take the greater interest in it, but much greater respectability attaches to himself by his being made the instrument