

EDUCATION AND ITS MACHINERY IN ONTARIO.*

BY A. J. DONLY, SIMCOE.

THE word Education, I need not inform you, is derived from two Latin words, which mean to *unfold* or *develop*, and when used in this, its proper sense, it means a gradual development and improvement of all the powers and faculties of man from his infancy to his manhood. Education, therefore, refers to the whole man, and hence it is naturally divided into three great branches: physical, intellectual, and moral. In this sense, education is a preparation, not only for this life, but also for that which is to come—for moral education, properly so called, is based upon religion. But a great deal of false reasoning is founded upon misapplication and misapprehension of the word education. How often, for instance, do we hear the *instruction* given in our public schools designated as *education*. But this is evidently erroneous, and has led many persons to regard the education of the people as perfectly useless, if not positively injurious. It is frequently observed by persons not by any means regarded as unintelligent, but led astray from a misapprehension of the intrinsic meaning of the term "education," that a large portion of the criminals in our gaols have been "*educated* in our public schools." Of what use, they say, is education to them? Many of them even go further, by asserting that education has been positively injurious to many of them ;

adducing instances where "reading" and "writing" brought many possessed of these accomplishments to the felon's dock ; alleging that if they had not been taught how to write, they could not have committed forgery, scandalized society by writing immoral, lawless or slanderous letters, or other publications ; or if they had not been taught how to read, their minds could not have been poisoned, and therefore led to do the wrong which has brought them to their present condition, by the perusal and study of bad books and inflammatory periodicals.

But to argue against the use of a thing by bringing forward the evils arising from its abuse, is one of the commonest of fallacies. The true answer, therefore, to such statements, is, that instruction is not education, but only a branch—indeed the lowest branch of it—that persons instructed and not educated, in the true sense of the word, are as likely—perhaps more likely—to make a bad as a good use of their knowledge. It has been asserted by a great educationist that "knowledge is power;" but it is power for evil as well as for good ; and if the person who possesses it is not under the guidance and control of moral and religious principles, he will not scruple to use it for evil, if he thinks that by so doing, he can promote his own personal advantage. In close connection with this announcement, it is only necessary to mention, that the reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar,

* A Paper read before the Norfolk Teachers' Institute, on the 13th February, 1880.