

THE Proceedings and Transactions of the N. S. Institute of Science has just been published by Wm. McNab, Halifax. Of the 163 pages which it contains, 115 are devoted by H. S. Poole, M. A., F. G. S., to the coal fields of Pictou. This paper is well illustrated and will be of much interest to coal miners. "Venus in Daylight to the Eye and Opera Glass," is the title of a paper of 14 pages, in which Principal Cameron, of Yarmouth, records some interesting astronomical observations. Natural History observations, by Superintendent MacKay, will be of interest to teachers. He also writes on explosive gases generated in hot water apparatus. The Nova Scotia Institute of Science is one of the best societies that our teachers could join. The fees are only two dollars a year. Scientific work, no difference how humble, would be welcomed, and papers would be published without expense to their authors.

FOR THE REVIEW.]

"Is the Study of Latin a Practical Study?"

Since the above paper was read before the Educational Institute, I have been somewhat severely taken to task by the editor of the *Telegraph* for presuming to insist that the teaching of Latin is of prime importance in our school system. To two of his assertions I must respectfully object. The learned editor in the course of his remarks says, that the writer of the paper being a teacher of Latin, has very naturally come to regard the subject as an important one. Now it is not because I am a teacher of Latin alone that I have come to recognize the educational value of this language as a disciplinary subject, but it is also on account of its reflex influence on the teaching of English. From a long experience both as a teacher of English in our high schools and an examiner of the English papers of normal school students, written both by those who had instruction in Latin and those who had none, I have come to the conclusion that no thorough or comprehensive knowledge of the English language is possible without some acquaintance with Latin. Nor indeed am I alone in having arrived at this conclusion. Large numbers of the most prominent educationists on both sides of the Atlantic insist that Latin must not occupy any secondary place in the school curriculum, simply because the young student cannot acquire a thorough training in his own language in any better way than through the medium of the study of Latin. In the United States, moreover, both educationists and men of affairs alike, are thoroughly agreed as to the practical value of the study of Latin, and testimony as to its worth and importance coming from a prominent journalist like Charles A. Dana, of the *N. Y. Sun*, and Dr. W. T. Harris, U. S. Commissioner of Education, probably the most experienced educator on the continent, ought to convince any reasonable person.

As our own respected Superintendent of Education, Dr. Inch, as well as other experienced teachers have been violently assailed by the learned editor of the *Telegraph* for venturing to support the views advanced as to the practical value of a training in Latin, I may be allowed to quote the remarks of Dr. Harris, addressed to the great meeting of

teachers in Toronto some three years ago: "It has often been said that we should have studies that fit the student for practical life. What will be the vocation of the future man is not, as yet, determined while the child is at school. The child is educated not only because he is to be an individual plying a special vocation, but because he is to be a member of the family, and the civil society and the state. There should be such an education as is adapted to take the individual out of his idiosyncrasy as an individual, and make him a universal person, and thus round out his nature and help him to advance the civilization in which he lives. The primary purpose and function of education, is to elevate the individual and give him the benefit of the experience of all mankind. That should be the ground of all courses of study. It is not to take this individual or that individual who lives in a little narrow sphere with the horizon close by and make him more than that individual, but the education should be the training of his mind, giving him power to perceive, lifting him out of his little self into the greater civilization that is around him. The most important thing, in fact, is the education of the individual into civilization; is derived from a two-fold source—the Roman on the one and our civilization, being that of the Anglo-Saxon people, side, and the Greek on the other. I am in favor of the study of Greek and Latin, and I have never seen anything during the past twenty years which shook my conviction with regard to the importance of the classic studies in education."

It would almost seem superfluous to add anything to testimony so plain as this, and coming from such a high source, from a person, moreover, who has spent his whole life in active educational work; but I cannot refrain from giving a few remarks made by active business men in this province. A prominent citizen of Fredericton said to me within the last few weeks, that he never had any thorough grip on English Grammar until he studied Latin. A few years ago, a citizen of St. John, the secretary-treasurer of a large and influential corporation, told me that he felt to this day the value of the training in Latin he had received under that able teacher, Dr. Jas. Hutchison, formerly Principal of the St. John Grammar School. Numbers of my own pupils also in different parts of the Province, have assured me repeatedly, that they never had any clear or comprehensive knowledge of English until they had studied Latin. I submit that such testimony, coming from sources so widely different, ought to have some influence in a practical settling of the subject.

The other point on which I would join issue with the editor of the *Telegraph* is this. The editor of the *Telegraph* makes the assertion that most of the Latin words, which have been imported into the English language, have come to it through the French as one of the results of the Norman conquest. As a matter of fact such a statement is not only entirely incorrect, but it is also very misleading. As this is a question which must be settled by an appeal to authorities, I do not ask the readers of the *Review* to take my own *ipse dixit* in the matter, but will give you the words of Prof. Meiklejohn, the author of one of our standard English grammars. "The Latin words of the fourth period came in with the revival of learning, which is also called the Ren-