

Correction of Old Ideas.

At the present rate of revision and correction of old ideas it will not be surprising if many who laid the foundation of their education a quarter of a century ago will soon begin to question whether it had not been as well to have waited until now, seeing that so much must be re-learned and that many so-called facts, natural and historical, were no facts at all. Only a little while ago the public were gravely informed by the critics that the immortal Joan of Arc, who for a hundred years has been represented as the deliverer of her country and a martyr as well, instead of perishing at the stake, died a natural death many days after the date ascribed for her burning, and that the thrilling and fascinating story of William Tell shooting the apple off his son's head is a mere myth, a foundationless fancy. And now we must have our geographical knowledge declared incorrect, and be told that the North American mountain which towered most majestically before our youthful imagination must give up his place of superiority, and instead of ranking first come in about twentieth. It is hard to say just yet whether we can thank the recent expedition to Alaska for the information that, instead of being 19,500 feet high, Mount St. Elias is only about 13,500 feet high. One mile and upwards, especially when the cut is made horizontally, is a slice a little too large to yield with perfect equanimity. Of course, if Mr. Russell, the leader of the expedition, who, however, confesses that he did not succeed in gaining the top, proves to the satisfaction of geographers and the scientific world generally that his data are correct and his conclusion incontrovertible, there will be no help for it but St. Elias must take a place among the pygmies instead of the giants. Meantime, while waiting for the proof it may be as well for one and all, though they may regret this monarch's degradation, to school themselves into submission to the work of modern criticism, remembering the word of wisdom uttered nearly two millennia ago, "Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good."

The Jews in Russia.

One of the prohibitions of the barbarous decree of 1882 which the Russian Emperor has recently revived is that no Jew shall be permitted to attend any public school or higher seat of learning in the empire. How sorely this disability will be felt by these oppressed and persecuted sons of Abraham may be inferred from the educational report of the German Capital—assuming that the tastes and ambitions of Jews are substantially the same wherever found. A Berlin report gives these statistics:

"Of every 100 Protestant youth in Prussia 91.63 per cent. attended the elementary, 4.87 per cent. the middle, 3.25 per cent. the high schools, and 0.25 per cent. the universities. Of every 100 Catholics there were 97.21 per cent. in elementary, 1.18 per cent. in middle, 1.48 per cent. in high schools, and 0.13 per cent. in universities. Of every 100 Jewish youth there were 52.71 per cent. in the elementary, 24.40 per cent. in the middle, 21.26 per cent. in the high schools, and 1.68 per cent. in the universities. Moving these numbers closer together, we find that of each 100 Christian children about 10, of the Jewish children about 47, aspire to an education which goes beyond the elementary school."

An American D. D.

Though it is not an absolutely safe criterion to estimate a man's general knowledge and culture by the character of his orthography, seeing that some persons never can learn to spell correctly while others seem to be born with the gift of reproducing the dictionary, still a very glaring departure from generally accepted rules is apt to arouse a suspicion that the speller's educational attainments are not of the first order. Here is a specimen, said to have been taken from a letter written by a minister whom a college in the United States has recently honored with the title of D. D.:

"Menchin, persude, methoeds, perminant, aranged, resorces, cas, acording, menclined, prepair, buisness, onely, increas, increas, begining, hardly, wer, strenth, indebtiness, remaning, arisen, easely, sufficient, vacent, possibilities, guarenty, safty, soal, comunity, pararie, slue, kneed, disgussing, opinon, enterd, famiely, enroled, vigerous, planing, realy, convension, hed."

Such a degradation of the title which was once regarded as indicating more than ordinary abilities and attainments can only tend to hasten the day when ministers will refuse to accept the empty honor though it should be bestowed without money and without price.

"You have asked to see me," said an employer to his clerk. "Yes, sir." "What is wanted?" "I wish to make a claim which I doubt not your sense of justice will accept." "Very well—what is it?" "I do the same work as Z., and I am paid a pound a month less than he. Is that fair?" "No; you are perfectly right. I will at once reduce Z.'s salary a pound!"

According to Dr. Farr, a close and careful observer and skilful physician, the number of sick persons at any time in a given city will double the number of those who have died in that city during the preceding year. This statement implies that the number of sick does not vary to any considerable extent from time to time during the year, a fact which no doubt will come as a surprise to many. A careful compilation of statistics, however, is said to have confirmed the truth of the statement.

A Washington dispatch thus chronicles the first known failure of the McKinley tariff: "The men who are directly responsible for the increased duty on barley advocated the increase because they asserted South Dakota farmers needed some protection in order to compete in the New York State markets with the Canadian agriculturists. It would seem, however, from the crop reports for the month of October published to-day, that the South Dakota farmer will not be able to carry out the pledges made in his behalf by Congressman LaFollette and other high tariff advocates who had charge of the agricultural schedule. His failure to carry out his end of the bargain falls, of course, upon the malsters of New York, who are compelled to pay the higher price for Canadian barley. The Dakota report shows that the barley in that State is 'below the standard for malting, being shrunken and in many cases badly colored. It will be mostly used for feeding purposes.'"

Insurance Amalgamation.

The business of the Glasgow and London Insurance Company has been transferred to the "Citizens," of which company Hon. J. C. Abbott, the leader of the Senate, is president, Mr. E. P. Heaton, general manager. This is not so much an amalgamation as an actual purchase by the "Citizens" of the Glasgow and London company's business. The "Citizens" assume all liability for losses, which will be settled and paid with the promptness for which that company is well and favorably known throughout the Dominion. The Citizens will also assume of their own policies for every policy in force in the Glasgow and London Insurance Company, as announced in another part of this issue. This is the first time in the history of the Dominion that a purely Canadian company has purchased the business of a British office, and the experiment is worthy of success and the result awaited with interest.

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A. P. 527.

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