

of truth. Not unfrequently we hear it said, that the school is not the place for the imparting of religious training. Education is thus made to consist in sharpening man's faculties for the struggle with his fellowman, during his stay here below. With others the opposite extreme holds sway, and on all sides is exhibited an excessive readiness to advance an opinion on this important question. The reason of this is not far to seek. Education has not yet, unfortunately, risen in public estimation to the grade of a science. It is as yet an art based upon induction and experiment. It is still capable of being perfected; but a little way removed from its primitive state of potency, and its movements are unsteady and accidental. Its process thus far has been one of trial. The printing press has placed at our disposal, immense and numerous advantages (?) but it has not, as yet, given us a text book on the philosophy of education. We have not yet laid down a code of fixed and evident principles to serve as the foundation of the educational fabric and an impregnable barrier to him who would destroy it. Who would dare call into question a mathematical principle, the veracity of which is self-apparent? No one who has not made a life study of astronomy would dispute the soundness of the axioms of that branch of knowledge, nor are the principles of economical science over-ruled by a mere wave of the hand, and all this, because, these have been raised to that state of perfection when their cultivation is no longer a work of chance, but a procedure from known scientific truths. On this account, there is much reason to hope that according as we deduce a philosophy of education, it will become more stable, and the number of those who are ever ready to summarily dispense of the most momentous issues will correspondingly diminish.

It is time, however, that a reply should be given to the question already put. What do educators wish to accomplish? In answer, we say that they are in search of that mode of drawing out—for education is, etymologically, nothing else—and developing the faculties of man, which will best enable him to live honestly and uprightly, with the greatest moral and material advantage to himself, and in the best interests of the community in which he lives. It is well, however, to limit the

scope of the term, as it is understood in the present instance. Broadly enunciated, education is all that the individual sees, hears, learns, or imbibes throughout his journey from the cradle to the grave, but here, education is confined to the efforts made by the older and more experienced portion of the community, to mould the character, and to increase the mental capacity of the young. To mould the character of the young, an apparently simple process, but at what a terrible cost, in the majority of cases! How can we conceive of an instructor forming the young mind, and giving the proper bend to the character, without being at the same time, thoroughly acquainted with the nature of the material upon which he works. A stone-cutter would not think of commencing the purely mechanical process of dressing a block of granite without knowing something of its nature, still less, would the sculptor proceed to carve a figure out of marble, before he has learned some of its properties, and are we then to believe that the framer of the human mind can enter upon his task without having made a study of his subject. When we think, however, that by no means a few of those who have it in hand to fulfill this highly important office, this duty, upon the proper performance of which depends the after life of the young ones of the land, are wanting in this knowledge without which their efforts are not only lost, but positively injurious, we cannot but pause at the responsibility of the teacher, and at the blindness of those who over-look this essential aspect of the educational problem.

We cannot all, therefore, be instructors, for it is manifest that he alone is justified in undertaking the duties of this office, who has mastered the idea of education in the sense above indicated. He alone is qualified to teach, whose sound ethical principles, enable him to comprehend man's moral and religious nature, whose psychological learning, gives him an insight into the mental construction of his pupils, and whose knowledge of physiology will direct him in supplying their bodily needs. Do those who occupy the exalted position of teacher in our primary schools, possess this triple qualification? If they do not, and few will venture to say that all do, an effort in the direction of supplying this want, would be of incalculable aid