

walls were conspicuously hung cards with passages from a catechism. This surprised me, and I made some quiet inquiries of the teacher about the circumstance. She had many qualities desirable in a teacher; but her reply to my questions rather astonished me. "You know," said she, "that what is on the cards is not true; but I am required to teach it." I do not know how she knew that I "knew" that the cards were the vehicles of error. The same clairvoyance might have taught her that I considered it very wrong for her or any one else to teach what was known, or even suspected, to be false.

I once visited, in company with a school commissioner, a number of schools, in which a foreign language was a substitute for English. The law made no provision for the substitution; but the government was too "wise in their generation" to interfere, and so the books prescribed by the Council of Public Instruction had been relegated to retirement and dust. The children, small and large too, in many cases, supported their trembling steps in reading by the aid of a pointer—half of an iron or steel knitting needle! This was the method of reading. There were no pauses, except perhaps in the body of the words, from the beginning of the line to the end of it, when custom and the teacher alike allowed of a stop. This led me innocently to remark to the commissioner that the children did not seem to understand what they read. "No," said he, "they don't, but when they become older they will." I think it doubtful whether the charitable assumption would ever be realized, for it was the "Lives of the Saints" that was the reading book.

Once again: It was my lot to ascertain and report as to the educational status of a young lady of some sixteen or seventeen summers, who had been generally at school and had studied at a ladies' seminary for a couple of years, and who was, withal, of fair intellectual powers. In accordance with my instructions, I was to decide as to what was her knowledge of the elementary branches. I found that in arithmetic she was much perplexed with numeration; and that she could not explain and did not know why it was that she "borrowed" in subtraction. It was just so with reading and elocution, with grammar and analysis, and so throughout the scale. We conclude, then, that there are accredited ladies' seminaries which one may attend for years, and yet know next to nothing—for which knowledge they must pay hundreds of dollars.

One of my strangest experiences in this field was the hearing of a lecture on education by an educational officer, one of whose duties it was to instruct and enlighten the country on educational matters.

The lecture was designed to show what education was; and the lecturer would begin at the beginning, and lay his foundation. The foundation was the derivation of the word, and consequently, according to the lecturer, its true meaning. This is a misleading assumption, but my present business is not to show it. We were informed, and with great unction, that the word education was derived from "the Latin, *educō*, to draw out," and that this was precisely what was meant by education—the drawing out, or unfolding, as it was explained, of the faculties of the mind, etc., and the assurance was iterated and reiterated till the dullest could not but understand and the most treacherous memory retain the words or the sentiment. And the great man never suspected that he was in error—that his foundation was false and the superstructure erected upon it delusive—but was evidently greatly pleased with his performance.

Once more, and I am done: On a certain occasion as I entered a school—it was a public school—I heard a little girl reciting the Lord's Prayer in Latin. As it was an unusual occurrence, I listened with interest; nor was my interest diminished when I found she gave every word correctly and without a single slip, even the slightest, in the pronunciation. There were reasons which led me to conclude that she did not know the meaning of the words she was uttering; but I thought I would ask the teacher—more, however, for the sake of hearing the reply than for information. The response was—"Oh, no, she does not understand it." Do not let us blame the little girl, or even her teacher, who was herself ignorant of Latin; lest in doing so we condemn ourselves. Is it certain that we quite understand all that is contained in the Lord's Prayer—or, "leaving the first principles" of religion, whether we more than half comprehend what is embraced in the creeds we respectively profess to hold—or, to proceed still further, whether we have a very clear conception of any of the branches about which we talk so complacently and so learnedly? At least we have it on record that a wiser man, and a more profound scholar than any of us, thought very lightly of his attainments. It is not necessary to quote his language, for the words are "household words" in all our families and schools. The dear little child reciting the Lord's Prayer in Latin, and not understanding a word of it, is a type of us all.

EDUCO.

Wolfville, N. S., Aug. 10, 1887.

The highest mountain in the world is said to be Mt. Hercules, in New Guinea, soaring to an altitude of 32,786 feet.