

VOLAPUK—from *vola*, "of the world; *puk*, language—is a scientific international language. It is not intended to supersede any living language, but to be learned next the mother language by every educated person. It is formed on the general model of the Aryan families of languages, selecting from each the true and beautiful, while discarding irregularities, oddities and difficulties. Its material is largely taken from the English, but its structure—noun-declension, and verb-conjugation—is rather un-English as are two or three of its vowels. It is far easier to learn than any existing language, and has already made rapid progress in twenty or thirty European and Asiatic languages. It is to be tried by a small class in the Pictou Academy this winter. The grammar is expected to be fully mastered before the Christmas vacation. The text-book, is "Seret's Grammar with Vocabulary of Volapuk," 420 pages, published in Glasgow, by Thomas Murray & Son, and in London, by Whittaker & Co. At a Congress of Volapuk scholars in Munich this year, a Volapuk Academy has been formed. The next meeting of the congress is in Paris, 1889. After considering all, we believe that were English orthography corrected to agree with its orthoepy (and they should never have been allowed to drift asunder), the English language might, with greater advantage to all concerned, be adopted as the international or universal tongue.

OVER-PRESSURE IN SCHOOLS.

During the past few years the question of over-pressure has, perhaps, more than any other, been urged upon the attention of school-boards and educational administrators. Eminent physicians and educationists have discussed it in the journals of the day, while teachers, in their magazines and at conventions, have not been slow to express their views. Committees have been appointed to investigate the matter and suggest remedies, and have presented elaborate reports which have been listened to and read with satisfaction, and whose proposals to meet the evil have been commended as eminently wise and practical. And yet on every side we still hear the same cry of over-pressure, perhaps louder and more frequent than before. And why is this the case? Why is it that though so much has been uttered and written on the subject, so little has been done? Does the cry rest on a basis of fact, or is it a delusion? Are all these letters and speeches merely the spasmodic productions of nervous people and busy-bodies; or are they the genuine outcome of philanthropic zeal and an intelligent interest in the cause of education?

As we understand the question, there is much misapprehension of its import by many of those who

have entered upon its discussion. The non-professional disputants, and, we fear, many of those engaged in teaching, fail to distinguish between the healthful pressure exerted by an enthusiastic teacher who is governed by a reasonable curriculum, and the pernicious urgency which generally accompanies a course of studies preposterous in its variety and extent. And therefore it happens that the best teachers deny the existence of over-pressure, while medical men denounce our educational fervor and declare that we are doing more harm than good. The former allege that the break down of many a promising pupil is attributable to other causes and not to excessive application to their lessons; but the latter see in school work the apparent cause of collapse: to that they unhesitatingly refer it and condemn it accordingly.

The position of the teacher in relation to the question is also complicated by the attitude assumed by the parents of his pupils. They are often unreasonably anxious for the advancement of their children from grade to grade, and that irrespective of mental capacity and physical strength. But if they expect them to be promoted they must first secure the necessary marks indicative of progress, and must accordingly perform a fair share of hard work. The character of the parent (so he imagines) is to some extent at stake in the pass or failure of his child: pressure is put upon the teacher and the teacher stimulates his pupil.

This interest, however, evinced by the parent in the progress of his children, is not unfrequently of great service to the teacher, by securing regularity of attendance and some attention to home preparation. And if the school programme be of possible dimensions the conditions are favorable to successful work. Nor need there be any fear lest dangerous results ensue from earnest and diligent application under the direction of a teacher who possesses prudence as well as zeal; a clear intelligence, as well as a sympathetic soul. We must affirm that under these circumstances we have never seen boy or girl injured by diligent study. But we have known of boys and girls being sent to school who ought rather to have been in the open air enjoying the sunshine and the breath of heaven: youths in whom the seeds of disease were already present, which only required the confinement and other conditions of the school-room for germination and growth. It unfortunately happens that sometimes delicate children display an abnormal brilliancy, and are encouraged to greater effort when they ought undoubtedly to moderate their application and spend most of their time in an atmosphere and in occupation favorable to health. A natural tendency disease, bad air, insufficient or improperly cooked