

play was very creditable to that enterprising firm and to Mr. Selby who personally superintended it. The series of progressive drawing books especially attracted attention, their merit being conspicuous to those who took the pains to examine them carefully. It is to be hoped that the enterprise of Selby & Co., in making such an exhibit will be recognized by an increasing demand for the materials which they took so much trouble to display.

VACATIONS.

In the more remote country districts, and in an occasional newspaper article, the long summer vacation is sometimes sneered at, and the teacher is held directly responsible for it. If the teacher is responsible he has been much more successful in urging his claims upon the public in this particular than in attracting consideration from the public in any other. That the teacher does not object is only natural; that he deserves it equally with the pupil is indisputable; but that he is responsible for it is not true. The parent has taken that matter in hand and has successfully contended, not only for longer vacations, but shorter school hours and less home work of all kinds. It has not been long since school hours were much longer, and even Saturdays were not holidays. Since these changes have been made it has been noted that pupils leave school at an earlier age than during the olden times. Will any one, not a pessimist, contend that they are not as well equipped mentally as formerly? To whom is it due that better work is done in shorter time? It is due to improved methods of teaching and a greater expenditure of nervous energy on the part of our teachers, and the advance is not costing the state nearly as much as it is worth. Teaching is not, under the most favorable conditions, a healthy business, and there are few millionaires engaged in the work. Fresh air is to the average teacher a highly prized luxury, and he returns compound interest to the state on all he receives.

Can any one advance any reason why the country district is not entitled to as long a summer vacation as the town or city? It would not take long to look for reasons for a change exactly reversing the present order. The country trustee wants longer vacations, but he is averse to thinking he has to pay for them.

SCHOOL EXCURSIONS.

In the *Century* and *Forum* Magazines for September, are two noteworthy articles on school excursions, both by Dr. J. M. Rice. The former is an account of a seven days' excursion during the summer of 1893, of about 38 teachers and pupils, undertaken by the

school of practice of the University of Jena. Such excursions have become a regular part of the instruction of the boys, and to some extent of the girls, in the German schools. These "school journeys" are thoroughly scientific in their management, and much of the school instruction of the year, both before and after they have been undertaken, are based upon the material acquired or expected to be acquired. The journey of 1893 was undertaken for the purpose of preparing the pupils for the study of the history of the Reformation. For weeks beforehand, the pupils' lessons were directed to a study of the geographical features, industries, and history of the section to be visited, and during the excursion lectures were given by the teachers and others, and class recitations were conducted on all available opportunities, care being taken that the pupil should make the utmost of these opportunities. We cannot here enter into the details of the excursion. It is sufficient to say that the physical welfare was looked after as carefully as the "roughing it" through a rugged and mountainous country, with the long marches and inferior inns, would admit of. The cost to each pupil for the seven days did not exceed sixty cents a day.

The second excursion, described in the *Forum*, was undertaken by the Anderson School, Indiana, and embraced a trip to Virginia and return. It also occupied seven days, and was undertaken at the suggestion of Dr. Rice, who had taken part in the "school journey" from Jena the year previous. The distance travelled was 1800 miles, and the cost per head was \$30—a much more expensive trip than the German one, where the cost did not exceed \$4.20 for each pupil. The number of pupils and teachers embraced seventy-eight. The pupils were from the advanced schools, and the cost was borne by the pupils themselves and the teachers who took part, whereas in Germany it was borne by the university and the school authorities. It may be said that in the German excursion, the children were much younger and were from the poorer classes. The Indiana excursion embraced a railroad journey through one of the most picturesque pieces of country in the eastern United States, rich in natural scenery as well as historical reminiscences, and of great interest to the student in natural science. The discipline throughout was excellent, and the self-control of the pupils very marked, but the lack of experience and the want of preparation on the part of both teachers and pupils failed to produce the best results.

These excursions are of the greatest interest to educationists. In Germany, where they have been tried for some time, and where the excursion is preceded by careful and thorough preparation, with the