

over all meteorological stations that receive any aid from the Government as well as other private observers who may place themselves in connection with it.

3. To advise observers in the selection of their instruments and the method of observation; to issue the necessary forms for registration, and to determine the time for reporting.

4. To receive telegraphic weather

reports from telegraph stations and to despatch to various points by wire probabilities founded thereon.

Time is also exchanged at regular intervals between the other observatories and Toronto. Clock and chronometer comparisons and transit observations having been sent in, they are examined and correct time is furnished to the city and to railway and telegraph companies.—*Empire*.

SOME FAMOUS DUNCES.

THE youth of high scholastic attainments who is always carrying off prizes naturally raises hopes of his subsequent success in a particular career. Of course, the most is made of him. He is not only a credit to himself, but to his teachers; to the latter, indeed, he is a practical certificate—a “human document”—of the first class. Finally, he leaves school, and it is confidently predicted that, if he does not achieve greatness in the battle of life, it can only be on account of some moral flaw which has not yet had time to declare itself. But the “dull boy” seldom receives the benefit of the doubt in any speculation as to his future. Once dubbed “dunce,” or reputed “slow,” and he is allowed to develop in the shade; emerging from which he satisfies or surprises his friends only because nothing was expected of him. No one can dispute the claim of Sir Isaac Newton to a monument in Westminster Abbey, nor to the praise conferred by Pope’s well known epitaph:—

Nature, and Nature’s laws, lay hid in night;
God said, “Let Newton be!” and all was light.

Nevertheless the greatest of English philosophers was a so-called “dunce” at school. Sir David Brewster tells us, in his “Life,” that Newton made little progress “until one day, the boy

who was above him having given him a severe kick in the stomach, from which he suffered great pain, he laboured incessantly till he got above him in the school, and from that time continued to rise until he was the head boy.” In the same illustrious fane is a monument to another Isaac, not, perhaps, so universally known as his great namesake, but showing a genius in his maturer years for which the friends of his youth were by no means prepared. Isaac Barrow was not only an idle and quarrelsome lad, but was so dull and stupid in his early years that his father once remarked to a neighbour that “if God took away any of his children, he trusted it would be Isaac, as he feared he would never be fit for anything in this world.” But there was evidently something more than mere animal pugnacity in young Barrow. As a divine he stands as one of the great triumvirate of the Church of England with Taylor and Hooker. As a mathematician, under the designation of “the most learned man in England,” he was appointed master of Trinity College, Cambridge. As a wit he more than once administered unanswerable verbal chastisement to Lord Rochester, “the wittiest of the witty.” It is worth remembering that Isaac Barrow and Isaac Newton—the “dull boys” of their respective