

fine selections which were read and re-read, committed and recited, with never a note or word of comment whatever. We were allowed to meet the author alone, and hear his voice without let or hindrance from officious editor or teacher. The old school-master knew where to stop.

I need not comment upon that careful and painful penmanship that prevailed. Our old teachers "set" our copies, and their penmanship was awe-inspiring to contemplate. On this study I always thought they were over nice, as they would rap my fingers with their rod to make me straighten them out and keep my pen pointing to my shoulder.

The old master has long since passed away; the old school-house has been replaced by the modern school building with its rooms and grades, all of which are much, very much, better than the old in many respects; but in cultivating self-reliant manhood, in inculcating true democracy, in inspiring a genuine love for good English and originality of thought and freedom of expression, I know nothing in the new American educative system that more thoroughly takes the place of the old country school.

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—*The School Journal.*

THE TEACHER'S WORK.

THE demands of the educational system of to-day upon the energies of the teacher are tremendous. There is no other labor at the same time so exhausting, ill-paid, and unsatisfactory to the doers of it as that which is done in our school-rooms. The work of the Ontario Public school teacher is, in fact, never done. He cannot compass it all. As prescribed for him by the pro-

gramme of the Education Department, it is an impossibility. He cannot perform well the half of what there is required of him. But ill or well, the ground has to be covered—he must leave nothing out. In their respective classes boys and girls must be taken over the full sweep of the authorized course of study. There stand at the end of the term the examinations—promotions, entrance and leaving—and unless the teacher wants to lose his situation and his reputation he must make shift to pass a respectable number out of each class. To do this he must largely discard sound methods of teaching. To take the pupils thoroughly over the work required for the examination is out of the question. There is too much of it. The subjects are too numerous; in most of them the range of study is too extensive, and the questions set by the examiners are frequently beyond the understanding of the candidates. Take the scope of the work for the entrance examination in the one subject of British history. The examiner may select his questions from all periods of that history, from the time of Julius Cæsar's landing in Britain down to the Diamond Jubilee. To stand the test of such searching, ingeniously constructed questions as will be asked, a pupil should be well grounded in not only the broad facts, but also in much of the detail of the text-book. He must not only have a full and exact knowledge of the history of Great Britain, but he must know also a good deal about constitutional usage. In fact, some of the questions asked belong rather to political science than to history. It is vain for a teacher to try to put his pupils in possession of such a stock of historical knowledge as will assure them success at the examination. If he teaches faithfully, with the object of really making his class acquainted with the subject, they will all be plucked. At that rate he