

"Here it is necessary, from the absolute necessity of brevity, to consider the subject with special reference to practical wants rather than to develop any preconceived theory. We shall therefore make direct reference to existing systems and current methods. Let us observe, then, that the generally accepted plan of Common School education is based upon the *mathematics*. The traditional three R's have a deep meaning. A child must learn to *read* and to *write*, that he may be able to "*figure*." "I want you to learn my boy 'rithmetic,' and then he won't get cheated," has a more profound signification than at first sight appears. Besides, the philosophy which it hints at is deeper seated, and the results broader and of more general application, than may at the outset be apparent.

"It is often assumed, either consciously or unconsciously, that the study of arithmetic has a greater power of expanding the reasoning faculties, and that it produces a greater and more rapid growth of mind, than any other branch of study. Again, in general practice, it is undoubtedly true that the schools are graded and the pupils ranked more by their progress in arithmetic than in any or all other studies. A pupil changes from one school to another. The first question asked of the new-comer is, "How far have you advanced in arithmetic?" and he is placed in a class in accordance with his proficiency and evident ability in that branch of study, with but very little reference to what he has done or can do in reading, writing, composing, or understanding the English language, or whether he has studied geography or natural history or other branches.

"Upon the theory advanced above, this is totally wrong and indefensible. Arithmetic, like the other branches of mathematical study, improves the reasoning faculties only to a limited extent and in certain directions. There is a broader and a better way."

In an article on the "Study of Language," an amusing *exposé* is made of some of those pretentious "fads" which certain School Inspectors bring forward as new ways of saving a child's labour in learning to spell—new ways that are not found to work in practice, and are on principle inconsistent with the history and growth of our language. We commend the perusal of *Education* to all who have it within reach. It is philosophical,

and requires intelligent effort to follow some of its articles, but it is quite within the reach of the thoughtful reader.

A SKETCH OF ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY FROM THALES TO CICERO, by Joseph B. Mayor, M.A., Fellow and Tutor of St. John's College, Cambridge. Pitt Press Series. Cambridge: Deighton, Bell & Co. Toronto: Willing & Williamson.

THIS delightful little volume has the merit of giving an account, in simple and intelligible language, of the opinions of the leading thinkers of Greece and of the Eclectic school which reproduced their teaching at Rome. Mr. Mayor does not write as the advocate of any special school in modern metaphysics, and he does not perplex us by stating the doctrines of ancient philosophers in the terminology of modern thought, great as the temptation to do this so frequently is. Students of Kant, and more especially of Hegel, whose philosophy seems coming to the front once more in the works of Ferrier, Caird, and in Canada of Professor Watson, will often be startled at what seem strange anticipations of the cardinal ideas of these great masters. Mr. Mayor gives the teaching in all important points in the words of the teacher himself, adding the Greek wherever the phrase is especially pregnant. For those who realize the fact that philosophy, like everything else, is best studied historically, and in its natural course of evolution, this book is invaluable as giving a clear view of what the cultivated Greek intellect had to say on the foundation questions of the mystery of existence. Mr. Mayor, we are glad to see, does full justice to Cicero's contributions to the literature of Philosophy. It is perhaps to be regretted that Mr. Mayor has not included the important philosophical phase of Neo-platonism in his criticism of ancient systems. We cordially recommend the book to all thoughtful readers, whether classical scholars or not.