

# THE SCHOOL MAGAZINE.

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## "THE NEW DEPARTURE."

THE NEW DEPARTURE IN THE COMMON SCHOOLS OF QUINCY.—BY CHARLES  
F. ADAMS.

This pamphlet comprises the opinions on which the "new departure" of education in the public schools of Boston has been carried out. The reader is rather surprised, or would be, if he did not know beforehand that Mr. Adams was a man of sense, with very practical opinions on most subjects, to learn that it is a very sensible pamphlet. So much has been said, and upon the whole so absurdly said, about the "new departure," as to lead people to suppose that Boston has just been revolutionizing lower education as Cambridge is supposed to have revolutionized higher education. There was an anonymous account of the new departure in the January number of the *Atlantic Monthly*, which announced that the old system which had endured so long "seemed to be crumbling," and the disintegration of it was finally to be accomplished by some new text-books already authorized in the schools of Boston. These text-books, published by Lee & Shepard, consist of four little volumes, two of them in paper covers, and are entitled respectively "Poetry

for Children," edited by Mr. Eliot superintendent of the Boston schools; "Six Stories from the Arabian Nights," also edited by Mr. Eliot, and two series, each of "Six Popular Tales," edited by Henry Cabot Lodge. Neither is there anything in these to account for the pæans which from other places than the *Atlantic* have been sounded for the "new departure." The old system, as the *Atlantic* writer explains, is the system "of routine and of cram." Its chief fault besides that it "enfeebles the mind by overloading it with undigested matter" is that "it crushes out originality by discouraging all independent thought." The great need of this country is notoriously the need of more Independent Thought by Independent Thinkers of from five to twelve years of age. If the object of the new education is to develop originality in minds of this sort, that education would be a revolution indeed. The "old system" would collapse, and we should have the pleasure of recognizing, as soon as the new "system" got well under way, a