

those who cannot use it to provide a substitute book at the least possible expense, for the "Traveller" was in use in 1880 and will come into use again next year by the ordinary rotation of texts. We have the best of reasons for stating that this arrangement will be satisfactory to those who raised the objections, and as the freedom of others is not interfered with they cannot have any ground of complaint. As the Departmental examinations are not competitive there can be no difficulty in the double examination in literature except the extra work of preparing a second paper.

3. The most important question of all is whether, apart from religious considerations, "Marmion" and the "Reflections" are good texts for high school or matriculation purposes. We are strongly of the opinion that they are not, and we are confirmed in this view by the opinions of many high school teachers and others whose judgment and experience make them safe guides in such matters. We believe that very little of Burke's literary work is suited for juvenile study and that it would have been difficult to select anything less appropriate than his strictures on the French Revolution. The whole tone of the pamphlet is bad politically, and it has the great defect of doing the author a serious injustice. It was the production, not of Burke the liberal and tolerant political philosopher in the full vigor of his intellect, but of Burke the morbid old man with mind all but unhinged and perceptions either obtuse or warped. And the style is as unsuitable as the matter and spirit. At his best Burke was apt to lapse into turgidity, and in the "Reflections" he is hardly ever anything but turgid. From this cause alone, to say nothing of the complete falsity of his point of view, it is one of the most wearisome of literary productions. If a piece from Burke must be had it would be much better to select passages from some of his noble speeches in favor of the right of the American colonists to political freedom, with the loss of which they were threatened during the earlier part of his public career.

"Marmion" also is open to the objection of being wearisome. It is too long for critical study, and it always spoils a poem to select a piece of it when it is in itself a complete work of art. One might as well attempt to estimate a painting by selecting a few square inches for study. "Marmion" contains some of Scott's best poetry and some of the most trashy he ever wrote. It is spun out to such a length and is so purely narrative that there is nothing in it to study. *Marmion* himself is a prosaic scoundrel who endeavors by forgery to ruin an honorable rival and lives a licentious life. There is not a fine character in the book, the best being *Clare's*, and she is all but a nonentity. Linguistically the poem is not valuable as a study. There are many archaic words but Scott's archaisms are all of one class and such words, when mastered, add no valuable element to a student's vocabulary. After a critical study the introductions to the cantos will be almost the only parts that furnish any lasting possession and this is saying little for the work. In the range of modern English literature something far more suitable than "Marmion" might surely be found for such a purpose. In several respects, to say nothing of what is likely to offend on religious grounds, even the "Lady of the Lake" is superior to it.

A USEFUL RECIPE.

Mr. Burke, a teacher in South Hastings, brought before the notice of his fellow teachers in that district at a recent convention the following recipe for making an excellent substitute for more costly copying presses. Take one pound of glycerine, four ounces of French glue, and one pint of water, melt them together in a pan over a fire, and when the mixture is thoroughly dissolved pour it into a shallow tin dish large enough in superficial area for the paper to be used in making copies. The tin dish should be carefully made with sides as straight and corners as square as possible. In writing the original to be copied use aniline ink and press the written sheet gently on the smooth surface of the gelatinous mass in the dish. When taken off it leaves a well-defined impression in ink, and by pressing blank sheets on the same surface scores of copies can be made from the one impression. This cheap press can be made very serviceable by the teacher in the production of papers for conducting written examinations.

NEW READERS,

We notice that at the conventions now held the question of new reading books is a prominent topic of discussion, the usual practice being to refer the different series to a committee for inspection. To this plan we have no objection, but it would be well for the teachers to bear in mind these two facts: (1) that while Gage's "Canadian Readers" are now complete up to the end of the fifth book there is no other series at all approaching that condition; and (2) that while the prices of the various members of the "Canadian" series are given no announcement has yet been made as to the price of either the "Royal Canadian" or the "Royal" series. The various numbers of the "Canadian" series are sold at the same price as corresponding numbers of the present series, and conventions, before expressing any opinion as to the merits of the different books, would do well to ascertain the prices of all. It is clear that cost must always form an important element in the reading book problem.

—We commence this month the publication in the *SCHOOL JOURNAL* of a little work entitled "The Problem of Teaching to Read." It is from the pen of one of the ablest educationists of the present day, J. M. D. Meiklejohn, M.A., Professor of the theory, history, and practice of education in the University of St. Andrews. The problem of teaching beginners to read is the most difficult the teacher has to encounter, and no one has done more to simplify that problem than Professor Meiklejohn has done in his little treatise. To his other qualifications he adds that of being a distinguished philologist, and, without any exhibition of pedantry, he throws, by means of his scientific knowledge, a good deal of light on the history and peculiarities of our perplexing English orthography.