

could barely write a sentence in English correctly were awarded first-class certificates.

By the School Act of 1871 inspectors were required to pass a rigid examination; a uniform standard of qualification was adopted by the Council of Public Instruction for teachers; compulsory attendance was a principal feature of the Act, and a Township Board of Trustees recommended as a necessary means of carrying the new law into effect. This, however, was left to the popular vote, two-thirds of the sections composing a municipality being required for the establishment of a Township Board. This Board was to consist of five members, one to be elected in each ward of a township, if so divided, or all the rate-payers might vote for each of the five members. This system was mainly suggested from the experience of a large number of the different American States that had adopted the Township Board system with great success. Some of the advantages of a Township Board may be briefly enumerated. Convenience is better served by the section boundaries being done away with; children can be sent to any school in the township most convenient to their homes. Under the old school system a rate-payer can only send to the school he pays his taxes to, and a school in the adjoining section may be next door to him and have a more efficient teacher. By this it may be seen that Township Boards are necessary to a thorough Free School System. As to economy, London Township may be taken as a fair sample. Here there are something like one hundred trustees to manage thirty schools, where five would do just as well, and manage more efficiently. Then, every school must have a Collector of School rates; so that, in London Township, there would be thirty collectors to be paid, when the Township Collector might do the whole business. Again, if the school sections were properly distributed, it would not require nearly as many schools as there are at present. They would be placed at more regular and convenient distances from each other.

By the new system better teachers might be procurable. A Township Board can classify schools, and each vicinity can demand a teacher fitted to the wants and status of the school. That is, the school could be brought to a more uniform standard of excellence. Married men under the present system are nearly debarred from teaching; unless in towns and villages no proper accommodation can be had, thus causing teachers who choose to accept the conditions, to travel a long distance, morning and evening—time that might be better spent in improving their schools. Residences would be erected in school sections for the accommodation of teachers. Under the present system, the rural teacher is a mere waiter on Providence, resorting to the business as a stepping stone to something else. Married teachers are more liable to cultivate a stronger social feeling than others who have only a mere temporary interest in a neighbourhood. A married man becomes more closely connected with the wants and feelings of a community; he has more at stake than a single man, and thus permanency of situation would be enhanced; the teachers would have a more just and impartial tribunal before which to submit any complaints arising; local and petty differences would be removed, and a teacher put in a position to carry out the provisions of the new School Law, which it is impossible to put in force under the present system.—*London Free Press*.

THE SWISS SCHOOLS.

Among numerous and varied excellencies which have long characterized the Swiss schools, is that of the care they bestow upon the bodily training of their pupils. The following from a Zurich letter to the *Boston Advertiser* gives some account of what is done in this respect:

I know of only one institution in the United States where physical training, adequate, compulsory and intelligently directed, holds its appropriate place, and that is Amherst College, in Massachusetts. In most significant contrast with the neglect of bodily training at home is the zealous care of the physical health of their children from the earliest age exhibited by the Swiss, especially of the Teutonic cantons. At every hour of the day you will see a squad of boys in the ample grounds of the burgher and cantonal schools undergoing a systematic gymnastic drill—walking in line, with heads erect, shoulders well back; running, performing in succession the exercises of the parallel bars, the rings, and the horizontal bars, and a score of other exercises which with us are scarcely known by name except to "professional" gymnasts. What school in New York or Boston has a play-yard equal in area to one-fourth of an acre, or say, ten thousand square feet? To my certain knowledge many school yards do not contain half that area; yet five, six, seven hundred children are turned out into this *pen* for exercise, and—as I was going to say, play—but all running, laughing, loud talking, all fun, in short, *is strictly forbidden!* Any roguish indulgence in boisterous play is the signal for the sharpest discipline. Here we'll educate the mind, not the man! In Switzerland, on the

contrary, it is not unusual to find a school-yard containing a hundred thousand square feet—in the heart of the town, too, where land is precious—a spacious lawn surrounded with a triple row of trees; in the middle, under the open air, the well-constructed apparatus of a complete gymnasium, and at the end of the yard a very plain but substantial building, containing the same apparatus for use in inclement weather. Such an extravagance! It is matched only by the similar character of the physician's certificates to feeble scholars, which run somewhat this way: "The boy who brings you this note is of slender health; give him all the exercise you can." A boy in an American city under similar circumstances would carry the following message: "Be kind enough to excuse the bearer from drill hereafter: he is not strong."

Each class in these schools spends from fifteen to twenty per cent. of the working time daily in gymnastic exercises. If to this time for recesses be added, it may fairly be said that nearly a fourth of the regular hours are devoted to physical education. Nor is this all by any means: on a holiday, in the long nooning, or after school is over, you may see troops of active fellows practising various feats, more or less difficult, and not unfrequently assisted and urged on to greater ventures by the presence and daring deeds of one or more of the teachers. Mr. Hepworth Dixon in his book on Switzerland, says that *every woman and girl in Switzerland knows how to read and write, to sing and to shoot*.

NOTES ON EDUCATION.

The standard to obtain a State certificate for teachers in Indiana has been lately fixed at 75 per cent. It was the same last year.

At the meeting of the Virginia Educational Association last week, one of the members gloomily attributed the corrupting influence of our literature chiefly to the neglect of the mother tongue in American education, and elaborately argued that the antidote is to purify the stream—to teach English in schools, to provide a pure literature for children, and to teach them to love it.

At the adjudication of prizes at University College, London, the first prize of jurisprudence was awarded to a young lady, who two years ago at the same College achieved a like success in political economy, and the second place in the same class was attained by another lady. Another obtained honours in political economy, and prizes were gained by three, and certificates by several in the fine arts classes.

The *Swiss Times* says that, according to the new Constitution, the public schools of Switzerland may be attended by the members of all sects without prejudice to their liberty of conscience. Convinced that religious instruction in elementary schools ought not to be dispensed with, the Society for Liberal Christianity of Switzerland had taken the initiative by offering prizes for a book of unsectarian religious instruction. Two prizes, 500 francs and 200 francs, have been proffered for the two best works. They must be sent in anonymously at present, by the end of March, 1875. The works may be in the German or French language. The authors will retain their proprietary rights, but the Society reserves to itself the liberty of publishing one of the works by paying a proper remuneration to the author.

Sir Arthur Helps, who presided at the distribution of prizes at the Warehousemen and Clerks' School, in London, recently, referred to the common discussion as to the best things to be taught. He placed the study of classics, modern languages and sciences, all very high, but stated his own idea of children's education to be that of teaching them to do one thing supremely well.

At the meeting at North Adams last week of the American Institute of Instruction, Mr. George B. Emerson read an essay on the "Motives that ought to be addressed to pupils in school," deprecating the common custom of instigating one child to surpass another, which gave rise to envy and bitter feelings. "A child ought to try," he says, "to surpass itself and be taught to love other children. Many teachers make a mistake in paying too much attention to the bright scholars to the neglect of the poorer ones." Mr. H. E. Sawyer, Middletown, Conn., Superintendent of Schools, charged as faults in school management: first, want of clear and definite conception of the objects for which schools are maintained; second, failure to provide for proper supervision; third, lack of precise definitions of duties and responsibilities; fourth, the employment of inexperienced and incompetent teachers; fifth, such arrangements of buildings as render the employment of inexperienced teachers unavoidable; sixth, the selection of teachers by large bodies of men who are not intimately acquainted with the schools; seventh, electing teachers for short terms.