

of mental gymnastics. The importance of such question of relative values becomes strikingly apparent when we consider that thirty five minutes a day is equivalent to an entire school year out of the eight devoted to elementary education. Consequently, by economizing only a little here and there, by the exclusion of merely a part of the disciplinary measures of minor or doubtful importance, such as drill in arithmetical puzzles, superfine penmanship, in parsing and analysis beyond what is actually needed, it might be possible to save as much as the equivalent of two school years, which might then be utilized toward enriching the course of study, without in any way neglecting the essentials.

Geography, and particularly that phase which treats of the location of places, the boundaries of states and countries, the length of rivers, the height of mountains, offers a broad field for exclusion without true loss in any particular. How much waste there is in the old fashioned method of teaching this subject becomes apparent when we consider how exceedingly little the average individual has to show a year or two after leaving school for the numerous hours a week, during five or six years, devoted to this study.

While the number of geographical facts in topographical geography that the individual is required to know, in order that he may be able to take an intelligent interest in the affairs of the world, is considerable, it is nevertheless very small when compared with that which the child is compelled to acquire in the traditional course of instruction. Indeed, so great, in my opinion, is the discrepancy between what the child is compelled to memorize in the old fashioned schools and what the citizen is expected to know, that I do not regard it as an exaggeration to say that the course in topographical geography might be shortened by 70 or 80 per cent, without neglecting what is useful. *Dr. J. M. Rice, in the January Forum.*

Free Text-Books.

The agitation in Quebec in favor of free text books in the public schools will naturally have the effect of bringing the matter up in some of the lower provinces in Canada. In many cities in the United States free text-books are given to the children, and certainly this custom seems to be a proper outcome of the system of the system of free schools. At all events it prevents any parent stating that he cannot send his children to school because he is unable to afford the cost of doing so in the purchase of books. How such a system would apply to the cities of New Brunswick may be a question, because the conditions here are somewhat different from what they are in the large cities of Quebec; at the same time we think that if the cost of free text books was defrayed by the school boards of St. John and Fredericton, it would not be very great, because there

would be a greater economy in books than there is now, and the books would be taken care of. The people of New Brunswick may make up their minds that this matter is one which will presently be engaging our attention, and one which they will be required to vote upon. With free text books, of course there should be a compulsory system as applied to school attendance. It cannot be denied that there are many children now who do not attend our public schools, and that this is due to the neglect of parents and the carelessness of the children themselves. Some parents seem to dimly appreciate the advantage of an education for their children, yet if the state is to pay for schooling, it is proper that the state should make that schooling universal, and not allow any person to avoid going to school. *Fredericton Globe.*

Thomas Arnold as Taskmaster.

It has been often remarked that Dr. Arnold was not held in high esteem in England as an educator, though he seems to have a good rank in America. This is explained by the late Dean Lake. He tells us that the students at Rugby were on a fearful mental strain, Dr. Arnold was a remorseless taskmaster, the lessons were long and he demanded perfect accuracy.

"Some of the ablest of Arnold's pupils have often expressed to me their strong sense of the physical harm that it did us. Arthur Clough was certainly one of the most remarkable; he broke down in health very early, and died when he was scarcely forty, and I well remember his saying to me emphatically some ten years before that there was no standing the pressure of the work which he had gone through at Rugby, and another equally eminent Rugby man used to remark, laughingly, that it took a Rugby boy ten years to recover his health, both physically and intellectually. I have always myself thought that the boys who derived the most unmixed good from Rugby were the mass of well-intentioned, rather idle boys, such as the author of 'Tom Brown' delights to depict, who carried with them the remembrance of Arnold's character into their after life."

This means that those with conscience killed themselves through the effort to realize the demands Dr. Arnold made on them. Here is a side of the teacher's character that needs attention. Of a gentleman in charge of a private school in this city, it was said: "He was made of iron and forgot his pupils were not."

New York.

A. N. S.

The British Royal Commission on secondary education suggest, that the universities are the proper institutions to take up the task of giving the professional education required for teachers of academies and high schools, as has already been done by two Scottish universities. The science of education ought to be studied where other branches of mental and moral philosophy are fully handled by the ablest professors. *School Review.*