

the first of the Riverside Art Series which has this end in view. This book, which the other volumes of the series will follow in general plan, contains a portrait of Raphael and fifteen excellent reproductions in half-tone of pictures which best represent the artist's most interesting characteristics and which most directly appeal to the imagination. For each picture there is an appropriate and simple text description of the story, but not critical from the artist's point of view. Each book of the series will consist of about 100 pages, bound in paper or boards at 25 and 40 cents.

PROF. MACOUN, the botanist of the Natural History Survey, spent five weeks on Sable Island the past summer, studying its soil, plants, animals, climate and general physical features. There is much that is instructive in the study of this outlying portion of the Dominion, and Prof. Macoun's report of it, to be issued during the winter, will be looked forward to with interest. The island, in one of our modern encyclopædias, is said to be thirty-four miles long and from one and a-half to five miles wide. It is at the present time not more than twenty-five miles long and not much over a mile in width at its widest part; so that it would seem that the winds and waves are gradually working to obliterate it entirely. There are no inhabitants except the staff that the Dominion government keeps there to maintain light house and life saving stations. The Sable Island ponies and cattle find abundant pasturage. The climate is very equable, the temperature seldom going above seventy degrees in summer, nor generally much below forty in winter. Prof. Macoun thinks that it is an admirable place for a sanatorium, although the approach to the Island from steamers or vessels by means of surf boats is somewhat perilous.

THERE is an opinion abroad that the public schools are not devoting sufficient attention to the requirements of a business education.

The increasing number and growth of commercial schools gives strength to the impression; and it is certain that numbers of our boys and girls are leaving school before completing the course to enter these. This is especially true of dull students and those who fail to pass the examinations. Special efforts are being made by commercial schools to attract these students. While it may not be the function of a public school system to provide expert instruction for a business career more than any other, yet it is argued that business knowledge enters into all occupations, and therefore the schools should provide it. While book-keeping is taught in our schools, its teaching has not kept pace with the modern complements of type-writing and shorthand.

To introduce these would be to further enlarge an overloaded course. In the high schools such instruction could be provided for by still further enlarging the number of optional subjects.

Centralization of Schools.

The subject of centralizing rural schools is one that is attracting considerable attention in many sections of New Brunswick, and the recent permissive act passed by the Legislature has rendered it practical for any section to adopt it. The recent debate upon the subject in the Charlotte County Institute aroused deep interest and the number of representatives from country districts who were present assisted materially in bringing the matter before the public. Like all measures of reform it is but to be expected that it should meet with opposition and take time to bring into effect. As yet the majority are either opposed to it or regard it with considerable distrust. While all admit that there would be great and decided advantages in the scheme, the cost as compared with the present district plan appears to be greater; and until it can be demonstrated that this idea is erroneous, very little progress will be made. An object lesson or two is needed to insure conviction.

Again the local and district idea prevails in many localities and all desire, if a change is made, to have central schools. There is also a dislike to abandon good school houses, and to incur the cost of large central buildings. The present only is regarded, and the future not all. Few reflect that the cost of central schools and the benefits arising therefrom will be spread over many years. There are at present in the province more than one hundred schools with an average of less than ten. Instead of decreasing, this number is increasing, owing to constant sub-division. It is therefore most desirable, in the interests of economy and the larger districts, that some plan of curtailment should be devised. In not a few cases it is beyond question that centralization would be cheaper and better. In these places the Board of Education should bring its influence to bear to secure centralization.

For several years I have continued to take the REVIEW and have greatly enjoyed reading it each month. I have found it helpful and stimulating. Always filled with interesting, fresh ideas and earnest practical suggestions, it has done me a great deal of good. * * * I was struck with the article on Drawing in the September number, the truth of which is so evident. I shall with many others await the help on that subject which the REVIEW promises.

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