

Unlike the customary blue book, however, this one was as popular as a novel, and there is a constant demand for copies. Wide-awake farmers want the information, and they can get in these books what cannot be had elsewhere. The book represents the ripest experience of the most ingenious and successful farmers and fruiters. Encouraged by their success as publishers of practical literature, the Government have recently issued a book on Forestry, written by Mr. R. W. Phipps. This book is written in a style so charming that the demand for it is very lively—so much so that an extra large edition has been printed.

The ATHENEUM calls for the appointment of an Educational Commission, who shall have power over persons and papers, and *carte blanche* to go where they like and interview whom they please, with the object of learning the precise facts as to our educational system, its working and results. Our educational interests are quite as important to our national life as are our agricultural interests. A much larger proportion of our people would be interested in the results of an Educational Commission than are interested in agriculture. There is not a family that is not directly affected by changes in school books and methods. There are thousands of parents and scholars who are now declaring against the "cramming" system, as they have been for years past. Is there any reason for the outcry? Everyone knows there is too much. Is there any remedy? Everyone who considers the matter will see that an Educational Commission could find the cause and suggest the remedy.

The Commission should not be composed of professional educationists, though that class should be represented. A school inspector, a clergyman, a business man, a mechanic, and a quick-witted and intelligent woman—these should form the Commission—with the business man as chairman. Let them interview school inspectors, head masters, subordinate teachers, high and common school scholars of all grades, and find whether there are too many studies on the list, and ascertain which could be best omitted. Let them call kindergarten teachers and scholars and learn their methods, and compare their progress with pupils taught by the ordinary methods. Let commercial colleges be visited with a view of finding out who attend them, and how it is that young men fresh from school have to "finish off" in these institutions in the simple English studies which the schools presume to teach

—writing, book-keeping, and arithmetic. Let young clerks and mechanics and sales-women and sewing girls who have recently left school be examined, in order that it may be learned how much of what they know was taut then at school, and whether they learned at school how to teach themselves; also whether or not they consider that, having passed thru the school curriculum, they have nothing more to learn. Let street arabs, and boot-blacks, and news-boys and girls be called, and a comparison made between them and the school scholars in the matter of practical education, with the view of learning how it is the schools teach so little and the streets so much, and also with a view to considering whether it might not be advantageous if, more frequently than at present, the schools were turned into the street, or the practical street methods were introduced into the schools.

Let an Educational Commission, composed as we have outlined, and empowered as we have suggested, turn its attention in the direction hinted at, and there would be a marked educational improvement within five years from the date of publication of their report.

What say our readers to this Educational Commission?

NOTES ON THE SPELLING REFORM.

The educationists of this enlightened Province, as of the whole Continent, need no instruction as to the absurdities of ordinary English spelling. They are fully alive to these; more than that, they would be the most practical spelling reformers in the most suitable place—the school room. What hinders their action? We reply, the school regulations which make compulsory the spelling of words according to an arbitrary standard that cannot be supported by rime or reason, by sense or sound, by etymology or euphony. What is the remedy for this condition of affairs?—a condition causing discouragement to pupils and teachers? We reply again, the school regulations must be changed.

Is the time ripe for such change, and is it practicable? We think so, decidedly. When teachers, inspectors and examiners are convinced that a change is both desirable and necessary; when the present method has been faithfully tried, and has proven a miserable failure; when the