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THE DRY BONES OF POPULAR EDUCATION.

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DURING the last ten years a great deal of industry has been expended upon the production of books for the instruction of children in elementary schools. And though the results of this industry are of national importance, the work has been hitherto left to private enterprise, and has been carried on as an affair of speculation by book-makers and publishers. The Council of Education has carefully abstained from directing it authoritatively, and has even on occasion gone so far as to caution the inspectors of the schools against interference in the choice of books. A very limited right of rejection is left to them, but they are wholly denied that of selection. The responsibility of choosing the books to be used in any particular school lies with the local board of management, and in many cases it is practically vested in the schoolmaster or schoolmistress. But while the Council of Education

abstains from interference in the choice of books the Education Code prescribes subjects of instruction and lays down in outline the scheme of examination. While the Council refuses the responsibility of providing a set of books out of which it might be possible for the children to learn the things it wishes them to be taught, it throws out, from time to time, hints as to what these books should contain; and such hints are invariably acted upon by the people who make it their business to cater for the schools. In 1876 the Lords of Council especially charged the inspectors to do all they could to promote the teaching of cookery and the establishment of penny savings banks, and to lose no opportunity of pointing out to managers and teachers the advisability of making all the lessons tend as far as possible to the inculcation of habits of thrift and practical industry. The Code had lately sanctioned the