

general certificate of competency to enter upon the profession, the teacher has to pass a competitive examination, if he desires a mastership in a public school. The conditions of admission into the training college in France are very simple; the course of instruction extends over three years; and of the extent and nature of this course, Mr. Arnold, who visited some of the most efficient of the normal schools, speaks as follows:—

"At Bordeaux," he says, "the class of the third year, consisting of thirteen students, was receiving a mathematical lecture when I visited the institution. They do not go far in mathematics; no student in the institution was advanced as high as quadratic equations; no student was reading Euclid; they were taught, however, the elements of practical geometry. The object is to teach them what is needed for a primary school; the programme of the normal collegian exactly corresponds to the programme of the primary school; the student is not allowed to pass, at the end of his first year, from the obligatory matters of primary instruction, to the facultative, unless he has given proof of his thorough knowledge of the former, and not of his knowledge of them merely, but also of his skill to teach them. The teaching of method;—it is on this that circular after circular of the minister insists; it is on this that the reports of the commissioners who superintend normal schools perpetually dilate; it is to this that principals and lecturers address all their efforts. Practising schools are annexed to each training college, and in them the French students pass a great deal of their time—much more in proportion to that spent in the lecture room, than ours. And with what success? Undoubtedly, a knowledge of method is of the highest importance to the schoolmaster; "*Donner c'est acquérir*," says a French poet, most truly; to teach is to learn; and to give a man, therefore, the power of teaching well, is to give him the power of learning much. Undoubtedly, too, the attention to method in the French training schools has resulted in the establishment of improved modes of teaching particular subjects; the teaching of arithmetic, for instance, and the teaching of reading, have been facilitated and simplified. Yet I doubt whether in all his zeal for method, in this exclusive thought for the bare needs of the primary school, in this jealous apprehension lest the normal college pupil should become more of a student than a schoolmaster, the range of study has not been made unduly meagre, and a risk incurred of developing the student's mental power so insufficiently, that he will be thoroughly effective neither as student nor schoolmaster."

The meagre and unambitious course of training which Mr. Arnold thus describes, is fully paralleled in the curriculum of the *Schullehrerseminarien*, or normal seminaries, of Prussia. Though the course of instruction lasts three years, it is mainly limited to the subjects taught in elementary schools. The first year is occupied in bringing the pupil within the scope of the influence of the place, and making him feel what it is he is wanted to be and to become; in the second year he goes over again more thoroughly the ground he has already travelled at school; in the third he is practised in the model school, and has lessons in school management. He is required to learn by heart large portions of the Holy Scriptures, and summaries of Christian doctrine and Biblical history; he has much discipline in reading and intonation, and is elaborately drilled in the contents of the school reading-books, at which he has to work until he thoroughly understands them, and makes them his own. Written exercises, involving paraphrase and reproduction of such elementary books, are often given, and within these limits he is to acquire the power of understanding and using his own language, "so far as it is requisite for the elementary master, and without any theoretical lessons of etymology, prosody, lexicology, &c." General history is considered useless in the seminary; the instruction is confined to German history, with especial regard to that of Prussia, and the history of the province. Such knowledge of nature, and of physical philosophy generally, as is permitted to be taught, intended to bear exclusively on practical life, on gardening, agriculture, industry, and trade; and although in the third year some knowledge of mechanics may be given, it is expressly stipulated in the government regulations that it shall always be treated in an experimental way, and without mathematical formulae. For leave to go into the higher parts of arithmetic—proportion, decimals, extraction of roots, or for application in the school, but for their own improvement, special application is to be made to the provincial government. Drawing is not allowed to go beyond introductory lessons in the linear representation of simple objects, and even music is only cultivated in the seminary for moral and church objects. The art is never to be regarded as its own end. In short, the great aim of the existing system in the Prussian normal colleges appears to be to repress anything like intellectual ambition on the part of the young candidates, and to inspire them with

a sufficiently modest and humble view of the office for which they are destined. It will surprise many who have been accustomed to regard Germany as the birthplace of abstract speculations, and the home of dreamers and theorists, to learn that systematic *pädagogik*, or any attempt to construct a science of education, is utterly discouraged in the German seminaries. Even in a popular form, the theory of teaching is not to be lectured upon or discussed; in its place may be taught, indeed, the "art of school management," but these lessons are to be kept in strict connection with the experience obtained from day to day in the practising school. In fact, the whole tenor of the official documents by which the authorities of the normal schools are directed by the government as to their own duties and functions, is a sustained protest against any course which would give a technical or scientific character to the normal training.

Before concluding this notice of the state of education in the principal states of Europe, it may be interesting to mention here, in passing, a fact stated in a memoir published some time ago by Mr. Robert, the secretary of the jury, showing the extent to which the principle of compulsory education is now acted upon in various countries. It appears that "the principle of compulsory education is applied, either directly by means of penalties imposed upon parents, or indirectly by various legal disabilities, which apply to all who have not attended school, in the following countries: the Kingdoms of Prussia, Saxony, Hanover, and Wurtemberg; the Grand Duchies of Baden, Saxe-Weimar, Saxe-Cobourg-Gotha, and Hesse Darmstadt; the Duchies of Nassau and Brunswick; the Austrian Empire, Bavaria, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, Portugal, the Ottoman Empire, the Swiss Confederation, in all the Cantons, except Geneva, Schweiz, Uri, and Unterwalden, in the New England States, and in the Mauritius.—*Educational Times*."

(To be continued.)

Hard work.

No teacher can succeed in school without hard work. Our neighbor, Farmer Holdanthrive, laughs at us when we speak of hard work in the school-room, and thinks we have a very insufficient idea of the meaning of the phrase we use. He would like to know what possible connection there can be between sitting in an arm chair all day, hearing the boys and girls say their lessons, and hard work. He thinks it would be a good thing for the schoolmaster if he had to "stir his stumps" a little; it would prevent him from contracting bad habits, laziness, in particular. He wonders that all teachers are not distinguished for obesity; for the inactive lives they lead, are, in his opinion, favorable to the cultivation of aldermanic proportions.

It were hardly necessary to controvert Farmer Holdanthrive's position, if it were not apparent that many teachers sympathize with his views, and give him considerable grounds for the formation of his opinion. Those who adopt the teacher's profession because it is a lazy and inactive one in their estimation, might as well have chosen the calling of a soldier because it is a safe one; if he does not fight, he will be perfectly safe; and if the teacher does not do anything but draw his salary, he will have an easy time of it—until he is removed for incompetence. We need not tell the earnest and faithful teacher that teaching is hard work; he feels it in his bones and his brains.

We took occasion the other day to tell our honest agricultural friend that we personally knew how to "hold and drive;" that we had followed the plough, holding and driving, for days and weeks together; and that we had been more fatigued after a day of hard work in the school-room, than we ever had been after the severest toil on the farm. He was incredulous, and we attempted to show him that the mind tires as well as the body; that the labor required to concentrate the thoughts of a class was more wearing than that of holding a plough, or moving in a meadow full of hassocks. We were not very successful with our neighbor Holdanthrive; his prejudices were stronger than his common sense. We should be content to leave him in the mire of his own shortsightedness if he did not think it a "mortal shame" to pay the teacher twenty-five dollars a month, during the winter season, when there is "nothin on airth a man can do besides teach school." He thinks his "deestrick could get a man for ten dollars a month and board him round, and good pay at that."

The influence of our friend in the rural districts is decidedly unhealthy. He is the foster-father of, and the practical sponsor for, at least nine-tenths of the incompetent teachers in the State. When his oldest boy arrives at the mature age of eighteen he will