

"Canaries have upper and lower front teeth."

"Cows and horses rise on their paws."

"Iron exposed to damp air will soon begin to *roast*."

"The muscles are fastened to the bones by a liquid called Albumen."

"Some of the domestic animals that swim are the shark the salmon and the trout."

The examiner who quotes the above gems thinks there is room in the curriculum for nature-study. No doubt of it.

That the school master is abroad, and very much abroad, may be gathered from the following references to Canada, still found in text-books used in London schools:

"Haymakers frozen to death in their tents."

"Indians are now quite tame."

"Places where hay-making has all to be done at night time because men dare not face the flies on hot days."

"Summer milk is delivered in solid cakes to customers."

"When once winter sets in the people are frozen up till spring."

As Lord Strathcona himself has directed the attention of the London board of education to these and other stupid blunders in the text-books, there is reason to hope that the British children will soon cease to be regaled on such choice relics. It is interesting to note in this connection the school correspondence that has sprung up between London and Fredericton, N. B., and perhaps other Canadian cities. In these letters the boys and girls of the Empire are showing a disposition to find out things first hand for themselves.

Some have complained bitterly of the severity of the cold and the deep snows of this winter, of frozen water-pipes in cities and impassable roads in the country, and the blocking of freight trains—a loss to trade. But look at the compensations. The covering of snow and the frost which has penetrated the ground to the depth of four or five feet will be worth many millions to the farmers of the country. The snow has protected the roots of plants, especially of grass, and when it melts will leave abundance of fertilizing matter in the ground. The frost, entering every minute cranny of soil, will pulverize it as no amount of cultivation could do. Both these influences will make the work of the farmer less and cause him to rejoice in the bountiful harvests of the coming season. Then there has been less disease this winter, as the germs do not flourish in such steady, cold weather. And look at the fund of joyous, healthy recreation that has been got out of this rough winter in sleigh-driving, skating, snow-shoeing, hockey, curling and other winter sports!

### The Schools of Nova Scotia.

The report of Dr. A. H. MacKay, Superintendent of Education for Nova Scotia, has been received. It presents an interesting and complete review of educational progress for the year ending July 31, 1903.

During the year the teachers employed increased by two, although the number of pupils was 291 less than the previous year. The pupils in the three lowest grades increased by 758, showing that the school population is gaining. There were 179 sections without schools, an increase of 24 over the previous year, and 300 schools were maintained with an average attendance not exceeding *eight*. This is a strong argument in favor of the consolidation of schools, which has been started under such favorable auspices at Middleton, where eight sections have been federated.

The number of trained teachers employed increased by 33; and 3,258 high school pupils presented themselves at the provincial examinations, 77 less than in 1902, but 372 more pupils received diplomas than in the previous year, showing creditable preparation and an increased efficiency of the high schools.

The marked progress in manual training was referred to in the last number of the REVIEW. The school gardens increased during the year from 24 to 52, a gratifying feature.

The total attendance at the public schools for the year was 98,768, but the average attendance was only 55,213. This, in spite of many reasonable causes of absence, shows too great a disregard of educational opportunities. The cost to educate this average number was \$16.94 for each pupil.

There are many interesting features in the report, only a few of which we can mention: The schools with an average of eight or less, draw as much money from the public chest as those educating five times that number of children; Pictou county has four schools with an average attendance of less than five; male teachers decreased by 44 and females increased by 46 during the year; there are more girls than boys in the kindergartens, but there are more boys than girls in grades one to six; from grades seven to eleven the girls are greatly in excess, being nearly double the number of boys in grades ten and eleven of the high school; salaries show a slight improvement; a number of distinguished university scholars and able teachers in the high schools are