

text-books were not the same. In England no one series of text-books is prescribed, but the school boards provide the different kinds asked for by the head teachers.

Soon a whistle was blown, and the boys marched in to the sound of music played on a piano. They stood in ranks while they sang an opening hymn, and the head master read a portion of the scripture, after which they knelt and responded in concert at certain places in a prayer that was offered.

There was a great deal of clear glass in the partitions between the class-rooms and the corridors, so that the head master could see just what was going on in a room without entering it. I noticed that the desks of the teachers and those of the pupils in the front rows stood on the floor, but those of the other pupils were arranged in tiers, each row standing higher than the one in front of it.

By order of the Board of Education, the first lesson was the Scriptures. I heard a class discuss, in a very interesting and profitable way, Peter's escape from prison. The next lesson I heard was on Venice. The children in the common schools of England do not have lessons to prepare at home, so these pupils were *learning* the lessons, not reciting them. An outline of the lesson was written in exercise books, and geographical readers, maps and pictures were used to impress important facts upon the memory. A very practical lesson in descriptive composition was listened to in one of the rooms in the girls' department. The head mistress in this department informed me that the names of absent pupils were sent every morning to a truant officer, who investigated the cause of absence at once. She also said that regular classes in physical training were conducted in the play ground when the weather was fine, and in the assembly halls when it was stormy. They also encouraged out-of-door games, by holding inter-school contests at certain times. I came away with the impression that the people of that town, at least, were thoroughly assured of the advantages of a good elementary education, and they seemed to be determined that their children should have the best that was to be had even at a considerable expense.

From a subscriber who is not a teacher: The REVIEW must be a great inspiration to teachers, for those who are not teachers find it most interesting.

M.

Lessons in English Literature.—IX.

BY ELEANOR ROBINSON.

Le Morte Darthur.

HOW ARTHUR CAME TO BE KING.

In the days when Uther Pendragon was King of England, there was living in the land a magician called Merlin, the same who made the Round Table. Uther Pendragon wanted the wise and beautiful lady, Igraine, for his wife, and Merlin promised that he should have her, and that a son should be born to them, but on one condition. As soon as the child was born, he was to be given up to Merlin. The King promised that this should be done, and all fell out as Merlin had said. King Uther and the beautiful Igraine were married "with great mirth and joy." And when their little son was born, the King commanded two knights and two ladies to take the child, wrapped in a cloth of gold, and give it to a poor man whom they would find at the postern gate. This poor man was Merlin; he took the baby, and gave him to a good and noble lord, Sir Ector, to be brought up. He was christened Arthur, and the good Sir Ector and his wife cared for him as their own son.

Years went by, and there came a day when King Uther fell sick of a sore malady. Then his enemies came against him, and killed many of his people, and won a great battle. Merlin came to the King and said, "Sir, ye must to the field, even if ye ride in a horse-litter. For ye shall never have the better of your enemies unless ye yourself be there." So King Uther was carried out in a litter with his host. They overcame the enemy and slew many of their people, and put the rest to flight; and there was great rejoicing in the kingdom. But soon the King fell ill again, and became speechless. Merlin said that it was God's will that he should not recover, but that he would speak once before he died. Merlin and all the barons came before the King, and Merlin said, "Sir, shall your son, Arthur, be king of this realm after your days?" Then Uther Pendragon said in hearing of them all, "I give him God's blessing and mine, and bid him claim the throne." Then King Uther died, and was buried as a king should be.

There was great confusion in the kingdom, for every one of the great lords wanted to be king. So Merlin went to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was head of the church in England, and ad-