

The Old and the New.

How often do we hear it stated, "The schools of today are not what they were when we were young, especially in the three R's—reading, writing and arithmetic." The men who talk that way know nothing whatever by experience of the interior working of our schools. They are busy men—mechanics, merchants, professional men. They compare their own well-earned acquirements with the acquirements of children leaving the schools, forgetting the education of the years of experience that have elapsed since they left school.

An interesting comparison of the schools of sixty years ago with our own has recently been made by Principal Riley of Springfield, Mass., who discovered lately in that city a bound volume containing the questions and answers of an examination test given in 1846 to 250 pupils of grade nine of the high school.

The tests in spelling and arithmetic which were given to 250 ninth grade pupils during the last year by Principal Riley on the questions used in 1846 showed 51 per cent of correct spelling, as compared with 41 per cent for 85 pupils of the high school in 1846, and 65 per cent as compared with 29 per cent in arithmetic. The comparison in geography is equally unfavorable to the old schools.

The average age at which pupils entered the high school was as high as it is today. This gives evidence that the schools half a century ago were weak in the pet subjects on which they spent their strength.

We give below the spelling and arithmetic tests so that our teachers may institute a comparison if they choose with their own schools.

SPELLING.—Accidental, accessible, baptism, chir-ography, characteristic, deceitfully, descendant, eccentric, evanescent, fierceness, feignedly, ghastliness, gnawed, heiress, hysterics, imbecility, inconceivable, inconvenience, inefficient, irresistible.— 20 words.

ARITHMETIC.—I. Add together the following numbers: Three thousand and nine, twenty-nine, one, three hundred and one, sixty-one, sixteen, seven hundred, two, nine thousand, nineteen and a half, one and a half.

2. Multiply 10008 by 8009.

3. In a town five miles wide and six miles long, how many acres?

4. How many steps of two and half feet each will a person take in walking one mile?

5. What is one-third of $175\frac{1}{2}$?

6. A boy bought three dozen of oranges for $37\frac{1}{2}$ cents and sold them for $1\frac{1}{2}$ cents apiece; what would he have gained if he had sold them for $2\frac{1}{2}$ cents apiece?

7. There is a certain number, one-third of which exceeds one-fourth of it by two; what is the number?

8. What is the simple interest of \$1200 for 12 years, 11 months, and 29 days?

History of the River St. John.

A series of articles, published in the Saturday edition of the *St. John Daily Telegraph* for the past year or more, by Rev. W. O. Raymond, LL. D., has just been issued in book form. The result is a volume of 376 pages, largely documentary in character, but a mine of historic information on the St. John River valley from the time of its discovery by Champlain in 1604 to the coming of the Loyalists in 1784. The book is illustrated by several full page portraits, and engravings, with plans, maps, fac-similies of signatures, etc. Dr. Raymond in his numerous citations has quoted the exact language of the writers, giving us a series of glimpses of the past as they appeared to the eyes of the principal actors of Acadian story—de Monts and Champlain, Biard, Biencourt, La Tour, Charnisay, the Sieur de Soulanges, Governor Villebon, Membertou the Micmac, and Secoudon the Maliseet. The Indians and their mode of life is accurately described and we are enabled to see them as they appeared to the eyes of the first explorers of the Acadian wilderness. Next we have the tragic tales of Indian wars and massacres, the touching story of John Gyles the little English captive, the record of the feeble attempts of the French at colonization, the narrative of the struggle for mastery of the rich river valley between the French and the English, all woven together with the skill and patience of a historian and the love of one passionately devoted to his story.

Dr. Raymond has won the gratitude of the students of our history in laying before them in this acceptable form the narrative of early French exploration in this country. The book is a mine of information to present and future readers. Especially valuable is it to teachers in supplementing the somewhat meagre records in the text-books of our early history. Teachers may obtain the book from Dr. Raymond for one dollar.