

Physical Training and Over-pressure.

the triple object of education, physical education is placed before either of the two other objects,¹ and it is provided that in addition to evolutions and exercises, which can accompany the movements of the class, gymnastic exercises are to be taught every day, or at least every two days, in the course of the afternoon.² In the communal Colleges and Lyceums, the exercises occupy four lessons per week, of half-an-hour's duration each.³ The elaborate (pp. 221) official publication herewith on the teaching of gymnastics in the University further shows the stress laid upon, and the exhaustive attention paid to, the subject.⁴

Over-pressure.

"Over-pressure" as relating to secondary schools formed the theme last year of an article in the "Matin" by M. Jules Simon; when that distinguished ex-professor approved a curtailment in the hours of study lately made by the Minister, and also advocated a reduction of the programme.⁵

PRIVATE SCHOOLS.⁶

Private schools ("écoles libres") are not under general State control, yet they are subject to State supervision, in respect of (a) morality, (b) sanitary arrangements, (c) the keeping a register of, and reporting, absences,⁷ and (d) so that the books used be not such as are contrary to the actual Constitution, or principles of government.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND HOME LESSONS.

Corporal punishment in all schools is forbidden by law, and any breach would be punished by dismissal of the teacher, or infliction of a severe penalty: but home lessons, which, I fear, in most cases are more injurious,⁸ are insisted upon, at least as regards primary schools, to a far greater extent than in the Colony, or England.⁹

TEACHERS.

Qualification.

The "brevet de capacité" requirement of the law of 16th June, 1881, and the further provisions of the law passed this year (1886),¹⁰ render the proper qualification of teachers indispensable.¹¹ The subject of normal schools, therefore, has become, not only to the State, but to the teacher, an especially important one; and in all the departments there are excellent State normal schools for the training of masters ("écoles normales d'instituteurs") and in many for mistresses ("écoles normales d'institutrices").¹² Examinations are held for

Normal schools.

¹ See rég. d'org. péd., pp. 5 and 11.

² See *ibid.*, p. 7.

³ On subject generally, see also R.E.C., Mr. M. Arnold, 6058, and I.E.C., vol. 13, p. 161, and note N.Z. 1877 Act, s. 85.

The prominence recently accorded to physical culture in the French system is possibly attributable to the physical and tactical superiority of the Germans as exhibited markedly in the Franco-Prussian war, just as the Austrians apparently learnt from Sadowa, see Dr. Philbrick, p. 101. Indeed, even a casual visitor to Germany and France, if impartial, must be impressed with the superiority of German physique and solid intelligence. See also R.E.C., Mr. M. Arnold, 5502-3. But note remarks by H. E. H. Jerningham, "Blackwood's Magazine," June, 1886, "French Examiners under the Civil Service," p. 739, thus:—"Leisure hours in French schools are too much devoted to profitless chatter, and those bodily exercises which purify the blood and quicken it are not sufficiently encouraged."

⁴ "Enseignement de la Gymnastique dans la l'Université. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1878," has been recently received by me (Nov., 1886) from the Ministry of Public Instruction, and is therefore, I presume, the latest official publication on the subject.

⁵ On "Over-pressure" note R.E.C., Mr. M. Arnold, 6058 and *seq.* The absence of complaints both in Germany and France may fairly, I think, be attributable in large measure, not merely to superior educational system in other respects, but also to the attention paid to the antithesis of mental strain—muscular exercise.

⁶ See also R.E.C., Mr. M. Arnold, 5739 and *seq.*, 5604 and *seq.*, and 5,998; and R.C. 1st rep., p. 27.

⁷ See note 6 above.

⁸ "Now, as to the child at least, I think that only a small part of his day ought to be given to lessons."—Prof. Seeley, "Insular Ignorance," "N.C.," Dec., 1885, p. 863; see also 871 and 872.

⁹ See also—

(a) M.C., E., p. 230;

(b) Hon. L. Stanley; and

(c) R.E.C., Mr. M. Arnold, 5935.

¹⁰ See also Décret relatif aux titre de capacité pour l'enseignement primaire et arrêté, 20 décembre, 1884.

¹¹ "In 1877 there were 417,112 uncertificated; in 1882, 26,677; in 1883 there were only 21,781 without such brevet. Since Oct., 1884, when the term of grace expired, no teachers without certificates are employed, unless in certain cases, where age and term of service are taken into consideration."—Amer. Commr. Report, 1885, p. cciv. The text applies to teachers of private schools also, except in certain cases of age and experience. The instruction is better in foreign popular schools than in ours, because the teachers are better trained."—M. Arnold's (May, 1886) rep., p. 15. Again, "the methods of teaching . . . are more gradual, more natural, more rational, than in ours," &c., p. 13. And see R.E.C., Mr. M. Arnold, espec. 5276, 5512, 5827 and *seq.*, and 5839.

¹² See—

(a) "Règlements et Programmes d'Études. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1886," and "Documents relatifs à l'Enseignement Secondaire des Jeunes Filles. Paris: Delalain, 1881."

(b) Réglementation 1884, and compare with N.Z. Gazette 92, 1878.

See also R.C., 1st rep., p. 8.

Mr. M. Arnold, in his May, 1886, report, says (p. 19), "In the training schools the good effects of the present zeal and liberal expenditure for improved popular instruction are especially visible. I saw no school institution on the Continent better than the training school for masters at Anteuil. I doubt whether I saw any so good, certainly I saw none so interesting, as the training school at Fontenay-aux-Roses for directresses and teachers of training schools for school-mistresses," &c. Mr. Arnold eulogises (p. 19) the system of students at colleges coming into contact—