

psychology, history of education and other professional subjects, and at the same time extend the academic knowledge of the student-teachers, as is now attempted in many of the provincial normal schools?

These normal schools are doing as good work as can be expected under existing circumstances, but whether through a commissioner of education for Canada, or by some other means, I trust the day is not far distant when Canadians will be awakened to a realization of the grave mistake they are making in placing so many insufficiently-trained teachers in charge of the future citizens of our dominion.

Riverside, N. B.

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Join a School Improvement League.

Children are so keenly conscious of environment and so susceptible to its effects that, next to the direct training afforded by the teacher, the surroundings during school hours form the most potent influence of education. This fact has not been generally recognized until recent years, and now organized effort to improve old conditions must be made if we are to insure the speedy establishment of model classrooms.

Sanitation is naturally the first reform that demands attention. We cannot expect our children to do good work in school unless they are well, and we cannot expect them to be well unless the building where they pass five or six hours a day is clean, comfortable, well ventilated and free from defective plumbing. But, after all precautions for the protection of health have been taken, the school-rooms may be bare, ugly, and in every way unattractive. Boys and girls are so intensely susceptible to impressions that they will unconsciously associate a distaste for study with confinement in a cheerless place bounded by forbidding blackboards, ugly walls and uncurtained windows. They must love school in order to do good work, and, as long as the classrooms are not more home-like than prison cells, they will feel little more attachment for the school than the felon feels for the jail.

It has been demonstrated that beautiful surroundings have not only a mental, but a moral stimulus. It is, therefore, manifestly a duty to make school-rooms restful and inviting. Upon whom, then, devolves this task? The schools belong to the people, and the people can make them beautiful, so beautiful that every pupil will feel a pride and interest in them.—*The April Delineator.*

School Gardens.

By PERCY J. SHAW.

Teachers who are intending to have a school garden will find it advantageous to start some of the seeds this month in window boxes. This may be done in the schoolroom or at the homes of some of the children. Such plants as asters, petunias, phlox drummondi and bachelors' buttons do well if started inside. It is important to have a good soil for the window box. A good soil for seeds is made by mixing equal parts of rich garden loam and fine river sand—such as the plasterer uses in mortar. Give the soil a thorough watering when the seeds are sown. Cover the top of the box with glass, or paper, or cloth, to keep the soil moist until the seeds come up. The less watering until the young plants appear the better. If they can be brought above ground with one watering, there will be the less danger of the soil baking or becoming sour.

The young plants will be better for being transplanted into another box before being planted out of doors; but if this cannot be done, they may be thinned in the seed box to give more room. They will be set in the garden when warm weather comes, usually after the middle of May.

Seeds of candytuft, calliopsis and poppy may be sown in the garden as soon as the soil can be worked in the spring, but most flower seeds are better not to be sown in the open until settled warm weather has arrived. The soil for the garden should be made fine and rich; well rotted manure, or compost, is the best material to apply, as it mixes well with the soil, and its plant food is quickly available.

Three of the best flowers to depend on for results in a school garden are shirley poppy, dwarf nasturtium and petunia. These may form the larger part of the planting, because they are surest. Other good flowers are candytuft, calliopsis, bachelors' button, mignonette, phlox drummondi, sweet elyssum and pansy. Three good vegetables are tomatoes (Earliana and early ruby), beets (early turnip and Crossley's early Egyptian) lettuce (Grand Rapids). The tomatoes should be started early in the window box or hot-bed and transplanted to the garden after June 10th or 15th. The beets and lettuce may be planted in the garden as soon as the ground can be worked in the spring. They will be ready for use by July.