

TALKS WITH TEACHERS.

How does your schoolhouse compare in appearance with the nearest church? Is it well painted, and are the grounds snugly fenced? Are any of the window panes out, or are they patched, and, perhaps, a shingle in them? Is the interior kept clean, as most churches are, and has there been any attempt made at ornamentation?

Why will so many people be so careless about their school buildings and so particular about their churches? It is the same flesh and blood that occupies both; only that while the school is used five days in the week for six hours each day, the church is occupied usually once each Sunday, or perhaps only on alternate Sundays. An iron fence is often not too good for the church, where the school grounds are unfenced. Trees flourish on the church grounds, where the school grounds are bare and uncared for.

But this does not answer the question. The answer, perhaps, may be found in the fact that the needs of the church are systematically and earnestly kept before the people. In those localities in which the pastor contents himself with merely holding regular services, and does no outside work, churches do not flourish so well. They are not so well painted nor so well fenced. Let teachers borrow a hint from this. They should not be content to perform merely their daily routine. Their duties do not necessarily begin at 9 A. M. nor end at 4 P. M., but they should be factors in the community. Some teachers do far more outside work for the church than for their schools. They will stay away from their teachers' institute in order to be present at their Sunday-school convention.

The churches and schools should go hand in hand; but it must be borne in mind that without the schools the churches could not exist. It is well for teachers to take an interest in church work, but they should give their first attention to that work which lies nearest them. As the energetic pastor looks after his church both from within and without, so should the teacher look after his school, and for one thing endeavor to have its externals, at least, as attractive as the nearest church.

Are you supplied with good blackboard surface? Is its use confined to yourself, or do you require the pupils to use it? Are you provided with suitable erasers? Are your maps in good repair, and do you keep them hanging up ready for use, or are they standing in the

corner covered with dust? Are you supplied with a cabinet for apparatus, such as globe, etc.? Have you any pictures in your schoolroom? Is your room as clean as the homes of your pupils, or is it only cleaned on Arbor Day? Have you any flowers growing in your school grounds, and are there any climbing plants upon the outbuildings? Have you a good school dictionary, and are the pupils provided with small ones? Do you ever read to your pupils from books in your library or from other sources? Do you discuss current events with them? Do you ever lend your educational papers to your trustees or parents interested in the school? Do you visit the parents? Do you take an interest in what interests the people, and do you exert an influence in the community? Do you have a reading circle in your neighborhood? Are the homes of the pupils supplied with good literature? Is there a school magazine? Do the parents take an interest in the welfare of the school? Is the house painted? Are any of the windows broken?

Please ask yourself these and many other questions, and if the answers are not satisfactory, bring your individuality to bear.

Please remind your trustees when the time of the annual school meeting approaches. If any apparatus has been recommended, or is needed, endeavor to have an appropriation made for it. Try to get your school grounds fenced. The district never owns the grounds unless they are enclosed.

While it is much easier to change from the slant writing to the vertical, than from the vertical to the slant, yet with advanced pupils it is not usually advisable to seek to change their hand. If you favor the vertical system, begin it with the younger pupils.

This story is told of Sir Walter Scott, who was far from being a brilliant pupil at school. After he became famous he one day dropped into his old school to pay a visit to the scene of his former woes. The teacher was anxious to make a good impression on the writer, and put the pupils through their lessons so as to show them to the best advantage. After a while Scott said: "But which is the dunce? You have one, surely? Show him to me." The teacher called up a poor little fellow, who looked the picture of woe as he came bashfully toward the distinguished visitor. "Are you the dunce?" asked Scott. "Yes, sir," said the boy. "Well, my good fellow," said Scott, "here is a crown for you for keeping my place warm."