

should be made imperative, he may observe most of the lessons along with his students, and thus be prepared to correct and supplement their imperfect observation.

The reports by the students of these observation lessons should be chiefly *oral* not written, as the Regulations seem to imply. The memoranda made in the class should be as brief as possible, for while the student is writing his attention is completely diverted from observation, and if his notes are elaborate he will not see more than half the facts of the lesson as it goes on. Full written reports may be assigned as home work, which would give useful practice in composition and enable the Principal to assist the young teachers in the acquisition of good and correct language, one of the most useful things the teacher can possess.

In the reports by assistants of the lessons taught by students, account should be taken of success as well as of failure. If nothing but faults are noted the students come by and by to experience a sort of chill which discourages the more sensitive and renders them unable to exhibit the teaching power they really have. The sunshine of sympathy is necessary above all to bring the flower of good teaching to perfection, and therefore the good points should be reported as carefully as the faults, of which, indeed, the student is often only too painfully conscious. We read:—"Assistant teachers should not be reticent in reporting criticism." This is well, but the words following, "particularly if the work has been badly done," ought to be struck out as calculated to leave a wrong impression. There are the watchful eyes of the Principal and the final examination to weed out incompetents, and assistants are more likely to criticise too harshly than to over-estimate undeveloped teaching power which may very likely soon eclipse their own.

The Regulations indicate that thirty lessons should be taught by each student in the various classes of the school. This is certainly an excessive number for so short a term as thirteen weeks, and some of the time could be better occupied. An hour and a quarter a day for seven of these short weeks is too ambitious, and should not be exacted from any but the very dullest students with little aptitude to teach. Not the number of lessons taught, but the number and sweep of the principles thoroughly wrought into the very fibre of the student's thinking will determine his success in the schoolroom. He will shortly get practice to his heart's content, meantime, a dozen lessons will test his power and reveal his weakness quite as well as thirty or a hundred. Some of this time might be utilized by the Principal in reviewing non-professional work and giving the candidates a *teacher's grasp* of the subjects they will require to handle, and a more thorough study of the best methods of presenting them. The first three Readers might be gone over in course so as to make sure that every candidate could pronounce every word correctly. It is well-known that many teachers mispronounce the words of the first book, such as *of, with, put, full*, etc., and thus propagate their own inaccuracies, while many such barbarisms as "four over five" for four-fifths or four by five, need a careful hand to eradicate. Much time should be devoted to such work and less to practice lessons. Our space will not admit of further remarks at present.

## THE NORMAL MUSIC COURSE.

The First Reader furnishes sufficient for the subject of one notice. The book is so faulty that we are more than surprised it should ever have found a place on the authorized list. We are more surprised, however, to find that it is the only book authorized, and that in future, all the musical genius of the school-rooms in Ontario must receive its inspiration from this series. Such a state of affairs seems almost criminal.

If music is to be taught in the Schools of the Province—if it is desired that a love shall be created for the study of this important subject, the object can certainly never be secured by the use of a book such as that before us. We note a few of the points.

1. The whole of the subject matter of the selections was spun from one man's brain. Suppose the compiler of a school reading-book should sit down and try to fill it with his own composition, *written to order*, instead of culling the gems scattered through our English literature? There is a very large literature of children's songs by the best authors. The unavoidable sameness of this book will prove very tiresome.

2. The exercises, and especially the songs, are not very melodious in the ear of childhood, and they are non-educational in respect to the musical ear of the child from the fact that they wander too far from the natural harmonies. Every song, even in the part, has its harmonic foundation; and that supposed harmony, in order to produce the right effect upon the little learner, should be close to the main pillars of the keys.

3. The first reading lessons are written at too low a pitch for the voices of little children. If the key in which they are written is *not to be kept* in their practice it is falsehood to say that they are in that key. (See M. Tomlins in the June "Century Magazine" on Children's Voices.)

4. The early reading lessons are too stiff and mechanical; this sort of exercise is always fatiguing to little learners, and by their tendency to destroy the child's pleasure in singing, keep him from making the progress that might be made by the use of pleasant little song-forms as reading lessons. Their use would be analogous to pronouncing the words in a spelling column instead of those in a sprightly and well constructed sentence. It might be a trial of skill, but not particularly improving to the mind.

5. In the construction of these exercises the laws of musical form have been repeatedly violated. All German writers—and they lead the world in school music—are very careful in regard to this point.

6. The reading lessons have the numerals that point out the place of every note in the scale printed throughout, which takes away the necessity of pupils using their eyes to measure distance upon the staff, an act which lies at the foundation of all proficiency in music reading. To read music by this book the pupil would really have nothing to do with the notations except to observe the shapes of the notes indicating duration.

7. The preface puts forth the claim that the "true educational principle of instruction" as applied to music is the peculiar possession of the authors of this book. The contents of this book fail to justify this pretention. Aside from a few incidentals of instruction, borrowed from the Tonic-Sol-Fa system, the same principles have been applied to music teaching by all our best music teachers ever since Dr. Lowell Mason's day. The elementary music books of thirty years ago contained just as good reading exercises as this, and much better songs.

8. The preface also tells us that the words Tā, Tū, Tē and Tō name the value of sounds in length. As used in this book they do no such thing. Tā and Tē have exactly the same