

his. Let him have proprietary rights in the animals about the farm. Let him be taught to be kind to animals, and the better to do this let him have one for his own to bring up, feed and train properly. Let him be taught to keep accounts of all that belongs to him. If he wants to spend his money in books, outfits for hunting, fishing, camping out, let be encouraged to do so, to a limited extent of course. By these and other means the common-sense farmer will give his children a stay-at-home feeling instead of a continual restlessness, and a desire to turn the back on the farm; he will cultivate a spirit of self-reliance, independence, an interest in the farm and the country. If the children have been led to feel an interest in the farm, beyond mere drudgery, they will feel an interest in their studies at school that pertain to farm life. But it is scarcely reasonable to expect that if every day they spend on the farm is a day of toil and drudgery, not much interest will be felt in agricultural education. We have doubts as to the utility of teaching agriculture in the common schools, except in the higher grades. If children are taught to observe and think on what is going on around them; if their studies in plants, animals, physical geography, chemistry, are more from nature, if they be taught to do manual work neatly and with some skill, it will be a far more valuable training for farming or any other occupation than to be dosed daily with agriculture from a text book. A properly equipped agricultural school is one of the pressing needs for New Brunswick, and in connection with this a school of forestry. Until this is done there will be very little progress in agricultural education.

A NEW LOCAL PAPER.

We understand that the "*New Star*," of Kentville, has been purchased by Prof. Eaton and now appears under a new name, "*The Advertiser*."

Judging from two numbers that we have seen and from what we know of the ability of its editor we venture to predict for it a most successful career.

As might be expected it devotes a department to "Education," and under this heading we find in the issue of the 27th of January good articles on "Children's Imagination," "Popular Education," "Sloyd" (manual training) and "United States Schools." It seems strange that the most important interest of the state should be ignored by nearly every provincial and local paper. The police records, sporting news &c., *ad nauseam*, but seldom an article on education. We hope that the good example set by the *Advertiser* in this respect will be followed by all other papers. We regret to find however, in the number mentioned above among so much that is excellent, one sentiment that is most objectionable, viz., that "it is right to promote the general party organization by drawing

the party lines in the inferior local contests." We would not have the cleavage lines of general politics or sectarianism entering into every department of civic life and weakening and demoralizing society. Happily the common sense of our people has so far frowned upon any such drawing of the party lines, and the day may come when it will obliterate them.

TALKS WITH TEACHERS.

Why are teachers of ungraded schools less successful in teaching reading than the teachers in the graded schools? Some will say because they have less time to devote to it. This is only partly true. Method has more to do with it. Pressure of different kinds induces the country teacher to hurry over the work more rapidly than she should. Her term of office may be short if she does not defer to the wishes of the parents. The only way some parents—the majority even—have of estimating a teacher's work is the rapidity with which they advance the pupils from one reading book to another. It is true that plan may not please the inspector, but he does not pay their salary, and while deference to his views may modify their course yet the temptation to pander to the wishes of the ratepayer too often prevails.

Pupils in the lower grades usually read twice daily. Some teachers give a new lesson for each session. Some plan to dwell upon one lesson for the two readings, and others insist upon each lesson being thoroughly understood and satisfactorily read before proceeding with a new one. It is needless to remark as to which of these teachers succeed the best. The result of the hurrying process is, that the pupils have gone over the allotted ground before the work in the other subjects has been completed. If the pupils go back over the same ground in reading the parents at once get the idea that the school is standing still. To counteract this impression, the pupil is advanced to the next reading book and is thus in advance of his grade in reading. It is true he could read profitably in the lower grade, but the step once taken the whole school is upset as far as classification is concerned, and it will take a year or two for the next teacher, if she is bold enough to undertake it, to bring the school to order again.

But this is only one side of the question and perhaps the least important. When pupils are advanced too rapidly in reading and get beyond their depth, fluency is lost, and where this is absent, natural reading cannot be obtained. Pupils must not only understand the thoughts and sentiment of the passage to be read, but they should also be familiar with the