

The books are often excellently done, the work is neat, and the copying most careful, but this is all that can be said for it;—it is mere copying—and the slight differences of proportion as given in the book are, in themselves, no preventive of this. The work is, also, too often done by mechanical aids, such as compass and ruler, thus rendering the fact of its being "free-hand" a misnomer. Consequently, when the candidate is set down to the examination paper, he is quite bewildered, and his answers show that he does not know how to set to work—in fact, he has no copy! This defect can only be remedied by the teachers themselves: let them use the "Drawing-book" chiefly as a text-book for furnishing them with black-board examples—then let these be copied into a blank-book, and be made certain definite sizes,—in no case too minute—the construction lines, &c., being all drawn by the pupil to the scale selected for the example. There must then be a certain amount of attention and knowledge exhibited, and the figures will be drawn in the correct method, at any rate; we have noticed pupils doing the figures in the books used at present, without any regard to the method, doing the answer before the construction lines, the only aim being to show a correct copy when the figure is completed. Every practical teacher must see the absurdity of the present method of instruction; and, perhaps, at some future examination when marks are to be given only on the paper set, he will be painfully convinced of its uselessness. We do not pursue the same method in any other branch of study, why should it be thought necessary, then, in this one? What success would any teacher have in his Arithmetic Class, by giving the pupils a sum completed, then asking them to merely copy it, and as an exercise have a trifling alteration, of a figure or two, made in the question; no further examination or variety of question being given?

But we must not attribute all the blame to the much-abused teacher. In the first place the books set are badly graded, far too difficult for the classes to which they are appointed, and contain more matter than can possibly be properly taught in the short time that can be devoted to the work. To those numerous teachers who understand the subject, the books are a positive hindrance, and to those who do not know anything of this branch, they are a temptation to allow of mere copying. If drawing is ever to take its place in our schools as a practical training, it must be done in some other way—it must be done not merely with the hand but also with the mind. Should any of our teachers hold the same opinion as we do on this subject, we hope they will not neglect to air their grievance at the conventions during the year. As an old teacher remarked lately—we are now going through the drawing-craze at present—well, let it be a 'craze'—but by all means let the craze be of some use and not a mere deception.

WILLIAM BURNS, Brampton.

DO YOU READ EDUCATIONAL PAPERS?

The best evidence that a teacher is trying to better himself in the work of teaching is the fact that he reads educational works and learns what others are doing to improve themselves in their noble undertaking.

The teacher owes it to his pupils, his patrons, and to himself to keep abreast of the times. To-day our public schools are receiving more attention from the best class of our people than ever before. Their faults and weaknesses, as well as their excellencies, are brought out in their clearest light. Our schools must be better taught in the future than they are now or have been in the past. If the teachers of to-day would do this better teaching they must become better teachers. To do this they must know their fault, and correct them, and know what will be expected of them in

teaching better schools which an awakened public opinion will demand.

The successful manufacturer has his daily reports from all parts of the country, the successful merchant each day reads the quotations of merchandise for the previous day, the successful stock broker receives hourly reports of changes that occur in the market; the successful teacher, he who educates the manufacturer, the merchant, the broker, and the farmer, reads his educational papers.

It is as necessary to keep posted in school work as in any other business.

The worthy teacher, the one preparing to do this better work, is not without his educational papers.—*Normal School Instructor.*

Writing must be taught by its principles. The pupils should be made familiar with the analysis of the letters, also, their up or down strokes and curves, and by constant drill in these they can be made proficient in the art of writing. Before an exercise is put into the copy-books, let the pupils practise it upon loose slips of paper. Let every stroke be made simultaneously by the whole school, the teacher keeping time audibly for them, *one, two*, or better, *up, down*, for the strokes, and *right, left*, for the curves, mentioning them in their proper order. One of the most serious faults in teaching writing is the endeavor to make pupils write as much as possible like the copy in the book. If a child can learn to make the letters neatly and legibly, it is not of the slightest consequence whether they look like the copy or not. Children do not naturally walk alike, or speak alike; why then should they all write alike? Besides, the thing is impossible, for when the pupils leave school and undertake the business of life, their writing assumes distinctive characteristics—so distinctive that in a thousand men, all taught by the same copy-books, it would be hardly possible to find two whose penmanship is so very similar that the one would be likely to be taken for the other. Teach children to practise writing outside of their copy-books, by copying short poems or articles, and by committing their thoughts to paper. They will thus be far more likely to take pleasure in their writing exercise, and will improve much more rapidly.

Educational Notes and News.

The Normal Schools at Toronto and Ottawa open on Tuesday the 19th inst.

Mr. R. Lane, teacher of the public school, Enfield, has been re-engaged for 1886.

F. H. Sykes, B. A., has accepted the modern language mastership of Port Perry High School.

The Guelph High School is to be raised to the rank of a Collegiate Institute on the 26th inst.—*Dufferin Advertiser.*

Mr. Ralph Ross, of Oxford, has been appointed assistant teacher in the Dundas High School.—*Dundas True Banner.*

Bismarck public school opened on Monday with Mr. Higley as principal, and Miss McColl second teacher.

Mr. D. McGill, of Wallace town, has been engaged as head teacher in the Dutton public school for this year at a salary of \$425.

Mr. Geo. Hogarth, of Solina, has accepted the position of teacher in Strathroy Collegiate Institute for the present year. He will leave for there shortly.—*Canadian Statesman.*

Mr. A. W. Aytoun Finlay, late high school headmaster at Chatham, comes to London for a short time. Mr. Finlay will go into the practice of law.—*Free Press.*

Mr. Alex. McMillan, of Granton, is an applicant for the Inspectorship of South Huron. He is well qualified for the position. For ten or twelve years he taught in East Middlesex.—*Free Press.*