

KEEPING ACCOUNTS.

BY AN INSPECTOR.

God, in his dealings with men, it is inferred from the teaching of the Bible, keeps a strict account, both *debit* and *credit*, wherein each one is charged with blessings and opportunities to do good, and credited with right intentions in character and conduct. The matter of utmost importance in human affairs is, that every man's life may be such as to insure a satisfactory account at the last, for "each one must give an account of himself to God." If this then be accepted as correct, and if the aim of education is to fit the young for the highest degree of success in life, is it not essential that this principle be recognized in our methods of public instruction? Is it too much to expect that every teacher of youth shall adopt some plan by which his pupils shall be impressed with the truth, and be held to account for the manner in which they improve the privileges they enjoy of becoming wiser and better?

Every teacher of a successful school finds it necessary to employ some method of expressing his approbation of the efforts of meritorious pupils, and his want of approval in the case of those who do not strive for improvement. This renders some kind of an account with each pupil necessary, not only to secure a fair degree of efficiency in the school, but especially upon the higher ground above referred to, of early impressing each one with the great lesson of individual responsibility. Now, are not these very important objects to be attained? And are they not of sufficient importance to justify the employment of a limited portion of the teacher's attention during the daily hours for teaching? And yet, will it be believed, that fully half of the teachers under my supervision fail to adopt a method

of so great utility, either on the ground that it consumes too much time, or from sheer negligence? I presume other Inspectors could give a similar experience.

If marking the attendance, deportment, and recitations of pupils, requires some time each day, so does the teaching of history or geography; and yet no teacher objects that the time to be devoted to these subjects is too long, or that it is time wasted. But I contend that either of these subjects may be better spared from the course of study, than a reasonably thorough method of recording the standing of pupils.

Of course it is not necessary to omit any subject in order to find a few minutes required each day in marking the standing. An ordinarily expert teacher will jot down the few figures necessary at the close of a recitation before the pupils are well to their seats, without consuming any appreciable time from other school duties. But suppose it would absorb half an hour each day to perform this task, who can say that it is not of sufficient importance to warrant it? Is the formation of character in the young a matter of little consequence? And what part of instruction in school bears so directly upon the habits and conduct of pupils as this? We infer then, that every programme should embrace this as one of the most important of the teacher's duties, and that a reasonable time each day cannot be better spent than in attending to it. The system of reports to parents is, of course, but a further application of the same principle, and a necessary adjunct to the former part. When well carried out, it is to a great extent successful in securing the earnest co-operation of the parent—an object of the very greatest consequence.