

PROMOTION OF PUPILS.

In reference to the point raised by our correspondent, B. D. B.:

In graded schools, pupils who have failed to reach a certain arbitrary percentage in their grading examinations, are generally required to go over the same work again. They soon lose all interest, and fall into idle habits, from which but few of them recover. It adds to the evil that they find themselves competing with younger pupils who make more rapid progress because the subjects to them are new and interesting.

Two boys may be quite equal, yet from some accidental cause one may be a unit below the passing mark, the other as much above it. The latter is promoted, and the school life becomes a success. The former probably loses all ambition, and becomes one of the backward big boys found in such numbers in some schools.

It frequently happens that the department above is crowded, and only a limited number can be advanced. To avoid the resulting evils, one or both of two courses should be followed according to circumstances.

1. Use supplementary or parallel courses. For example: if the pupil has read the first Royal Reader once as carefully as he should have done, and is still found to be unprepared for advancement, let him read the first Maritime Reader, instead of reviewing the first Royal Reader. Thus he will gain in interest and self-respect—not to mention other important benefits. When he has read the Third or Fourth Readers, utilize his text book in geography as a supplementary reader, if no better can be found. It will be much better used to supplement the reading and the oral lessons in geography than as a lesson book from which to memorize geographical facts. It is thus used in several of the best schools that we know.

2. Take up some subject closely allied to the one in which the pupil has failed, or if the same subject has to be studied, let it be treated so differently that it will seem like a new subject. The defects found in the pupil's first study of the grade can then be gradually remedied by incidental teaching without the risk of creating a dislike for study and without those intermittent periods in which little effort is required because the pupils is already familiar with certain parts of the subject. For the incoming grade, this changed treatment of the course may be quite as useful as the usual routine—to the teacher it will be more useful.

In many cases, it will be found impossible to advance pupils to the department above, because it is overcrowded, and yet the pupil is prepared to advance. This necessitates an increase of the number of grades. Well, this is not an unmixed evil. We do not find that the pupils

learn much more rapidly in schools where the teacher is confined to one grade or to a part of a grade, than they do where one teacher has the work of several grades. In the latter case there are two manifest advantages; the pupils become much more self-reliant, and the teacher becomes much better acquainted with each pupil, and therefore more interested in him. This partly accounts for the fact, that pupils from country schools, when in the higher grades, so frequently excel those in the city.

Therefore, though pupils should have a weekly or monthly review, yet they should always be kept moving on, and should not be thoughtlessly subjected to the disheartening process of going again over the same work, and that with younger pupils.

THE NOVA SCOTIA EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

The *Journal of Education* for April and the new manual of the school law have just come out, from which it appears that the constitution of the Provincial Educational Association of the province has been slightly changed by adding to the range of both *ex officio* and *ordinary* members. This is how the regulation referred to now reads:

REG. 2. The membership shall be, (a) *ex officio*, the Superintendent of Education, the Principal and Professors of the Normal School, the Provincial Examiners, the Inspectors of Schools, the Presidents of Colleges within the province, and one representative, chosen annually by each district institute for every twenty-five enrolled members present at the annual meeting of each institute; and (b) *ordinary*, all licensed teachers, professors and instructors in colleges and seminaries, trustees and commissioners of schools, by enrolment and the payment of such fee (not exceeding one dollar) as the Association itself may determine.

From the *Journal* it appears that the Association is to meet in the Normal School buildings at Truro, about the time of the opening of the institution, the middle of October. Attendance at the Association is under the regulations equivalent to a period of three days' teaching, so far as the Provincial and County grants to schools and teachers are concerned. We always thought that the meetings of such an Association are more useful when held at or near the commencement of the school year instead of after the end, when teachers are wearied, and will not for some time be able to put into effect, immediately, any new enthusiasm imbibed.

I find the EDUCATIONAL REVIEW a valuable assistant. In fact, I could not get along very well without it; for besides giving valuable hints about school work, and informing me as to the doings of my fellow-teachers, it has solved many knotty questions for me. E. A. H.