

history of the changes in the courses of study in Nova Scotia. He called attention to the fact that though Latin was an optional subject, recent reports show a decided increase in the numbers studying that language in the schools.

The next subject considered was the order of the arrangement of studies. There are two methods of arranging studies—the successive or tandem and the simultaneous or abreast. The former proceeds upon the maxim of one thing at a time and that done well. This method is open to serious objections. It does not give sufficient attention to the fact that it takes a child's mind some time to grow. If too much attention and time be given to any one subject the teacher must necessarily proceed from the easier to the more difficult parts of the subject more quickly than the child's mind has grown in strength and capacity. Again, a course of study with a small number of subjects does not appeal to a sufficient number of interests. Variety is a condition of interest. Monotony, a want of variety, is almost synonymous with the uninteresting. Equally ineffective is such a course in developing all the pupil's capacities.

In this connection the lecturer considered the objection to the study of several sciences. He contended that the method of study was one, though the objects studied were many. The result was not a smattering of knowledge, but a single kind of training; for the object in view is not knowledge, but a way of thinking. Variety of objects is necessary for broadening the pupil's interests—for opening his eyes to many things and for counteracting the tendency to faddism. He also spoke of the marked improvement made in recent years in the teaching of science in the schools. The subject of examinations was also touched upon. The written examination is not the only means of testing work in the present system. The teachers as well as the inspectors' reports enter in the determination of the grading.

These lectures have been of very considerable interest and value, not only to the profession in Halifax, but also throughout the province.

They will be continued next year, but on a larger scale. The lectures leading up to the degree of Literate in Education, were attended by twelve students, five of whom will be graduates in the arts course for this year. They have, in the meantime, gone to the normal school at Truro, to receive further light in methods by a three months' exclusive devotion to practical work.

Could the trustees be induced or compelled (if necessary) to subscribe for one good educational journal—the EDUCATIONAL REVIEW for instance—for the use of the school and the teacher, at the expense of the section, payable out of the county fund or otherwise, the desired medium (between school officers and trustees and teachers), would be established, besides securing to the teacher and the school valuable and profitable articles and exercises without any appreciable burden to anybody.—[Inspector M. J. T. Macneil, N. S.]

Cut from a Criticism—Nature Lessons.

* * * It was very sensible for Dr. McKay to urge the importance of interesting children in "buttercup and butterflies," but it is one thing to sow and quite another to secure a crop. Out of fifty school teachers "who could exhaust all the adjectives of admiration over his opinion, not ten of them could tell you how 'toad stools' are propagated, or know a moth from a butterfly. To hear them, one would think they were so in love with nature, that they were stuccoed with quadrupeds and birds all over." I know that there is but a very little teaching of natural history in any of our schools. The reason is not far nor hidden. The teachers have neither adequate knowledge of the subjects, nor the enthusiastic aptitude to impart such knowledge. Very few of them have prepared themselves to make buttercup and butterflies interesting to children. This does not arise from lack of interest and curiosity about such things in children, but for the reason that the would-be instructors lack both the enthusiasm and the knowledge to open the way to the deeper enchantments of nature. It would be an easy matter for any teacher to pluck a squash blossom and hold it up for the admiration of children, and draw their attention to its unusual size, and notched corolla; but how many will call their attention to the two kinds of blossoms on the same vine, and show them that one produces pollen and the other does not; that one has a baby squash already set below the blossom, and the other has not; that, unless this golden dust of pollen is placed on the proper place within the other blossom, no squash will ever grow? Will they capture a bumble bee and show them that this little creature as he tumbles in and out of these blossoms for sweets, carries this dust on his hairy body, and thus performs a necessary service, and but for the like of him or some other insect the race of squashes would come to a sudden end? Will they show them that these honey-pots inside the flowers are apt contrivances that secure the visit of the needful bee? and so on, carrying the children with wide-eyed wonder into the temple of nature. The teacher must not say to the children that this "onion" I place before you is a provision meant for man; but explain that this was nature's provision for another onion; the food was not for us, but for the future plant. * * *

One might as well say the highest ambition of a beech tree is to produce beech nuts for squirrels and jays; or that the highest ambition of pine trees is to produce seeds for squirrels, since our "pine squirrels" could not winter without them. To show how far this is from the truth, come with me and let us open up, scale by scale, a pine cone before it is ripe, or we will