

### Educational Advance in Nova Scotia.

The *Journal of Education*, the official organ of the Council of Public Instruction for Nova Scotia, in the last issue, November 17th, gives notice of some important improvements in the school regulations.

It is made imperative that all candidates for teachers' licenses shall be required to make at least thirty-three per cent on each imperative subject in the high school course up to and including the grade corresponding to the class applied for. Now as the subjects in the different classes vary somewhat, and as there is no provision by which a candidate can be examined in more than one grade each year, this regulation implies that the successive grades must be taken in successive years. For example, three examinations covering three years would be required for Grade B. Under the old regulation a teacher might obtain Grade B without having passed an examination in chemistry, mineralogy, botany, drawing, or book-keeping, — all subjects of great importance. This was a serious defect which has now been remedied. It is sometimes a hardship, however, for a candidate to have to wait one, two, or three years to obtain a grade for which he may be prepared at the time. He should be allowed a supplementary examination on those subjects of the lower grades which do not find a place in the grade for which he is applying. This regulation, requiring thirty-three per cent, does not apply to Normal school graduates who are, therefore, not required to be as good scholars as those of the same class, who have not attended the Normal school.

A proper certificate, showing that a pupil has made satisfactory proficiency in woodwork, cookery, or sewing, is taken in "lieu of the full value of any question on such work in the County Academy Entrance Examination." This important regulation helps to give manual training in our schools the higher status to which its educative value entitles it. The advisability of supplementing the ordinary written examination by actual laboratory work, or by satisfactory certificates of the same, is now more fully recognized, — a notable advance which inspires the hope that in the near future it may be possible to have practical science in place of book-science, — realities instead of mere words. Nova Scotia is to be congratulated on taking the lead among the provinces of the dominion in recognizing this important principle.

The twenty-third of May has been set apart as "Empire Day" in the schools. It is to be specially devoted to the cultivation of feelings of loyalty and attachment to our country, and to the institutions under which we live. It is expected that a British flag shall float over every schoolhouse in the land, that British or Canadian history lessons in the forenoon, and an interesting programme of patriotic songs, recitations, and speeches from local celebrities in the afternoon, shall inspire the pupils with deeper love for home, and country, and humanity. Teachers are expected to report to the inspector as to the manner in which the day was observed in their schools.

The text-book in formal grammar has at length been sent where it belongs — to the high school, and in its place, in the common school grades, we have in the hands of the teacher "Lessons in English," showing how by systematic practice the pupil is to become proficient in the use of his mother tongue. The arm-chair subjects are every year becoming less popular, as teachers are becoming alive to their work. We cannot help thinking, however, that a simple ten-cent primer of English grammar might still be useful. Our teachers generally have not yet obtained that mastery in their profession which makes them largely independent of the text-book.

### TALKS WITH TEACHERS.

A school trustee remarked to me a few days ago, "You speak about progress in education. How do you explain the fact that twenty-five years ago many pupils went direct from our schools to business offices, whereas now, it is first necessary for them to take a course at a business college?" I replied, that twenty-five years ago such subjects as shorthand and type-writing were not required in business offices and that our schools had not made provision for such demands.

There are so many demands being made upon the schools, and the courses of instruction are already so crowded, that it is dangerous to open the door for any new departments. As we have always professed to give pupils a business education, it would seem that the high schools at least should keep pace with the requirements of commercial life. A strong indication of the demand for such is the number of business colleges that are springing up in all cities and small towns.

Another case of corporal punishment has been ventilated in New Brunswick, and it is said that recourse is to be had to the courts of law. A recent decision rendered in the United States, seems to be accepted there as covering all cases.

"Any corporal punishment commensurate with the offense is allowable, providing that no permanent bodily injury is inflicted: if the pupil resists he must take the consequences of so doing."

This subject has been pretty fully discussed in these "Talks" before, and it is sufficient to remark: avoid using corporal punishment in as far as possible; do not use it for any other reason than for offences against the morality of the school.

Advertising for teachers is not so common as in former times, not that fewer teachers are required, but that school boards have discovered more satisfactory means of securing them. A few such advertisements appear from time to time, and the past year has been no exception. Specimens may be given. In one, several teachers were required, and limit was placed upon the time in which they were to be received. Applicants were asked to "state salary." It is said that nearly every teacher within a radius of fifty miles applied whether he was provided with a school or not, and that some of them were very indignant, after two-thirds of the vacation had expired and no replies had been received. What could be expected of the business methods of a district that is willing to put its schools up at auction? In the other case a teacher was advertised for and the salary stated. The matter was decided promptly, and from