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School Management and Methods of Teaching.

(By DR. JOYCE.)

(Continued.)

4. LOCATION OF DESKS.

A notion very generally prevails among those who have no technical knowledge of School Management, that in furnishing a school, it is necessary to provide a seat for every child in actual attendance. It often happens, therefore, that schoolrooms are over crowded with desks and forms, only a narrow passage being left all around, and a small space near the rostrum for class teaching.

Where the bipartite system is adopted, as there is never more than a division sitting at any one time, the

number of desks may be limited if necessary to as many as will accommodate a little more than half the greatest attendance expected. Suppose for example, a school in which there is a maximum attendance of 75 during some particular month, but whose average for the year is only 50; here there should be desk accommodation for at least 38. Any one of the four following sets of desks will answer, the particular set to be chosen being determined chiefly by the shape of the room :—

5 desks of 12 feet long = accommodation for at least 40 pupils.
6 " 9 " = " " 36 "
8 " 7½ " = " " 40 "
10 " 6 " = " " 40 "

In Holland and Prussia, and other Continental Countries, the pupils are taught all their lessons sitting; they sit, in fact, as a general rule, the whole day. For this purpose the desks are often placed in groups, those pupils that sit in one group forming a class to be taught by one teacher. There are many modifications of this system both as regards the individual shape of the groups and the mode of distributing them through the room; but the intention is the same in all, to enable the teacher or pupil teacher to teach the children while sitting in a class immediately before him.

Though the grouping system is still upheld by some elocutionists, it appears to be falling into disrepute among those who have the best means of judging of its merits, that is, among the most intelligent teachers. In Ireland it has been tried in some of our Model Schools, and it has been disapproved of both by teachers and inspectors.

We find by experience that in the schools of our own country at least, it is not a good plan to keep the pupils constantly sitting; that a regularly recurring alternation of position from sitting to standing, and vice versa, in short intervals during the day, with corresponding changes of subjects, while increasing the healthfulness of school employment, imparts an agreeable variety to the daily routine, and infuses a spirit of activity, life and cheerfulness into the working of the school. Keeping out of sight for the present the consideration of galleries, we find too that instruction in those subjects requiring