

Free School Supplies.

At the recent conference of the teachers and trustees in St. John, the advantages of supplying the schools with paper, pencils and pens were pointed out. It was shown that it would be cheaper for the average rate-payer and would conduce to greater efficiency in school work. Either reason should be sufficient to bring about action on the part of school boards. School supplies would be much cheaper if purchased in large quantities. For example, slate pencils can be bought for a few cents per box, but if obtained by the cent's worth a box costs more than double the amount. Again, material which belongs to the school will be looked after by the teachers and not permitted to be taken from the rooms, and thus will last much longer. In such case, also, the quality best adapted for pupils' use will be procured, which is no small advantage. Another decided gain would be long pencils for all pupils, and pens which are uniform in style and excellence. Much valuable time is now lost because suitable material of this kind is not provided to pupils, and which, when worn out and useless, is not promptly renewed.

This may be said to advocate free texts. It certainly does, but the ground has already been broken. There is now a provision for the supply of texts to "indigent" pupils, but because of the term used few, if any, avail themselves of the privilege. It is the custom in most parts of the United States to provide free texts, and in no case when once adopted has it been receded from. Let our school boards make a beginning.

TALKS WITH TEACHERS.

I am glad to see that the teachers of St. John have at last been aroused to the necessity of forming an association to look after the general and special welfare of the body. There are one hundred ways in which such an association may be of advantage. It can provide protection and redress to teachers generally, and may be an important and influential factor in creating and shaping public opinion, as well as establishing a professional etiquette which shall frown upon unprofessional conduct of any kind. That such an association opens a wide field for culture and mutual improvement is also apparent. If the members proceed on progressive ideas the society will thrive. If their chief object is to preach blue ruin, it will soon perish.

In the nature of things some scheme for superannuation should be the prime object of such an association, and there can be no doubt but that as soon as the

teachers show they are in earnest and formulate a workable plan, assistance may be obtained from other sources. An excellent business man and a former teacher said to me a few days ago: "There are one hundred old teachers in the province who could contribute as well as not five hundred dollars each toward such a fund." Just think of it, fifty thousand dollars to begin with! In Ontario and Quebec the government makes a grant for superannuation. Why should not our own city and province do the same?

A new high school building is about to be erected in St. John, and it will no doubt be fully up to the times in equipment. Why do not the teachers petition before it is too late for accommodation in it for a reading room and library? The room could also be used as a place of meeting for the new association. Such a concession, if granted by the board, would not only be of advantage to the teaching profession, but indirectly to the pupils who come under their care, and, therefore, to the citizens generally. Teachers seek to improve themselves and advance in order that they may do better work, and rate payers cannot manifest their appreciation in a more tangible way than the one which I have indicated.

I am informed that it has become a recognized custom among the best colleges in the United States to allow each professor every seventh year in which to recuperate and study. A similar custom prevails in some of the larger cities with respect to teachers, and a most commendable one it is. It is true teachers' hours are not long, but for that matter neither are those of professors and clergymen, yet both classes seek and are granted periodical leaves of absence, and there can be no doubt but that an ample return is made in the increased effort put forth by the recipients of the favor. We have some teachers who have been continuously employed for more than a quarter of a century. Do they not deserve a year's rest with full pay?

For the REVIEW |

A Correction.

To the Editor of EDUCATIONAL REVIEW:

In your last issue of the REVIEW an item appeared giving me credit for being instrumental in procuring, among other things, a school library for the school at Grand Falls. That was an unintentional mistake on the part of your informant. Miss Bessie Fraser obtained the money for that purpose three years ago by means of a school concert. By inserting this in your next issue you will greatly oblige

J. L. WHITE.

Grand Falls, April 22nd, 1906.