

TALKS WITH TEACHERS.

Is there a reading circle or any society for mutual improvement in your district? If not, why not as the days get short and the evenings long try to organize one? Teachers should not be mere followers, but be leaders in the community; and in seeking to improve its tone and education they will elevate themselves and the work they are engaged in.

I know of the following plan having been tried in more than one locality: Three or four teachers engaged near each other and desirous of bringing about the co-operation of the home and the school, have formed a society for improvement, embracing all who are willing to join—fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters of their pupils. Assuming that a fee of one dollar each be paid and there are twenty members, the sum realized will, at club rates, provide a goodly number of excellent magazines or periodicals, which may come addressed to different members of the society, as determined by lot. There is a fixed plan of rotation and a large number of people are supplied with good reading, many of whom perhaps have enjoyed very limited opportunities in this direction. The society usually meets once or twice a month, either at the homes of some of its members or at a school-house.

Care must be taken to curtail the hospitable desires of some; and it should be stipulated that only the plainest kind of entertainment be provided. The plan of "Bread and Butter Clubs" is a safe one to follow.

At these meetings it may be sought to interest all in the aims of the schools, though they should not be exclusively devoted to that purpose. There may be readings, debates, and music; but see to it that there is a well-defined programme and that too much time is not devoted to mere talk. Under the auspices of such a society, one or more public meetings in the interests of your work may be held. All of these things will serve to create a larger interest in and a better appreciation for schools. It will, moreover, not only be improving to others but to yourself as well.

Do you have a school magazine? If not endeavor to provide one. It will open up a new world to many of your pupils and will aid you in your work. Some of the best schools I am acquainted with have reading tables, on which are spread good reading matter, either purchased or contributed by pupils or parents. If other ways and means cannot be devised, there are usually people in the neighborhood who will be found willing to give the second reading of magazines to the school. If pupils remain during the dinner hour, or have other spare time, they will turn with avidity to good reading

matter, and by exercising care to have it clean and stimulating, the taste for undesirable literature may be counteracted. Teachers may read to the pupils once or twice a week, and they may, as a reward for work completed, permit them to read for any time remaining. Even where there may be libraries, new and fresh periodicals insure brightness and interest.

I often ask myself, when I see pupils past and present conducting themselves in an undesirable manner in public places, how far we teachers are responsible for it. It is not an uncommon occurrence to see boys and young men behave rudely to passers by and to be discourteous to their elders. It also seems to be the correct standard in some localities for young men to stand outside churches and other places of public meeting, not perhaps for the purpose of interference, but they do interfere and cause much annoyance. Nothing is more reprehensible than such conduct, and nothing reflects so much discredit upon home and school. Young men who go to a place of worship to stand outside the door, have a very defective education, and the teachers are in a measure responsible. Is this true in your locality, teacher? If so, "catch your boys young." The girls never do such things in as far as I can learn.

Ask your secretary to send a copy of the minutes of the next annual meeting in New Brunswick to the inspector. It may hasten your supply of apparatus.

There is a legitimate and an illegitimate use of the school entertainment. It is the first if it is to provide for the needs of the school; it is the second if it provides for the needs of the district. The latter use of it in a few districts threatens to abolish it, but better that, than it should cause the loss of proper ideals.

The *Bookman* tells this story illustrating the humors of a school examination: "It appears that an elementary examination in English, which was lately held in a school near New York, two sentences were given out to be corrected by the younger scholars. The first sentence was to be corrected as to its subject-matter, and the second sentence as to its syntax. These were the sentences:

" 'The hen has three legs.'

" 'Who done it.'

"When the papers were handed in it was found that one of the examinees had apparently regarded the sentences as subtly connected in thought, for his answer was as follows:

" 'The hen didn't done it; God done it.'"