

Teachers' Institutes.

It is a matter of regret that more of the teachers who attend institutes do not take an active part in the proceedings. The great body of teachers present listen to addresses and papers, and they probably receive benefit from mingling with their fellow-teachers and in the exchange of ideas. But were they to throw off a little of their reserve and communicate the results of their experience in the schoolroom, the result would be a contribution that would greatly increase the interest and value of these gatherings. As it is, a few of the leaders take part in the papers and discussions, while the great problems—the difficulties that daily confront the elementary school teachers—remain practically unsolved. The teachers return to their schools without receiving that stimulus which it is the province of a live, well-conducted institute to impart.

These institutes should accomplish much for the teachers. For the two or more days they are in attendance the schools are closed, and thousands of children are idle.

How can institutes be improved? By having as many model lessons as possible given by successful teachers; by stimulating the ambition of schools within a given area by competitive exhibitions of school work; by helpful, inspiring addresses, such as those given the past month by Chief Superintendent Carter on rural school conditions in New Brunswick; that given by Percy J. Shaw at Sussex on school gardens; that at Riverside by Dr. Thos. Walker on tuberculosis; and that at St. Stephen by Mr. Jas. Vroom on nature and agriculture.

The Kings County Institute, which met at Sussex in early September, furnished several excellent model lessons. Miss Turner, teacher of the domestic science departments of the Sussex and Hampton schools, illustrated how inexpensive lunches might be prepared in the ordinary rural school by a simple apparatus; Mr. W. N. Biggar's display of manual training work in the adjoining exhibition building showed what could be accomplished in this direction in a country school; the practical subject of bee culture was illustrated in the open-air in the presence of bee hives and working bees; and the school garden attached to the Sussex school was one of the best models of the kind to be seen anywhere, showing results of which any school might well be proud.

At the combined Westmorland-Albert Institute at Riverside a lesson in geometry, given by Principal W. C. R. Anderson to a class of high school pupils, was illustrative of the best methods of teaching this subject without dependence on text-books, while Miss Rena Gleeson's model lesson at the Charlotte County Institute on how to teach drawing was intended to interest teachers in a subject in which there should be more progress.

These lessons are significant of what is being done to make institute work more practical and interesting to teachers who are ever ready to avail themselves of fresh opportunities to make advances in their work.

One drawback in connection with such lessons at institutes is that the children speak in such low tones that they cannot be heard except by those immediately around them. Chancellor Jones urged in an institute address recently that more attention should be given to the education of the ear and mouth. That is good. Our scholars should be taught to speak in clear, distinct tones, a training that will serve an excellent purpose as an aid for their success in life, and one that will give pleasure to many people.

The executives of teachers' institutes should seriously consider what can be done to improve them.

Writing.

In the discussion that arose on Inspector R. D. Hanson's paper on writing at the York County Teachers' Institute at Fredericton a few days ago, mention was made of the excellent work of the pupils of the Marysville, N. B., school, and Principal Day was called upon to give the plan he pursued. This, he assured his fellow-teachers, was very simple, which any one could adopt and be sure that his pupils would make good writers: He paid especial attention to all writing exercises, as well as to those done in copybooks, giving pupils plenty of time to accomplish the work, and requiring that it be done over again if imperfect. When he put work on the board, he was careful to write his best. And he kept at it from day to day, month to month, year to year. This was his plan, in a nutshell; and any teacher may secure good results by giving attention to the foundation principles of penmanship with unflagging attention to practice.

"Scribbler," should never have been allowed as