

liberty of quoting at some length from a letter on this subject kindly sent me by the principal of the grammar school :

The grading of the St. Andrews' schools has, for several years, been conducted in accordance with the following regulations, approved by a joint meeting of trustees and teachers :

1st. The grading shall begin on the third Tuesday in June.

2nd. The pupils shall be examined and marked according to proficiency by the teacher of the grade into which they desire to pass.

3rd. The papers for a written examination shall be prepared by the teacher of the next higher grade, and submitted to the trustees for approval.

4th. If, on announcement of result, a teacher requests a second trial for some pupil, who, through illness, or for other sufficient reason, has failed to qualify; such request may be granted. This request must be made, however, on the day of the announcement.

The date of the examination has since been changed to agree with that appointed by the Board of Education for the high school entrance examination.

On the morning of the examination—or rather the first morning, for in the higher grades it extends over the greater part of three days—the secretary of trustees comes to the grammar school to relieve me by presiding while my pupils are engaged in a written examination; I go to the principal's room in the intermediate; he to the next lower; and so on down to the primary. The trustees move about from grade to grade to exercise a general oversight, and see that all is being done fairly.

Before the examination takes place each teacher places in the hands of the trustees a list of his or her pupils classified as "qualified," "doubtful," "not qualified," basing the judgment upon the work done during the year. This list is carefully compared with the result of the examination, and from a consideration of the two the trustees come to their decision.

Any adequate scheme of grading must be based on the assumption that a complete and thorough knowledge of each pupil's acquirements and ability is indispensable. As such knowledge can be had only by the teacher, his carefully formed judgment must be the most important factor in the determination. Since opinions differ, however honestly formed, some means must be adopted to obtain a uniform standard. Besides, the scheme must be simple; any elaborate system, even if excellently well planned, would be apt to work ill in practice.

Bearing these requirements in mind, I will suggest a scheme for the reader's consideration which, I hope, will embody them. The plan will be designed for a town where each teacher has charge of two grades, and a number of teachers are under one principal.

First, then, I would place the grading entirely in the hands of the principal and his staff. They alone are in a position to obtain that minute and thorough knowledge of the pupils' attainments and powers, without which the work cannot be properly and justly done; and, besides, they are so vitally interested in having the

grading thoroughly done that they would not fail to take the necessary steps to accomplish it, even though it entailed much labor.

Secondly, I would have the pupils graded upon the teachers' recommendation. But the recommendation should be based upon no superficial observation, but upon the results of comprehensive and systematic tests applied at regular intervals.

In grades V, VI, VII, VIII, these tests would be for the most part *written*. Three examinations annually in all the subjects of the course would be sufficient to determine with accuracy the standing of the pupils. In the first two examinations the questions would be set and answers estimated by the teacher alone, the answers being then handed over to the principal for inspection, while in the final examination, in the case of pupils passing from one department to another, the principal, the teacher of the grade and the teacher of the next higher grade would make out the questions jointly. The answers to these questions would then be estimated by the teacher of the grade jointly with the teacher of the next higher.

In the lower grades the tests might be more frequent and must be to a greater extent *oral*, but the same method would be adopted.

In every grade an accurate record of the standing of each pupil in all the subjects of the course should be kept by the teacher.

In case of pupils passing from one department to another, the principal, the teacher of the grade and the teacher of the next higher grade, basing their judgment upon the pupils' record and having regard to all the circumstances which they would know as no one else could, would, I think, arrive at a decision as nearly just as could possibly be attained. In passing from grade to grade in the same department the teacher and the principal would decide. Such are the outlines of a scheme of grading which, I believe, would prove satisfactory. The details could easily be worked out and might vary to suit varying conditions.

Such a plan, besides furnishing accurate data on which to grade the pupils, would, *inter alia*, provide both teachers and pupils with a fair test of the success which was attending their efforts, and also keep the principal in close touch with the several departments under his charge—two consummations devoutly to be wished.

Being convinced that there has been a great loss of power in the working of the educational machine on account of carelessness in this matter of grading, I have written this article, not so much to put forward a scheme which all will approve, as to arouse the attention of the readers of the REVIEW to the importance of the subject, to evoke discussion upon it, and to contribute something towards keeping us all from falling into that apathetic state which I fear is too common with teachers as well as trustees, "where inconsistencies cease from troubling and logic is at rest."