

For the REVIEW.]

New School Building at Springhill.

The new school building at Springhill, Cumberland County, Nova Scotia, was completed on February 20th, 1889. Springhill now boasts of having one of the best school-houses in the province. It is an educational pile, as the *Springhill News* puts it, costing \$10,000. It is seventy-two feet square and occupies a prominent height overlooking the town—facing the west, and is enclosed by a picket fence. Inside the building there are eight rooms—four on the ground floor and four upstairs. These rooms are 33x28 and each will accommodate upwards of seventy pupils.

Eight teachers and over five hundred pupils occupied this building for the first time on Thursday, February 21st. The formal opening took place on the afternoon of the following Tuesday, February 26th. A large number of parents and visitors availed themselves of the opportunity given to see the new building, and the teachers and pupils engaged in their work.

The principal of this school is D. W. Byers, a first class graduate of the provincial normal school. The other teachers are: J. A. Purdy, Miss Maggie A. Grant, Miss Cassie M. Bacon, Miss Jennie Peers, Miss Ella Fletcher, Miss Clarissa P. Hunter and Mrs. Logan.

The teachers highly appreciate their new quarters and have entered upon their work with renewed efforts. The scholars, too, with their youthful countenances beaming with delight, seem to find the change agreeable.

The old building, though forsaken, is not yet forgotten. Although *Ishabod* adorns its walls there are some who will cherish its memory for many years to come.

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On First Lessons in Number.**A NORMAL SCHOOL EXERCISE.**

What is number? Apart from all consideration of size, shape, color or material of the individuals which compose it, every group of objects has a special character which we designate *number*. Number is, therefore, a sort of quality or property which we find in every group of objects. This may not be an adequate definition, but, at least, one side of the truth is expressed.

How then should ideas of number be taught? In much the same way as ideas of other properties and qualities are taught. To get ideas of color children must see, handle and compare colored objects. So, too, *number ideas* can only be obtained from objects

properly presented in groups. It is no more absurd to attempt to teach red than 5 without objects.

Where should one begin in teaching number to children five years old? As in all other subjects, just where the child's knowledge ceases to be definite and complete. This will, of course, differ very much with different children. Many on entering school do not know number beyond 3, while others can count, at least, as high as 10.

Is ability to count numbers, say, up to 10, a guarantee of adequate knowledge of those numbers? By no means. Counting implies at least only a knowledge of the *order* in which numbers occur. 6 is known, for example, only by the fact that it comes next after 5. Thus, in learning to count, only a single fact is learned about each number—that it is 1 more than the number just before it. Counting is liable to be little more than a succession of names to be given one after another to the objects in a group. It is a very great mistake, therefore, to spend time teaching children to count up to high numbers until they have thoroughly learned the lower ones.

What then is it, to know a number as it should be known? A number is fully known only if it can be identified by any one of the facts which may be learned concerning it, and if, when once so identified, all the other facts can be stated.

What are these facts? Illustrate by the numbers 5 and 9. The number 5 is made up of 4 and 1, of 2 and 3, of two 2's and 1; while the number 9 should be known as made up of 5 and 4, of 6 and 3, of 7 and 2, of 8 and 1, of two 4's and 1, of three 3's, of four 2's and 1.

Should *all* of the facts involved in any one number be learned before another is introduced? Certainly no attempt should be made to teach numbers beyond 10 until all the numbers up to, and including 10, are known in the complete way just indicated, for the reason that any real knowledge of numbers greater than 10 is impossible unless this foundation is laid. As to the numbers below ten, it is not, perhaps, absolutely necessary, though generally it will be the safer way, to follow the plan indicated in the question.

How may a new number be introduced, supposing all of the preceding numbers to be completely known? There are two ways: first, and probably this is the common method, by a process of *synthesis*, so called. If 5 is the number to be taught, the child already knows 4 as well as 1; a group of four objects is presented to him and recognized; another is then added to the group and he is taught to call the enlarged group 5. 5 is thereafter identified as 1 more than 4, just as 4 has been previously learned as 1 more than 3. This is evidently the process of learning