

uneducated parents, who, conceiving that they have been tolerably successful without education, cannot be persuaded of the advantages to be derived by their children from that inestimable gift; and this feeling is usually the immediate cause of that irregularity of attendance, which so frequently obstructs the progress of rural schools, and renders it so difficult for an Inspector to form a just estimate of that progress.

It will often occur, that, of twelve children present in a certain class at one examination, only one-third will be found at the following, though the class may be greatly increased in numbers. Under such circumstances, of course, a Superintendent can form little or no judgment of the improvement of that class, the majority being pupils whom he has not before examined; and he will have to consult the records of the school to ascertain the number on whose answering he may depend to enable him to form a comparative estimate. Indeed it will be found useful in every instance, before commencing the examination of a class, to scrutinize the roll and observe how far the different individuals of the class have attended regularly or otherwise. If the Superintendent do not possess some information on this point, he can scarcely fail to do injustice to the Teacher, who is accountable for the improvement of the scholars, but whose efforts must necessarily be materially impeded by the irregularity alluded to. It is the more requisite also to attend to this particular, as inefficient or careless Teachers perpetually quote the defect in question as a cause for the backwardness of their pupils.

In conducting the literary examination, great care and attention are requisite. A mere series of questions on the particular subject under consideration is by no means all that is necessary. The duty of a Superintendent of Schools is not merely to ascertain the acquirements and improvement of the pupils, but to afford information to the Teacher on every point connected with the management of his school; and one of the most important of these points is the mode of teaching. Presuming therefore, that in schools supported by public funds, a uniform system is recommended, and on experience of its efficacy, finally adopted, that system, whatever it may be, the Superintendent should exemplify in his examination of each class. In this way his visits can be made far more essentially useful than they would be, were his efforts limited exclusively to the collection of such information as would enable him to furnish the desired report. He can, in many instances, aid the Teacher in supplying the defects arising from want of training. This may be made peculiarly useful to those who, from age, insufficient pecuniary resources, or other causes, are unable to attend a Normal School.

And here I may mention the two particulars on which the well-being of a school may be said chiefly to depend, and which should consequently claim special attention from the Superintendent; they are, mechanical and intellectual training. In the former are included all the various details of discipline, the classification of the pupils, a careful division of time for each object of study, regularity in passing to and from the desks, mode of standing when engaged in any lesson, particularly the due inculcation of habits of neatness and order, &c. Intellectual training enables the Teacher to address himself to and educate all the faculties of the mind, instead of depending altogether on the memory. It is exercised to most advantage in classes, and the great secret then is, to awaken and keep alive attention, which may easily be effected