

The examination, as a test for promotion, was abandoned, and the pupil's ability to do the work was determined by the record made day by day in his class work. In the primary grades the record was determined by the judgment of the teacher, and in the higher grades by written recitations, in which all had the same questions at the same time. These were given at irregular intervals and took the time of the regular recitations.

The monthly report was in such a form that the parent could see at a glance what was the character of the work done, and whether the pupil's work entitled him to promotion.

Some of the benefits of this system of subdividing grades are that while one class recites the rest can prepare their lessons. So closely are they graded that much of the instruction can be individualized, the teacher thus coming into such close contact with each pupil that the best work is secured. The recitations are short, and the attention of the pupil is held. The pupils lose the sense of being crowded, and the slowest ones often surprise their friends. The bright pupils are not kept back, waiting for others, but when ready are at once promoted to the next sub-division of their class which is only a few weeks ahead of their division. When a division finishes the work of its grade it is promoted to the next grade. As a result, promotions are frequent. Instead of the nine annual steps to the high school, Supt. Shearer's plan provides for from twenty five to thirty-five short steps, to be taken according to the ability of the pupil.

Supt. Shearer estimates that out of one hundred pupils who take the course seven will save five years; twelve, four years; thirty-five, three; thirty, two; and the rest will save one year or take the full term. This means an average gain of three years, and the city will save \$45 for each pupil, what it costs to educate a pupil for three years. If this is multiplied by thousands the financial gain of the system becomes apparent. *N. Y. School Journal.*

Military Drill in School.

It may be that military drill is neither so useful as its advocates represent it, nor so perilous in its effect upon character as those on the other side apprehend. But leaving the moral question out of the consideration, it may fairly be said that it is a mistake to urge military drill as a substitute for general athletics.

There is high athletic authority for the statement that military drill does not exercise the muscles properly, but strains them; that it promotes stiffness rather than grace of movement; that it does not produce erectness, but a stoop; and that it does not encourage a symmetrical, but a partial development.

It is significant that in countries like Germany, where the most is made of military drill, it is found necessary to require other athletic exercises to correct its defects. Whatever, therefore, may be the proper place of the drill, it should not crowd out general athletics. *Youth's Companion.*

Playing with Fire.

The *Chicago Dial*, in speaking of the measure now under consideration in Congress to promote a system of military drill in the public schools of the United States, has the following:

One of the greatest dangers to which our public schools are exposed is that of the raids so frequently made upon them by bands of well-meaning but ill-balanced riders of hobbies. One set of people gets the notion that some form of mechanical discipline in morals and religion is greatly needed, and moves heaven and earth to secure the introduction of Bible-readers or ethical catechisms into the school curricula. Another set becomes possessed of the fantastic idea that our children need more than anything else to be guarded against the danger of becoming drunkards, and drafts measures (like the monstrous legislation recently enacted in New York) for the compulsory adoption of what is called "scientific instruction in temperance," a kind of instruction which is usually repudiated by those who have a right to speak for science, and which proves to be temperate only in name. Another set of hobbyists finds in manual training a panacea for all social ills, and does its best to convert our schools into carpentry kindergartens. Raids of this sort upon public education have become alarmingly frequent of late. * * * It is desirable that the friends of education do everything possible to prevent such a bill as that now under consideration from passing into law.

The *Dial* goes on to show that the few hours of military drill that it would be possible to provide for in an already over-crowded curriculum would not go far to secure physical results or military training, and states on the authority of a military expert that "in Boston the effect of school drill has been to make boys round-shouldered and narrow-chested. I never saw a school company well set up in my life."

The *New York Nation*, commenting on the bill, goes even further and states that "it springs from the same senseless and brutal war-spirit that is making wreck of so many public reputations, and continually threatening to embroil us with other nations. What its promoters really have in mind is, not physical exercise, not parades and displays, but the spreading in childish minds of the idea that fighting is the noblest occupation of man, that we are all the while exposed to insults and aggressions, and must be ready to whip all creation on call. Now the boys have too much of this idea already. It is in their minds that the furibund patriotism of Lodge and Frye finds most admiration in fact, so far as we have observed, its only admiration. What they need, together with their fellow juveniles in the United States Senate, is, not military drill, but instruction in good manners, in the arts and love of peace, and in ambition to make the country decent and habitable instead of feared."