

THE

JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.

FOR THE PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA.

AMONG the advertisements will be found the announcement of the Executive Committee of the Educational Association of Nova Scotia, for the Annual Session, which takes place during the Christmas Holidays.

WE have been requested to insert the following resolution passed at a late meeting of the Yarmouth Teachers Association:—

“Resolved, That Mr. A. D. Smith, B. A., be appointed to act as our Corresponding Secretary with the *Journal of Education*, and that the Teachers throughout the County be invited to forward to Mr. Smith any communications intended for publication in the *Journal*.”

We shall be happy to give insertion to any communications from the Teachers of Yarmouth which Mr. Smith may deem suitable for publication. We commend the arrangement adopted by the Yarmouth Association to every Teachers' Association in the Province. Our columns are open to any Corresponding Secretary whom the Teachers of any County may appoint.

AT the opening of the Court of Quarter Sessions of Halifax County, the Custos, A. M. Uniacke, Esq., in his address to the Court, said:—

“It affords me much pleasure to be able to testify to the great improvement in the efficiency and usefulness of our Public Free Schools, and I am persuaded that the taxes will, while they may bear heavily upon some, ere long be cheerfully acquiesced in when the inhabitants perceive the great benefits these Schools confer upon the young, and the general advancement in the scale of moral and intellectual improvement which the present system entails upon our youth.

In the district beyond the limits of the City, the number attending our Public Schools in 1864, was 2874, while in 1868 they have increased to 5136. Within the City, in 1864, we had 750 attending our Schools, while in 1868 we have 4300, making an aggregate of nearly 10,000 children in attendance on our Public Free Schools within the county.”

HIS Honour Governor Wilmot, in his address on Education delivered before the Mechanics' Institute of St. John, N.B., referred in terms of high commendation to the great efforts made within the past four years in Nova Scotia for the advancement of Public Education. He urged the immediate adoption of assessment as the foundation of a system of Public Schools in New Brunswick.

In the course of his address His Honour expressed his great appreciation of Dr. Forrester's *Teacher's Text Book*, as a most valuable work on the subject of Education. How many of our Teachers have procured the *Teacher's Text Book*? How many of those who have procured it have made themselves practically familiar, by careful study, with the author's views? Every Teacher in Nova Scotia, *who is a Teacher*, should blush with shame if he has not sought to obtain this work. No matter whether you think you will agree with all that the author sets forth or not, the book is entitled to your notice, and worthy of your careful perusal. Our word for it, you are too wise to be a Teacher, if the glowing pages of the *Teacher's Text Book* do not stimulate you to a higher and more perfect performance of the duties of your office.

WRITING.

PROBABLY no branch in our public schools is so poorly taught as writing. It is true that in some schools writing is well taught, even admirably so. We have visited some of these schools, and what we there saw served to render the more pitiable the “system” pursued in other schools. In fact, the majority of

teachers do not give systematic instruction in writing. The subject has a certain time allotted to it in the routine of school work, and the teacher says something about having “the pen-holder point towards the shoulder,” and gives a few general directions to his pupils. But he pursues no system, nor does he proceed in a scientific way with this important branch of school work. Two things are necessary to secure the satisfactory teaching of this branch; (1) a scientific system with copy-books arranged in harmony with it, and (2) the intelligent mastery and daily practice of that system by the pupils. With the sanction of the Council of Public Instruction a system of writing and a series of copy-books have been arranged by a gentleman who is at once a most skillful penman and a most successful teacher of penmanship. The system is exceedingly simple, and can be mastered by any teacher by a few hours' careful study. That it is practicable and effective, no one will doubt who has visited a school where writing is really taught in accordance with the system. But it seems to be a matter of small moment to the majority of teachers, what the system is. They place the copy-books before their pupils, with little regard even to the numbers of the books, or whether girls are not writing the books intended only for boys, or *vice versa*, and then *let them write*. It appears to be of no interest to these teachers that each copy and each book bears a fixed relation to every other copy and every other book in the series; or that the entire series is but the natural development of a few simple elements. They do not seem to know anything about a *system* of writing. In short, it would seem that they have no faith in science as applied to methods of instruction in this branch, and are quite content to practically deny any professional position to themselves, so far, at least, as this fundamental part of school work is concerned. They may be sure that the public generally will be none the less disposed to deny a professional position to teachers, when teachers are content thus to deny it to themselves. Such indolence is most reprehensible. There is not a teacher in Nova Scotia who ought not to be making a good writer out of every pupil old enough to write. This can be done only by intelligent and systematic instruction and a rigid putting in practice of that instruction in every day school exercises. We would earnestly press every teacher thoroughly to master Staples' Progressive System of Penmanship, and then make all his pupils masters of the system. Teachers will be astonished to see the intense interest that will be manifested in the writing exercises by their pupils, when once the subject is scientifically taught.

In order that every teacher may have at his command all necessary means for giving systematic instruction in writing, the entire series of the prescribed writing books, *with full explanations of the system pursued*, bound in one volume, has been provided for the Teacher's desk. A copy will be supplied for each Teacher's desk, upon the order of the Trustees, at the reduced price. See “Official Notice,” Prescribed Books.

ON TEACHING GRAMMAR—CLASSIFICATION.

GRAMMAR is generally a most repulsive study to young beginners, and is shirked and shunned by them in every possible way. Without assuming that it can be made as agreeable to juvenile tastes as a game of “marbles” or “jack-stones,” we believe it is possible to present it in such a manner that it will be both intelligible and interesting to very young pupils.

It is often asked—At what age should children begin the study of Grammar? Before answering that question we would propose another—How are they to begin? Forbear to cram them with definitions and rules from the book, but lead them on gradually by properly adapted oral lessons, and the work may begin at a very early period—say at seven years of age.