

During the warm season, much effort will be needed on the part of the teacher, to give the exercises such variety and interest as to command the attention of the school. For this purpose, his plans and modes must of course be somewhat frequently varied. The smaller scholars should have some concert exercises, as repeating the names of the seasons, the days of the week, the months, &c.—the points of the compass, the names of the town, county and State in which they live, and other facts in geography; counting, numbering, and the addition and multiplication tables, etc. The older pupils should also have some concert exercises in arithmetic, geography, history, and other studies. To awaken interest in spelling, the younger pupils should occasionally spell a number of common words, to be dictated by the teacher, such as *knife, fire, wrist, tongue*; or they should be allowed to mention and spell the names of familiar objects, such as the articles in the school room, or furniture at home, or the different kinds of food or fruits they eat, the garments they wear, etc. The older pupils should sometimes write on slates the words pronounced by the teacher, and for this purpose a similar course to that above named may be pursued. It should always be borne in mind by the teacher, that the great object in attending to spelling, is to acquire the ability to *write* words correctly. Occasionally, if thought proper, the scholars might be allowed to "choose sides," and spend the last hour of Friday or Saturday in spelling in that manner.

In reading, if a class become dull, let each read only to the first pause, or to a period, and thus pass around the class several times in a few moments. When it is desirable to read longer sentences, if they do not "keep the place," call upon them promiscuously, instead of reading in rotation. If they do not pay close attention, read yourself and make mistakes, by mis-pronouncing, and omitting or inserting words, and require them to detect and describe the mistake; this may be repeated to the fourth or fifth time, and almost any degree of enthusiasm awakened in the class, if it is adroitly done.

If the teacher can sing, a few minutes spent in singing some cheerful juvenile song, will do more, perhaps, than any other single thing to enliven the school and quicken both teacher and scholars; and, perhaps, nothing exerts a better influence over the minds of all concerned.

Ohio Journal of Education.

JOURNAL OF EDUCATION,

Upper Canada.

TORONTO: NOVEMBER, 1854.

*. Parties in correspondence with the Educational Department will please quote the number and date of any previous letters to which they may have occasion to refer, as it is extremely difficult for the Department to keep trace of isolated cases, where so many letters are received (nearly 500 per month) on various subjects.

PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

During his last visit to the several Counties of Upper Canada, the Chief Superintendent of Schools explained to the County conventions the steps which had been adopted, after the most careful deliberation, for the establishment of Public Libraries, and the precautions which had been adopted to avoid the evils which had been complained of in connexion with the school library system in the State of New York. It was a noble and an almost original conception in the State of New York to provide useful and entertaining reading for all its youth through the medium of school libraries; and the liberality with which the Legislature made provision for that purpose is, in the highest degree, commendable. But it is to be regretted that, for want of adequate precautions and regulations in the selection of books and the means of supplying them, the fund set apart for the establishment of School Libraries has not realized the hopes of its patriotic projectors. The losses to the Library Fund, and the injury to school sections, by both the prices and character of books, in the State of New York, are prevented by the methods adopted in Upper Canada

in the selection of books and in supplying them to Municipalities at reduced and uniform prices; and our admirable Municipal system remedies much of what is lamented in the State of New York, arising from individual indifference and carelessness.

It is also to be remembered, that though our system of Libraries is managed by the Educational Department and School authorities, yet the Libraries are truly and in the widest sense *public* libraries—and *public free* libraries—open to all, without exception, and without fee, according to the regulations for the safety and proper care of the books. The number of volumes sent out from this Educational Department of Toronto up to the 31st October, was 81,965—an average of upwards of 8,000 volumes per month since the commencement of the system..

We have read with unaffected regret the following statements and remarks in the *New York Teacher* of last month. We trust means will soon be devised to secure to the State all the advantages which may and ought to be conferred by their noble library fund. We trust, at the same time, that the perusal of the following article will satisfy all persons in Upper Canada, who may yet have any doubts on the subject, as to the propriety and advantage of the measures and regulations which have been adopted in Upper Canada for the establishment and extension of public libraries.

(From the New York Teacher, for October 1854.)

When the state set apart the sum of \$55,000 annually for the purchase of school section libraries, it was thought and believed that a great good had been accomplished; that future generations would reap a harvest, the seeds for which were sown with so much care, and in the exercise of so strong a faith. But alas! for human speculation, the intent was good and the appropriation was liberal, but the object has not been accomplished. Why not? Because, in the first place, the majority of the inhabitants are not sufficiently interested in the subject. They do not appreciate the great benefits that would certainly be derived from a well selected library, if properly used. They often allow petty, personal feeling to prevent them from participating in its advantages, thus bringing an irremediable evil upon their children. They refuse to be troubled with the care of the library, thus consigning it to an unfavorable location in the section, and often hide it in some dark corner of the garret, or stow it into some out-buildings where its only visitors are rats, mice and spiders. They exercise a low and pernicious taste in the selection of books. Dark and bloody tales of war and bloodshed, the silly catch-penny publications of unprincipled publishers, and the dry uninteresting matter of some *cheap old book*, usurp the place of the instructive, the elevating, the refining, the progressive issues of reputable publishing houses. They seem to regard it as a great evil that they cannot divert this sacred fund from its appropriate channel. Almost daily applications are made to the State Superintendent for permission to apply the Library money to the payment of teacher's wages, and that, too, when the section is destitute of many useful items of apparatus; sometimes even of a globe and blackboard. How short-sighted and penny-wise is that policy which would thus rob the rising generation of intellectual nutriment, just to diminish the merely nominal school tax or rate bill to the amount of a few cents to each individual! How much better would it be, to raise an additional amount in each section, that the school library might be made an exponent and representative of the literary progress of the age!

But, says one we rely upon pedlars to supply us with books, and of course we must take what they bring us! This is no excuse. We are not only required to act in accordance with the light we have, but we are held responsible if we neglect to obtain the information which we might have obtained had we made the effort. Let any one look over the pages of advertisements in this journal for example, and he will find that there are scores of books which hawkers never carry, and he will find that a pedlar's wagon is no more the place to purchase books for school section libraries, than would a tin pedlar's cart be to purchase a dessert set for the Queen of England. It is true that those unprincipled men who palm off spurious works upon the sections are responsible for the act, but at the same time, it does not relieve the purchasers from their portion of censure. The imposer and the person imposed upon—the tempter and the tempted, are alike guilty.

The practical question now is, "Can a reform be effected?" Most