

secured a house and furniture which, until the present time, had been the best in the county. This has been the prime motive presented in the recent purchase, remodelling and enlargement of the school-house in Upper Church street; and has led to the re-seating and other improvements now going on at Upper Canard. Doubtless also the same influences had their effect in reference to the very efficient accommodation which is being provided at Lower Canard; and in Kentville, at the recent annual meeting, the same motive was urged to induce a liberal appropriation for site and building in keeping with the times.

"There have been six schools in competition for the superior grant, viz., Piedmont, Somerset, Upper Canard, Upper Church Street, Sheffield Mills, and Kentville. Of these, Kentville and Upper Canard are graded, with two departments; the higher department in each case being the competing one. A spirited emulation on the part of each of the teachers, to render the school under his charge as efficient as possible, has been in active exercise, and the result is such as might reasonably be expected."

We are pleased to know that a very large number of schools entered the lists for competition at the beginning of the present term.

SHORT NOTICES OF BOOKS.

PRIMARY OBJECT LESSONS FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS: By N. A. CALKINS. HARPER & BROTHERS, New York. A. F. PORTER, Halifax. Price \$1.50.

This is a very interesting and instructive book. Comenius taught and Pestalozzi demonstrated some sound philosophical principles about the imparting of knowledge to young minds. Upon these principles, which have been confirmed by the experience of many subsequent educators, is founded the system of mental development illustrated by Mr. Calkins' book. The Mayos of England have preceded him in elaborating a systematic course of instruction adapted to initiatory schools. Their labours have told upon American teachers.

Mr. Calkins' book presents a pretty clear and systematic outline of the object system, with copious examples and illustrations. The ideas of form, colour, number, size, weight, sound, and place, are developed in course. The principal parts of the human body, physical training, drawing, and elementary reading, are also treated of. Some observations upon the nature and design of object-lessons will repay perusal. The book is worthy the attention of thoughtful teachers, and should find a place in their library. The specimen lessons are, in our judgment, scarcely flexible enough in their structure, and do not show great skill in the use of questions and ellipses. In fact, the author seems almost a stranger to the training power of judicious ellipses in conversational lessons. The questioning process, pure and simple, finds its sphere in review lessons, and, well handled, may be made to cultivate closeness of attention, readiness and accuracy in continued statement, and self-reliance. But in lesson giving its place is subordinate, and a skilful sequence of ellipses is necessary to insure that exercise of mind which is antecedent to the actual and profitable reception of knowledge.

Teachers, however, are not expected to square their practice by the views of any one man. They will find Mr. Calkins' book full of suggestive matter. The article on "colour" is worth the price of the book. We subjoin an extract or two from the introductory chapter, setting forth some facts upon which the development of the intellectual faculties is based:—

"1. Our knowledge of the material world is derived through the senses. Objects, and the various phenomena of the external world, are the subjects upon which the faculties first exercise themselves. Knowledge begins with experience.

2. Perception is the first stage of intelligence. Primary education begins with the culture of the perceptive faculties; this culture chiefly consists in affording occasions and stimulants for their development, and in fixing perceptions in the mind by means of representative language.

3. The natural and most healthful incentive to attention and the acquisition of knowledge, with children, is the association of pleasure with instruction. Curiosity, or the desire of knowledge, and the love of the beautiful and of the wonderful, are great actuating principles of early childhood, and their gratification is always accompanied by pleasurable emotion. Children possess a natural craving for knowledge as well as for occupation. Success affords them pleasure. Self-dependence is another powerful agent of culture.

4. Instruction should give pleasure to children, and where it does not there is something wrong, either in the mode of presenting it or in the subject-matter selected for instruction.

5. All the faculties are developed and invigorated by proper exercise; they may be enfeebled by being over-tasked, or by being exercised on subjects which do not come within their proper sphere.

6. The chief object of primary education is the development of the faculties. The period of development is emphatically that of the first ten years of the child's life.

7. Among the faculties that develop earliest, and are most active in the child, are those of perception, conception, simple imagination, and the memory of things. Some powers of the mind remain inactive during childhood, attaining their full development only in manhood. Among these are the higher powers of reason and judgment, philosophical memory and generalization.

8. Fulness of knowledge depends upon attention. The power of attention is the result of habit. Habits are formed by repetitions of the same act. The great secret in fixing the attention of children, consists in gratifying curiosity, the love of activity, and mingling delightful associations with learning, never overstraining their faculties by keeping them too long directed to one particular object.

9. The natural process of education is from the simple to the complex, from the known to the unknown, from facts to causes, principles before rules, ideas before words, things before names."

DR. COLLIER'S HISTORIES OF GREECE AND ROME are a most valuable addition to the common school text-books. "These volumes aim at giving a clear outline of the chief events in Grecian and Roman History. The personal or biographical elements, upon which so much of the living interest of history mainly depends, has been kept prominently in view throughout." Our advanced common schools should, after British American and British History, give pupils a fair knowledge of the history of ancient Greece and Rome. These books are compact, well bound, and printed on good paper.

THE CHEMISTRY OF COMMON THINGS—Nova Scotia School Series. Halifax, A. & W. MACKINLAY.

This book is intended for the more advanced pupils in schools. It presupposes no scientific knowledge on the part of the pupil or teacher. Its statements are remarkably simple and clear, and all are brought within the range of observation and experiment. The book is beautifully illustrated with upwards of 60 finely executed cuts; and those teachers who prefer scientific reading books will find this among the best of the kind. The *Chemistry of Common Things* should be used in every advanced school, as an aid in imparting a general knowledge of the chemical relations of familiar objects. In paper, typography, and binding, this book is the gem of the Nova Scotia Series.

BAIN'S COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC.—This is a new and fresh book. It has been prescribed by the Council of Public Instruction for use in the county academics. The subjects are treated philosophically, yet clearly and briefly. The author's views approach nearer to those of Blair and Campbell than to those of other writers on these subjects; and he has produced a better manual, we think, than any of his forerunners.

THE SCHOOL MAP OF NORTH AMERICA, which has been for some time in course of preparation, under the supervision of the Educational Department, is now ready for the schools. It is of good size, and embraces an area of 5000 square miles, sub-divided into squares of 1000 miles each. It is beautifully colored and mounted. This map is much needed in the schools, and we trust that teachers will give no rest to their trustees until a copy adorns the walls of their school-rooms. The map of British America is not yet published; but it, with those of South America, Africa, Asia, Australasia, and the United States, is being proceeded with as rapidly as is compatible with accuracy and excellence. When these maps are completed, and Mr. Calkins' School Geography of the World is published, we believe that the schools of Nova Scotia will be in a position second to those of no country in America, with respect to the appliances of geographical study. By consulting Official Notice VI. 4. trustees and teachers may learn what maps are now in stock. The present opportunity of purchasing these splendid articles of school furniture, at so cheap a rate, should be immediately improved. There can hereafter be no good excuse for the absence of these maps from the schools.

The Chairmen of the several Boards of District Examiners are requested to forward to the Education Office notices of the April Examinations, for insertion in the next number of the *Journal*.

Much on earth, but little in heaven.

Knowledge is a treasure, and practice is the key to it.

A wise man changes his mind, a fool never.

'I CAN'T,' never crossed the Alps, or raised an ear of corn.