

TALKS WITH TEACHERS.

Do you ever have a written examination in your school? I do not mean for the purpose of ascertaining results, so much as for the value it has as a disciplinary exercise. Sooner or later perhaps, many of your pupils will have to undergo written examinations and whatever may be said for or against them as an accurate method of determining pupils knowledge it is certainly an important part of their education that they should be able to express with facility and in proper form their ideas in writing. This cannot be done without practice as many have found to their great disadvantage. The necessity for this mode of examination is emphasized by the fact that in the future it will be required to pass our pupils out of the high schools, and later may extend lower down.

It is well not to wait until the end of the term to hold written examinations but to give them at certain intervals throughout it—say, once per week give a paper of about one hour's length and embracing two or three subjects for one grade. The next week give a paper to another grade and so on. Be very particular as to the form of the paper, such as the heading, margin, numbering of questions, paragraphs, folding of paper, endorsing etc. Of course it is not necessary for me to dwell upon the correction of the matter, as too much care cannot be taken in that particular. Always insist upon the pupil doing his best in the writing.

It seems to me rather a pity that the good old fashioned custom of Friday afternoon recitations has died out in so many of our schools. It is true that the variety and character of the selections often made, may have had something to do with it. In a large school it is certainly impossible to demand them with any care from all the pupils. Is it well to allow the pupils to make their own selections? I think not. Some suitable selection should be made by the teacher for each grade and attention directed to the beauties it contains. Too great a tax should not be put upon the child's memory. Whatever he memorizes in his school days will probably never be forgotten, and if the selections are good they will always be a delight to him. Hence the teacher should look to it that the choice selections of literature contained in the readers at least should be memorized. A pupil should not leave the fourth book without knowing Scott's ode, "Love of Country," nor the fifth book without memorizing Grey's "Elegy," nor the sixth without committing portions or the whole of "The Lady of the Lake," and as many as possible if not all the excellent selections in each of the readers. At the

same time direct the pupil's attention to the authors and some of their other writings, if not in the readers, then elsewhere. Having formed a taste for one selection the pupil will be induced to look up and examine others.

Do any of our teachers continue to require that Canadian history should be memorized from the textbook? If so, hasten to discontinue such an irrational process. Memory is a good thing to cultivate, but not in that way. More distaste for history has been engendered in this way than in any other. It is pure laziness on the part of the teacher to properly prepare the lesson herself for the pupils' benefit. Canadian history is sadly in need of reform, or rather the teaching of it, in some of our schools. Pupils are constantly leaving them with no knowledge beyond the French period. Is it any cause for surprise, then, that when large boys and girls return for a winter's schooling that they manifest a decided aversion to the study of Canadian history? If the knowledge that would qualify them to become intelligent voters were given them, they would take a more patriotic interest in their native country. A knowledge of the British North America Act and the history of the attainment of responsible government is of far more practical value than that of the French period. Why not begin at the present, then, and go back? Why does each new teacher think it necessary to put the pupils back to the beginning of the history? Review should be progressive and carried on from day to day.

If you have any pupils preparing for Normal school or the university matriculation examinations in New Brunswick, take care that the applications are presented to the proper persons and at the proper times.

The following, clipped from an exchange, shows the progress made in kindergarten training:

The kindergarten system of education is making its way slowly even in the larger cities of the east, always slow to adopt new things. In a few years it will be part of the public school system in all the leading cities. It ought to be. Even if to inaugurate it meant the lopping off of some of the ornamental branches in the public high school, kindergartens for the younger pupils would pay well at the cost. Not more than one school child in a hundred goes to the high school; every child goes to the primary school. The kindergarten system of education means less book stuffing, better eyesight, better reasoning power, a trained observation of objects in nature, the use of hand and eye to an extent which seems marvelous to any advocate of the old methods, and a moral education which our present plan of education, either in public or private schools, fails to supply. Our schools want moral education—the more of it the better—not sectarian training.