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Articles: Original and Selected.

DARK DAYS IN SCHOOL.

Every teacher knows something of them, those days when everything goes wrong. The spirit of evil has taken possession. Even the good boys have become, all at once, restless and perverse. The room seems to have become transformed into a whispering gallery. The prescribed lessons have not been prepared. The usually bright pupils are dull and careless. The dullards are hopelessly imbecile. You thought you had, by dint of patient effort, succeeded in establishing tolerable order in your department. You now wonder how you could have so deceived yourself. The room is a perfect pandemonium. Sounds of all disorderly kinds are ringing in your ears till you are half-distracted, and it almost seems as if deafness would be a relief. Every effort you make to restore quiet appears but to intensify the disorder. If you are a woman you would give anything to be able to run away to your chamber and have a good cry. If you are a male savage, you have to exercise strong self-control to keep your hands off half a score of the little school-demons who are tormenting you and seem to delight in it. On one point you are resolved. If you can but survive to the end of the term of your engagement you will abandon teaching thenceforth and forever. Better to break stones on the Queen's highway, or to go out to wash and scrub for a daily pittance, than to suffer such tortures as you are now enduring.

Well, you survive. Another day comes of a very different kind. You enter the school with an elastic step and a song in your heart. The children file in with quiet movements and bright, smiling faces. Everything falls into line and the work goes on cheerily. There are no discordant notes in the general harmony to-day, or, if there is an occasional jar, it does not grate upon the nerves, and a little patient effort sets it right. The pupils' minds seem to be on the alert. It is no hard task to gain their attention. They are interested in their work, and act as if they both loved it and their teacher. The hour for closing comes all too soon. You feel as if you could enjoy another hour's work when everything is going on so nicely. You leave the school-room feeling yours is indeed a "delightful task," and are glad at heart that you have chosen so pleasant, so useful, so noble a profession.

Now what is the cause of the difference? Is it in the atmosphere? Is some mysterious and baneful influence generated on certain days by some new condition of the elements? There may be something in this. Our souls are in contact with air and sky and sunbeam more closely; and at more numerous points than we are apt to suppose. It is very likely that the dark days are not, as a rule, the days when the sun shines brightly in a clear sky, when refreshing breezes are blowing, and the face of nature smiling.

Other disturbing causes, too, may be at work. Some special attraction the evening previous may have kept the boys and girls from their studies, and from their beds, and all who have to do with children know what these irregularities and excitements mean; or some peculiarly difficult stage may have just been reached in the work of an important class.

Mrs. E. D. Kellogg, writing in the *American Teacher* some years ago, after a graphic description of these same "dark days" when "everything goes wrong; every sound is piercing; the door slams; the boots hit at every angle; books are left at home; the ink spills; children laugh at nothing; visitors come, and drive you half-distracted with their undertone to each other; slates and pencils obey the law of gravitation with the perversity of inanimate things; and the spirit of misrule reigns triumphant," adds, by way of suggestion to young teachers: "First of all, don't lose

heart, and conclude you are a failure as a teacher, either then or after you get home. . . . You are in conditions you cannot analyze, my dear young teacher, when the clouds gather from all points of the compass—and don't try it. Just hold yourself with all the calmness that is possible, and be as patient with yourself as you must be with the children. Perhaps you, yourself, through that subtle action of mind over mind, are practically responsible for the complicated condition of things. That is hard consolation, but not at all unlikely to be true."

Not unlikely to be true! Far from it. It is most likely to be the very essence of the truth. On any doctrine of probabilities it is far more reasonable to suppose, when one mind comes into disagreeable contact with fifty, that the jutting angles which produce the collision have been suddenly developed in the one, rather than simultaneously in the fifty. In nineteen cases out of twenty, we make bold to say, the origin of the troublous times is in the teacher, not in the pupils. The causes are many and various, a slight attack of indigestion, too little fresh air and exercise, want of congenial surroundings, social or business disappointments. Any one of these, or of a dozen other influences, emanating from our own neglect, and—shall I say—selfishness, may be sufficient to work out for ourselves and our pupils a day of wretchedness.

But there are other causes arising likewise from a mental condition of the teacher which is, in itself, not only not discreditable, but praiseworthy, but no less harmful in its immediate effect. Mrs. Kellogg, in the article above alluded to, deals with some of these causes so forcibly that we close by commending a thoughtful study of her words:

"Perhaps there is no greater cause for the dark days of young, normal-trained teachers than in the inability to work out the ideal plans that had grown to be a part of daily thought. Bristling individualities spring up at every step, and stand like bayonets to prevent an approach. Every child calls for separate tactics, and in the confusion of disappointed hopes the heart sinks, the head is lost, and a mild panic is threatened.

"Let me suggest the unwisdom of attempting to force any up-hill course at this juncture. There is too much demoralization to attempt any re-organization of plans on the spot. Turn the attention in another direction, and manage

as quietly as possible till the day is over; then think it out alone, and be quite ready to accept your part of the blame. Fortunate will you be if it leads you to recognize the hardly learned fact that you are for the pupils, and not the pupils for you; that your methods must be fitted to the children, and not the children to your methods. Every child's soul, as Holmes tells us, is 'a little universe with a sky over him all his own,' and it is for the teacher to enter that 'little universe' with the humility and respect due one of God's creatures.

"But after a fair-minded review of the day, don't pore over it. Look after the repairing of the physical and nervous waste that has been rapidly going on in those trying hours of discomfiture. Go out of doors, and change the whole direction of thought. Looking too long at the wake of a ship is a poor preparation for avoiding future collision."
—*Educational Journal*.

Editorial Notes and Comments.

IN Limerick, across the sea, there is a teacher's association which was organized for the purpose of removing four of the leading grievances which the Irish teachers have good reason, it would seem, to complain of. The four are inadequacy of income, insecurity of tenure, want of pensions, and want of residence. It is remarkable that in our provincial association the question of salary has hardly been touched. The teachers have evidently thought their efforts could be productive of better results if directed towards self-improvement in their professional work. The school boards should not forget, however, that a salary considerably above the average will secure a teacher even more above the average. This consideration, even if there were no others, should operate powerfully to increase the salaries of our teachers.

If, as has just been said, the Provincial Association has seemingly overlooked the question of salaries, the same cannot be said of the educational magazines and newspaper correspondents. Several letters have appeared in recent issues of the *St. Johns News* on this subject. The writer of one of these says among other things:—"I also desire to express an opinion on the subject of professional training and teachers' salaries. What your correspondents say in

regard to salaries is not overstated in the least, but rather understated. The amount of the salaries, if I may use that dignified name, paid to elementary teachers, is one of the foulest blots on our educational system. While "Saxon" places the amount at \$16 per month, I know of several districts that pay but \$14 per month, and oblige the teacher to board herself and teach in an old "shanty" that no decent farmer would house his pigs in. However, we are hoping for better treatment, as there is some little stir being made by influential educators to get matters in this respect in a better condition. I do not think that "Saxon" is quite right, however, in condemning the movement towards securing a better training for our teachers, for it is the very fact that there were certain individuals who had obtained their diplomas cheaply, with no training in practical teaching and could teach for a small sum, that has brought the standard down to its present level. I do not mean to say that the actual knowledge of the subjects to be taught was insufficient, acquired though it might have been with small expense, that there are not many successful teachers of both model and elementary schools who have never seen McGill Normal; but the young teacher was obliged to acquire knowledge of the art of teaching, (and it is one of the fine arts) by experience, with no direct supervision whatever. No one would think of trusting a child's health to the care of an inexperienced physician who had never been inside a sick-room or seen a patient treated. Why trust the care of the mind to inexperienced hands? In the normal school the student has to teach classes in the model school under the direct supervision of experienced teachers, besides having a regular course of lectures on teaching mapped out; and thus comes out to begin teaching with a sound knowledge as to the manner in which he should begin and maintain the work."

Acknowledging, as we must, the meagreness of the salaries at the command of our teachers, on whom are we to lay the blame? Some, who lay everything at the doors of the "government," say the fault lies with the powers that be, others again blame the school boards, but can it possibly be that the teachers are to a large extent their own worst enemies in this important matter? As one answer to this delicate question, the *Canada Educational Monthly* says:

The reference made in our last issue to the "still small

voice" that comes from a remote corner of the Dominion urging an improved professional relationship among teachers is well worth the consideration of every teacher in the land. The ills that flesh is heir to are hardly less frequently expatiated upon than the ills which seem to be the lot of the teacher. And yet, when some of the teachers' ills are traced to their origin, the teachers themselves are hardly able to free their skirts altogether from blame. For example, in the matter of salaries, the teachers' small and precarious emoluments are often traced to the lack of funds in the public chest, or to the poverty of the country districts, whereas it may be too often traced to the unprofessional conduct of the teachers themselves towards one another. In a word, if teachers were only to become true to themselves, they would command not only a higher respect but a higher salary from those who require their services. An instance will illustrate this readily enough. A teacher was once pleading with a school commissioner to support an application he was about to make to the board for an increase of salary.

"Your salary is just what you asked for when you made application for the position you hold, is it not?" asked the commissioner.

"Yes," answered the teacher, "that is true, but I find I cannot live on it. Besides, the teacher that was here last received more money for just the work I am doing."

"Then, why did you offer to take the position at a less salary than your predecessor?"

"Because I wanted the place, and being told that there was a very large number of applicants, I asked for a very low salary, thinking that if I gave satisfaction, the board could be induced to give me the amount paid to my predecessor."

"In other words, you expected the board to break their bargain with you. That is a new way of carrying out a business contract. The fact is, sir, you should never have offered to take the position at a less salary than your predecessor's. You have made your bed and so must lie in it. In my opinion the salary should be given to the position and not to the teacher. But will you tell me who have encouraged the districts to ask candidates to state in their applications the amount of salary required, but the teachers themselves? If I were a teacher I would refrain from

applying for a position when such a humiliating request is made in any advertisement, and if all teachers would do the same, the huckstering spirit among trustees and commissioners would soon disappear."

—LAST month we referred to the commendable action of the authorities of Morrin College, Quebec, in inaugurating a course of popular lectures in chemistry, and we expressed the hope that other courses of a like nature would follow. We are pleased to learn that such is the case and that two others, one in Political Economy, by Mr. L. R. Holme, B.A., and another on natural science, or, perhaps more correctly, Entomology, by the Rev. Mr. Fyles, of Levis, are now in progress. The thorough knowledge that these two gentlemen possess of the subjects on which they lecture, is sufficient to explain the large amount of success that has attended their lectures. There is a possibility that a highly instructive as well as interesting course of public lectures in descriptive astronomy will be given during the coming session by one of the professors of the College. This course, if the arrangements for its delivery are successful, will be most thoroughly illustrated by photographic plates specially prepared by the lecturer. The citizens of Quebec are to be congratulated on the opportunities which are thus afforded them for the acquiring of scientific knowledge.

—THE *Teachers' Program* has been asking for a definition of "teacher." For the edification of our readers, we reproduce some of the ideas elicited by this enquiry.

That individual which is seen by all, comes in contact with all and influences all, is admired by some, despised by some and holds the destiny of humanity in his hands; he is the second station on the road to eternity; he holds the keys to both roads and has the power to send humanity either to eternal enjoyment or to eternal destruction.

A vigilant, progressive, enlightened compound of love, order, virtue, diligence and equity.

A peculiar machine, which is expected to lead the procession, gather up the thorns by the wayside and scatter in its path beautiful garlands of flowers.

One who should possess the zeal of Luther, the firmness of Peter, the wisdom of Solomon and the love of John.

One who governs, instructs and imparts science.

An automatic machine manufactured by his patrons,

lubricated by his pupils, worn out in moulding civilization and who remains a monument inscribed "Pauper."

The only person in this world who spends his life working for others with no hope of a reward this side of the Celestial City.

A person who is qualified in dropping small seeds that by years of cultivation may grow into spreading trees.

An angel without wings.

A guide who leads the children through the thorny wilderness, School-days, to the beautiful city, Education.

That mechanic who makes and sets in motion the machinery of the soul, called education; and the fabric which it weaves is character.

A moulder of character and thereby of statesmen and nations.

The real guardians of a nation's safety in time of peace, as well as the primary bulwark against coming dangers.

A dictatorial machine; an up-to-date instrument of torture; a testing apparatus; a long drawn out negotiation; a never-failing source of information; a being all-seeing, all-hearing; a perfectionist; a moulder, a chiseler and a polisher of mankind.

One who teaches by precepts and actions, and instructs others by words or signs.

—In the *Canadian Magazine* for January appears an article attacking the educational system of Ontario, which cannot but make interesting reading not only to residents of that province but of other provinces of the Dominion as well. The writer seems to look at things through blue glasses, and yet we must acknowledge that there is more than a tinge of truth about what he says. Has free education done for mankind in any part of the world what theorists believe it should do? If it has not, does the fault not lie rather in the imperfections and unsuccesses attending all human efforts than in any mistakenness of the belief that education is a blessing and far from a curse to men? From the article just referred to we extract the following passage: "What hopes we, in Ontario, built upon the benign and beneficent influences of free education! Brought to the door of the humblest cottage, it would enter in and make the lives of the people happier and truer. Labour would become more efficient and more dignified, and before the bright light of knowledge the hideous phantoms of

vice and crime would fly away. With what care have we studied the systems of other countries, and, step by step, built up and perfected a system of our own, leading by natural grades from the public school and kindergarten at the cottage door to the University of Toronto! With what pride, and natural pride, we look at the crowning point of our system, which commands the respect and admiration of the whole American continent! And we receive with complacent satisfaction the congratulations of our visitors who attend the great educational conventions which from time to time are held in our midst. It is, indeed, hard to have to admit that the educational system, of which we hoped so much, must be ranked among the disappointments of life; that it has not decreased crime, and that, instead of an angel of light, it has proved an octopus with an angel's face, reaching out its tentacles into the houses and pockets of the people, degrading our professions and depopulating the country. The language is strong; but so are the facts. In twenty years we have educated millions of pupils, and we cannot point to one man, who could not have paid for his own education, whose place could not be filled at once by a hundred; not one man, to whose education we feel glad that we have subscribed. While in the general condition of the people we see no great improvement to console us for the money we have spent. Perhaps this may be due to the fact that our present system more than anything else tends to drive our best men from the country. The difficulties of the educated man only begin when his education is completed. Where the field is as overcrowded as it is in Ontario, there must inevitably be a period of unremunerative waiting. If a man cannot afford to pay for his education he cannot afford to support himself during this time. He finds that in the larger centres of the United States the prizes and opportunities are more attractive and the cost of waiting is no greater; and to-day it is the cities of the United States that are reaping the benefit of millions spent by the Ontario tax-payer in higher education."

—THE pedagogical creed of Mr. Earl Barnes, professor of Education in Stanford University, is the briefest of all those that have appeared in the *School Journal*. It is this: I believe that this is a sane, well-ordered universe, and that the natural tendencies in it are toward higher forms. I believe that the problem of the educator is to find these

large upward-moving tendencies in civilization, and to do all in his power to foster and encourage them. I believe these laws can be discovered through a study of the history of ideas and ideals, and through a direct study of the natural history of human beings from childhood to old age. I believe the great problem of this immediate generation is to work out the natural history of human beings as a basis for educational activity, and I believe that when this is fairly accomplished we shall find that what we have is a philosophy of life and life's possibilities, not materially different from philosophies held in the past, but perfected in many details.

—THE *Teachers' Institute*, in the following sensible paragraph, emphasizes the fact that "child-study" is a means rather than an end. It says: The gravest danger of the present wide-spread interest in "scientific" child-study is that teachers are apt to regard the school as a laboratory for enriching their knowledge of children and of child nature, instead of attending to the enrichment of the minds of their pupils. It is all very well to say that the child cannot be well taught until his mental, moral, and physical make-up is well understood. But this trying to get better acquainted must not consume too much time. First, it ought to be presupposed that a person who is appointed as teacher is already acquainted with the characteristics of child-nature in a general way and is capable of readily diagnosing individualities of children, just as a licensed physician is supposed to be able to give a diagnosis of the physical condition. Secondly, every teacher ought to have a plan of incidentally gathering the additional observations necessary to form a correct judgment of the peculiarities noticeable in some pupils. After school hours these incidentally collected data may be entered in a special book kept for purposes of gradually obtaining a record of the educational progress and peculiar needs of the various pupils. Child study must not be made an end in itself, so far as the teacher is concerned. It is only one means of learning how to best educate a child. How can I best promote the educational growth of the children? This is the question. The scientists who wish to work out a new psychology of childhood—grand as their object is—must not be permitted to substitute their object for that for which the schools are founded and maintained—the education of our future citizens.

Current Events.

AT the last meeting of the Montreal Protestant Board of School Commissioners, the question of prizes was taken up, and it was decided that subject prizes be abolished and general proficiency prizes retained. The reasons for this proposed change were pointed out as being that where subject prizes are given, a tendency is often created on the part of pupils to devote the greatest attention to one or two subjects to the neglect of others. General excellence should be the object aimed at, and this would be stimulated by the offering of the prizes on the basis of the standing in the aggregate of all the subjects of the examination.

—ONE of our exchanges says that the school board of Toronto has abolished the system of giving prizes in the schools under its control. It is said that diplomas will be given to successful pupils at the end of the school year.

—THE news comes from Norway that the parliament of that country has abolished the study of Latin and Greek in the schools. It is rumoured that a somewhat similar step, with respect to Greek, is contemplated by the authorities of McGill University. The report we refer to hints that under a new system of things, the study of that language will no longer be compulsory in connection with the arts course. We cannot vouch for the truth of the report.

—THE principal of one of the public schools in Brooklyn has begun a new departure in school methods, by which he hopes to bring about co-operation between teachers and parents. His scheme is to have parents present during the school session so that they may observe the methods of the teachers and become familiar with the workings of the school. Parents are invited to remain after school and confer with the teachers. The first of these visits was a success, about one hundred and fifty people, chiefly mothers, accepting Mr. Haaren's invitation. The regular work was gone through with in the intermediate and primary departments, and after school hours the class work and records for the month were shown to the parents. In the grammar department the exercises consisted of general exercises, such as singing, recitations, etc. Monthly reports were read, and there was an exhibition of the work done.

—NO teacher can be appointed in the state of New York to a position in any city school, who has not had at least one

year of professional training in addition to a high school course or its full equivalent. This requirement will not be made of teachers with three years or more of successful experience, but all others must conform to the law. It is probable that another step in the direction of professionalizing teaching will be taken by the legislature before long by the enacting of a law requiring high school teachers to be college graduates, with at least one year of professional training. This training must be given either in the normal school or in the department of pedagogy, which it is expected every college will hereafter conduct in that state.

—FROM the catalogue of Yale University for 1896-97, it appears that the number of courses in the college is 290; in English alone, thirteen courses. The university library has increased during the last year from 180,000 to 200,000 volumes, and the department libraries have gained nearly 5,000, equal, in all, to 245,000 volumes; Yale has 239 teachers, 1,237 students, 227 graduated students (last class); the Sheffield scientific school has 553 students, 2,146 students in arts, 194 divinity students; in all departments, 2,946 students.

—IT is said that New York city will soon follow the example of Boston, and appoint medical inspectors, who are to visit the primary schools every morning, to look over the children for symptoms of contagious or communicable disease on them, or to inquire into the nature of sicknesses that keep children from school, the purpose being to check the spread of dangerous diseases through the carelessness or ignorance of teachers and parents. Dr. Roberts, the sanitary superintendent of the health department, has drawn up rules and regulations which were submitted to the board of education. The plan will be put in operation as soon as the civil service board has finished an eligible list of the 218 physicians who were examined for appointment to the corps of medical inspectors.

—A NOVEL suggestion for the prevention of dishonesty among students at examinations is to do away with the examinations rather than to deal summarily with the offenders. A resolution has been sent to the faculty of one of the universities in the United States, asking for the abolition of final examinations and a higher class standing required for passing work. What is known as the "honour system" in examinations is in vogue in the college, but as

now conducted it has proved a failure, and the object of the resolution is to stop cribbing by doing away with examinations and requiring better class-room work of those who crib, by making the passing mark higher.

—THE inestimable value of properly conducted fire-drill in school has recently been demonstrated in the case of one of the Brooklyn schools. The presence of mind of the teacher together with the training previously given to the children undoubtedly prevented a panic. A pupil threw a lighted match into a waste paper basket, and the flames spread at once. The teacher formed her pupils into line and had them file out as if going for recess. Meantime, the flames were put out.

—SPECIAL examinations are held for candidates for principalships in New York city. An exchange says:—"Promotion from the ranks to these posts without examinations, upon the recommendation of the board superintendents, is no longer practised, though it would seem to be the only rational course. One effect of the change is that many of those who are in line of promotion are using every moment of their spare time to prepare for the great ordeal; they run to lectures of all sorts, spend their hard-earned money on "coaches" who make it a business to produce "qualified" principals, swallow book after book, and pour over question-books. Meanwhile the schools are suffering. Teachers are exhausting their energies on matters that do not benefit their pupils. Do the superintendents know this?"

—THE *Educational News* says that Kentucky is the only state which regulates at all by legislation the lighting of school buildings and which guards against overcrowding by specifying that the seats shall fit the children. Brooklyn is the only city in the United States where the school board has ruled that the pupils' seats shall not face the light.

—AMONG the many large gifts made to the different universities during the past year, it is noticeable that in the case of one, Yale University, the revenues have been increased by \$400,000 within that period.

—"DRAWING in the New York City Public Schools," is the title of an article in the January number of *Education* in which Mr. Henry G. Schneider describes the New York city course in drawing as in accord with the best ideals of the New Education. Among other things he says:—

“Drawing from objects has been a feature of our New York city course of study since 1890. The unique feature of our course is that it makes leaf and flower study the basis of design in all grades of the grammar school. Besides this co-ordination of drawing and nature study the drawing course includes drawing of ‘a simple object from nature’ in eighth, seventh, and sixth grades, while drawing from the round ‘object drawing’ is pursued in grades one and two, our seventh and eighth years.” Mr. Schneider concludes that an “ideal course in drawing” cannot be laid out by a superintendent who is not himself a practical teacher of drawing.

—THE British Royal Commission on secondary education suggest, that the universities are the proper institutions to take up the task of giving the professional education required for teachers of academies and high schools, as has already been done by two Scottish universities. The science of education ought to be studied where other branches of mental and moral philosophy are fully handled by the ablest professors.—*School Review*.

—IN recent years it has been strongly maintained that eventually the English language will come to be the universal language, but considerable surprise is felt at an eminent German professor being among the more recent converts to this belief, and advocating that means should be taken for making English the one language of the world. The need of a universal language, Dr. Schroer says, has long been felt. Attempts to introduce an artificial language are unnecessary, for, says Dr. Schroer, there is already a universal language, and it is English. But in what sense is English a universal language? By its spread over the whole earth and by the ease with which it may be learned it has, Dr. Schroer declares, reached a position so far in advance of all others that neither natural nor artificial means can deprive it of. Our language is spoken by the richest and most powerful nation of Europe, by the greater part of the people of North America, South Africa, and Australia, and in India. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century the number of English-speaking people has grown from 25,000,000 to 125,000,000, and there is no prospect of any check to its ever-increasing triumph. As a seeming confirmation of Dr. Schroer’s idea, it is said that the Chinese government has ordered the establishment of

schools in all the large towns and cities of the empire for the teaching of the English language and Western sciences.

—NINE thousand students are registered at the University of Paris. No other educational institution in the world has as many names on its rolls.

—FOUR years ago Tufts College began to admit women on equal terms with men. President Capen is well satisfied with the results produced by this change of policy of the college. He writes: "Speaking negatively, I am constrained to say that the admission of women has not had a tendency to reduce the number of men entering the several departments. On the contrary, there has been a constant and steady, and in some departments a very marked increase in the attendance of men. The presence of women, moreover, has not diminished the interest in the activities or sports which are supposed to belong peculiarly to men's colleges. There has been no friction arising from their presence in the class-room, and they have not increased materially the difficulties of administration. On the positive side it may be said that their work has been as well done as that of the men. The general testimony of the teachers is that they have raised the tone of the class-room, and quickened the serious efforts of student life. Their presence has also brought an element into the social atmosphere of the college which is very agreeable and very wholesome. The medical school has been co-educational from the start. Women have shown excellent capacity for medical training. The teachers, moreover, assert that they have found no embarrassment from the presence of both sexes in the lecture-rooms and laboratories."

—THE state superintendent of Kansas, U. S. A., has drafted a text-book bill which is very favourably received by educators of the state, and it is likely that it will be presented to the legislature and adopted. The bill provides that school boards, including boards of education in cities, shall purchase the necessary text-books, making contracts for terms of five years. Each publisher making contracts shall file with the governor a bond in the sum of \$50,000 for the faithful performance of the conditions of such contracts. No school board shall contract for books not approved by the state board of education, and a maximum price for school books is fixed by the proposed law. When the state board of education approves of a certain line of

books the governor shall issue a proclamation to that effect, and then it shall be the duty of school boards to adopt a series of books for five years. If the state board is unable to procure books below or at the prices stated, it shall advertise for manuscripts of the books needed and select such as are satisfactory and have them published at the expense of the state, and then sell the books to the local boards at cost. Publishers desiring to sell books in Kansas shall file proposals in the office of the state superintendent, and the board of education shall consider them and accept such as are satisfactory. Each bidder shall make affidavit that he belongs to no trust or combine.

Literature, Historical Notes, &c.

COMPOSITION.—REPRODUCTIONS.

BY CHAL. D. NASON.

At the period of life when imitation is a powerful factor in the education of a child, one of the very first principles of teaching composition is the setting of good examples. For this, it is necessary that the child hear nothing but good English spoken, and a good English style, and that he read only the best of the good English writers. In this way, if there be the germs of a fair writer in the child, they are brought out and developed.

Unconsciously, of course, much of the good from the reading comes, but it is necessary to study the writers carefully, if their greatest secrets are to be learned. This it is difficult to do, as we unwittingly slip over many important points, without at all appreciating that they are important. This comes from the well-known fact that the highest art conceals art. It is necessary, then, to study the masterpieces of English. Out of a desire to make scholarship closer and to bring to notice the fine points of a writer's style, reproductions of good pieces of English composition have been tried. These consist of studying or reading the points to be reproduced and then writing out the extracts as nearly in the style of the author as possible. In the lower grades this method shows pretty clearly the pupil's power of extracting knowledge from the printed page. For the students of the high school, or even of the college, this serves as a good exercise in the method of making literature,

and is, in fact, the very way in which many of our best writers have acquired their power in manipulating the language. The method is used to some extent in the translation of the Greek and Latin classics, the aim ever being to interpret as closely as possible the thought of the writer, and at the same time to use a good English style. This is wherein the study of the ancient classics has its greatest value.

But reproductions have a place in the elementary school as well; indeed, that is the place of their origin. It has too long been the custom to make the children write on subjects concerning which they have no knowledge; under such conditions there is no possibility of their doing good work, for the very obvious reason that they have nothing to say. The first requisite for writing compositions is to have some idea to express, and then the task is not so hard, especially if the pupil has had some experience in getting at the subject. In reproductions in the elementary schools, the child is read a story or narrative article, the essential details of which he is to reproduce, and to imitate as closely as possible the style of the original story. The child has, then, something to say, and the way is opened to say it.

Imitation is especially active in children, and they have little trouble in making a presentable copy of the original story, often throwing into prominence some idea that has caught their fancy, thus showing to the teacher, in many cases, the distinctive way the child has of looking at things. It is needless to say that the models must be of the best, in order that false ideas of beauty may not be rooted thus early in the child's literary career. The short stories, such as are found in the better of the children's magazines, are just the thing, having that element of interest which makes an otherwise intolerable lesson quite a treat. The details of an interesting story will remain with the child long enough for them to make their impression. If the story is one of the ethical or character building species, it will make a more lasting impression from being made use of in the reproduction lesson.

This idea of reproduction is carried to an even greater extent in the schools, where the child is given a model sentence and told to write an essay in which a sentence formed after the model occurs. This is a much harder task and suitable only for the older pupils, but it has the advantage

of making the child think out the facts and fancies to be written about, and only prescribes the form of a few of the many sentences in the composition. In practice it is found that this method gives the child a stock of forms of expression which serves greatly to relieve the monotony of school-boy compositions, necessitating, as it does, attention to the order of words, figures, epithets, etc.

The objection will, of course, be made that the method makes the pupils servile imitators and takes away all spontaneity in forming a characteristic style. This objection might be valid if the method were used exclusively, but the ideal way is to use it only as a recreation after the prolonged use of the older method. For very little folk, it is the only method that can be used, for the child has to get his facts from the teacher, and whether they be read or given in oral recitation makes very little difference. Used sparingly, such a method gives the child a series of forms of expression that he gradually accumulates, and it gives him an enlarged vocabulary of the common and unusual words, which in the course of the ordinary composition lesson he would never attain. If it does make imitators, surely it is something to imitate the greatest writers; and if some of the pupils have the making of great writers in them, they will be none the worse for an intimate acquaintance with their predecessors.—*Popular Educator*.

—WE have received the subjoined patriotic lines from Mr. L. D. Von Iffland, of Cowansville Academy, and gladly give them a place in the RECORD. Our teachers will find the verses most suitable as a song to be sung by their pupils, of whatever age they be. The air of "Auld Lang Syne" will readily suggest itself as fitting the metre of the lines:—

OUR QUEEN, OUR COUNTRY AND OUR FLAG.

I.

Oh Canada, our native land,
Our home so dear and free!
Loud ring the praise of thy fair name
And England's o'er the sea.

CHORUS.

Come raise the song, ye loyal hearts;
Wave high the flag we love;
And thunder forth Victoria's name,
Through earth to heav'n above.

II.

Let friendship's golden chain unite
 All subjects of our Queen ;
 We're brothers 'neath the Union Jack,
 Though oceans roll between.

III.

Then join our hands the earth around,
 All loyal, brave and true ;
 God save our Queen, our Canada
 And England o'er the blue.

Practical Hints and Examination Papers.

RECITATION RULES.—The *Educational Review* reproduces the following suggestions from Swett's "Methods of Teaching." Readers of the RECORD who have not seen the book may derive some benefit from them :

1. If you expect to have lessons learned at all, make them short.

2. Assign but few lessons to be learned at home ; children must have time to work, play, eat, sleep and grow.

3. Keep your explanation down to the level of your pupils' minds. A great deal of teaching "flies over the heads" of your pupils. You must learn to talk in household Anglo-Saxon, such as men use in business and women at home.

4. Your chief business is *to make pupils think*, not to think for them ; *to make them talk*, not to talk for them ; *to draw out their powers*, not to display your own.

5. Keep your voice down to the conversational key. A quiet voice is music in the school-room.

6. Train your pupils to recite in good English, but do not worry them by interruption while they are speaking. Make a note of incorrect or inelegant expressions and have them corrected afterwards.

7. *Seldom repeat a question.* Train your pupils to a habit of attention, so that they can understand what you say the first time.

8. Give your slow pupils time to think and speak. The highest praise given by an English inspector to a teacher was "that he allowed his slow boys time to wriggle out an answer."

HOW TO MAKE A HEKTOGRAPH.—A writer in the *School Journal* says that this simple medium of reproduction can

be made by any teacher for the trifling cost of seventy-five cents. The following materials are required: one pint of glycerine, four ounces of gelatine, and a tin pan 8 x 12 inches. Dissolve the gelatine in a pint of cold water. Then add the glycerine. Put upon the stove, stirring that it may not burn. When it comes to a boil pour into a shallow tin pan to cool. Beware of air bubbles and you will have a smooth, hard, sticky surface. A shallow caramel pan with upturned edges is just what is desired in the way of a pan. Eight by twelve inches, the suggested dimensions, correspond with those of the blocks of unglazed paper sold for the hektograph.

Directions: Use hektograph ink and a coarse *stub pen*. See that every stroke of the pen shows a green metallic lustre when dry, else the work will not "take." Write or print the reading matter to be used, and when the ink is quite dry lay the sheet face down upon the hektograph. Press gently over the whole surface with the hand or a soft cloth. After from two to five minutes (according to the number of copies desired) gently peel the paper off. From the impression thus made, reproduce all the copies required, laying one sheet of paper on the surface at a time.

INK-STAINED FINGERS.—A simple way of removing ink-stains from the fingers is to rub vaseline well into the skin at the stained points and then rub off with a piece of soft paper before applying soap. In this way the hands may be washed perfectly clean.

—A COUNTY commissioner of schools in Michigan has addressed the following suggestions to the teachers in his district:—"Let each teacher see to it at once that the stove and pipe are black, and well put up, curtains neat, windows in order, pictures on wall the whole room made neat, bright, cheerful and inviting. Impress your personality upon your schoolroom. Have small flags on walls of room, and have two crossed over the clock any way. Start a library entertainment. Get a five dollar library. Study at night. Get up your work. Don't let the place of death reign in your school. Have an occasional social evening gathering of pupils and parents at the schoolhouse. Don't mention money matters at such meetings. Dare to have an original idea in your class work. Read Page's Theory and Practice of Teaching. Consult the dictionary more. Teach the best term of school you ever taught. Do your

work so well that if any one ever does better work in that district he will be obliged to do remarkably well indeed."

THE HABIT OF PRECISION.—There are some valuable thoughts suggested in the subjoined article from an exchange, which says :

"There is no habit that young people can acquire that is likely to be so valuable to them in every relation of life as the habit of being exact. Indefiniteness is a crying fault of youth. It is an easy thing to get into slipshod habits of thought and work. Such work may be brilliant, but unless work is directed toward a definite purpose it is valueless. Thought that appears in brilliant flashes is as useless for guidance as the light of a jack-o'-lantern. A beacon-light must be steady and certain. The value of a fixed definite purpose in life, steadily adhered to, cannot be overestimated. It is the secret of success, and so fully is this recognized that some one has defined genius merely as the power of persistence. He who has ability to maintain a fixed purpose in spite of disappointments and apparent failures, must, in the end, win, if he is guided by honour and truth.

"Exact habits are best formed in youth. It is next to impossible for a man or woman who has grown up in 'happy-go-lucky' habits of work to turn back and learn to be exact. Parents often excuse inaccuracy and careless ways in children on account of their youth. It is a great mistake to do this. While youth cannot be justly burdened with the cares of age, yet whatever a young person is called on to do should be accurately done. The common habit of acquiring a smattering of many things should be discouraged as a vice. It is far better for the young student to have two studies and pursue these to the definite purpose of comprehending them thoroughly than to take up a dozen, of which he can only secure a frivolous knowledge.

"The habit of giving simple, accurate information is a rare and valuable one. Not one person in ten can give definite, clear directions on any stated subject of which they have full knowledge. Yet this is a habit which successful business men are compelled to acquire. The trained specialist in any branch of art or science is chiefly valuable because he has learned to crystalize his information and reduce it from vaporous theory to something that can be made practical. From the earliest childhood, children can be taught to be exact and clear. This is the chief value of the kin-

dergarten system, and it should be supplemented by home training for the same object. Children who learn to know what they are taught clearly and definitely will have nothing to unlearn, no superstitions and false ideas to correct when they reach maturer years. An early training in definite, correct methods of work has trained the mind as well as the hand, so that the small student from these schools is at once ready to enter the paths of higher knowledge by a royal road."

SUGGESTIONS.—Among the following suggestions, taken from the *Educational Review*, are many that will help the teacher in his daily work.

The teacher should be enthusiastic, energetic; thus will he impress the pupils with the idea that the subjects taught in school are most important.

The teacher should avoid seeming to be cold and uninterested, and yet should guard against being nervous and excitable. Lively interest expresses what he should be. The teacher should not laugh at the mistakes of his pupils, nor draw attention to natural or acquired defects for the purpose of inducing ridicule.

The teacher should aim to induce inquiry. If he cannot always answer the question elicited, let him acknowledge it, and set to work with the pupil to find out the answer.

The teacher should not be too ready to help a pupil out of a difficulty. The recitation is for the purpose of inciting pupils to think. If it fails in this it fails utterly.

The pupils should look forward to the recitation with something of the pleasure that an athlete looks forward to the field sports.

The teacher's manner should be such as would encourage the timid. These you have always with you, and they need your aid and sympathy more than any others in the school-room. The teacher must remember that he is being constantly read by his pupils; he must therefore avoid all mannerisms—all vulgar practices. All things that cultivated persons should avoid, he should.

The teacher should not take up the subject as though it were an old story to him. Get all the new lights on your subject you can, and always come to the class with something fresh.

Be always prompt in calling and dismissing classes. The habit of punctuality and promptness is as necessary a

part of education as a Latin declension. If class work is done promptly it becomes a habit with the pupil.

The teacher should show by his manner that his mind is on the answers the pupils give in forming other questions.

The teacher should show himself independent of the text-book—should teach the subject, not the book.

The teacher should aim to reach the lower half of the class.

The teacher should not allow his attention to be given exclusively to one pupil, that others may feel themselves unnoticed—then is the opportunity for disorder.

Teachers, govern your temper—never scold—never nag—be pleasant—be firm.

Do not take up the time of recitation in reprimanding pupils. Discipline by the eye, or a simple shake of the head. Leave reprimanding until the close of the session, then take the offender by himself.

The teacher should be watchful that his pupils use correct speech. Even in the arithmetic class you may teach English.

The teacher's own language should be well chosen. What you are in speech your pupils will probably become.

The teacher should remember that the pupil is daily reading his character, and as a rule forms a correct estimate; let him therefore have noble purposes in life and strive after the attainment of a noble character worthy the emulation of his pupils.

Unless the teacher is himself advancing, the pupils will not advance. As Dr. Arnold says, "All prefer to drink from a spring rather than a pond."

A teacher animated by a noble purpose in life, an unfeigned love for his pupils, a consuming desire for their moral as well as intellectual welfare, cannot fail to produce impressions for good, lasting as eternity.

To none are given so many opportunities for good as to the teacher. None performing their work in a merely perfunctory manner, will do so much harm as will the teacher.

Insufficient pecuniarily as the rewards usually meted to teachers are, to the faithful will come the "well done."

—YOUR younger pupils will appreciate the following lines which we reproduce for their especial benefit from one of our exchanges. Ask them to correct the errors made by the children.

THE SPELLING MATCH.

Ten little children, standing in a line,
 "F-u-l-y, fully," then there were nine.
 Nine puzzled faces, fearful of their fate,
 "C-i-l-l-y, silly," then there were eight.
 Eight pairs of blue eyes, bright as stars of heaven,
 "B-u-s-s-y, busy," then there were seven.
 Seven grave heads, shaking in an awful fix,
 "L-a-i-d-y, lady," then there were six.
 Six eager darlings, determined each to strive,
 "D-u-t-i-e, duty," then there were five.
 Five hearts so anxious, beating more and more,
 "S-c-o-l-l-a-r, scholar," then there were four.
 Four mouths like rosebuds on a red rose tree,
 "M-e-r-y, merry," then there were but three.
 Three pairs of pink ears, listening keen and true,
 "O-n-l-e-y, only," then there were two.
 Two sturdy laddies, ready both to run,
 "T-u-r-k-y, turkey," then there was but one.
 One head of yellow hair, bright in the sun,
 "H-e-r-o, hero," the spelling match was won.

Books Received and Reviewed.

[All Exchanges and Books for Review should be sent direct to the Editor of the *Educational Record*, Quebec, P. Q.]

The *Canadian Magazine* for February is largely devoted to mining in Canada, three splendidly illustrated articles on that interesting subject being given. Dr. George Stewart has a paper on "The Premiers of Quebec since 1867," which is embellished with ten handsome photographs. David Christie Murray speaks of Robert Louis Stevenson in the second instalment of his series of articles on "My Contemporaries in Fiction." The number reflects great credit on its publishers.

The February *Ladies' Home Journal* opens with a striking article, "When Kossuth rode up Broadway,"—the fourth of the series of "Great Personal Events." "The Senate and House of Representatives," is the title of ex-President Harrison's paper. "The Origin of our Popular Songs," is another most interesting article. The scope and interest of its articles are what has ensured the lasting success of the *Journal* as a family paper.

In the *Atlantic Monthly* for February, there is a valuable paper by Mary C. Robbins on "Village Improvement Societies." Colonel Higginson continues his "Cheerful Yesterdays" with reminiscences of the religious fermenting time in New England. Professor D. C. Gilman speaks of the results of the "Peabody Education Fund." Paul Leicester Ford's novel, "The Story of an Untold Love," gains in interest in the second instalment. The book reviews and Contributor's Club are as usual very good.

In the *Ladies' Home Journal* for January is a delightful article, "The Personal Side of Prince Bismarck," by George W. Smalley. General Greely tells about "What there is at the North Pole," and Jerome K. Jerome contributes a bright short story. The departments are, as usual, good. The cover of the number is by Edwin A. Abbey, the famous illustrator, and is a splendid composition.

HARLAND'S TEST CARDS, by John Harland, Montreal. It is a pity that the idea embodied in Mr. Harland's publications has been so defeated by the numerous errors, typographical and otherwise, that mar the cards. The series on English History gives a very good synopsis and if more care had been taken when the cards were in proof, we should have no hesitation in recommending it for use by older pupils when preparing for examinations, but in view of the errors we have just referred to, pupils using them would need to be well up in their work to avoid being misled at times. On the first card, for instance, we find a reference to the "Phœnicians," and further on the "Venerable Bede" and the battle of "Porctiers" are spoken of. On card 16 we are informed, probably by the printer, that Lady Jane Grey wrote the "Schollemastre," and on card 22, that Thomas à Becket was a clever "courier." When we find it stated baldly that Mary Queen of Scots, was "a bigot and a hypocrite," we are inclined to ask on whose authority such an unqualified assertion is made. Besides, the typographical arrangement of the notes is often misleading, as when we are led to think that Gibbon wrote "Our Greatest Historian;" but is the printer responsible for the information that Wordsworth wrote "The Ancient Mariner?" There are many other less important mistakes which should never have escaped the wide-awake proof-reader, but enough has been said, we think, to show that unless a corrected edition of the cards is issued, great care will have to be

exercised in their use. The test cards in arithmetic appear to be well graded and have been prepared with a view to aiding candidates for the A. A. examinations. It is too difficult a matter to readily appreciate the correctness of the examples given, for us to express an opinion, and so we must believe them to be better prepared in this respect than the History cards. The cards dealing with the metric system will be found very useful in the arithmetic class. Answer cards are also furnished which may be retained by the teacher, while those containing the exercises are distributed to the pupils to test the knowledge they have acquired.

Correspondence, &c.

To the Editor of the EDUCATIONAL RECORD,

DEAR SIR,—I see by the RECORD that the Protestant Committee has decided to issue no diplomas after September 1st except to those who have had at least four months' training in the Normal School. Will you kindly inform me (1) whether this will prevent diplomas being given as a result of the Central Board Examination next June to those who have not had such training, and (2) whether, if diplomas are issued, the holders will be allowed to commence teaching in September without taking any such training?

Yours, etc.,

L. W.

ANS.—(1) No. (2) Yes.—Ed. ED. R.