



# THE NEW BRUNSWICK JOURNAL of EDUCATION.

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF TEACHERS.

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SAINT JOHN, N. B.

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All remittances should be sent in a registered letter, addressed "JOURNAL OF EDUCATION, St. John, N. B."

There were 205 applicants for license at the last termal examination of the N. B. Normal school: 0 for grammar school; 9 for first-class; 104 for second, and 83 for third.

The result of the entrance examinations at the Normal school was as follows: Of the 122 who stood examination, 66 passed successfully, 39 were admitted conditionally, and 21 were rejected; 68 were admitted by certificate or license, making the total number enrolled for the term 160.

A WRITER in the Sackville Post criticises the action of a local school board, in selecting a stranger to fill a position, to the exclusion of local teachers of excellent ability. We are not informed of the circumstances of the case, and are not in a position, therefore, to give any opinion. One sentence, if the correspondent is correct in his assumption, is deserving of the attention of thoughtful persons who are interested in our educational progress:

\* \* \* The crying evil is the lack of age and experience found in the teaching staff of to-day. The greatest interest, the one most vital to the permanent progress of our people, is at this time largely committed to boys and girls, the great majority of whom have not the most remote idea of teaching over four or five years, the young gentlemen being largely aspirants for the clerical, legal or medical professions, or civil list promotion, and yet these are chosen in preference to men who have devoted years to the work, whose experience alone is worth more than all the unearned recommendations that these come armed with.

**IMPORTANT TO SCHOOL TEACHERS.**—The legality of keeping a child in school after regular hours for not learning his lessons was tested in an English law court recently, when the mother of a little boy had the head master of the school he attended before the court. The judge, in giving his decision, said that the master had no authority to impose upon the children the duty of studying at home, and that he, therefore, had no right to detain him, and he also said that in his opinion the detention amounted to an assault. As the plaintiff in the case did not wish to press it, the master was discharged on paying costs. Canadian teachers can take the lesson from *Gaulth Mercury*.

We think Truro teachers should take notice and govern themselves accordingly. Another matter is the whipping of children. We think the teacher exceeds his or her authority and breaks the law when they undertake to whip a child. When they cannot teach them without whipping them, they should send them home to their parents instead. — *Truro Sun*.

Such comments as the above are of doubtful propriety, and harm is liable to be done instead of good by their publication. Frequent and injudicious keeping in after hours is demoralizing to a school, and the same is true, to a greater degree, of frequent resort to corporal punishment. The teacher who is able to govern without resorting to either, except on very rare occasions, has grappled

with and solved a great educational problem. But such power comes from nature, tact, experience. To expect that these are possessed by all teachers to the degree that shall enable them to govern without resort to force is perhaps to expect too much. We have faith that we are gradually approaching that happy era when all cruel and barbarous punishments will have been abolished in our schools, and when love and tact will be the governing powers. But society will have to advance in this respect before such a state of things can exist. In the meantime, gentlemen of the quill, let your ardor for reform be tempered with moderation and wisdom. Such paragraphs as the above do much to weaken the authority of the teacher and raise disaffection and revolt. Sensible parents would much rather have a little wholesome severity exercised in the school-room than that their children should be turned out of school with the prospect of having their prospects in life marred. Let us aim rather to lead to a better state of things by enforcing the precepts of obedience, and respect to authority, than by injudicious reflections recommending what may be productive of injury and discontent.

### WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS.

The value of written examinations in schools depends altogether upon the object in view. If they are designed to point out to the teacher where he has failed in being explicit and thorough in his teaching, and to show him that the student has thoroughly mastered the subjects taught, the end gained is a very important one. Writing upon a subject throws the pupil upon his own resources, gives him facility in expressing his thoughts, gives him encouragement and self-reliance, if, as we have before said, the teaching has been explicit and thorough.

But the teacher is the one most benefited by these written examinations after all. Going carefully over the papers before him, he is weighing the effectiveness of his own teaching at the same time that he is testing the effect of it upon the minds of his scholars. If the result is satisfactory he is encouraged, and can with confidence lead his pupils into higher paths of knowledge. But too often these results are not satisfactory. They are even discouraging. The teacher finds that listlessness and dullness, his inveterate foes, have not been overcome. It is wrong to indulge in fault-finding at such results, unless the fault be placed on the proper shoulders. If the teacher has judgment and common sense he will not waste the time in regrets and disgust over the mental torpor, or defects in the previous training of his pupils, but he will see that his duty to himself and to them requires that he exert himself afresh to overcome those defects which this examination test brings to light.

There is no subject of common-school routine that has been more perverted in the hands of injudicious persons than the written examination. Teachers who do not recognize its educational value have abused it. Writers who make up their minds from viewing one side of a case, have condemned it as barbarous, and as an instrument of torture to the rising generation. Perhaps it is to a certain extent.

Teachers use up their working power

in hours of exhausting labor over examination papers; pupils have been tortured also in racking their brains to discover the answers to senseless catch questions. But those who would do away with written examinations in the school have nothing to propose as a substitute by which a student's scholarship and progress can be correctly tested. They would abolish what some may abuse but which others make one of the most valuable class exercises. By it pupils may be trained to think clearly and intelligently, to condense and make as precise as possible their information on a given subject, and to exhibit to others the amount of exact knowledge they may have acquired. The one who is chiefly interested in observing this growth of knowledge is the teacher, for the reasons above stated.

But how can results be secured without subtracting too much from the working power of the teacher? By making occasionally the examination of written papers a class exercise. The writer has adopted this plan, at intervals, for many years, and his own experience and that of others who have adopted the same plan, convinces him that it is one of the best exercises that can be adopted. This would, of course, be possible only with students in advanced grades. Papers may be exchanged and examined by the pupils, the teacher directing the award in each case. Thus a question may be looked at from all points of view, and many interesting facts in connection with it brought out, eliminating from the replies, whatever may be trivial, incorrect, or foreign to the subject. Both teacher and pupil are benefited by this process of looking at and examining a question from many points of view, and the judgment is trained in deciding what is valuable or trivial in the answers. The process is in the highest degree educational, and may be resorted to with advantage at intervals, say of one month, for purposes of instruction merely. When the student comes to the test of an examination at the end of the term, when other examiners, not stricter, though, than his fellow pupils, are to estimate his papers, he will welcome the test, conscious that his knowledge, his power of precise expression, and readiness, have been improved in the training he has had in making written examinations a part of class work.

THE London school board is true to British traditions; it refuses, by a vote of thirty to fifteen, to abolish flogging in the schools, but it decides that the power shall be restricted to the headmasters, who are told, in addition, that the more thoroughly qualified and skillful a teacher is, the less necessary will it be for him to resort to corporal punishment. The idea that flogging breaks the average boy's spirit, or humiliates him in such a degree as to injure him, is a modern American nabby-pabby notion. Boys, as a general rule, take a flogging as they take any other punishment brought upon them by their sins, as a sort of purgation, the pain of which they should bear manfully. They take their licking as they would pay a debt, without a sense of shame or disgrace except that which is caused by the offence.

PROFESSOR GOLDWIN SMITH, it is reported, will shortly return to England from Canada and take up his residence at Oxford.

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For the JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.]

## AMERICAN CHILDREN.

English people generally are surprised at the note of training American parents adopt in regard to children. We all know that in England the parents as a rule are far more strict than the parents on this side of the Atlantic. The children are not allowed to follow their own ideas of right and wrong. It may be safely said without fear of contradiction that the English children are very much more respectful to those in authority and to their elders than American children. I do not propose to uphold for one moment the "mock respectfulness" which is given to those persons who have no claim to respect whatever, outside of their wealth or inherited position. Let us hope that this is dying out, and that in the near future it will be reckoned among the things of the past. If we look back a half century over the political reforms of England the conclusion is forced upon us that many of the old customs are dying out and giving place to those of a more practical nature. Why do the gentry of England send their children to the great public schools of England? The answer is easy. The strict discipline demanded at these institutions makes the youth understand that the world was not made for him. "Earth my footstool, my canopy the skies." If these same children remained with their parents they would grow up and act as they pleased either because they would not or could not take the necessary time and patience to train the youthful mind. Hence they prefer delegating this to the schoolmaster. In America the parents as a rule are not wealthy enough to send their children away from home to be educated. Consequently the training of the youth of this country is almost entirely in the parent's hands. In many, many cases I fear they are guilty of the sin of omission. It is not a very uncommon thing to hear children give impertinent answers to their parents; many a time it turns into a battle of words between parent and child. When a boy or girl who has such training at home goes to school every person is aware of what the effect would be. The impertinence is hurled at the teacher with increased power until the punishment so well deserved is meted out. In the playground, in going from and returning to school, the other children come in contact with this unruly boy or girl and in time they will fall into this degrading habit. If parents could only believe that in school many boys are not the meek and quiet youths of the home circle the teacher's trials would be lessened. Often we hear a mother say, "I would like to catch a teacher flogging my boy." "A mother's love," you say. I say, "A mother's curse." If any child does a wrong is he not to be punished? Yet perhaps the same mother, if a starving man broke into her house merely to obtain some food, or happened to take some without breaking in the house, would call upon the law to punish such an one. Worse still, many a mother plays the hypocrite and conceals as many of her child's evil deeds as possible from the father. A mother's love? When in future years this youth, a man, is called upon to pay the penalty for some crime committed on account of defective training in childhood, you will still cry, "A mother's love." Many a parent can remember a well deserved flogging at the hands of a teacher. Suppose the Board of Education should say, "No corporal punishment is allowed in any school," what would be the effect? The pupil knows that you dare not touch him, and he does exactly as he pleases. Moral suasion is not the same anodyne as birch suasion. At the former he can laugh, at the latter he dare not. "Spare the rod and spoil the child," is an old proverb.

American children as a rule are given too much latitude. If you visit the skating rink, the theatre, in fact any place of amusement you will find children present who, if they should not be peacefully sleeping, at least should be around the family hearth. I do not wish to convey the idea that children should be deprived of amusement. In fact one evil of home life is, that there is a dearth of amusement in the family circle. The outside

sports can be indulged in at the proper time. In short let the little folks have an abundance of amusement and they will grow up better men and women. Let them even dance. Although a great deal is said against dancing, all I have to remark is this: If a young lady or gentleman must refrain from dancing to keep themselves "spotless from the world," the only effectual way would be to shut themselves up in monasteries far from the haunts of men. Trials only show the stuff we are made of. Difficulties make a man.

"The five seven times tried this;  
Seven times tried that judgment is,  
That did never choose amiss."

Again, one has only to take a stroll through the streets of St. John and Portland, to visit the various railway stations and such places to find children of all ages late in the evening wandering about. Do children learn to swear at home? Do they learn to drink intoxicating liquors in the family circle? Do they have instilled into their minds from the lips of a parent evil thoughts?

J. W. H.

For the JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.]

## A PROPOSED REFORM.

BY JOHN BRITAIN.

The Board of Education has come to the conclusion that one year is not too long a time for pupil-teachers to devote to special preparation for their work. No argument is now needed to prove the wisdom of this decision; but another reform is still more urgently demanded.

The function of the Normal school is, I take it, two-fold: primarily, to give a thorough professional training; secondarily, to instruct the pupil-teachers in those subjects which should be included in our public school course, but which are not now effectively taught, owing to defects in the education of our present teachers. Hence, every candidate for admission to the Normal school should be required to pass a *thorough* examination in all those branches of knowledge, required for the class of license for which he applies, that can be taught in the public schools.

This regulation would not only afford a stimulus to teachers to do more effective work, but would reach the people and give all those (a very large number) who have children, relatives, or friends, preparing for the Normal school, a stronger personal interest in the maintenance of good schools, and a greater willingness to contribute adequately to their support. The retention of the advanced pupils in the schools for a year or two longer would have a beneficial effect upon the others; and a greater number would receive the benefits of a good English education. The facilities offered by the Grammar and Superior schools, also, would be more largely taken advantage of by those working for the higher grades of license.

After passing this initiatory examination, the candidate might, if he desire it, be granted a temporary license for one year, of the class for which he worked, a reduced provincial allowance to be paid him when he had successfully completed one-half or the whole of the required course at the Normal school. This would be much better than granting local licenses to comparatively illiterate persons, and would materially aid worthy young people of small means in securing the necessary training. In case, however, the supply of teachers should equal the demand, these temporary licenses could be withheld.

If this regulation were adopted, the Normal school could attend solely to its proper work. Surely one year is not too great a time for the acquisition of a competent knowledge of the powers and capabilities of the human mind; of the scope, aims, and methods of public education; and for the practice necessary to make this knowledge effectively available in the school-room.

But, besides this, there are several subjects which figure in the prescribed curriculum which, at present, serve for no other purpose than to excite the wrathful attacks of ignorant and narrow-minded niggards, and the praises of liberal and philanthropic foreign-

ers. But a small proportion of our teachers, for instance, even of those of the higher grades, are capable of teaching vocal music successfully, or of giving effective instruction in hygiene, sanitary and agricultural chemistry, and local natural history—subjects which would contribute quite as much as any others in the curriculum to promote the moral and physical well-being of the rising generation, and to make them contented and happy in their homes and country. Hitherto this state of things has been unavoidable; the adoption of proposed reform would, with the aid of the Normal school, gradually supply this defect in our system.

## CONCERNING NOISE.

There must be a reasonable quietness in the school-room. But how shall it be had where there are forty children with eighty feet, and sometimes eighty children with one hundred and sixty feet? Books and slates will drop, pencils will grate, and sometimes lips will whisper. Noise is a pleasure to the pupil, too; he enjoys the hum and buzz that the teacher dislikes. How shall we secure quietness?

Mr. Sharp will say: "No trouble about it, sir; give me a good strap and I'll make it quiet. There is no noise in my school." Very likely; but that is not the kind of quietness that is wanted; it is too much like the improvement in the colored people's religion that resulted from the earthquake in Charleston. That kind of quietness is wanted that the young pupil produces by his own efforts—self-made quietness, or "subjective quietness," as the philosopher would say. To produce that the teacher will "lay awake nights and study of days."

The following has come to us from a successful teacher, who writes not for the purpose of display, but to help others who have not had the experience he has had.

"I once found myself in a school-room that gave me a great deal of trouble, and will tell you how it became perfection, for such it really did. There were sixty boys out of a live village in it; they formed the lowest grades of the advanced or grammar school. There were some 'hard customers'—sons of the butchers, the canal men, and tanners. I assured them, over and over, that they were there not merely to study and recite lessons, but to grow better and nobler in every way. I put on a long strip of paper the words, 'We come here to grow stronger, nobler, and better.' I put this up before them on the wall over my desk. This matter I discussed very frequently during the first days and weeks.

"Now during the first week there had been noise, and a great deal of it; but I found much of it came from carelessness. I trained the boys to go out and come in with care; opening and shutting the door and the desks was practised over and over; coming to the recitation seat was also practised over and over; getting out the books, and putting them away, was a matter to which much time was given. When the second week began, more than half the work had been accomplished.

"It may seem to many that the training might have been carried on just as well without addressing the moral side of the pupil, but that is a great mistake. The teacher must in some way give moral stamina. To say, 'don't do this, and don't do that,' will injure a pupil if kept up too long. He must begin to act from principles that lie within him, from the desire to do the noble thing.

"To keep the feet from being shoved backward and forward on a sandy floor, was a problem. I told the boys that it injured our school, and proposed to appoint a boy to attend to it and report who made no noise to speak of, and to admonish

by a tap of his pencil on the desk when there was noise. This was a great help to quietness.

"We sang pretty songs (at first very roughly) several times a day; we discussed our school-room a great deal. The pupils would be asked, 'What can we do to improve our school?' One would suggest something, and then we would discuss it. Another would suggest something, and that would be discussed. Then we would try to put these things into practice. I boldly asked them, 'Is there anything that I do or do not do, that I should do?' 'Am I kind enough?' 'Do I help you enough?'"

"It took a little time for these seeds to grow up and bear fruit, but they did, and the result was perfection. All tried hard to attain quietness as being a thing needed for real progress. This I found to be an important point. If a pupil keeps still simply to please a teacher, or in fear of a teacher, he is building on the sand. Yet theory is not enough. There must be steady training in all the small things—the walking, the writing, the speaking—that they be done with the least noise possible."—*Teacher's Institute.*

### SHAKESPEARE.

[Selected for the JOURNAL by "E."]

I doubt whether Shakespeare ever had any thought at all of making his personages speak characteristically. In most instances, I conceive—probably in all—he drew character correctly, because he could not avoid it; and would never have attained, in that department, such excellence as he has, if he had made any studied efforts for it. And the same may be said of Homer, and those other writers who have excelled the most in delineating character. Shakespeare's peculiar genius consisted chiefly in his forming the same distinct and consistent idea of an imaginary person that an ordinary man forms of a real and well-known individual. We usually conjecture pretty accurately concerning a very intimate acquaintance, how he would speak or act on any supposed occasion; and if any one should report to us his having said or done something quite out of character, we should be at once struck with the inconsistency; and we often represent to ourselves, and describe to others, without any conscious effort, not only the substance of what he would have been likely to say, but even his characteristic phrases and looks.

Shakespeare could no more have endured an expression from the lips of Macbeth, inconsistent with the character originally conceived, than an ordinary man could attribute to his most respectable acquaintance the behavior of a ruffian, or to a European the features and hue of a negro. Merely from the vividness of the original conception, characteristic conduct and language spontaneously suggested themselves to the great dramatist's pen. He called his personages into being, and left them, as it were, to speak and act for themselves.—*Archbishop Whately.*

### READING.

There is more written than read in our day. Yea, more published than read. And, generally, what is read, is done in a very cursory manner. Very few in this age, read as did some of our forefathers, when books and papers were scarce. Hence many superficial thinkers, and very little profound thought or mental culture. Nearly everybody wants to know a little about everything, and they do. A few desire to know a great deal about some things, and they read such books as give them the desired knowledge. But they do not read them as newspapers are generally read. They digest them, and thus make their contents their own. This is the kind of reading that will develop men and women.

It may be that newspapers are read as carefully as their contents demand. This may sometimes be the case, not always. There are occasional articles containing, in a condensed form, a vast amount of philosophic and scientific truth, which ought to be perused more than once with care and fixed thought. Much time is thus saved, for a few columns in the paper has all the leading truths of quite a volume. But these articles are never read by superficial men and women, who are content with surface knowledge. There is doubtless more reading in the world to-day than there ever was; but in proportion to the population, not as many great men. It must, however, be remembered, that the essential qualifications of a great man one hundred years ago would not give him that designation at

the present time. Education is constantly giving to multitudes some of the principal elements of greatness. But only a few come out prominently as distinguished men or women. Providential openings are not forthcoming; they remain among the undistinguished great, who now far outnumber the other class.

There is a vast amount of useless reading at the present time, and still more that is positively injurious. What to read is a question quite as important as how to read. Books, magazines and papers are so numerous that all cannot be read. There must then be selection and refusal. Much precious time is wasted, more than wasted, in perusing a certain class of novels. The brain may be fuller of thought than when the reading commenced, but it had better be empty. Bacon truly says,—"Reading makes a man full," but full of what? In some cases emptiness is better than fullness. There are some men, however, as Pliny says of a certain man, "He picked something out of everything he read," gather a little grain of much chaff.

In view of the value of time such a course is not wise, it does not pay. Dr. Johnson says, "What we read with inclination makes a stronger impression." He goes so far as to state, "If a man begins to read in the middle of a book, and feels an inclination to go on, let him not quit it to go to the beginning." Bacon's advice on this subject is good, "Read not to contradict or refute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider."

J. Beaumont's words are worthy of consideration—"Some men may read authors as gentlemen use flowers, only for delight and smell, to please their fancy and refine their taste. Others, like the bee, extract only the honey, the wholesome precepts, leaving the rest as of little value; in reading, we should care for both, though for the last the most. The one serves to instruct the mind, the other fits her to tell what she hath learned."

"Few men," says Foster, "have been sufficiently sensible of the importance of that economy in reading which selects, almost exclusively, the very first order of books. Why should a man, except for some special reason, read a very inferior book at the very time that he might be reading one of the highest order?"

Newspapers may help to cultivate a taste for reading, but they do not all do so. Too many ponder to the vitiated taste and desire of sensational readers.—*G. O. H. in the Halifax Critic.*

### MISCELLANEOUS APOPTHEGMS.

[Selected from writings of Archbishop Whately by "E."]

THE FIRST business of a teacher,—first not only in point of time, but of importance,—should be to excite not merely a general curiosity on the subject of study, but a particular curiosity on particular points in that subject.

TO TEACH one who has no curiosity to learn, is to sow a field without ploughing it. Curiosity is as much the parent of attention, as attention is of memory.

EDUCATION, as usually conducted, is addressed to the memory alone, and that is the reason, one reason at least, why clever boys, as they are supposed to be, do not turn out clever men, and *vice versa*. If a boy remembers all that is told him, he does as much as is usually required of him; and no wonder, for he is told just everything, and is never called upon to exert his own powers except in retaining; and then it is made a wonder that a person who has been so well taught, and who, perhaps, was quick in learning and remembering, should not prove an able man, which is about as reasonable as to expect that a capacious cistern, if filled, should be converted into a perennial fountain.

CULTIVATE not only the corn fields of your mind, but the pleasure grounds also.

### LITERARY NOTES.

WE welcome to our exchange list a new educational journal—*THE SCHOOL TEACHER*—published monthly at Winston, North Carolina. It is devoted to approved methods and principles of teaching, recognizing the growing demand for better instruction and better teachers. To judge from the first number it will be a valuable addition to current educational literature. It is under the management of Messrs. J. L. Tomlinson and W. A. Blair, editors and proprietors.

*THE BOOKMART*, for January, is a beautiful and very excellent holiday number, the title page new and appropriate, and bearing many evidences that it is growing in influence, and that its pages are prepared for scholarly and critical readers. Lovin

of rare tid-bits in literature can revel in its pages, while the searcher for rare and curious information about books will find much to interest him and gratify his curiosity. The *Bookmart* Publishing Company, Pittsburg, Pa., issues this valuable monthly at \$1.50 per annum.

*THE CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL* comes this month in a new dress and under new management—J. E. Wells, M. A., editor and publisher. It is much improved in appearance, and gives evidence of fresh vigor in educational subjects. But it is not "the only educational paper published fortnightly." Down here by the sea is a *JOURNAL OF EDUCATION*, published fortnightly, which hopes to reach a green old age.

### WHAT EVERY GIRL OUGHT TO LEARN.

She should learn to use her senses to the best advantage, especially her hands and eyes, in other words she should have an "education by doing."

She should learn how to wear a calico dress, and to wear it like a queen.

She should learn how to sew, darn, and mend.

She should learn how to cultivate flowers and to keep the kitchen garden.

She should learn to make the neatest room in the house.

She should learn to have nothing to do with intemperate or dissolute young men.

She should learn that tight lacing is uncomely as well as injurious to health.

She should learn to regard the morals and habits, and not money in selecting her associates.

She should learn that 100 cents make a dollar.

She should learn how to arrange the parlor and the library.

She should learn that there is nothing more conducive to happiness than a comfortable house dress. The idea that anything is good enough about the house and in the kitchen is a very grave mistake.

She should learn to observe the old rule: "A place for everything, and everything in its place."

She should learn that music, drawing, and painting are real accomplishments in the home, and are not to be neglected if there be time and money for their use.

She should learn the important truism: "The more she lives within her income the more she will save, and the farther she will get away from the poor-house."

She should learn that a good, steady, church-going mechanic, farmer, clerk, or teacher, without a cent, is worth more than forty loafers or non-producers in broadcloth.

She should learn to embrace every opportunity for reading, and to select such books as will give her the most useful and practical information in order to make the best progress in earlier as well as later home and school life.

She should learn that a plain, short dress, comfortably made, is a very regiment of strength, and wash goods are decidedly preferable, because, with a clean dress, even if it is only a cheap print or homespun, a woman puts on a kind of beauty, and there is something in clean clothes marvelously helpful to being clean-tempered.

She should learn how to manage a house. Whether she marry or whether she do not, the knowledge will almost certainly be of service, and at some time of her life will probably be a necessity to her.

"A girl, whether rich or poor, whose education has been conducted upon a plane so high that to become a fashionable idler or an inconsequent gossip or dawdler would be impossible, is the one who will be most earnest in considering the holy purposes, in fitting herself for the responsibilities, of the most serious step of her life—marriage."—*Practical Teacher.*

**PROSPEROUS.**—The business of the Ontario Mutual Life Co., for 1883 shows an increase of 80 per cent. over that for 1882. This company's record for reliability and promptness will doubtless make their eighteenth year a still greater success. Mr. E. M. Sipprell manages their business for N. B. and P. E. Island.

## DARK DAYS IN THE 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 masculine savage you have to exercise strong self-control to keep your hands off half a score of the little school devils 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 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 enjoyed it and loved 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 that yours is indeed a "delightful task," and are glad at heart that you have chosen so pleasant, an 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—an influence which gravitates, in accordance with some occult and malignant law, towards the school-rooms of the land, there to make its presence felt in a reign of universal gloom and confusion? 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*, 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 troublesome time 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 un wisdom 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 collisions."—*Canada School Journal*.

The colonies of Australia and the neighboring islands have some twenty scientific societies, with a membership of between 2500 and 3000. These organizations are to meet in 1888 for the purpose of forming an Australian Association for the advancement of science, similar to the important associations now existing in England, France and the United States.

## EDUCATIONAL ADVANCE.

We think we have referred to the matter before, but we would again call the attention of teachers and all interested in the educational affairs of the country to the need of an educational journal published in their interest. Every enterprising teacher, and we are glad to believe that the majority in our province are of this class, feels the need of a good periodical that shall be the medium through which he shall be able to communicate with his brother teachers, and which shall keep him acquainted with all the latest developments in the educational affairs of his province. There are a number of such journals in the upper provinces, but while they are attending pretty carefully to the interests of those provinces, they are of comparatively little worth to our teachers of the maritime provinces. The teachers of this province need a journal of their own, or one in which they can have a prominent part. A small journal could, without doubt, be published here, and be of great value to the teaching profession of the province. New Brunswick has such a periodical, the *NEW BRUNSWICK JOURNAL OF EDUCATION*, well conducted and appreciated, by the teachers there. But in order that the journal may possess the strength that comes through union, we should like to see the educational boards of the other maritime provinces uniting with that of New Brunswick in the production of an enlarged periodical embracing the three countries. With an editor at Halifax and another at Charlottetown to co-operate with the present staff, the attention to the interests of the several provinces would be assured and a publication placed in the hands of the teachers of the maritime provinces that would be equal in point of merit to any that now find their way here.

From an editorial in the *NEW BRUNSWICK JOURNAL* a short time since we are led to believe that such a proposition would meet with the heartiest approval on the part of the promoters of that periodical. Let our educational authorities consider the matter.—*Kentville New Star*.

## PERSONAL.

J. S. Horseman, B. A., formerly principal of the St. Andrews schools, is now on the staff of the grammar school, Woodstock.

S. W. Irons, recently principal of the North Head, Grand Manan, school, has been appointed to the vacancy in the Moncton schools, caused by the death of J. G. McCurdy. Mr. Irons is a successful teacher and his departure from Grand Manan will be regretted.

Inspector Wetmore is visiting the schools of Sunbury on the south side of the river St. John. These, with the parish of Peter'sville, will engage his attention until the middle of February.

Inspector Boudreau intended to begin his tour of inspection in the Parish of Aberdeen, Carleton County, last week. Thence he will proceed to Victoria and Matawaska Counties. All correspondence during the month of January should be addressed to him at Grand Falls, and during the month of February at Edmundston. No applicant for local license will be recommended to the Board of Education by the Inspector unless the supply of regularly licensed teachers is exhausted.—*Courier des Provinces Maritimes*.

Mr. Geo. A. Inch, principal of York street school, and Miss Mary Todd, of Milltown, St. Stephen, were married at the residence of the bride on New Year's morning, and after a wedding breakfast took the train for Fredericton. The *JOURNAL* presents its congratulations to the happy pair.

Mr. Dean, the head teacher of the Millford schools, has taken charge of the Sussex Superior school.

Mr. Colin H. Livingstone has offered a handsome prize annually to be competed for by any grade in the Portland schools that the trustees may decide upon.

Dr. and Mrs. Lyle of Swatow, China, are on a visit to this Province. Mrs. Lyle (Miss Norwood) was formerly a teacher in St. Stephen where she was highly esteemed.

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The Spectator (London, Eng.) not long ago called attention to the remarkable change in Asiatic politics caused by the sudden rise of China to a place among the "World's Powers." This change has taken place notably within the last five or six years. The French government has had its eyes opened during its recent encounters with "The Middle Kingdom." Both the army and navy of China are now organized and equipped on the most approved European models, and her coast-line fortifications are every year being strengthened, so that she becomes yearly increasingly formidable. Though she may not yet be able to defeat a first-class Power, she is certainly able to inflict so much damage with so little loss that even a first-class Power will hesitate to challenge her without the gravest reason. Hitherto China has acted solely, or mainly, on the defensive, and wishes only to be let alone, a seemingly reasonable enough wish, and one which it is to be hoped other nations may have sense enough to respect; for it is not easy to predict the consequences that might ensue should so populous and resourceful a nation be provoked to aggression. There are two great reasons why Canada should wish friendly relations between Britain and China to continue: Our most interesting and prosperous mission work there, and the profits of the trade possible between the two countries, should this country become, as seems likely, the highway between Europe and Asia.—Ex.

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We hope to be able to answer these and other questions that have appeared recently, in the next issue of the JOURNAL.

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Grand Manan, N. B., December 18th, 1880.

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