THE EASTON GAZETTE.

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PROFESSOR ALEXANDER CHAPLAIN

Gives Convincing Reasons why the Grading System Is Defective,

AND SHOWS HOW IT CAN BE MUCH IMPROVED.

Studies Should Be Divided into Two Sections—Those Which Move Step-by-Step, as in Mathematics and Language, and those like Geography and History that Do Not Depend So Much upon Former Acquisitions of the Pupil.

To the Board of County School Commissioners.

SIRS:—One of the most prominent and most difficult problems which confronts those who are charged with the organization and administration of the public schools, especially with reference to the larger schools of cities and towns, is the plan for grading and systematizing the work and fixing rules for promotion.

Dissatisfaction among educators with the present plan of grading and promotions seems to be now almost universal; and is beginning to occupy, next to manual and industrial instruction, the prominent place in educational discussions.

Several years ago, under the direction of the United States Commissioner of Education, a number of questions bearing upon this subject were sent to the superintendents of several hundred cities, the most important of which are as follows:

1. Is it sufficient to classify with intervals of a year's work in grade of advancement between the classes, or ought the intervals to be made as small as can be done and secure classes of the normal size—say twenty to thirty pupils in each?

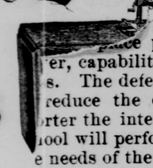
2. Is it the natural effect of classifying with intervals of a year or more between classes, that the bright pupils are held back and not given work enough to do to develop their capacity, while the teacher is obliged to expend the greater part of his time on the slow and less competent pupils?

3. Under the system of year intervals between classes, is not the progress of the whole school kept down to the pace of the slowest and weakest pupils?

4. Does not this system discourage the less mature and sluggish minds of a class, while it wastes the opportunities of the bright minds?

To these questions, five hundred and sixty-five answers were received. Less than fourteen per cent favored the class interval of a year. Less than seven per cent gave a negative answer to the second question. In answer to the third question, less than nine per cent say "No". Less than nine per cent were willing to answer the fourth question negatively.

Quite recently a city school superintendent in a houghtful article published in the Northwestern ournal of Education, said:



...es of the graded system manifests itself ... that we are compelled by our limita... pupils of varying attainments, will ...er, capabilities, and opportunities, into the same ...s. The defect is inherent; all that is possible is ...reduce the difficulty to its lowest terms. The ...rter the interval between classes, the better the ...ool will perform its function of adapting itself to ...e needs of the community. The more easy it is to ...assify pupils of varying attainments and capacities, ...e more easy it is to make special promotions where ...upils are able to do more work. The more plastic a ...ystem of schools becomes in the direction of allowing properly regulated special promotions, the better the system. The limitation here upon the creation of classes with short intervals between them is that the number of pupils in each class must not fall below twenty; otherwise we shall trench over on the other side. In a properly managed school system the classes are perpetually undergoing disintegration and reintegration. Crystallization into any one absolute form is death, just the same as in physical life. When a new class of pupils is organized, there may be a complete homogeneity, but after ten short weeks—a school term—have passed away the pupils in this class will appear in three different and divergent forms. A certain percentage may be classified as very good pupils, another definite quantity may be classified as average pupils, and still another portion as deficient pupils. Approximately twenty per cent will belong to the first element, fifty per cent to the second element, and thirty per cent to the third element of the class. And should this class of pupils be again divided on these lines and formed into three separate and distinct classes, it will be only a few short months before each class will break up again into the same relatively strongly merked three elements; very good, average, and poor pupils. This phenomenon may be styled the persistency of disintegration. The remedy for this disintegration is reintegration--reclassification, the gathering together of somewhat similar elements to form a new class, which itself again disintegrates only to be rebuilt again, and so on ad infinitum. The breaking up of classes must be foreseen and the remedy foreshadowed all through the year, but more especially the last three months of the school year. In the rebuilding of classes in a school system, the short interval between classes becomes a potent factor. There is nothing in the whole work of a superintendent that demands clearer insight and greater breadth of vision than the taking care of this disease which so remorselessly attacks classification."

It is quite evident that this city superintendent has thought and experimented only along the line of short interval promotions which has been adopted by about three prominent cities where one or more thousand pupils are gathered into a single graded school, either primary or intermediate. With hundreds of pupils in a single grade, it is necessary, of course, to divide them into such groups as can be handled efficiently by a single teacher. With the short-interval plan, the pupils of each grade are divided in such a way that the divisions are not more than ten or twelve weeks apart; and pupils are promoted to advanced work at times arbi-trarily fixed, as under the usual plan, though more frequently. Properly managed, this plan would make classification comparatively easy, as the divisions are so close together that many of the stronger pupils could pass from one division to the next higher, if given the opportunity to do so.

In the graded schools of the counties of Maryland, surrounded as they are by so many and unfavorable limiting conditions, it is impossible to adopt the system of short interval promotions; and it is undesirable to abandon class recitation and return to the method of individual instruction. The class is the best place for pupils to learn to correct wrong ideas, by seeing things through the eyes of the other members of the class. Pupils learn more from each other than they do from their teachers or from their text-books. If the work is adapted to the class, each pupil helps all, and, in return, all are benefited by each. While there is a place for individual work, individual testing, and individual instruction, there can be no place for individual recitation.

A satisfactory plan of grading and promoting must make possible an accurate classification of pupils, so that those of very nearly equal ability and advancement may be placed in the same divison; it must make such provision for frequent reclassification, especially in the lower grades where frequent readjustment is most needed, that the teacher will be able to keep the adjustment accurate; and it must permit individuals and divisions to go forward as rapidly as they can do the work well. It will not be perfectly satisfactory, however, unless it retains the advantages of class instruction without sacrificing the interest of the individual.

One of the most important advantages of such a plan of grading and promoting would be that an entire grade can recite together in those branches of study in which it is easy to hold the attention, and, therefore, in which it is possible to secure simultaneous mental activity on the part of all. The time thus saved can be used to great advantage in other branches of study, where it is absolutely necessary that the teacher shall always know exactly what knowledge each pupil possesses, for the reason that in these subjects, further progress is entirely dependent upon what has been learned, and where a step in advance is entirely dependent upon a knowledge and mastery of the steps which properly preceded it.

In these step-by-step branches of study, the pupils of the grade should be subdivided, according to ability and acquirements, into at least two groups. Better results can be obtained in these branches of study with shorter recitations, and time may be saved for individual work at those points where the study of the pupil's record shows that individual work is most needed. A study of the records of examination in the schools of Talbot County show that in the fifth, sixth, and seventh year grades, which, in our large intermediate schools, require our most watchful care and attention, more than eighty per cent of the failures are in arithmetic and grammar. By providing for groups and individual work in these subjects, the causes of failure will be removed, and very few pupils will be retarded in their progress toward proper and safe promotion.

The Recitation Period in Step-by-Step Branches of Study Should be Short. The Desk Work Period Should be Ample.

The time was when recitation occupied only a limited portion of the movement of the school, and the desk work was made chiefly important. But now the pendulum has swung too far the other way, and it is nearly all recitation, while desk, work, for grades above the third, receives very little care and attention.

For the teacher to keep in constant unity with all the grades and classes composing the school, is one of the greatest strains to be encountered; and this suggests the necessity for a systematic programme or time schedule for the movement of the whole. In this the most thoughtful care should be expended upon the arrangement of the time schedule for study and the desk work period, class reciting being sure of engagement. The instructor who harbors the impression that teaching is hearing the recitation, is almost sure to leave pupils to shift for themselves out of it. But the teacher should exhibit as much skill, and should serve the pupil as efficiently, in providing for study and the desk work period as in conducting the recitation. What the pupils are to accomplish during the desk work period should be as definitely placed in the program as the topic of recitaiion. The written programme, however, can show the employment only in general; the programme should be made out by each teacher daily. The success of the work, especially in the step-by-step branches of study, depends largely upon the preparation of the teacher in setting up for guidance and inspiration the ideal performance for each day. Without this there will be no assured precision of action, and no certainty and force in execution.

The ideal to be secured in the grade, or grades, during the study and the desk work period, is the undivided and the greatest possible stress of attention on the thought or principle to be worked out. This is unity, not primarily of pupils among themselves, but with the teachers; although the teacher may at the time be employed, or conducting a recitation. If the pupils focus their attention on the thought which the teacher has planned for them, unity among themselves will be incidentally secured. The great and principal reason for the programme of study and desk work periods, is the training of pupils into the power of self-limitation by imposing limits upon them. This gives the tehcher the best opportunity for training the pupils to hold continuously to one object of thought—to the power of concentration and continued effort.

The ideal to be secured in the class reciting, especially in the period, purposely made very short, in the step-by-step branches of study, is, that all the pupils fuse with the teacher in an unbroken effort to grasp the thought, principle, or problem under consideration The skill of the teacher in such a recitation will be summed up in the degree of undivided effort secured. The greater the amount and intensity of mental activity aroused in conjunction with the thought and purpose of the teacher, the higher should be our estimate of the teaching skill. Remember that skill in teaching can never be cold and mechanical. Whatever may be the purpose, or the thought and principle to be presented, the lesson must have been so mastered, and so wrought into the being of the teacher, that it will glow with the warmth of life.

The thought and purpose movement of the lesson

(Continued on page 8.)

MR. CHAS. W. BAKER

Writes an Interesting Letter to the Editor.

SPEAKS WELL OF GREENVILLE.

He Thinks the Presence of the Soldiers from so Many Sections Has Done Much to Bring About a Truly Fraternal Feeling between North and South.

MUCH could be said of this interesting section, its natural features, its fine climate, hospitable and refined people and bright future, as also of the patriotic American citizens who have encamped here for the winter and more than doubled its business, for many hundreds of thousands of dollars have been expended here by them during their stay. All the citizens are lavish in their praise of the good behavior of these young men, and their stay and close association with the families of the South have done more than anything else probably could ever have done to bring about a proper appreciation by the people of all sections of the good qualities of each section and the close sympathies and kindred feeling existing deep down in the hearts of all the people of this great nation. Soldiers are or have been here from New York, New Jersey, West Virginia, Massachusetts and Missouri. Of the peculiar institutions and political conditions of South Carolina and her leading men much is to be learned here, and much could be written by one with the time and the talent to describe them intelligently. I wish I had these two requisites to devote to your service. As the time draws near for mustering out, the labor of the staff department increases, and each must bear his part of the burden. In addition to our depot work we now issue to thirty-two separate detachments and organizations. It is now 11 P. M., and I am taking time from either Uncle Sam or my sleep (whichever way it is viewed) to write this.

With the exception of the "blizzard" which swept over the entire country from the Rockies to Key West, we have had no time with thermometer so low as to make one shirk ourdoor exercise on account of the cold. Rains have been rather frequent since the early part of January, but one realized that you had what is to me far worse, snowstorms, for this has been a phenomenal winter and one the equal of which cannot be remembered by the "oldest inhabitant" of any section of the Union.

I thank you in advance for the promised copy of "Legendary Lore" and shall prize it highly for its interest and worth, and especially its associations and the pleasant memories it will recall.

HIS "TALE OF WOE."

A Talbot Democrat Says the Leaders Refuse to go on the Ticket.

"A few days ago a well posted and staunch democrat from Talbot was in Centreville, says the *Record* of that town, and it goes without saying, that the political outlook of the two counties, so far at least as to whom the nominations would go, was talked over in a friendly way. As the aspirants for every place on the ticket in Queen Anne's are so numerous, it was impossible to give definite or intelligent information of the coming nominees. The Talbot democrat stated that his "tale of woe" was that many of the leading democrats of Talbot refused to accept places of the ticket, in other words, could not be induced or persuaded to become candidates."

The "well posted" democrat evidently does not consider that Chas. S. Carrington, J. Harry Covington, J. Frank Turner, who are aspirants for the State's Attorneyship are 'leaders' and that Chas. E. Nicols, W. T. A. Lockerman and Sol. Pippin, who are said to desire the jail as an official residence, are not 'leaders' and a host of others, enough indeed to fill twenty times over the number of available offices. The 'hankering' for offices seems to be chronic with Talbot democrats,

Do not buy your **Easter Millinery** or other spring outfittings till the **Easter Opening** of **Annie E. Rathell & Co., Ltd., To-day.** Their past record is a sufficient guarantee of what is in store for you. Everybody invited. No cards.

Court House Improvements.

The work on the Court House is progressing rapidly. The plastering has been completed and is now being kalsomined. The four rooms on the ground floor have beautifully designed metal ceilings, while the court and jury rooms upstairs will have the same kind of ceilings. Considerable of the court room furniture has arrived and also the iron columns and stones for the portico. Most of the outside paint work has also been completed.

Confederate Veterans.

Charles S. Winder Camp, C. V. met on Tuesday and elected Louis W. Trail adjutant. Delegates were selected to attend the annual Confederate reunion to be held at Charlestown in May as follows: Rev. B. S. Highley, Louis W. Trail.

Hats! Easter Hats!

T. H. Hollingsworth & Co. had a very successful Millinery Opening on Tuesday. So great was the demand that the opening will be repeated today.

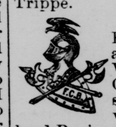
SECRET SOCIETIES.

Miller Encampment I. O. O. F.—The Knights Templar Election.



The recent revision of the higher degrees of Odd Fellowship in Easton has attracted considerable attention on the peninsula, several Odd Fellows from adjoining counties having become members of Miller Encampment This Encampment was at one time among the largest in the State, but was unfortunately allowed to decline. Some months ago it was revived and is now rapidly increasing its membership. Rev. F. B. Adkins is the Chief Patriarch. THE GAZETTE is now at work on a handsome book for this Encampment to contain the by-laws and constitution of the order.

At the last conclave of Chesapeake Commandery, Knights Templar, at Masonic Temple these officials were elected: Eminent Commander—W. H. Barton, of Cambridge; Generalissimo—S. E. Whitman; Capt. Gen. T. A. Councell; Senior Warden—T. J. Smithers; Jr. Warden—F. C. Mason; Prelate—Rev. F. B. Adkins; Treas.—Wm. G. Denny; Recorder—E. R. Trippe.



Star of the East Lodge Knights of Pythias, has advanced Mr. Joseph T. White to the chair of Chancellor Commander, since his return from service with the 1st Maryland Regiment. He was duly installed at the last meeting.

GRAND CONCERT NEXT WEEK.

Home and Foreign Talent to Appear at Music Hall Wednesday Evening.

A grand Concert will be given at Music Hall, Easton on Wednesday evening April 5th 1899. The features of the concert will be Kinder Symphonie, by Children of Easton with 30 instruments. Soprano solos, a vocal duette entitled A. B. Lyric quartette *en semble* pianists and violin solos, to be followed by the Bachelor's dream in which occurs a series of beautiful living pictures. The Concert will be under the management of Miss Kerr and Miss Roche, two very distinguished young artists and the whole promises to be one of the finest and most enjoyable entertainments ever given in Easton. Home talent and talent from Washington and Baltimore will be represented. Tickets for the concert are now on sale at Hayward's Drug store, prices 25 cents and 35 cents for reserved seat.

Teachers' Association and Notes.

The Talbot Teacher's Association met at the assembly room of the Easton High School on Thursday of this week.

Wilson M. Tylor, the newly elected President of the Association was, introduced by the retiring President, Mr. Addison Mullikin.

After the opening exercises, and the reading of the minutes, the program was introduced by a talk upon drawing by Mr. Mattoon. This was received with marked attention and interest.

Following that, the President of the School Board, Mr. M. B. Nichols, introduced the subject of vaccination in schools. This brought about so much argument and expression that it became necessary to suspend all other busines and the Association adjourned after deciding to continue the program at the next meeting.

A Glee Club will be formed by the Teachers to furnish vocal music for the occasion of the Institute this summer.

Nearly all the teachers of Talbot have taken advantage of the Easter holidays by either going to the city for Spring shopping, or visiting friends at a distance.

Teachers are refered to the columns of this paper for the extended report of Prof. Chaplain to the Board of Commissioners, on the subject of regrading the schools.

AETNA LIFE'S FORTY-NINTH ANNUAL STATEMENT.

The forty-ninth annual statement of the Aetna Life Insurance Company shows large gains in all the principal departments of business as usual. More than two and one-half million dollars were added to the assets last year, and January 1st these amounted to the handsome sum of $50,227,022. The surplus on the same date amounted to $7,245,052, a gain of $357,178. Itemized the gains for 1898 were as follows: Increase in new premiums $172,925 Increase in total income $366,343. Increase in assets $2,642,053. Increase in surplus $357,178. Increase in life insurance in force 6,731,034. Increase in accident insurance in force 8,677,950. Increase in number of policyholders $7,093. Total increase in insurance in force $15,408,984.

The new issues of life insurance for the year were $21,979,183, and there was in force January 1 last $157,392-932 life and $109,861,120 accident insurance. Since its organization the Aetna has paid policy-holders $109-503,450 and now holds for their protection $50,227.22. This is a record to be proud of and one which reflects credit on the management. The company's representative for Easton and vicinity is Henry Shreve.

"One of the best student musical organizations in the state.—Harrisburg Patriot. Music Hall, Friday vening, April 7.

Do you know that

Miles River Bridge Collapsed

Yesterday Afternoon at Hour of going to Press

And a Two-Horse Team and a Number of Persons Missing?

The handsome Miles River Bridge which has but recently been rebuilt at great expense is still standing and we have not heard that it collapsed. To-day is april fools day, now don't get excited.

YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS.

What You and They Have Been and Are Doing.



Mr. and Mrs. John M. Elliott are entertaining an Easter house partyat their country seat, "Llandaff" Their guests are Mr. and Mrs. P. W. Rose, of Atlanta, Lewis Robinson, of Baltimore, Miss Jacqueline Minor, of New York, J. A. R. Elliott and David Elliott of Kansas City

Mr. E. H. Bishop, formerly of the Maryland Nautical Academy is with his friend, O. Forrest Shreve of the Hopkins University, at the residence of Henry Shreve.

E. Percival Jump of Lehigh, J. H. K. Shannahan of Western Maryland, and Neal Shannahan, of Dickinson, are spending the Easter holidays at home.

Mr. Alan Huth, who broke his arm during the late blizzard, has entirely recovered and is now at his post at the Moreland Shaving Parlors.

Lawrence Chaffinch, a student at Western Maryland College, is visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Chaffinch.

H. H. Langsdale, agent, has sold the Wm. T. Stewart farm near Royal Oak to Geo. A. Seymour for $3400 cash

Misses May and Maud Shehan are spending the Easter holidays with friends in Washington.

Mrs. Frank N. Claridge and daughter, Louise, of Baltimore are visiting Mrs. I. A. Barber.

Col. Chipley has moved his family to The Anchorage where they will reside permanently.

John Caulk and Henry P. Turner are home from St. John's College for the holidays.

Miss Myrna Tompkinson, of Port Deposit, is the guest of Miss Mary S. Jump.

Mr. Douglass Stewart, and Mr. J. Dukes Wooters are home for a few days.

Mrs. W. Rickard Parkes, of Baltimore, is visiting relatives in town.

Miss Helen Austin, of Baltimore, visited Easton friends this week.

The Rev. W. M. Poisal was in Baltimore this week.

Mr. R. T. Larrimore, of Baltimore, visited Easton this week.

Dickinson College Glee Club.

Speaking of the above organization the Harrisburg News says: "The audience packed Chestnut street Hall Every number was encored, often two and three times. One of the finest entertainments of its kind ever given in Harrisburg." This famous musical organization will be in Easton on Friday evening next, April 7th at Music Hall.

Of Course

you want a new Hat for Easter, and you will find an unsurpassable display at Hollingsworth's Millinery Opening to-day.

Health For Ten Cents.

Can anyone afford to be unhealthy when ten cents will buy health? Nine-tenths of all diseases are caused by constipation, lazy liver, sour stomach, poisoned blood. Ten cents will buy a box of Cascarets, Candy Cathartic at any drug store, and will make the organs of the body do their duty, putting the whole system in perfect order. It costs so little to try it and find out for yourself, that it seems wrong for anyone to keep on suffering without at least testing the truth of these statements. Go buy a ten cent box of Cascarets Candy Cathartic at your druggist, to-day, for yourself or an ailing friend or relative Our readers will never regret taking this advice, but will thank us for it.

Latest novelties in Millinery Trimmings, Laces, Ties, both Net and Liberty Silks. Veilings, &c., can be found at **Annie E. Rathell & Co., Lim., To-day.**