(Continued from page 1.)

will go forward by means of directions, questions, and explanations. The rule should be to give the direction of the class movement so that all the pupils do the same thing at the same time. There may be exceptions—but they are rare—permitting one part of the class to do one thing, while others are differently engaged. In a step-by-step branch of study, nothing could be more unpedagogic and less effective than to announce in turn different sentences for the members of the class to pass to the blackboard and diagram, or for the teacher to direct one pupil to pass to the board and solve the first problem another pupil the second, and so on till the problems are exhausted. The unity of the class movement, the unity of each pupil with the others, will thus be entirely disrupted. Each one is concerned with his own little affair, and as soon as the diagram has been completed, or the problem has been solved, he may turn his thoughts to mischief, or propped against the wall in an attitude of dozing and dissipation may wait patiently for his slow turn.

Obstacles in the Way of Forward Movement in Step-by-Step Branches of Study.

The principal difficulty encountered by the teacher in maintaining the movement of the class in unity, during the very short period allowed for recitation in step-by-step branches of study, is that of diverse ability in the pupils composing it, and the necessity of helping the weak members. The temptation in such cases is to give personal help; and the question arises as to how far the giving of special help is permissible during the recitation period. The principle of unity will be a sufficient guide; and the necessity will be in great part minimized, for the teacher, by grouping the grade into two classes according to ability and industry. In the very nature of class work in the recitation it is largely individual help, but it must always be the help of all. The principle of helping all in every act of instruction during the recitation must not be violated; but its application is so elastic as to permit much aid to the weak pupil while continuing the activity of the strong. If a pupil fails to follow the development of a thought or principle in class recitation, the teacher must begin at the first and redevelop with the whole class. It is always probable that a considerable repetition of the process is good for all; but when it passes the point of positive usefulness for all, the weak pupil must be helped during the study and the desk work period, or secure the services of the teacher out of school hours. If the teacher understands the relation that should exist between the two, the requirement and responsibility of keeping in after school will be ingeniously and cheerfully shifted to the side of the pupil. A cheerful offering of service after school hours, when the pupil has been made to feel the need of that service, releases the teacher from responsibility. If the pupil does not feel the need of assistance, forcible detention will render useless the service of the teacher after school hours.

Another great obstacle in maintaining the movement of the class in unity, during the very short period allowed for recitation in step-by-step branches of study, is that of attempting to note the exact value in per cents of the thought and performance of the pupil. This is often fatal to the fullest and freest activity both on the part of the pupil and teacher; and it is an especial obstacle when the teacher threatens the pupil with his poor marking. Unity is mainly secured by the law of sympathy between the mind of the teacher and the pupil; and most of the marking is merely a register of the high and low water-mark of this mutual feeling as it affects effort and freedom of thought and performance. Per cent records may be used for the convenience of teachers; but the worth of such figures, when used to indicate mental attainments, is a matter of grave doubt. Especially is this so when per cents are used as motives to study, and become an object of attainment by the teacher. The work then assumes a formal character, and the higher the per cent the more questionable the qualification. The more vigorous the mind, the less capable and willing is it to do routine, presentable work. It is possible, indeed probable, that a class, strong in ability and native talent, will make a poor record when examined by a mechanical routine teacher; while a weak class, under the same conditions, will make a much better record. Before per cents can reveal anything of special value, it must be known how pupils have been taught, the kind of questions by which they have been tested, and the kind of teacher who makes the estimate

If per cents are used as a means of instruction, it shows either that the teacher has no faith in the passion of the mind for knowledge, and the power of the subject to gratify it, or it is a confession of the want of skill in so adjusting one to the other as to utilize the natural and most powerful motive in study. When teaching is poorest, the need for per cents is felt to be greatest. With tyros in the art of teaching, before the mere keeper of a school has discovered the center of his sphere in the unity of pupil and subject-matter, it is not strange that nothing seems so practical and powerful as the per cent system. Indeed, so universally and thoroughly has it been used, that it has assumed the part of a legitimate and necessary function.

Promotion Examinations Should be Abandoned.

The Public School Law of the State, for thirty years, has fixed examinations upon us by making it mandatory to hold two examinations in each scholastic year; and they undoubtedly have their uses, but these are greatly outweighed by their abuses. In the "Manual of the Public Schools of Maryland", beginning on page 110, will be found the following: "To make written examinations the only basis of promotion is generally admitted to be wrong, and to make a test of the pupil's power to recall unrelated and particular facts is a perversion. It is safe, however, to say that the written examination will remain in all the schools of the country; but they will be so changed in character and purpose as to better serve the end of the pupil's complete training and *preparation* for *life*.

It may not be amiss to state some reasons why these examinations must have a place in educational work.

First,—Pupils must be trained to generalize. Facts and ideas are gained from recitation; but these must coalesce into general ideas, and the examination may be so employed as to be the best means of securing this.

Second,—They aid in giving unity to the subject. The pupil has been looking at close range. But a true conception of a subject is impossible save by carrying the point of view so far back as to bring related things within the angle of vision. The review does this in part, but it is secured in the highest degree by a proper written examination.

Third,—They aid in fixing valuable facts and important ideas. The great outcry against examinations is that they unduly emphasize facts, that the best work of the pupil (his thought effort) is not shown. Facts may be overrated. The power to think is a great purpose of the school. But facts are the furniture of the mind, and are essential to good thinking. They must be stored up with a view to calling them forth when needed; and they are best remembered only when the probability of future need renders them of interest. A proper examination will test the power of the pupil to call up and think about valuable facts and great truths.

Fourth,—They reveal to pupils their weakness. Pupils usually do not know by what slight tenure they hold what they have gone over. When they undergo the testing of a good list of questions, they find that they have not mastered the subjects, they come to know themselves, to measure what they know alongside of what they should know.

Fifth,—They train to careful and accurate statement of thought. In oral recitation some allowance must be made for bad construction of language and illogical arrangement of thought. But in the examination there is time to organize thought into suitable forms of language. The pupil has studied the subject, and he is now asked to express what he knows of certain points in the clearest and completest way he can. No ears listen now, no teacher is impatient that he is slow about reciting, and in the quiet of his own being he is to shape his thoughts into words.

Sixth,—They are an impelling force. Some pupils will do their best for mear love of knowledge or to excel in recitation, but very many need the demand for application that the examination gives.

Seventh,—They secure fairness to those who write better than they speak. Some good thinkers find themselves a great disadvantage in oral recitation. Some can recite glibly on the lesson just studied, who have so poorly assimilated what they have studied that they cannot use it on demand for purposes of apperception, and the examination shows the teacher their real deficiency. The comparative mastery of the subject and the power of assimilation are revealed as they cannot be by any other means.

Eighth,—They are a security to teachers in promotion. While it is rare that parents cause trouble over failure of their children to be advanced, there are cases, and the papers written by the pupils upon the same topics and under the same conditions are the only satisfactory evidence that the teacher has dealt justly.

Ninth,—Frequent short examinations, to teachers who do not neglect constant criticism of their own work with the pupils in the school-room, serve to show to them wether their teaching has in it the element of thoroughness or is superficial and mechanical."

For testing the fitness of pupils for promotion, however, examinations should be abandoned. They make the *time limit* the same for all; they are incompatible with any pliant plan of grading; and the magnify non-essential snbjects into equal importance with step-by-step branches of study.

There are, of course, two kinds of schools, just as there are two kinds of teachers. First, the purely mechanical schools, those that exist on so low a plane as to do very little beyond crowding the memory of the pupil with a certain amount of facts in some branches of study, and a certain amount of formulas and examples in other branches of study. Second, those schools in which the aim is to develop the faculties of the pupil instead of crowding his memory with facts and formulas, and in which the teacher's work is based on a knowledge of psychological laws, children treated in a kindly and considerate manner, and in which there is a constant striving to build up the professional spirit. Promotion examinations as generally conducted are adapted only to schools of the first kind named; for, consisting of a definite number of questions adjusted to numerical marking, they do not even pretend to measure the ability and mental activity of the pupil, or his power and capability for doing the work of the next higher grade.

Promotion examinations cause a vast amount of drudgery on the part of teachers and cramming on the part of pupils. The pupils know that, no matter what the condition of their health, a failure at this time means the spending of another year in going over the same work; and it is a serious thing for a pupil to lose a year in school. It may be the able but nervous pupil who fails in the promotion examination while those who worry over nothing, and have been wasting time during the year may manage to get sufficient answers to pass.

The need of the promotion examination, even as a test of knowledge, is greatly overestimated. It is strange if the teacher who has taught a grade does not, in so doing, learn their spirit in study, their ability and powers, their preparation for higher work and their whole mental condition. Certainly the written recitation and the preparation of work out of recitation time are an exact, searching, and sufficient test; and all of these the natural course of instruction requires. After a grade is well taught under normal conditions, it would be a serious confession on the part of the teacher to claim that an examination is needed to ascertain the condition of the minds, at least, of the pupils concerning the subject taught. Every teacher, who is not purely and simply a mechanical "grind" and is worthy of the name and place which he holds, knows long before the examination what its result should be.

Pupils Should be Promoted Through Class Work in the Step-by-Step Branches of Study.

All other things should be secondary to class work and thoroughness in the step-by-step branches of study. By working in classes instead of by grades, the able, attentive, and industrious pupils are not injured by being held down to the pace of the slowest; and the plodders are not injured by being continually carried over the work faster than the teacher fully knows they should go. The vast amount of time wasted in the long recitation periods by explaining what a large part of the pupils, working by grades, already know, can be saved for the recitation periods by classes and for the study and desk work periods.

In promotions, and in the re-adjustments necessary from time to time, the distinction between class and grade must be held securely in mind. School organization has reference to two things: primarily to the relation of the pupils to the teacher, and secondarily to the relation of pupils to each other. Such pupils only as can profitably and really at any given step join with the teacher in the same teaching act, at the same time, should constitute a class; but when this class or any number of classes is thought of as joining with the teacher in a series of the same teaching acts in the development of a subject, we then have a grade. The course of study has both length and breadth, and pupils have to be adjusted to both. The pupils who can move forward together in the non-step-by-step branches of study, may not always be the same pupils who can best move together in the step-by-step branches of study. The lateral movement in the course of study may re-adjust the longitudinal movement. But in all this movement violence must not be done to the individual for the mere purpose of class uniformity.

The Purpose of the Plan.

The purpose, however, is not either to indorseor to adopt the so-called "Pueblo Plan" which has been described by its advocates, in the discussion of the subject of individual instruction, as having the pupil "work as an individual, progress as an individual, promoted as an individual, and graduated as an individual." Individual instruction is neither practicable nor desirable. The reaction against grade instruction and class instruction is a result of the abuse of the system, and does not come from objections inherent in the system itself. It is an easy thing to exalt gradation and classification into an end in themselves, until they run as now into mechanical ruts and grooves which compress the free life of the pupil. But in reality all instruction must be individual instruction. To teach a grade, to teach a class, is to teach the individuals composing it, however wide may be the range of their ability.

The plan is to so emphasize tthe step-by-step branches of study in the schools, and especially in the large graded schools, that a grade containing, for example, fifty pupils, be gradually collected into two classes, the strong pupils in one, and the weaker pupils in another. And then each of these classes should be required to "move up the inclined plane" only so rapidly as the ability and industry of the pupils permit. The point reached at the end of the scholastic year is to be noted, and the march is to be resumed from that point at the opening of the next session.

It is much more easy, of course, to manage an organization fixed in straight and hard grooves, than one that is flexible and mobile as to its inner life and the free life of the pupils. It is a simple matter to require uniformly all classes and grades to keep one year apart and to promote yearly by examinations. A *mechanical system invites* and *nourishes* the miserable work of the *mechanical teacher*.

Basis of the Plan and Difficulties to be Met and Overcome.

The classes doing the work of the grade are not necessarily doing the work of the same term in the step-by-step branches of study, but may finally be one term apart. This will give flexibility to the system. At present, all the pupils of any grade are required to do the same work; but this forces pupils unequal in ability and industry into the same classes and makes promotions and demotions less practicable; since, if a pupil is demoted, he must fall back a year, or if promoted, he will have to skip a year. If we think of each class in the grade working independently and doing the work best suited to it, the opportunity is twofold greater for classing each pupil correctly, than if each class of the same grade was required to do the same work.

Each class should be required to stay on the work of the grade until it is done. It may frequently happen that a slow class will need more than a year in which to do the work of the year. Such a class ought to remain on the work of the year, in the step-by-step branches of study, until the work is done, but need not remain in the same grade. A strong class may finish the work in less time than assigned, and should not be held back for slower classes. A pupil should be transferred from one class to another at any time when it is proper and best for the pupil.

To the teacher accustomed to the fixed year period for promotions and demotions, this constantly changing condition of things will seem perplexing. It will be troublesome, for no fixed plan can be followed; no two schools are exactly alike; and the same school has its changing conditions, requiring constant vigilance and expert judgment on the part of the principal teacher and the assistants. New problems will be constantly arising, whose solution cannot be anticipated. One of the most troublesome problems to be encountered will be the necessity for combining classes in the ascending scale when the grades grow smaller and smaller in numbers. It may be found necessary, or advisable, to make these combinations at various points in the movement; but whene they have to be made, it will be a recurring question as to the best way of doing it. If there be two classes in the grade that it seems from their relative positions, or for any other reason, desirable to combine it might happen that the more advanced, but not necessarily the stronger one, could best spend the time in a general review, while waiting for the lower class. It might happen to be best for the lower class particularly if it be the stronger of the two. to push work more rapidly, and join the other class, even if some points in the non-step-by-step branches of study had to be skipped. Or, the more advanced class, if it be exceptionally strong, might check its speed by pushing out further into the details of some subject than is regularly required. There is no end to the possible solutions of the problems which may arise under a flexible system.

The school organism cannot move forward without placing the pupil under the strict requirement of industry; and the teacher under the strict requirement of constant vigilance, industry, clear judgment, tact, and skill. The school is not a machine with a yearly stem-winding attachment. Nothing can be left by the principal teacher and the assistants to more careless happenings and the work of chance.

Respectfully submitted,
ALEXANDER CHAPLAIN,
Examiner of Phblic Schools.

A. H. BIELER,

.. ARCHITECT ..

Room No. 24, Builder's Exchange, Baltimore, Md.

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If you are a headache sufferer, or do your eyes ache or pain while reading, writing or sewing, or during the action of any bright light? why not call and have your eyes scientifically examined and procure a pair of my celebrated Crystal Glasses, and obtain instant relief. No Charge for the optical examination of your eyes. Entire satisfaction Guaranteed.

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J. Siegel, the scientific and manufacturing optician, from 11 E. Baltimore street, Baltimore, Md., who has been visiting and examining eyes in your city, as well as throughout the State since 1873, and well-known for reliability.

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Merchant, A. Coehn, next door to Major Stewart's, Washington street, week beginning **Tuesday, April 4th,** for one week. Will be in Cambridge at Braly's Hotel week beginning April 10.

Delinquent Tax-payers.

Under Local Law for Talbot County, Chapter 75, Acts 1894, I am required to publish the following list of delinquent tax-payers for 1897. Notice is hereby given that all of the same remaining unpaid on the 25th day of June, 1899, will be scheduled preparatory for sale to satisfy the amounts due and costs thereon, as directed by said law.

W. S. COVINGTON,
Collector for Fifth Election District of Talbot County.

Wm. Allen	$ 1 49
Mary F. Allen	5 44
Chas. F. Adams	2 06
John Baily	2 30
Alfred Brown	2 09
Margaretta E. Brumwell	23 19
Wm. H. Bradshaw	7 91
Margaretta E. Brumwell (guardian)	1 10
Jas. M. Cowgill	1 10
Nancy J. Cummings	5 82
Sarah E. Cummings	4 12
Oliver G. Cummings	4 39
Thomas P. Cummings	3 30
Susie A. Cummings	9 17
Oakley A. Cummings	8 07
Robert H. Caldwell, Jr.	2 20
Perry Edward Caldwell	2 47
Ernest E. Cummings	1 10
John Caldwell	3 36
Robert and Lizzie Caldwell	5 38
Harriet Cooper	1 33
James H. Callis	6 86
John W. Cooper	1 27
Mrs. Theophilus Cook	70 79
Louis Dove	3 57
Millard G. Davis	1 98
Annie B. Dobson	10 16
John W. Dulin	6 17
Jas. L. Duncan	136 96
John Duncan	6 86
Robert L. Ford	9 06
Jos. E. Fairbank	14 94
Jas. Frampton	1 41
Geo. W. Gibson	4 98
Mrs. M. E. Godwin	18 94
Lucretia R. Grace	1 16
Chas. W. Gibson	2 75
Chas. H. Gibson	1 10
Solomon Gow	7 75
Maria Hinson	3 01
Joseph Horney	7 40
Susie Horney	1 71
Jas. D Horney	6 16
Philemon T. Hambleton	6 20
Mrs. Ida Hubbard	3 08
Mary E. Haddaway	3 08
Chas. E. Howett	5 06
Daniel H. Hinson	3 85
Annie A. Haddaway	6 58
Thomas W. Haddaway	4 24
Annie R. Harrison	4 01
Wm. S. Horney	31 83
Wm. J. Jackson	20 75
Chas Johnson	2 46
John W. James	10 16
Thomasina Jones	1 49
Wm. H. James	2 20
Melvinia James	2 47
Chas. A. Kemp	6 04
John W. Kemp (heirs)	60 04
Hester E. Kersey	9 89
Joseph O. Kemp	103 15
Susan W. Landon	2 75
Jas. E. Ledman	1 10
Jas. L. C. Lomax	3 46
Jacob Lambdin	1 88
Lewis P. Lee	9 88
Thom. and Matt. Laurence	2 64
Edwin Lowe	10 56
Rebecca A. Lee	12 35
John T. Lowe	1 33
Geo. W. Marshall	1 49
Harriet J. Marshall	1 89
John B. Marshall	8 67
Francis A. Miller	4 83
Reuben J. Marshall	3 02
Wm. E. McQuay	17 84
Annie E. Newnam	5 66
E. S. Neavitt	19 59
Josephine Porter	4 94
Jacob W. Porter	35 52
Lewis Palmer	2 75
Perry N. Porter	21 08
Chas. R. Ross	1 60
Benjamin F. Sherwood	111 98
G. W. Shores	5 49
Mrs. Henrietta Senger	32 71
John A. Sinclair	2 20
Sarah A. Sinclair	4 94
Mrs. Mollie Sinclair	3 46
Thos. E. Taylor	36 03
Thos. J. Trott	4 45
Edward R. Tyler	6 84
[illegible] unis	162 [illegible]
[illegible] T. Usilton	3 41
[illegible]h B. Valliant	2 42
Mrs. Zenia F Vaillant	4 67
Mary Elizabeth Wilson	2 03
Alexander Webb	1 10
Peter W. Webb	2 75
W. O. Wrightson	21 37
Albert B. Willis	45 28
John H. Webb	3 74
Henry Witington	3 00
Lloyd Warner	1 65
Isaac S. Parsons	4 62
Alexis G. Pascault	39 51