

four grades, the latter into two. The grades in each department may be subdivided into as many classes as the relative capacity of the scholars requires. The examinations for transfer to a higher *grade* are to be held at the close of each term by the Commissioner, or teacher, and the result embodied in the term report of the teacher, by placing a plus (+) mark opposite the names of those pupils meeting the standard of proficiency required, and a minus mark (—) if they fail: the examination for *class* transfer to be held, if practicable, at the beginning of each month by the visitor, or teacher, and the result reported to the Board by the former.

For further details of the grading adopted, I again respectfully refer you to the statement annexed.

I hope, if my imperfect attempt have no other value, may, at least, be the means of inducing you to give us the benefit of your experience in this important matter, and to devise for us some well digested system of classification, adapted to the wants of our schools. I am satisfied its enforcement would add greatly to their efficiency, and that the examinations and transfers would prove a powerful incentive to the industry of the pupils, besides affording reliable data for estimating the relative merit of the schools.

In regard to the mode of instruction pursued in our schools, there is, I regret to say, still too great an adherence to the antiquated and condemned '*Rote*' system, by which the mind of the pupil is crammed, not cultivated, the faculties dwarfed, not developed, words substituted for ideas, and a perfect recitation is thought to consist in being able to repeat, Parrot-like, the language of the Text book, regardless of its meaning.

This is *machine* teaching, and *machine* learning, and if an education could be thus obtained, Yankee ingenuity would long since have invented *Automata*, to do the work quite as well, and much more cheaply. No text book can, or if well composed, will supply the place of the living instructor. At best it can but furnish, as its name implies, the *texts* upon which the oral instruction is based. The teacher must simplify, illustrate, explain, until satisfied that he has in some degree bridged the chasm between the mind of the pupil and the dry letter of the book, and adapted the mental aliment to the digestive power of the child.

A recitation *not comprehended*, is a *failure*, however slipshodly the *words* of the lesson may be repeated; a truth so obvious, that nothing but the force of habit can account for the retention of a system in our schools, against which the united judgment of the best educators has long since uttered its fiat of unqualified condemnation. But the zeal and intelligence of our present teachers, give every assurance of the needed reformation, and that ere long, instead of aiming to cultivate *verbal memory* merely, which is sufficiently, though