

4. Let the length of time of the recitation correspond to the ages of the class, making the lesson of young pupils very brief.

5. Illustrations, and especially if presented to the eye, help to rouse and fix the attention, but care must be taken that the illustrations shall not too much withdraw the attention from the real subject.

6. Seek to rest and encourage the attention by a pleasing variety, but avoid distraction.

7. Attempt very difficult subjects only when the mind is fresh, and arouse the attention to its highest pitch.

8. Select carefully those aspects of the lesson, and use such illustrations as shall be adapted to the age and attainments of your class.

9. Kindle and maintain the highest possible interest in the subject itself.

*Violations.*—The violations of these rules are many and frequent, and they constitute the most fatal class of errors committed by ordinary teachers. Lessons are often begun before the attention of the class is gained, and continued long after it has ceased to be given. In other cases, pupils are urged to listen and learn after their limited power of attention is exhausted, and when weariness has sealed their minds against any further impression. Illustrations are sometimes wholly neglected, and often so badly chosen and so extravagantly used as entirely to distract the mind, and withdraw the attention from the lesson itself. Little or no heed is given to the varying ages and talents of the pupils; and those wholly unequal in years and attainments are often united in the same classes and taught the same lessons in the same way. Only very careless and casual efforts are made to select such lessons and aspects of lessons as are adapted to the peculiar condition of the class; and almost no attempt is made to excite a genuine and lively interest in the subject. And finally, and worst of all, whatever interest the pupil may chance to feel is sometimes repressed by a dry and unsympathizing manner of the teacher; and a painful disgust, instead of a winsome and strengthening delight, is created by the unskillful and unnecessary harshness which robs the pupil's mind at once of its desire and its power to learn.

What wonder that through these and other violations of this most obvious law of

teaching, our schools are made unattractive, and their success is so limited and poor!

*"The medium must be language understood by both teacher and pupil in the same sense."*

The meaning of this law is simple and obvious. It merely insists that the *medium* of communication between the teacher and learner must be understood alike by both, —to him that hears it as well as to him that speaks it. The teacher may know familiarly a large number of words. The child necessarily knows but few, and these only imperfectly. In this case it is the child's language, not the teacher's which must furnish the medium of instruction. The child can not of himself come up to the teacher's plane of expression; the teacher must go down to that of the child's.

*Philosophy of the Law.*—1. Words are signs of ideas. They are not natural symbols, but artificial; hence they will only express to any mind the ideas which that mind has previously associated with them. Language does not necessarily carry to another mind the thought of the speaker, but rather the thoughts or ideas which the hearer has learned to find in its words.

2. The same word is often the sign of several ideas. The teacher may know them all; but the pupil perhaps knows but one. To one person it is rich with a hundred related meanings; to another it is the representation of some one barren notion. To the former it is eloquent with grand and pleasing associations; to the latter it is absolutely destitute of force or beauty. Thus, the simple word *Art* is, to a Reynolds or a Ruskin, the expression of all that is beautiful, grand, and elevating in human achievement, and of all that is most benign in human civilization. To the ordinary mind it means only craft—a mechanic's trade, or a hypocrite's pretence. So the name *Jesus*, to the Christian thinker, embraces all that is sweet and most glorious in God's moral government, and all that is pure and hopeful in humanity—all the long story of man's fall and degradation, and all the sublime hope of a blissful immortality and of a heavenly home. To the mere worldling it is the simple name of an historic character, without any peculiar import; to the infidel it is a word hateful, if not loathsome. In less marked degree, such variations of significance belong to hundreds of the common words of our language.