

fluent readers and good arithmeticians, and you arm them with a power of mental development which all the intellectual manipulation you can possibly bestow on them in your school will never give them. But to our subject.

Let us take, as an example, a school in a rural district or small town, where there are eighty or ninety on the rolls, and an average attendance of perhaps not more than forty. Whatever number of sections a class is divided into, the pupils of each separate draft must, according to the strict application of the rule, be reading the one lesson; some of the children from natural slowness, some from irregularity of attendance or other causes, do not keep pace with the quicker or more attentive pupils; the master advances them slowly according as a fair number has mastered each lesson—he cannot wait for the laggards—until as much of the book as is intended that section should read has been gone over; the draft is then examined, and from some perhaps having forgotten the earlier lessons, some having never learned them, it may be that less than one fourth are found fit for promotion to a higher section. But what of the other three-fourths? Why, they must be “put back,” and the labour of working them up to the same point again re-commenced. Now, there are few teachers who do not feel how much children are disgusted and discouraged in the labour of learning by this process “turning back;” if they could maintain their footing in that part of the book to which they had been advanced—and to which they never should have been advanced if they were not capable of doing so—it would be an encouragement to them to labour still, no matter how slow, their progress; but they recommence their Sisyphean task with a listless, apathetic indifference, and with the dispiriting consciousness that at the end of the course they will be again left behind by many younger children, but of quicker parts, who are now admitted to their draft. This “turning back” is also a cause of much vexation to parents, many of whom, after a couple of such operations, lose all confidence in the system, and in some instances withdraw their children from the school, to which perhaps, they never return.

The remedy for this seems to be, that while class teaching, in every branch and at every stage where it is practically useful, should be strictly adhered to, individual lessons, in particular branches and at certain stages should be the rule. The writer once knew a very painstaking and successful teacher, one whose heart was in his business that adopted a system of the kind, and a sketch of his plan in one important branch—that of reading—will best indicate the object of this paper. His first and second book classes were each divided into sections—though the attendance was sometimes large, his plan rendered a greater number of divisions unnecessary. It was only in the first or lower sections that individual teaching was practised, and in them each child has his own particular lesson from which he was not advanced until he had mastered every word of it. The course of individual lessons in the first book extended to about one-half, and in the second, to something better than one-third of the book. At the time for reading lessons one or two of the more advanced boys were sent to teach and examine each of these sections, the children of which were occasionally encouraged to assist each other in their lessons; the temporary monitor placed those who had “their lessons” at the head of the draft, so that when the master came round he had no trouble or loss of time in picking them out, but was enabled by a few rapid and judicious questions to test in each case the correctness of the monitor’s judgment; any of the other children who thought themselves unfairly passed over were encouraged to inform the master that they had their lessons, and were examined accordingly; but whether passed by the monitor or not the missing of a single word prevented any child getting a “new lesson.”

The advantages of such a plan must be obvious; the child from hearing constantly read lessons in advance of his own is in some measure prepared to grapple with their difficulties when he arrives at them; and in the same way he is continually kept *en rapport* with the lessons he has already passed, so that whatever

way he has made his footing is secure, and the discouraging process of “turning back” is rendered perfectly unnecessary.

On this system, our friend made the best readers in the district; but it is to be regretted that on one occasion he came to grief. A new Inspector who happened to be a martinet, entered his school one morning while those two very drafts were under manipulation, and stood aghast with horror at finding all the children in one draft with a different lesson; the poor teacher’s attempts at explanation were indignantly scouted and he was soundly rated, *in presence of the children*, for such a daring infringement of the law as laid down by Theoricus and Egotus, and interpreted by him, the Inspector. The examination of the school showed that while in no branch was it below the best, in reading and arithmetic it was superior to any other school in the district; but the “results,” though patent, had not been arrived at by the legitimate road, and in a week after, the Manager of the School received a formidable looking document “On Her Majesty’s Service,” requiring him “severely to reprimand, &c. The reprimand was duly administered, and of course the teacher, as by necessity bound, expressed proper contrition for his fault, but in turning away could not help repeating to himself, in the spirit of Galileo, “My system is right for all that.”—*Irish Teachers’ Journal*.

An Error Illustrated.

The feeling has been quite too common that any one could “keep school;” so that many schools, have been *kept*, while but few have been well *taught*; they have been kept *from* true knowledge, and not in garnering up for future usefulness. Hence, mere striplings, or men of maturer age with no fixed views or plans, engage in “keeping school,” though they never teach, because themselves untaught. They can neither discipline nor instruct, because they have never themselves been properly disciplined and instructed.

When Dinter was school-counsellor in Prussia, a military man of great influence urged him to recommend a disabled soldier, in whom he was interested, as a school teacher. “I will do so,” said Dinter, “if he can sustain the requisite examination.” “Oh,” said the Colonel, “he does not know aught about school-teaching; but he is a good, moral, steady man, and I hope you will recommend him, to oblige me.” “Oh, yes,” said Dinter, “to oblige you, if you, in your turn, will do me a favor.” “And what favor can I do you?” asked the Colonel. “Why, get me appointed drum-major in your regiment,” said Dinter. “It is true that I can neither beat a drum nor play a fife; but I am a good, moral, steady man as ever lived.”—*Northend’s “Teacher and Parent.”*

Compound Words.

It is surprising with what frequency hyphens are omitted between the parts of compound words, and inserted where the purpose would be answered as well without. Persons are apt to write glass-house a house where glass is manufactured, for glass house, a house made of glass; paper-box, a box to put paper in, for paper box, a box made of paper, and *vice versa*. Other examples are the expressions live-oaks, and live oaks; the former meaning a species of oak, as the live oaks of Texas, the latter growing or thriving oaks. Honey-moon and honey moon are so different in meaning, that while the former refers to the first month after marriage, the latter, almost meaningless, means a moon of honey. Black-lead, black-grass, black-gum (for which see definitions in Webster Dictionary) are perceptibly changed in meaning by omitting the hyphen. Black lead means lead of a black colour; black grass means grass of a black hue; black gum means gum of a black color. High-sounding literature is a term implying a sort of pompous literature, or writing; but high sounding literature has hardly any meaning. Well-informed means intelligent, possessed of an accurate knowledge of things;