

PRACTICAL HINTS FOR TEACHING PRIMARY READING  
BY ANY METHOD.

BY JAMES L. HUGHES.

## III.

**3. Do not ask Pupils to read Words with whose Meaning they are Unacquainted.**—In primary classes the pupils should be required to read no words which they are not in the habit of using. The object of reading at this stage is not to enlarge their vocabulary, nor to add to their store of information; but to enable them to acquire freedom in recognizing the names of words from their printed signs. When taking up a new lesson the attention of the pupils should be directed to the illustrations in it, and they should be encouraged to express in their own language the ideas which are suggested by the pictures. Having thus got the ideas first, the words which represent them may be given. It is always best to print the words used by the pupils on the black-board, and read them, before taking the lesson on the tablet itself. The teacher may print the words and require the pupils to name them, or occasionally she may repeat the words and ask the pupils to direct her in spelling them as she puts them on the board. In this way by skilful questioning the teacher may lead the pupils themselves to use all the new and difficult words in the tablet, and after they have read them from the black-board they will have no difficulty in reading them from the tablet. Remember that in the primary classes the child does not read to acquire knowledge, nor to learn to use new words, but simply to learn to name at sight words that he is in the habit of using in conversation.

**4. Do not keep the Class too long at a Single Lesson.**—Children were formerly kept droning sleepily at the "alphabet card" longer than they should require to master the first two primers under intelligent teaching. In process of time they were advanced to the "ox" card, and they remained with that interesting quadruped in many cases for weeks, and in all cases until they knew by rote all that was on the card, and could name the words quite as much by their location as by their form. Such a method of "getting through the book" could have only one effect on the mental condition of the children. It is questionable whether any child ever passed through such an ordeal without having its faculties blunted. This process generally changes the vivacious child into the dull school-boy or school-girl in a few months.

It is a grave mistake to expect perfection in reading the first lesson, before proceeding to the next. Perfection must be reached by a gradual process, and may be secured much more readily by practising with new sentences than by merely repeating those already so familiar as to have lost their interest. Without laying down a definite rule specifying the length of time to be devoted to each tablet, it is quite safe to say that every lesson should include some new work, and that if a teacher has to devote more than two of three lessons to the same tablet, he should be convinced that a weakness exists either in himself or his method. It is much better to review regularly the part of the book already read, than to dwell on each lesson until the pupils lose interest in it.

**5. Avoid long continued Lessons.**—Taking the schools of the entire country into consideration, there is probably no other class in which the pupils display so much inattention and listlessness as in the primary reading class. This is largely due to reasons already given, but it is often caused by the length of time occupied by the lesson. The younger the pupils the shorter the lessons should be. It is wrong to expect them, or try to force young children to concentrate their attention on any subject for more than a few minutes at a time, and as soon as the attention wavers the les-

son ceases to be of real value. Short lessons will develop habits of briskness and promptness on the part of the pupils, which will have a beneficial effect on them during their whole lives.

**Vary the Plan of Conducting the Reading Lesson as much as Possible.**—When, as is too often the case, the reading lesson degenerates into a monotonous routine, it should cause little wonder if the pupils come to it with apathy. There is no way of conducting a reading lesson which is so supremely excellent as to warrant a teacher in using it to the exclusion of all others. There are few subjects in which the method of teaching may be varied to so great an extent as in the case of reading, and yet there are few in teaching which, the teacher is more liable to become mechanical and formal. Among the plans for varying the plan of teaching a reading lesson in primary classes are the following:—

1. The pupils may read simultaneously.
2. They may read individually.
3. They may read from the black-board.
4. They may read from tablets.
5. They may read from primers.
6. They may read backwards.
7. They may read from the tablets as the teacher forms sentences by pointing to words in different parts of the tablet.
8. They may read by paragraphs, by sentences, or by words (If by words they should read in rotation to save time.)
9. They may print on their slates the words named by the teacher. This is not spelling, but testing their knowledge of the powers and sounds of the letters.
10. They may combine the above in various ways in the same lesson.

When reading from the black-board, or using the slates, all the varieties of plans suggested in previous articles may be employed.

## NOTES ON HYGIENE.

BY J. A. WISMER, PRINCIPAL OF PARKDALE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

"Familiar Talks" on the laws of health, for twenty minutes, on Friday afternoons, between the teacher and pupils of the Parkdale Public School.

(Pupils ask questions and take notes in memorandum books, which are preserved).

**Introductory.**—The term Hygiene is derived from a Greek word meaning health, and properly includes the discussion of that which is injurious to health, as well as that which promotes it. How to secure good health, and how to retain it, are questions of the greatest importance to everyone. Since most boys and girls are naturally healthy, we will consider more particularly the causes which injure and undermine the health, making the person more or less of an invalid during the later periods of life.

Nature has laws which cannot be broken with impunity, in fact we cannot even infringe upon her laws without paying the penalty. Thus, if we sit in a draft or with wet feet, for even a very few minutes, nature admonishes us that we have done wrong by giving us a bad cold. All action is followed by a corresponding reaction, and this is true of the mind as well as of the body. Too little or too great action on the part of either the mind or the body is injurious, and the sympathy between mind and body is so great that one cannot suffer without the other being also affected. The object of these "familiar talks," as I call them, is to show us how to secure and preserve—*mens sana in corpore sano*—a sound mind in a sound body. I think that hitherto the education and training of the body have been too much neglected in our schools. Nearly the whole attention of teachers has been devoted to the development of the