

administration, supervision and inspection of rural schools. Likewise our taxing system as at present applied to country schools does not secure anything like equality of educational opportunity. These and other problems are coming into the public consciousness.

But the heart of the rural school problem is that of the curriculum. For as it is, so will be in large degree the

intellectual, civic and occupational outlook of the farmer of tomorrow. It should be repeated that without knowledge the farmer can not even understand his problems; much less will he be able to solve them. It is because of the crucial nature of this knowledge problem that the rural school is the determinative institution of rural life. If it fails the farmer all else must assuredly fail him.

HOW THE PUPIL LEARNS NEW WORDS

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In the third reader grade, many new words are met in the reading lesson. Up to this time, the matter of chief concern was eye training—the mastery of words already familiar to ear and voice. The mechanics of reading have engrossed most attention; the purpose has been not to widen the horizon of the child's knowledge, for the subject matter presented in the first and second readers relates, in the main, to things already known by the child. In the mastery of these books, the pupil learns to read; but from this point on he reads to learn; the circle of knowledge increases, and with it his vocabulary grows and becomes richer. It is then profoundly important for teachers in the third reader to consider how new words may be rationally taught.

There are at least seven ways of teaching the meaning of new words, viz.:

1. By definition (which may extend to a description).
2. By synonym. { A word.
A phrase.
3. By antonym.
4. By illustration. { Action.
Drawing.
5. By use in another sentence.
6. By the context.
7. By etymology.

The last two ways named above are not of much value, except in upper form classes. There is, on the part of many teachers, a disposition to rely too much on the first method. Forgetful of

the law of apperception, that new knowledge is learned only by properly associating it with other knowledge already possessed, we are not always sufficiently careful that the definition shall appeal to the child's present stock of information. The following "definitions" are taken from popular school readers:

Compliment—Approbation.

Ghost—An apparition.

Maizena—Maize farina.

The skilful teacher will not depend upon any one of its methods, but will select first the one which seems most likely to convey clearly the correct meaning, and will also employ at least one other method. The use of more than one method is necessary to insure success, because the learner may associate the new idea with an old one which is altogether irrelevant to the true meaning. To illustrate: Suppose the new word to be stale; the third method bids fair to give the best result; the teacher uses the antonym, and says that stale means not fresh; the next day the boy writes, "The Caspian Sea is stale." Or, the purpose is to discriminate between simultaneous and seriatim; number four is chosen as the method; the teacher says, "I shall touch these four pieces of crayon seriatim; now I shall touch them simultaneously" (suiting the action to the speech). If this method be the only one employed, it should be no matter of surprise that some get the notion that seriatim means