

press those ideas. The words must be as simple as possible, and such as, in their origin and arrangement, are full of signification. I think that in the object lessons which are generally dispensed in our schools, there is a tendency to encumber the sentences with stiff and formal terms; and the lesson is so full of stiff, formal sentences, that the little ones instinctively are led to consider an object lesson a very grave affair. 'Tis true, the idea may be developed, and, in proper form, the term given, but it often happens that the term itself is the most formidable object in the whole lesson, and the little ones use it as they would handle a large nut with a shell so hard that they could not get at the kernel inside. In every object lesson, and, indeed, in every lesson, *teach the children to talk*. I do not intend to convey the impression that it is wise to make children chatterboxes; but our work of development is only half done if we do not enable them to express, in choice words and with nice arrangement, any thoughts to which the objects have given rise.

In this, it may be advisable at times to substitute, in the place of material objects, mental objects which have been abstracted from qualities of materials. It is surprising to see how quickly children will learn to make mental pictures which they will be only too glad to tell to you in their own simple language; and if these are lacking in definiteness and order, it is by the power over words that the pictures are brightened, vivified, harmonized and symmetrized. It may be that this instruction does not come under the head of object lessons, but it certainly comes under the head of objective teaching; and I think any teacher who varies his stiff little lessons upon objects, with *matter* laid down on the right hand and *method* on the left, with language lessons induced by mental pictures, will find the interest and pleasure of his scholars increased, while their development will certainly not be retarded. I shall not say, when you practise object lessons, do not use objects; but I think I may say, when you teach objectively, do not consider an object of a particular size, shape, or color, possessing peculiar qualities, indispensable to your work. An examination of facts, or even of fancies that institute comparisons by which resemblances, differences and relations are observed, is no less objective than an examination of tangible materials.

Perhaps you will bear with me if I again refer to my hobby—the development of language. There are no object lessons more interesting, and at the same time more instructive, than lessons upon words.

Occupations, tastes, habits, indeed the whole history of a nation, may be found in their language, while the intelligent use of words aids the memory, lessens the labor of thinking, and promotes accuracy in reasoning. In a little book I read a few days ago I found this: "The greatest of sciences is that of language; the greatest of human arts is that of using words. No cunning hand of the artificer can contrive a work of mechanism that is for a moment to be compared with those wonderful masterpieces of ingenuity which may be wrought by him who can skilfully mould a beautiful thought that shall preserve, yet radiate, its beauty. A mosaic of words may be made more fair than of inlaid precious stones. The scholar who comes forth from his study a master of the English language, is a workman who has at his command hardly less than a hundred thousand finely-tempered instruments with which he may fashion the most cunning device. This is a trade which all should learn, for it is one that every individual is called to practise. The greatest support of virtue in a community is intelligence; intelligence is the outgrowth of knowledge, and the almoner of all knowledge is language. The possession, therefore, of the resources, and a command over the appliances of language is of the utmost importance to every individual.

"Words are current coins of the realm, and they who do not have them in their treasury, suffer a more pitiable poverty than others who have not a penny of baser specie in their pockets; and the multitude of those who have an unfailing supply, but of the wrong stamp, are possessed only of counterfeit cash that will not pass in circles of respectability."

I should not like to be numbered among those whom Pestalozzi has called worshippers of words; nor would I advocate fluency of speech without thought. We do not pay sufficient attention to the signification of the commonest words in our language, and by our neglect, the thoughts to which we give utterance lose half their beauty.

"Language is a perpetual Orphic song
Which rules with Daedal harmony a throng
Of thoughts and forms which else senseless and shapeless were."

2. We have next to consider the use of books in objective teaching.

Under the old system, not so very many years ago, the school-master, who was abroad, and who has gone so far that I am happy to say he is rapidly disappearing from the profession, was known as a man with stooping shoulders, a corrugated brow, a rod in his hand, and a book in his pocket. This book was on occasion brought forth, and its contents drilled into the brains of the pupils, in tones of thunder, to the accompaniments of tears, groans, sighs, sobs, with sundry other manifestations of supreme disgust for, and dissatisfaction with, that teacher, that rod, and that book. In those days the book was about the only article that was considered of much use, if we except the trifling accessories of the master, and the rod, which, according to the strength of muscle possessed by him, more or less strikingly emphasized the principles contained therein. Take away the book, and the teacher was as powerless as Sampson shorn.

Not only was *he* the slave of the book, but the book was the tyrant master of the little world over which he swayed the birch. All day long was the smallest child doomed to sit upon the high benches, without backs, with feet and legs dangling in mid-air, with a book (which did not even possess the merit of being small) held over the little face, shutting out all earthly things, save the great words that conveyed no meaning to the wondering little mind, and which assumed the queerest shapes to the fanciful little gazer.

If occasionally an inquisitive little being was prompted to take a limited view of life round the sides or over the top of the book, no sooner had the curious eyes fixed themselves upon some object that was a perfect feast to the mind, than down came the rod upon the helpless fingers; and the aching and stinging, together with smothered sobs and piteous face, were all buried in the book. That the book was heavy, or that the child was tired, never entered into the consideration of the teacher. His business was to see that the child went *through the book*.

It sometimes happened that a child became interested in the book, and had a real desire to know what connection the words had with himself or any other object in life (this book was chiefly made up of isolated words, ranging from one to an incredible number of syllables), and would summon courage sufficient to consult the master as to what a word meant, when he was made to realize the rashness and absurdity of his questioning by the teacher, in a tone of severe reproach and rebuke, answering: "Tut! What do you want to know that for? Go to your seat and study your lesson!" And to his seat the daring explorer into word-mysteries returned with a crestfallen attitude, his humiliation mingled with a vague thankfulness that he had not been totally annihilated.

At night, the unfortunate student was doomed to carry the book home, and there existence was rendered a state of misery by the heartrending struggles, in which all the family joined, to store