

good beginning can be made. Children can at first write only the name of the object upon which the lesson is based; then several leading words, names of qualities or uses, may be written; and after, short sentences. Before the end of the year several sentences will be written,—first copied from the board, then written independently. I would have these lessons, from the beginning, followed by a written exercise, and as soon as possible let it be a synopsis of the entire lesson.

If these lessons are given methodically, we sometimes undervalue the power of habit in education. The *how* is as important as the *what*; nay, often much more so. A boy with his powers all at loose ends and his knowledge a hap-hazard accumulation of facts is as helpless to produce effects by either as the driver of a team untrained to pull together at command. When the Object Lesson is made the centre around which all the knowledge of a given kind is grouped and properly arranged, the pupils are put in a fair way to add to it, and that to purpose.

I am aware that Object Lessons are said to do just the thing I deprecate. They are said to weaken the mind by bringing to it what it should go out and get for itself. They are said to stultify by launching into the minds of pupils masses of facts that, having cost no effort, are never moored, and so are easily swept out again by the successive lessons. Nothing worked for, nothing digested, nothing assimilated, and so, weakness the conclusion of the unprofitable process. Better keep to the mul-

tiplication-table. True. If bread by unskillful making is rendered indigestible and innutritious, it is harmful, and better be let alone. Keep to vegetables. But who denies the possibilities of bread because sometimes made badly? The character of mind being known, the science of education is not an inductive science. The basis truths of education are established deductively. And because some teachers do not know the possibilities of their work, or have not skill to compass them, shall psychology and logic be held to be failures to shield them from the imputation of incompetency?

The first year's school work is a great one in the child's life. Beginnings are always great,—not in themselves, possibly, but in their causal relations. It is often undervalued and the worker disesteemed, because, in the very nature of things she can not show on paper, in an examination, its results. The work of these teachers is to stake out lots, to clear away obstructions, to dig cellars and to build foundation-walls. They get scarcely to the surface with their work, so that the world sees them, before others take it up and build grandly in the sight of men, upon that on which they have bestowed no labor. But, if the buildings stand firmly, it is because the first workers wrought well. But let them take this word of warning. If they begin not having studied the plan, and so work ignorantly and unprofitably, because their work is so nearly out of sight, they must claim no honor in the doing of it.—*D. A. Lathrop in Illinois Teacher.*