

Exercise with slates may be begun advantageously very early. Children may take to them while in the first reading book. It will require considerable practice for them to make figures well. Months will be occupied in this; though in a short time many of the little ones seem to take a delight in making their figures neatly. When they can form the figures fairly so as to copy exercises from the blackboard correctly and legibly, let two or three lines be given them to add up, the numbers being so small that the amount will not exceed nine; but as they progress, larger numbers should be given them and the addends increased to 5, 6, 7 or 8. Not a larger number of addends, however, should be given before they have some exercise in subtraction and multiplication. As soon as four or five addends can be put up correctly, the work may be proved by subtraction, each addend being subtracted in succession until every one has been subtracted. This not only furnishes excellent exercise in subtraction, but also the means of detecting mistakes in the work. While many of the pupils may be honourable in performing their examples and in correcting any mistakes they may find, there are always some who are more desirous of obtaining the answer and making the work prove seemingly, than of benefitting themselves by a course that will ensure success. By this method of proof, any shirking or deception is quickly detected. Passing the eye over almost any line of the subtraction, if there has not been honest work, it will be most readily manifested.

The exercise of the multiplication table should be continued until it is thoroughly mastered, taking two times until committed, then three times, four times, etc., until all can be repeated forwards. Then commencing at the first again, let them recite the table forwards and backwards; and going over the table the third time, exercise them with the numbers given promiscuously. The pupil does not usually manifest much pleasure in this part of his task; the slate in hand is much preferred, for memorizing the multiplication table is real labour to him. It is encouraging, therefore, to the pupil, and usually *profitable* for him to have easy exercises in two, three and four times, etc., advancing with the numbers as the child advances with the table, until he is perfectly free in its use. We then move on to long multiplication, which gives a good exercise on the table, and also some in addition; but before giving much exercise in this, short division may be begun with advantage, for this exercise seems to give the mastery over multiplication. Although this may give the pupil a fair degree of hard labor for some time, yet it should be persevered in until the operation of division is made easy for him. When this is mastered, when division by 7, 8 and 9 is performed readily and accurately, the key to the table is fairly in the hand of the pupil, for there is more mental exercise in this than in long division which immediately follows. Long division, however, usually presents several difficulties to the learner, and requires more explanation by the teacher than any of the other rules.