

THE SCHOOL ROOM.

English Composition.

For Primary Classes. Show the children a picture and ask them to write about it. They will have to be encouraged and their attention drawn to certain points in the picture. Select from books and advertisements a stock of pictures so that one may be given to each pupil; or better, put before all the pupils a large picture. Draw the pupils out by asking questions about it, and then have them write what they can.

Again, read a short story and ask the pupils to present a picture of what is told in the story. It may be the story of a cat catching a mouse. If told in an interesting way the pupils will (with a little encouragement) do their best to reproduce it in picture.

See that your pupils have thoughts to express before they attempt to express them. The first essential is, that the child have something to say on the subject selected before he attempts to write.

Have your pupils express their thoughts in correct language, and always in such words as they understand.

Encourage pupils to read and then to reproduce what they have read, either in newspapers or in the works of standard authors.

Encourage them to refer to the dictionary whenever in doubt as to the correct meaning or proper application of the word.

Encourage them to read the best and most classic authors, to discover, if possible, the essentials which make their styles pleasing. Reading literature of a captivating style will tend to give one power to form a pleasing style of one's own.

Give occasional exercise in transposing poetry to prose. This will require the learner to remodel many of the sentences and express them in a different form.

For Advanced Classes. The following composition, descriptive of a photograph of Evangeline, was written by a young lady in one of the normal schools of the west:

A DESCRIPTION OF EVANGELINE.

The picture here represented is certainly one of artistic taste and skill. It would require a careful study and a critical eye to detect any faults, so beautiful is the illustration.

The subject is a summer scene, showing Evangeline strolling through a rich, green meadow, with pitcher in hand, and four calves lingering near her, with their soft, dreamy eyes looking out in sweet simplicity.

The characters in the picture are so arranged as to reveal each subject in a most pleasing manner. Evangeline is well represented, her entire form being shown. The calves crowd near her as though they feel safe under her protection. Her

hand falls caressingly on the back of one, while the others stroll as near as possible. The two farther in the rear lay their heads fondly together, and all look bright and cheerful as the rays of the morning sun on a bright June day.

Evangeline is dressed in simple, plain clothing, with a morning cap covering the back part of the head and all the hair, save a few curling locks that resist the bondage and fall gracefully down over the white forehead and temples.

Expressive dark eyes look out from beneath a curtain of heavy fringe, and the firmly set mouth makes the face a scene of study and intense interest. The swan like neck is entirely revealed, and a soft collar clinging to the rounded shoulders is her sole ornament.

The ground at her feet is covered with the beautiful flowers of the meadow. The sweet simplicity of the scene, mingled with the beauties of nature, produce a pleasing and beautiful effect.

The background stretches back across a wide expanse of meadow, including a higher portion of land covered with flowers. A cluster of trees with wide spreading branches may be seen still farther back. These, with the summer sky and a few tinted clouds, make in themselves a pleasing picture.

The entire scene is one of entrancing beauty. The sweet face of Evangeline, the innocence and purity of the characters, lead one to deeper thoughts and higher ideas of life. None can behold the bright, glowing face of Evangeline, and think of her sunny disposition, her sweet patience and trusting faith, but he feels inspired with purer thoughts and loftier ideas.

The study of synonyms is an excellent exercise to make pupils acquainted with shades of meanings in words. Make a list of such words, give their derivation and accurate meaning, and ask the pupils to write sentences containing them. The following extract will serve to illustrate:

SHALL AND WILL: (1) Both are derived from the Anglo-Saxon. (2) Both relate to some act. (3) *Shall* in the first person simply predicts or denotes futurity. *Will* denotes intention or determination. In the second and third persons the case is reversed. Hence, it is absurd ever to ask a question in the first person, using the word *will*. (4) Not, *Will I go?* or, *What will we do?* but, *Shall I go?* *What I shall do?* There are similar distinctions between the past tenses, *should* and *would*.

EXCEED AND EXCEL: (1) Latin. (2) To surpass. (3) *Exceed* is to surpass in any quality. *Excel* is to surpass in any good quality. (4) Henry *exceeds* his brother in mischief. She *excels* her friend in generosity.

FAULT AND DEFECT: (1) *Fault* is from the Latin, *defect* from the French. (2) Imperfect. (3) *Fault* denotes something improper or wrong. A *fault* is a mistake. *Defect* denotes the absence of that which is necessary to make completeness or perfection. A defect is a deficiency. (4) Mary tore out the page, therefore the *defect* in the book was her *fault*.

INSTRUCTION AND EDUCATION: (1) Latin. (2) Information, knowledge. (3) *Education* includes instruction, growth and development of the faculties, moral discipline, and the whole training made use of for improvement in every way. *Instruction* is the communication of knowledge. (4) A person may cease to receive *instruction* in a certain branch, but his *education* is never completed.—*Common School Education*.