

Primary Department.

MARCHING.

RHODA LEE.

TEN o'clock brings generally to the children a feeling of fatigue and a longing for change. When my bell rings at that hour, there is great promptitude displayed in the careful placing of pencils, and my little folks sit up with a very suggestive look of expectancy that means, "what are we going to do."

And what are we going to do to rest the tired minds and hands that have been so busily employed and relieve the feet that have been kept so quiet on the floor for the last half hour? It must be something that will be a complete change and rest and that will work off some of the latent energy that might degenerate and drift into mischief.

Fortunately there are enough exercises meeting these requirements to permit of great variety in the recreation. The interest in ten o'clock would be apt to pall had we not variety and special favorites for play-time. Some days it is a game, other days a motion song or favorite calisthenics and very often *marching*. This last exercise can be so varied as to give constant pleasure and benefit to the children.

Of course in marching as in all kinds of drill our underlying aim is to promote definiteness of action and thereby definiteness of character, and that is why we find such exercises so helpful—I had almost said necessary—in obtaining and preserving order. With all definite, energetic, muscular effort there must be a correspondingly energetic will action. Therefore whatever incites definite action is going to train and strengthen the character.

Marching affords a very apparent index of the spirit of a class. Careless and indifferent in other departments of work, they will be doubly so in their marching; prompt, obedient, and thoughtful at other times, they are sure to appear so in the drill.

Provided we see the desirability of having good marching and also the necessity for making it attractive, let us consider how it can best be varied.

Music of course is a delightful inspiration and this we can always have. Pianos are rarities in the school-room. However, we have a much-appreciated substitute composed of a comb and a piece of tissue paper upon which are produced the most inspiring strains and patriotic melodies.

I have known classes that were happy in the possession of a boy who could play the mouth-organ, and this with a triangle in the hands of another scholar, makes quite an orchestra.

Singing we can have quite frequently. The tune of "John Brown," with suitable words makes a good marching song. "The Maple Leaf," the "Red, White and Blue," and many others which might be mentioned have been used with success.

In the serpentine march it will spur up and encourage your little soldiers greatly to state your intention of stepping into the line wherever you see particularly good marching and keeping with them for a

time. Then you will see the heads straightened, the shoulders thrown back, and every child doing his utmost to get his teacher to walk next him.

Have occasionally a *flag-march*, allowing the best marchers to carry a flag. If there is a banner of any kind in the room, utilize it also. This march is a reward for extra effort and is always hailed with great delight. Paper caps can be made with but little trouble, either for the whole class or for only an honored few, different scholars earning the caps each day. The time-honored dunce-cap shape cannot be surpassed. However, the old cap has lost entirely its original identity. It has dropped into another sphere. Instead of shaming some downcast dullard or tearful truant, it adorns the straightest, manliest little fellow in the class, being instead of a disgrace, a much-coveted honor.

One other exercise the benefit of which is obvious is to have the scholars while marching, go through various motions with the hands, for which the teacher gives the commands.

Never allow careless marching at any time and endeavor to have every child *in step* as well as in time. This with young children is a somewhat difficult matter but by merely insisting on carefulness in starting off with the same foot, it can be done.

ANTICIPATING HOLIDAYS.

ARNOLD ALCOTT

CHRISTMAS-TIDE is approaching, and with it come the bubbling spirits, the effervescent happiness and jollity of good-nature. How may we keep this superabundant animation, sufficiently under control without compulsion? This is a very important question in our estimation; and it is especially pertinent with regard to those of us who teach the "tots," the little ones so near the creative power.

Perhaps a device which I have begun in my class, and which is to last for the remaining days of the session, may be suggestive to some of our readers.

THE PLAN.

I have drawn in one corner of the black-board four rectangles about two by eight. These correspond to the number of rows of seats across my room, and are numbered accordingly one, two, three, four. In the upper part of the rectangles I retain a depth of two inches or sufficient to make a square. The squares are filled in with white chalk. And "our boys and girls" commence the day with a clean record, and aim to keep the account pure. If a misdeed be committed, such as the failure of several pupils in a row to take position promptly, then the teacher is very *sorry* that she has to make a black mark on this white. The lower part of the rectangle is reserved for special attainment. If the pupils have succeeded in doing very neat work, or, very quick work, then we reward the rows by giving a bright yellow mark, and when four of these are placed across one another, the pupils have gained a "star," and they try hard to "shine" brightly. The extra marks are to be left on until the Christmas holidays. The black marks, if any, are erased every night. Some

days we have none. But every day we begin afresh to try to keep a pure picture. Our boys and girls are charmed with the plan. An educator when visiting us the other day said that there was a tremendous amount of morality taught in this little idea; and so we offer it to our readers hoping it may help them.

In the subject of reading we were speaking about word-recognition. Before a child can read intelligently, up to its limit of power, *i.e.* silent reading, it must be able to recognize the words automatically, that is, without conscious effort. Therefore, in order to get our pupils to this stage we must give plenty of word-recognition, using both ear problems and eye problems, or, in other words, dictating words to be written, and also writing words for the pupils to read. We must teach and impress the combinations such as *oi, oy, sh, ch, ing, tion, cious*, and others. This work should be taken in the first book classes, in the junior second, and even in the senior second. Perhaps it may be necessary to continue it still higher. Do give plenty of exercises in the recognition of words; also, have the pupils give the sounds in the words separately and distinctly. For work at the seats the teacher might ask the pupils to write a story about "sh," about "tion," about "cious" and so on.

Now, with reference to what we named in a former number of the journal as the third step in the processes of Reading, *viz.*, the extraction of thought from visible language (silent reading), we may give two kinds of gymnastic exercises as follows:—

First, we may limit the amount of time given; or, second, we may limit the amount of work to be done.

The former is the better, *i.e.* when the time is limited, and the amount of work left according to the ability of the individual pupil. So I say, "Pupils you have three minutes in which to get all the thought you can, beginning at page sixty." Then when the time has elapsed I ask for a reproduction of these thoughts, sometimes orally, but oftener in writing. If we believe that acuteness in the extraction of thought is a necessary step to the expression of that thought, then, it follows that an intelligent exercise of the mental powers in this specific department must precede the final stage in reading, namely, thought-expression orally.

BOOKS are the true levellers. They give to all who faithfully see them the society, the spiritual presence, of the best and greatest of our race.—*Dr. Channing.*

FOR INCIDENTAL TEACHING.—On the black-board every morning, in a conspicuous place, visible to all the pupils, there should be a motto from some author. A line or two, or more, of poetry or prose, embodying a thought which in future years will be found in many a heart as "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." That line laboriously written by you in your copy-book on that rough-hewn desk in the long, long ago, lives in your memory still, and shall live forever. Has not the thought in that line contributed its mite, too, in leading you upward to any good you may possess? Where to get your mottoes? On the right hand and on the left; in the Bible, an inexhaustible mine; and all literature is at your disposal. No matter if your school is nearly out; begin now. In four weeks there may silently steal into those young hearts twenty thoughts freighted with infinite possibilities.—*Western School Journal.*