

ness is with him a characteristic, not a mere sentiment. Strength and force are elements of his character, which are quite as fully developed as his gentleness. He is the controlling power in the management of the schools, from the primary departments to the senior classes in the High Schools. He is an organizer, and claims that he laid the foundation of the Ohio system of grading, while Superintendent of the schools of Cincinnati many years ago. He is the architect for the School Board, so far as ventilation and the general plans of the buildings are concerned. If School Boards generally would leave these matters in the hands of their superintendents, the health and comfort of children would not be sacrificed as they often are in schools.

HINTS ON TEACHING SPELLING.

When Should Pupils Begin to Learn to Spell?—There should be no oral spelling or written spelling either from memory during the first year and a half or two years of school life; yet pupils should be learning to spell from the start. How? By copying, copying, COPYING. By copying in script well-written sentences set by the teacher on the board. Sometimes these sentences may be taken from the primer, but they should generally be the language of the pupils themselves, including certain words given by the teacher.

Assigning Spelling Lessons.—The teacher should not merely say, "prepare the tenth lesson" or "your dictation will be the first twelve lines on page 24." The pupils should pronounce after the teacher the words of the lesson, looking at them carefully as they do so. Peculiar or difficult words should be written on the blackboard, and spelled simultaneously by the pupils, and hints should be given to aid in the preparation of the lesson.

Preparing Spelling Lessons.—We wish to teach the forms of the words, not their sounds. Unfortunately, the forms of words do not always agree with the sounds in English; hence the form of a word must be impressed on the mind through the eye and not the ear. It is perfectly clear, therefore, that the art of making good spellers consists in teaching pupils to see words accurately. The *London Times* once said, "Spelling is learnt by reading, and nothing but reading can teach spelling." It may be accepted as a rule, that a good reader is always a good speller. These facts all point the thoughtful teacher to the conclusion that we have already stated—spelling depends on the power of seeing with precision. It follows that the exercise which compels the pupil to look most carefully at words must be the best method of preparing a spelling lesson. Unquestionably this exercise is transcription. Let the pupils copy on their slates the lesson to be prepared. The lesson may be copied as a home exercise, if due care be taken by the teacher in examining both spelling and writing. This is necessary in order to compel scrutinizing attention to the words to be copied. The whole value of the exercise depends on this being done.

Repeating the letters of a word orally is of little lasting benefit. Make the pupils see the words, and, if possible, never let a pupil see a word wrongly spelled.

Testing Spelling Classes.—There are only two methods, oral and written. The oral method alone is of very little practical value. An American writer records the case of a young man "who won three prizes at spelling schools, but made five mistakes in spelling in a note written to a School Board." Oral spelling does not accustom the eye to the form of the word in writing. This is a fatal objection to it, and all modern teachers recommend that spelling lessons be conducted chiefly in writing.

Correcting Spelling Lessons.—They must be corrected thoroughly. If proper preparation has been made as recommended,

very few errors will be made. In a large class the teacher will not be able to examine personally the book or slate of each pupil, except in the case of review lessons consisting of words previously misspelled in the class. These should always be examined by the teacher. In other lessons one of the following plans may be adopted:

1. The pupils exchange slates, and the teacher gives the correct spelling word by word, the pupils marking those that are wrong.
2. Pupils retain their own slates, and different pupils are called on to spell the words. Those agreeing with the spelling given indicate by raising the hand, before the teacher decides as to its correctness. Marking as before.
3. Slates are exchanged and the corrections made as in No. 2.
4. While the teacher writes the correct spelling on the board, each pupil may correct his own work, and slates and books be exchanged for revision only. The latter method is probably the best with honest pupils.

In all cases where slates are exchanged, the pupil owning the slate should have the right to appeal against the marking done by his neighbor.

Reviews.—Each pupil should write correctly the words which he misses, about five times, to impress the correct forms on his mind. In addition to this, he ought to make a list at the end of his book of all the errors he makes. From this list the teacher should prepare his reviews. The words missed are the only words that need to be taught. "Leave no enemy in the rear." Review regularly.

General Suggestions. 1.—The teacher should always articulate clearly and pronounce correctly when giving words for spelling.

2. Never overstrain the enunciation of a word in order to indicate its spelling.
3. Allow only one trial in spelling orally or in writing.
4. In spelling orally, the divisions into syllables should be marked by slight pauses, but in no other way.
5. Do not assign lessons too difficult for the pupils who have to prepare them. This compels the pupils to spell badly.
6. It is desirable that spelling should be taught to a considerable extent by means of composition, in order to give the pupils practice in spelling the words in their own vocabularies.
7. In some of the dictation lessons time may be saved by having only the words in italics spelled. The teacher should read the whole sentence and emphasize the word to be spelled.—Gage's *Practical Speller*.

SCHOOL HOURS.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE TORONTO TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION BY F. S. SPENCE.

Mr. President, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—Although the topic for our consideration this morning is seriously important, I shall not attempt any exhaustive or elaborate address on its varied details. My intention is merely to suggest a few practical ideas round which discussion of the subject may be concentrated.

Let me remind you by way of preliminary, that public schools are instituted, and ought to be conducted, entirely in the interests of the public; that public school teachers, trustees, inspectors, and all the other appertaining of the system are successful only as far as they promote these interests; and that, in the consideration of such a subject as this, the primary inquiry ought to be, not "What would be most agreeable to teachers?" but "What would be most beneficial to their pupils, and most advantageous to the community at large?"

That community is not itself best qualified to answer such a question. It is only from the vantage ground of professional knowledge and experience that all the bearings of any educational problem can be taken in. We must draw our conclusions as inde-