

compel them to "sit up and sit still" five or six hours, when the whole amount of profitable instruction for the day could easily be put into a half hour or less.

Whether children be sent to school or not previous to the age of eight or ten, home instruction, then and later, cannot be dispensed with. What teacher does not know by grateful, though too sadly exceptional experience, the pupil who receives intelligent and sympathetic aid at home in his school work? The teacher should understand that this hearty co-operation of parents can be secured in a great many instances by a little effort on his own part.

Parents will sometimes object that they cannot get the time to instruct their children, and are compelled therefore to leave this most important of duties entirely in the hands of strangers. Is it too much to say, that, in view of the importance of this matter, the few minutes required for special home training should be taken in spite of everything else? Better make or save a dollar or two less, than neglect so weighty a matter as the culture and development of your child.

We do not mean to say that the home instruction which we recommend so earnestly, should consist of set lessons.

We know a family of excellent spellers, who attribute their excellence in this department to the informal spelling exercises engaged in at the family table.

Exercises in mental arithmetic may be engaged in at the same place, to the great interest and profit of the little ones. Rainy days and the long winter evenings, may in part be spent in drawing, writing, tracing pictures, or reading aloud. No place so good as the home for teaching children to read. Parents and children should take turns in reading the newspaper, or some interesting book. In this way, better than in any other, a taste will be cultivated which, more than any other, will be a source of pleasure and profit in future years.

We urge upon teachers therefore that they call the attention of parents to the subject of fireside instruction. In most instances this prompting on the part of the teacher is all that is needed to secure so desirable a result.

But aside from the direct advantage to be derived by pupil and parent from the systematic home culture here recommended, is the marked benefit to the teacher himself in the work of the school-room. Much of this will cease to be task-work. A new interest will attend the ordinary recitations. School-work will cease to be to the pupil a mere matter of text-books. Arithmetic, reading, grammar, spelling, geography—all will be realized, so to speak, and an ever wakeful interest be excited.—*Iowa School Journal*.

2. THE HALF-TIME SYSTEM.

Having a school of fifty-six children, of five different grades, in a room where there were desks for but forty-six, I obtained permission of the Board to try the Half-time System for one month, taking my two advanced classes in the morning, and the remaining thirty children in the afternoon. The result was as follows:

Each child had a permanent seat and wardrobe hook; there was less confusion in passing out; the room was more quiet for studying; the pupils could all be kept busy; the teacher's attention was not disturbed by restless, idle children; better habits of study were formed; the attention of both teacher and pupils could be given to the recitation; the recitations were more interesting, more profitable; oral lessons could be suited to the advancement of the pupils; the children did not get tired from sitting on hard seats with nothing to interest them; they did not acquire a dislike for school; they were not so boisterous at recess; the demolishing of school-furniture and the demoralizing of school children, which result from leaving them without the care of the teacher at noon, were avoided; the children could help their parents at home; there was less tardiness and absence; less scolding and punishment; and at night the teacher was not too tired to prepare lessons, read or visit.

The smaller children learned much more, and the larger ones quite as much, as under the previous arrangement. The teacher, nearly all of the children, and a majority of the parents, were in favor of the Half-time System; and yet it was discontinued, because "the law says every child shall have six hours' schooling," and because the greatest concern of some parents is to get their children out of the way.

So the school has returned to the good old way. An assistant teacher was employed, and then, with more desks, more books, more weariness, and at more expense, bedlam was restored.—*Kansas Ed. Journal*.

3. TEACHERS WHO ERR.

He who clings obstinately to the past, with its traditions, who will not hearken to the teachings of the present, and who sees

nothing useful in the promises of the future—the *ultra conservative*.

He who is an iconoclast of old methods, and who believes in nothing that is not an innovation—the *ultra reformer*.

He who is *too lenient*, and who would substitute "moral suasion" for the rod in all cases.

He who is *too rigid*, and who would use the rod unsparingly for every, and for the slightest delinquency.

He who is *too watchful*, and plays the part of a police detective.

He who *never watches*, and sees not the most flagrant misdemeanor.

He who professes—in order to avoid the charge of partiality—to love an idle and disobedient pupil as much as one who is studious and obedient.

He who would punish an idle and disobedient pupil, when it does wrong, more quickly than a studious and obedient pupil, when it does wrong.

He who is so impolitically politic that he would treat a rich man's son differently from a poor man's son.

He who would pander to the ignorance and pride of the rich.

He who would pander to the ignorance and envy of the poor.

He who is a moral coward, and is afraid to correct a child when it does wrong, through fear that he may lose a pupil and a few dollars.

He who, for the same reason, is afraid to tell the parent when a child does wrong.

He who listens to, and tries to follow the advice of every one.

He who listens to the advice of no one.

He who is not as hard a student as any of his pupils.

He who is *too lazy* to educate (*Educo*—to lead out), and is content to be a mere lesson-hearer.

He who has no higher aim than to make money by his profession.

He who develops the intellect only, and neglects the moral nature.

He who fails to exalt his profession, and to place it next in nobleness and utility to that of the ministry of the Gospel.—*Journal of Education, Missouri*.

4. THE MISTAKE WHICH SOME "TEACHERS" MAKE.

It is generally assumed that anybody can teach school. The work is light, and if the teacher possess a little more knowledge than his pupils, it is sufficient. Hence, we see throughout the country hundreds of teachers who have not the remotest idea of the true methods of instructing. People think sensibly about every other occupation. The shoe-maker, the blacksmith, the carpenter, the farmer, the merchant, the machinist, the engineer, the lawyer, the physician, the minister, all must have preliminary training, but the teacher can be picked up at any time and place, without preparation, and people are satisfied, nay, they actually seek for such because they are cheap. No pecuniary interests would be permitted in the hands of inexperienced bunglers, for ruin would be certain. What merchant would trust his establishment to one who knows nothing of trade? What farmer would place his farm in the hands of one who knows nothing of soils, grains, machines, and stock? But districts trust a more precious interest than any of these to hands totally unskilled and incapable. Because the effect is not immediate, because they are not always able to discern the amount of damage; they do not see but one teacher does as well as another, and hence the cheapest answers them best. It becomes those who teach, therefore, to prepare themselves for their work, to raise the standard of education, and to oblige the people to have good teachers, whether they want them or not. Surely the teacher needs special instruction for his work, if any one does. Who would think of employing a physician that had never made the science of medicine a study, or a lawyer that had never studied law? No more should a teacher be employed unless he practically, at least, has some knowledge of pedagogy. Every one called to teach should see to it that he prepares himself to teach philosophically, that his pupils may not, in after years, rise up and condemn him. It is no light thing to shape the mind, and hence the character, of a number of children. They have a right to the best instruction, and we shall be blamed by them if we do not give it. Every one of us can look back and see wherein our teachers failed, and we often feel that we are now suffering in our mental habits thereby. On the other hand, we can recall some teachers, and see wherein they directed and moulded our minds, and prepared them for thorough and extensive work. Our labor is doing for our pupils what was done for us by our teachers. Do we, can we feel that it is a light thing? Are we willing to do work so fraught with the gravest responsibility for the sake of a livelihood, or because it is easier to us than some other occupation? Every teacher should feel that he has a special calling for the work, and then prepare himself fully for it.—*N. O. Journal of Education*.