

rapt faces to the story of the merman, whose wife was charmed away to the upper world at the sound of the Easter bells from the little gray church on the sea shore.

But it is useless for me to begin to enumerate the hosts of beautiful legends and tales and sketches that are at our command, each one pregnant with tender and heroic thought. The only wonder is that any one of mature judgment should be attracted even for an instant by the trashy or worse than trashy publications that crowd the parlors of to-day. Let us then try by this or any other judicious method to help our boys and girls, whose tastes are yet unformed, to appreciate and hunger for a higher and more wholesome class of literature.

But here let me say a few plain words in regard to this story teaching. It should not be of too frequent occurrence, nor yet without some other motive than mere amusement. We cannot denounce too strongly the custom that is not unfrequent among us of killing time, quieting troublesome pupils and relieving the teacher of needful work by taking up a book of suitable tales, and reading from it for an hour at a time, such a plan defeats all purpose of systematic instruction. We all know how our pupils demand another and still another; and before the second tale is finished, the first has become a blank in their memory. This method cultivates the habit of mental cramming so common in the present day, and seriously impairs the mental digestive organs. Let the story then come once a week, twice at the most. Question your pupils always at some aftertime, to see how much their memories have retained. If read to an advanced class let them rewrite it from memory. Tell the story, in preference to reading it, if your pupils are junior ones. It is fatiguing certainly and requires more effort than simple read-

ing, but we are repaid always, not only by the increased interest of our pupils, but in the knowledge that it aids the teacher to become a graphic and fluent conversationalist. Let us not attempt too much at once; if we can make our pupils conversant with the lives and writings of three or four interesting authors during the session, we have given them quite enough to store away, and were this plan adopted in the various grades, any pupil on reaching the advanced classes, would be capable of comparing one author with another, and be able to give reasons for any preference he might have.

I am afraid the custom of memorizing choice selections from standard writers has dropped somewhat into disuse in our schools, although it is one we can ill afford to dispense with, yielding as it does an opportunity for voice culture as well as storing the minds of the children with noble thought expressed in choicest language. We have the whole book world to choose from, and no teacher, be his literary judgment ever so poor, is likely to go far astray in presenting to his class suitable matter for memorizing. Give them selections suited to their capacity, and tell them the substance of the remainder of the article chosen; help them to find out when a thought is well expressed, show them that slang is never used by really good writers, teach them to detest anything like looseness of language in themselves or others, suggest the care that is exercised by writers in revising before sending their manuscript from them, thus by inculcating patience in composition, help them to make the language of literature their own, so that all unconsciously they will adopt it for daily use. The Association will pardon a slight digression here, in order to give a practical illustration of what is meant. A week or two ago, on walking to school in the morning,