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when he sees them; but the teacher's task is by no means accomplished when this is attained. If he is a practical and thorough teacher, he will make these words the text for a great deal of information, which may be rendered not only interesting, but actually of much pleasure and delight to the curious and wonder-loving mind of the little being before him.

Before I finish this paper, however, I shall have more to say about these words and many others, illustrative of the method which I have pursued for nearly twenty years. When the attendance at school has, for a reasonable time, been punctual and regular, the results produced from its working, I have found, by close observation, to be such as to satisfy me that, instead of time being lost, as some teachers maintain, many valuable hours are saved in their after-instruction by making them familiar, when first beginning to read, with the meaning of every word and its application to the various uses for which it is employed in speaking and writing; and if done in an attractive manner, will be to the child both instructive and pleasing; whilst it will prove much less irksome and monotonous to the teacher. It has long been my conviction that more teachers have failed in their calling from a want of success in teaching young children to read than from any other cause connected with actual instruction.

EDUCATION.

Teaching Small Children to Read.

Read before the Teacher's Association in connexion with McGill Normal School, on the 4th December, 1858, by H. Arnold, Teacher, Montreal.

The subject which I have chosen for this paper is one, the importance of which, no teacher male or female, who has been engaged for any length of time in teaching the elementary branches of education, will deny. I know that when young teachers commence the practice of their profession they very seldom give the subject that study and consideration which it ought to receive from every one who has chosen that honorable employment of "teaching the young idea how to shoot." And why should they trouble themselves about the preparation, by serious and deep study, for imparting what to them seems the least difficult of all that multiplicity of branches said to constitute a common or elementary education? They are under the impression, and so was I once, that teaching children to read is the easiest of all their daily or weekly round of tasks; that no method is required no previous study of the matter to be communicated, or the best manner in which it ought to be instilled into the minds of those little ones entrusted to their care and tuition. Nothing in short, but a book containing letters and words, which are to be simply pointed at by the teacher and repeated to the child till he is said to know them all by sight, and the art of teaching to read is fully acquired.

But a teacher of experience knows and feels that he will fall immeasurably, short of his duty to the enquiring mind of the child, how small soever he may be, if he stops short of making him thoroughly acquainted, not only with the words by sight, but with their meaning and application. It is not a very difficult matter, for instance, to teach a child to know the words *dog, cat, rat, &c.*,

Many have, no doubt, failed from other causes unconnected with practical teaching, such as immorality, general incapacity for the work, irregularity in their attendance, or a want of punctuality in regard to the hours of opening and closing the school, &c. But should a teacher's moral character and qualifications stand ever so high; and should he labour ever so earnestly and faithfully for the advancement of his school; still if he has not the *tact* to teach the younger children the art of reading understandingly, it is more than probable that he will find it exceedingly difficult to render the instruction in other branches intelligible to his pupils and satisfactory to himself. Who will not say that a teacher's explanations, when he is giving a lesson in any other branch, are not much more easily understood by the boy or girl, who has become by the judicious training of an experienced and skilful teacher well informed and intelligent, as regards the meaning of words with their connexion and application? I would, therefore, earnestly recommend every young teacher who may not possess that natural aptness requisite to impart with facility, this fundamental knowledge to his junior classes, to labour hard and perseveringly, and never to rest satisfied till he has acquired that qualification, which of course is very many absolutely indispensable in order to render a teacher thoroughly competent, is the one, which if properly exercised will in my opinion, go the farthest towards ensuring his complete and lasting success. Of course the same principle of thoroughness in explanation on the part of the teacher, and of minute examination by the children into every thing to be studied, or that is brought under their consideration, must be carried out in teaching all the other branches. But if the foundation be laid when they are at the elements of reading, the labour of teaching the more advanced