

## Teacher's Miscellany.

### THE "DO" METHOD.

BY ELIZABETH F. KEYSOR.

Did you ever think how many times in a day the word "Do" passes your lips, and how seldom we use "Do," the word of such magical charm?

The teacher's life would be a hundredfold easier and pleasanter if she would periodically drop from her vocabulary "don't," and in its place use "do."

A very limited use of the negatives is all right, but we are so apt to use them too freely—and then it is such a harsh way of obtaining the desired result. There is no loving, helpful, upbuilding-of-character process in it.

I admit that for the moment it is much easier to quietly say, "Johnny, don't do that," "Susie, don't play with your pencil," etc., but is it easier in the long run? Is it not a wrong done to the child? The business of every teacher is to tell the children *what to do* rather than *what not to do*. Let them forget about the things they ought not to do by never hearing them mentioned.

Many of the children come from homes where "don't" is in constant use, and often accompanied by harsh words and cruel blows. A kind and gentle "do" from the teacher will be a perfect balm to their little hearts, and as the smile breaks through the dirt she will feel well repaid for the extra bit of time the use of "do" has consumed. Crowd as much love, kindness, and goodness as possible into the hours from nine to twelve. Make the children forget the disagreeable, unkind things they have heard so much about, and fill the few hours spent with you so full of happiness and sunshine that there will be left no room for the naughty, unkind things to creep in. Remember, no *skill* is required in the use of the word "don't."

Children respond so quickly to the atmosphere about them, and are so ready to do the right thing if but given the opportunity. They are not innately bad, and should be looked upon as good, and ready to do the right so far as they know it. The little charmed word unlocks all the loveliness of the child-nature, while the excessive use of its negative shuts it up, and arouses the unpleasant, irritable qualities.

When we say to a child, you may do this or that, he is given employment, a definite something to do, and his mind and hands are instantly busy. But on the other hand, the use of the word "don't" leaves him with nothing to do, but with a strong desire and a determination to do something. And he does do something, but only to hear the word "don't" again, and so on until he becomes so cross and naughty that the teacher soon finds him quite unmanageable.

The use of these words was brought to my notice in trying to discover the cause of the difference in the atmosphere of two primary schools. In one, the sweetest spirit was manifest by all, teacher and pupils alike, and there was such a joyous, happy, contented expression on each little face that it almost renewed one's youth to look into them. The whole of one morning was spent here, and not once was heard the hard little negative—it was all *do, do, do*.

The next morning was devoted to the other room, and it was then that the charm in that word, so sadly neglected, was fully appreciated. For here its negative was hurled broadcast. It was, "Johnny, don't scuff your feet"; "Susie, don't hum"; "Willie, don't whisper," etc. It was an atmosphere of "don'ts," and often irritable, impatient ones, too. The children were not happy and free, but acted in a frightened, hopeless sort of a way, or else in a bold "don't care" manner—either of which is a direct and sure outgrowth of the "Don't" method of discipline.

This teacher worked harder than the other, but was much farther from gaining the desired result. Her life seemed full of care, and she went from her room tired and irritable, while the other felt joyous and happy in thinking of the loving hearts and willing hands that made her work a pleasure, and to get pleasure from her work is the duty of every teacher; if she does not, something, somewhere, is radically wrong.

Do not say her success was due to the children with whom she had to work, for it was not; it was her effective and ingenious use of the word "do,"

whose wonderful power is but half appreciated. If you doubt, try it, and your doubts will speedily be removed.—*Primary Education*.

### SOME PRACTICAL PROBLEMS.

BY C. M. DRAKE.

"Do you mind taking my class in arithmetic for a half-hour?" inquired my friend Jones one morning when I was visiting his school.

I assured him it would be a pleasure to me, and inquired where they were working. "They are just reviewing square measure. Give them a few practical examples out of your head," said he.

Then he left me alone with the class, and I began: "We will do a little problem in papering. This is practical, and something you should know about. My room is twenty feet long, sixteen feet wide, and ten feet high. Paper it with paper two feet wide, and thirty feet in a roll, at twenty cents a roll."

Now, I will leave it to the average teacher if that is not about the way he might have given an ordinary question in papering. It is very much like one I saw in an arithmetic, anyway. I had hardly given out my problem before a twelve-year-old boy said, "They don't have wall-paper two feet wide, and thirty feet long. There isn't a roll like that in my father's store, and he has the biggest wall-paper store there is in Tacoma." Well, we reduced the paper to the proper width, and stretched it out to the right length, and then another hand went up. "Shall we paper the ceiling?" I had not thought of that, but I said the ceiling should be papered, and then thought my trials over. But a lad asked me if I was going to have a border, and how wide the border would be, for with a wide border we could put the paper farther down the wall. He had hardly finished this before another rascal wanted to know how many doors and windows I had, and how big they were. "And I suppose there is a baseboard," he remarked. "And how often does the paper match?" asked another small villain. I had never before realized that papering was so abstruse a problem, and I said that we would put flooring on that room at the rate of \$45 a thousand. "That is too much to pay for flooring here in Tacoma," remarked a lumberman's boy. I claimed this was extra fine flooring, and despite the fact that he said that I could have the pick of his father's yard for less than half that price I stuck to my price. "Are you going to put on three-inch, four-inch, or six-inch tongue and groove?" was the next query. "You know there is less waste in the wider lumber, but the narrow makes the best floor," he remarked. I did not know it, but soon learned that 320 feet of lumber would not cover the floor, and that six-inch flooring was not six inches wide.

Then I started to have them carpet the same room, and I got the carpet of a width different from any that had ever come to Tacoma, the girl whose father was a carpet dealer assured me, and I failed miserably when I tried to tell them how often the figures matched, and I overlooked the fact that it would have to be turned under, and that it took more carpet if put one way of the room than the other way; and when I told the price and was asked what kind of carpet it was, I was afraid to answer.

Then I started to have them put a roof over the room, and the carpenter's boy snickered when I gave them the length of the rafters, and to this day I cannot see what was funny in my telling that every shingle was four inches wide, and laid six inches to the weather. I am sure that is the way I saw it in the book.

I got afraid of original examples, so I opened the book and began to read a problem where the soldiers got 8 oz. of rations a day, and a girl who belonged to the Tacoma Girls' Brigade wanted to know if the men were shut up in a fort and starving. And then the whole class looked at me, as though I were responsible for these short rations. You can't imagine how glad I was to see Jones return just then and take that class out of my hands.—*N. W. Journal of Education*.

Penalties and punishments must be *certain*, and must seem to be the natural consequences of wrong acts. The child should know *what* he has to expect, and *when* to expect it. There must be no caprice, no variableness, no shadow of turning. The child soon learns to yield to the inevitable.—*Exchange*.

### RECITATION—WINTER.

Old Winter is a sturdy one,  
And lasting stuff he's made of;  
His flesh is firm as iron stone,  
There's nothing he's afraid of.

He spreads his coat upon the heath,  
Nor yet to warm it lingers;  
He scouts the thought of aching teeth,  
Or chilblains on the fingers.

Of flowers that bloom, or birds that sing,  
Full little cares or knows he;  
He hates the fire, he hates the spring,  
And all that's warm and cosy.

But when the foxes bark aloud  
On frozen lake or river;  
When round the fire the people crowd,  
And rub their hands and shiver;

When frost is splitting stone and wall,  
And trees come crashing after;  
That hates he not, he loves it all,  
Then bursts he out in laughter.

His home is by the north pole's strand,  
Where earth and sea are frozen;  
His summer house, we understand,  
In Switzerland he's chosen.

Now from the North he's hither hied,  
To show his strength and power;  
And when he comes we stand aside,  
And look at him and cower.

### HOW TO TEACH ARITHMETIC.

I was forcibly impressed with an article in the December number of the *Gazette* in regard to teachers confining their recitations entirely to the text-book. For the benefit of my fellow-teachers who have fallen into this error, I wish to give them my way of conducting a recitation in arithmetic. Pupils seem to think when they see large sums of money and strange names in their problems that there is something connected with those conditions which they cannot comprehend. Suppose our lesson to be commission and brokerage. Talk with your pupils about those who work on a commission. Explain to them the difference between a commission merchant and broker in the articles they buy and sell, one handling all kinds of produce, while the other deals principally in stocks, bonds, etc., but that they receive their pay by a certain per cent. on business done. Supplement all your work with a few mental problems. For instance, your father sends 100 dozen eggs to a commission merchant in Buffalo. He sells them at 20 cents per doz. What do they bring? No pupil is so dull but that he will readily answer \$20. What will be his commission at 1%, 2%, 3%, etc.? After giving a few similar problems, proceed to the written work. Give your pupils original problems as far as possible. In giving the problems say to the pupil, "You are now doing this business, and in their explanation be sure to have them begin with *I*." I would not discard the text-book altogether, but use it in the class only when some difficult problem is found which some of the class would like to see solved. Let the explanations be full, and proper terms used. If this method is followed in the different subjects in arithmetic, I assure you your pupils will not only advance, but, what is much better, will understand what they are doing, and be able to apply what they learn into actual practice.—*A. G. Merville, in Educational Gazette*.

The test of the teacher is efficiency. Not the showing he is able to make in an examination, but the final result he can produce in the character of those who come from under his hand. This efficiency is not of the sort that can be counted up in always to work an increase of salary. But the ability to leave a lasting mark on the mind and character of the pupil is the unmistakable sign of the real teacher. And the source of this power lies not in the teacher's acquirements, but deeper, in the very fibre of his character. "Words have weight when there is a man behind them," said Emerson. It is the man or woman behind the instruction that makes the real teacher a great deal more than a mere instructor.—*Edward Eggleston*.