

for itself, arouses another, and the whole fluid spirit of man is affected, transmuted into power, like the pressure of a child's hand on the lever of the hydraulic ram.

A young man should accustom himself to expression, though his office was only to be dumb waiter in a deaf-mute asylum. In fact the less his calling demands speech of him the more assiduous should he be to cultivate it, for what he must do he will not be likely to neglect, while he will be sadly prone to omit the culture not required by his office.

The imprisoned soul was only liberated by expression, and he who accepts not the franchise consents to the fetter, and for some petty vanity, or trivial impediment, assumes the very bondage which it was the pride of Cadmus to break. The modesty of those youth who refuse to write and make to themselves a habit of expression is just as commendable as would be the persistency of a child in refusing to walk till it knew how to walk well. Let him continue so to refuse and the years will show you a wretched cripple, whose worthless limbs are a life-long rebuke of the shallow folly that would not make them available, and a lasting insult to the benevolence that vouchsafed him those noble organs of locomotion.

Let our timid friends, who are afraid to attempt composition and rhetorical exercises, evade every opportunity to get their souls into words, and the result will be as fatal, to a more vital power than that of locomotion. Intelligence itself will stagnate at its source, or only dribble out in the turbid channels of petty gossip and shallow inanities. Mind will have no dignity, and thought no incentive; and the poor withered soul will graduate into the next circle of being without the narrowest qualifications for making a decent use of this.

Thus it is that language is not only a measure, but a means of growth. It reveals how far the creature has ascended toward that pure intelligence, of which all the universe is an expression; and it puts his finite being into line, as it were with the mighty pulses of that infinite life, like some tiny bay laid open by its little tides to the great swing of the Atlantic.

PRIMARY READING.

AMONG the several methods of teaching children to read, the *word method* seems to have attained much popularity. By this plan an attempt is made to teach the child to recognize in print those words whose meaning and use he has previously learned in conversation, without any regard to the characters or letters of which they are composed.

Its advocates argue that as children learn the concrete before the abstract, the whole before its parts, the printed words should be learned before the letters which make them up.

That things, actions, qualities, etc., in the material world are, to some extent, so learned is not denied; but with regard to the words that represent them, we think the case is quite different. Even spoken words are learned principally in elementary parts. The child begins to talk by imperfectly lisping the simplest sounds and most elementary words of the language. Perhaps the child first learns to utter the Italian *a*, because this is the element most naturally produced by simply opening the mouth and emitting sound. Afterwards the most easily articulated consonant sounds are combined with this power of *a*, and such words as *ma*, and *pa*, *mamma* and *papa* are heard.

But as the child learns rapidly, since he learns naturally, at this period of his existence, the principal vowels and consonants are soon acquired; and such words as *me*, *see*, *go*, *eye*, *cat*, *dog*, etc., are distinctly uttered. In a short time, the easiest combinations of consonants, such as in *bread*, *grass*, *stand*, etc., are mastered by the little learner. And so the process continues, until the more complicated and difficult words can be uttered with ease.

If this theory is correct, it is evident that the parts or elements of spoken language are unconsciously learned before the whole or words can be spoken. Elements are learned before words, and words before sentences can be formed.

But more especially is this true of written language. The child, having previously learned the elements of spoken language, has only to learn the characters that represent these elements, acquire facility in combining them so as to form words, and in recognizing these combinations when formed.

The elements are few, and if we had a character for each, and but one, as in phonetic print, the task of learning to read would be simple and easy. If this were the case, I suppose the word method would have few advocates.

Though the orthography of our language has many irregularities, it would not seem to justify a system of teaching so much at variance with that which would be so clearly indicated were orthography regular.

The writer concludes, from the above and other considerations not presented, that the *word method* is not the best plan of teaching children to read. He may, in a subsequent article, offer some further thoughts on this subject, and indicate more clearly

what he regards as the true method of teaching this important branch of primary education.

JOHN D. JOHNSON, Yadkinville, N. C.

RELATIONS OF TEACHERS TO COMMITTEES AND THE COMMUNITY.

ARE teachers professional agents, or simply servants? Do they owe a professional service, or the service of the day laborer? May they at the stroke of the clock, close the door, turn the key, and shut out or shut in all school care and school thought, as the laborer drops the pick at the sound of the whistle? The teacher claims that he stands in *loco parentis*, and so much must be left to his judgment, to his discretion, to his sense of duty and the fitness of things, that I do not see how he can claim, or committees grant less. But who thinks of limiting a mother's efforts for her children by the hour, or of estimating their value in dollars and cents? Does not the teacher, straining every nerve for the good of his pupil, belong to the same class of laborers as the physician sitting anxiously by the bedside of his patient, or the pastors watching "for souls as one that must give an account?" If so, his service is a professional service, and is no more to be measured by the six hours a day for five days in a week, than is the pastor's by three hours a day for one day in the week. If, however, teachers are day laborers, they have a right to open offices, take agencies, go into the book business, etc., and when school is out hire them to their several places, and carry on a legitimate and thriving business. But should they do this, would not the community feel that the teacher did not give himself to his proper work; that there would be a divided interest, and that in that division the school would suffer? Moreover, the "Rules and Regulations" seem to recognize something more than day's labor, when they say of the meetings of the Teachers' Association held Saturday afternoons, that "teachers are required to attend the meetings, and contribute severally their share in rendering the exercises interesting and useful." And is not the rule and is not the community right in this respect? Are not the care of a school, the carrying of forty or fifty pupils upon the heart, the taxing of the brain for their improvement, the devising of means for their control enough? Are not the wear and tear of nerve and soul that come from the school-room all that any one ought to subject himself to? If the teacher renders a professional service, he should be paid for such service. If the whole man is engrossed, the whole man should be paid for. He should be so paid that he will not feel compelled or at liberty to engage in other business. If he gives himself to serve the community, to meet their demands, he should be recognized as one devoting himself to the good of that community. But if the teacher is such an agent, duties are his as well as privileges. He must devote himself to the school. He is not at liberty to select his home or his boarding-place with reference to church or lectures or concerts, to lessons in music or French or German, but with reference to school. If duties to his school require him to be here or there, to do this or that, he may not plead that he boards down town or up town, and so cannot do the work. He may not engage in anything that will "counter work in himself or another" the work he is called to do.

If the teachers' meetings are not interesting, he is to "contribute his share" to make them so. If he say that he cannot learn anything at the meeting, I will only say that that is just the complaint that a scholar sometimes makes of his teacher, and in such cases the fault is invariably placed to the account of the scholar, and not of the school. It may be asked, what shall a teacher do who is so poorly paid that he cannot give all the time demanded by his school. If a sense of the insufficient pay so presses upon him that he will not do the work, or if his relations and obligations are such that he cannot, then he should resign. He who stays in a position consciously withholding efforts demanded by the position, cannot be true to himself or his calling; and the community who will suffer an earnest, faithful teacher to render unrequited service, further than in the nature of the case much of his service must be unrequited, is not true to itself or to human rights. "The laborer is worthy of his hire."

E. A. HUBBARD.

A FRENCH paper gives the following account of the origin of the expression "to make a complete fiasco." A German one day seeing a glassblower at his occupation, thought nothing could be easier than glassblowing, and that he could soon do it as well as the other. He accordingly commenced operations by blowing vigorously, but could only produce a sort of pear-shaped baloon or little flask (fiasco). The second attempt had a similar result, and so on until fiasco after fiasco had been made. Hence arose the expression which we not unfrequently have occasion to use when describing the result of our private and public undertakings.