

stitute "Longfellow the poet was a great friend of little children," "Ballantyne has written some interesting stories of adventure," "Dickens was once a poor boy," and others more complete if needful for the requirements of the lesson. Such sentences lead to enquiry, especially if the pupils once realize that they are really true. "Tell us one of the stories," they cry, or "Did he grow rich?" "Had he to work very hard?" and then comes the promise that they shall be told at the first five or ten spare minutes through the day or week. Never wander from the subject of the hour, no matter how dry it is, or how attractive the path may be that opens out in some other direction. The children are not likely to forget to claim the desired information at some future date, and this brings us to our opportunity of directing their reading by stories told simply in story form.

There is no need for me to tell what fascination the prospect of a story exerts upon children of all ages, how the most restless are quieted, and the most indifferent become alert and intent. The charm is not lost even in more advanced years, for many of us here to-day, who grow occasionally restless and inattentive under the pressure of dry discussion, would promise unlimited attention and perfect order if the president would only tell us a story.

It is not to be wondered at, this eagerness of our pupils, with all the possibilities of this busy world before them, its strange lands they cannot yet explore, its laws of science, they cannot yet grasp, its government they cannot comprehend, and, above all, the mysteries of the unseen, which surround them on every side, filling their imaginations with vague terror and superstition, or confidence and enlightenment, just as we people do it for them with evil or with good. Surely, among all these wonders,

there is material enough for us to draw upon. But why not let our stories turn frequently upon the lives and works of great men, especially of authors and their writings, than which we could find nothing more attractive. Again we might give outlines of some books worth reading, or select chapters, anything that will excite their curiosity and make them desirous of knowing the rest. In doing this we must remember the needs of the children. Their imagination must be fed. Give them plenty of adventures and wonders. Portray for them Hans Andersen, with his awkward figure and homely face, tell them of the sensitive nature, the vivid imagination and the big heart beating beneath, then relate the story of "the Ugly Duckling," and see how intently they listen, knowing it is a picture of his own neglected boyhood; put his name in the literary corner of the blackboard as one well worthy to stand pre-eminent among children's story-tellers; tell them too of Dickens' boyhood days, spent in a factory, give them some selections from his books. They never tire of hearing of Smike the half-witted drudge, of poor neglected Joe the street arab, of Little Nell and her travels, of Joe and Pip; these characters become old friends to the boys, and they are desirous always of knowing more about them, and determine some day to read for themselves. Then we have Ballantyne, with his host of startling adventures on sea and shore; and for senior classes Jules Verne, with his brilliant and not entirely unscientific flights through the universe. Longfellow should be the children's poet, not only of the present, but of the coming generation, his simplicity and pathos making it an easy matter for any child to understand him. Even Matthew Arnold with all his vague mysticisms writes a poem that children can appreciate, and they listen with