

Commend Your Pupils.

As a rule, children have very little self-confidence. Where we find one child who over-estimates his natural ability for school work, we find a hundred who under-estimates theirs; and any device on the part of the teacher which has a tendency to increase the pupil's good opinion of himself should be used. I find commendation accomplishes more in the way of cultivating a pupil's self-confidence than any other means. On the contrary, fault-finding destroys the spirit of pride, especially in a timid child, and during the recitation keeps him in such constant terror of making a mistake that he refuses to give an opinion on topics which he has a fair knowledge.

The art that enables a teacher to draw out a pupil or any subject, thus gaining access to his childish views, is one desired by all but possessed by few. We may, however, by close observation and unlimited patience, bring ourselves in perfect sympathy with the child. Then, instead of condemning his faults, our desire is to help him overcome them; and the more congeniality there exists between teacher and pupil, the more readily is assistance offered by the one and received by the other. Would it increase your respect for the superintendent or principal to have him say to you, "Miss C., your work is unsatisfactory, and unless it is greatly changed your connection with this school will be discontinued;" or, "Miss D., I found great disorder in your room yesterday; we must see a vast improvement if you expect to remain with us." Such an open rebuke from a superintendent to a delinquent teacher is almost unthinkable; and yet how many teachers are unmindful of the sensitive little ones in their charge, and think nothing of berating them for the slightest offense. Such fault-finding tends to produce a feeling of antagonism which is detrimental, if not fatal, to the success of the teacher.—*Texas School Journal*.

The sensible Christmas gift must be sensibly selected and sensibly given. It isn't a gift of policy or obligation, but of affection. It taxeth not unduly the purse, the time or the eyesight of the giver, nor the taste and patience of the recipient. It may be beautiful or useful, both or neither. It brings its welcome with it. It is not laid away and passed on to some one else next year. It says "Merry Christmas" to you sincerely, because it can truly make your Christmas merry with kind thoughts and loving memories.—*Woman's Home Companion*.

A Good Method.

Do you require your children to write a single paragraph every day? This method often accomplishes more in training children to write good English than many more ambitious compositions. The advantages of this plan are many. Perhaps the chief is the ease with which the single paragraph may be corrected in the recitation period. The teacher is relieved of the burden of correcting papers after school hours, the corrections are made on the spot when the pupil's interest is fresh and lively. Best of all, the single paragraph may be rewritten two or three times without burdening the young authors or giving them a distaste for the lesson. Some teachers require a paragraph every day on some interesting event or fact of the moment, which the pupils have read about or heard discussed. Each child decides upon his subject before school, and is given fifteen or twenty minutes every morning for writing it down. Sometimes this work is correlated with the drawing lesson and the paragraphs are illustrated. The pupils are always interested, they are never at a loss for something to say, no time is wasted in the English period thinking of something to write about, and the children know that their work will be corrected on the spot, not thrown into the waste-basket with only a glance.—*Popular Educator*.

Why own a dictionary? Many answer "So as to know the spelling and pronunciation of words." Yes, but the modern dictionary has gone far beyond this primary stage and has become almost a universal question answerer. Its purpose, today, is to give quick, accurate, encyclopedic, up-to-date information of all kinds that shall be of vital interest and use to all people. This is why a Christmas present of Webster's New International Dictionary to a school or to a teacher would be a lasting testimony of the wisdom of the giver.

A good story is told of a normal school principal who was nearing the close of his life work. An inquisitive professor in the same institution with an eye, possibly, to business, inquired of him, "Now, Dr.—, please tell what you consider the best bit of work that you have done during your long term of office." A merry twinkle showed itself in the eye of the old student of human nature as he replied, "Well, sir, perhaps the best piece of work I did for this school and the country at large was to keep a number of young women and men out of the profession."