

## Primary and Rural School Department.

CORRESPONDENCE AND ARTICLES ARE INVITED IN THIS SECTION

### PRIMARY HAND WORK.

(Continued from last month.)

The next device in Grade I Hand Work is Free Paper Cutting. Many teachers do not have free hand cutting lessons either because they feel incapable of making good examples for the children or because they have an idea that only a few gifted pupils get even fairly good results. Experience will show that neither reason is sufficient to warrant the omission of this interesting subject. Every child whose eye-sight is not defective can be taught to reproduce correctly any object brought to his notice, but such training must begin in childhood. Every child will not acquire the same proficiency. Genius is not given to every boy and girl, but the school training should bring to light the special ability of each little one and not leave its discovery to the mere whim of chance:

"The heroes are not all six feet tall,  
Large souls may dwell in bodies small."

The use of this training is plain; accuracy, dexterity, ingenuity and originality are all developed.

The paper to be used in these cuttings should be of medium thickness, with smooth finish, but unglazed and unlined, such as may be found in a Scotch linen tablet. If the paper is glazed or too thick teachers will find that a child cannot cut a perfect corner or angle, even with training, thus spoiling the beauty of their figure. Small children should have blunt pointed scissors, not more than four or five inches long. On an incentive to good work, I would suggest the purchase of some half dozen pairs of sharp pointed scissors, to be used in the more delicate cutting. It is a good idea for the children to have a book in which to paste their cuttings. Many of them will be used as units for blackboard borders, decorations for booklets, Christmas and Easter cards, blotters, valentines, etc. The preserving of the cuttings not only shows their progress during the year but teaches them a valuable lesson in neatness. Little soiled hands cannot handle delicate work without leaving the mark of five little fingers, thus spoiling the beauty and daintiness of their cutting.

Nothing requires greater cleanliness than the pasting of these white paper cuttings. Aside from this the delicacy of handling and accuracy in placing teach lessons well worth learning. An excellent paste may be made in the same way as the old-fashioned flour paste by using two teaspoons of corn starch in place of the flour. Squares of cardboard will serve as receptacles for the paste which may be applied with the use of a tooth pick.

Children should be taught the correct way of holding the scissors; thumb in the upper loop, second finger in the lower loop, first finger in front of the lower loop, with the elbow and forearm held close to the side. If the scissors are sharp, a clear and smooth outline can be obtained and must be insisted upon. Most children have had a little practice in using scissors before coming to school in cutting pictures from magazines or catalogues. This is good practice for the first couple of lessons. The pictures may be saved and afterwards pasted into a scrap-book, which, when completed, may be used as a Christmas gift for a little sick friend.

The following method may be adapted in teaching free cutting; study the object, or better, two or three at a time. In this way the similarity and difference may be more readily seen (apple and orange, for instance, or bowl and cup. Notice the type form that the object resembles (apple and orange, the sphere; bowl and cup, the half sphere). Let the object be drawn on the blackboard. Next cut the object from paper—do not fold the paper and do not have pencil lines as guides. At the next lesson repeat the exercise from memory. Cutting from memory is a splendid practice. It is an excellent training for the eye—it is even more, for it teaches the child not only to observe the details of his work but to retain that observation for use in the future. The objects which have been torn may be now reviewed by cutting. These cuttings must be saved—they must never be regarded as worthless. It is a good idea for children to paste the best cuttings of each lesson in their books. If they have made an effort to do good work, and are pleased with their success, even though