

mate relation between the life in school and the varied life outside, with its games, its story-books, and its bright fancies. The other is the danger of paralyzing the young mind with an abstract subject far above its grasp. Doubtless we have all had our share of suffering of this sort. I well remember, at the age of eleven, sitting down with dismay in my heart to grapple with the mysterious and baffling subject of "Mutability."

In regard to the method of treatment, no greater mistake can be made than allowing the child to work by himself too early. If the first few compositions are made class exercises in which teacher and pupil take part,—the teacher guiding the thought, leading the pupils to see first the main divisions of the subject, then the subdivisions of these, building in until the pupils are so full of the matter that they must express themselves, then calling for full and free expression, throwing aside all ambiguous or inaccurate language, asking at times for a variety of statement for the same thought, choosing the most concise or the most vivid or the most graceful, arousing, in short, an enthusiastic desire for clear thought and appropriate expression—were this done, the brighter children would not suffer, the slower would gain steadily in power, and all would find pleasure in the work.

Little by little the pupils should be required to do more work by themselves. John is to write upon this division of the subject, quite by himself, and Charles is to try this topic, and Tom that, and thus together we are all to contribute toward the whole. And all the time the teacher speaks with enthusiasm and with happy anticipation of the coming day when each boy shall write by himself an entire composition. Nothing is truer than that children regard with enthusiasm a thing in which the teacher herself

seems full of enthusiastic interest. From the little child who longs to read the new word, because the teacher's eyes sparkle with pleasure when she looks at it, to the great overgrown boy who attacks the perplexing problem with patient energy, because the teacher's voice thrills with interest as she speaks of the difficulties to be overcome, enthusiasm is contagious.

How shall the normal school pupil be trained to teach her own pupils? Four ways are open to some normal students, three to others, two to all: First, observation of lessons given to primary and grammar pupils by experienced teachers; second, actual work with real children, subject to criticism; third, illustrative lessons given by the normal student to her own classmates; and finally, and the main part of the work must be done in this way, careful discussion of the subject in the classroom,—its scope, its value, the proper preparation for it, methods of conducting it, and the practical difficulties and the abuses which beset it.

Because the rightful claims of any subject are best appreciated when it is viewed in relation to other subjects, I should like in conclusion to draw attention to one thing which is always to be borne in mind in discussing the value of work of this kind. Composition is not the only, nor the most valuable, means of training the child in the use of his mother tongue. Before and above this must always come wide and intelligent reading. Throwing aside exceptional cases of diffidence or other personal peculiarity, the wide reader is the good speaker and writer. He has something to speak and write about, he has unconsciously added great store to his vocabulary in his varied reading, and has appropriate expression for his thought.

I have said that composition may be made a valuable aid in the training of the active form of the imagination,