

THE NEW SCHOOL-HOUSE.

Dedicatory Ode.

Father of Wisdom, bless the dome
The liberal hands have made
So beautiful, for those who seek
Instruction's fostering aid;
And grant them here such wealth to gain,
From learning's priceless lore,
As fits the mind e'en here below,
On angel wings to soar,

In groups they come; the earnest boy
Fast by his sister's side;
And toiling on, with wondering joy,
The nursery's youngest pride;
From hall and cot they freely come,
A glad and studious band
The hope of many a parent's heart
The jewels of our land

Father of Mercies, bless the band
That here, in youthful bloom,
Shall Lamb-like by their teachers stand,
When we are in our tomb;
And may they, through thy spirit's aid,
That holy knowledge prize
Which wins the soul a glorious home
When this frail body dies.

The Period of a Child's Education.

Various opinions prevail as to the most proper time to commence the education of children—some claiming that it should be begun earlier than is usual, while others maintain that it is already entered upon at too early an age. Experience, in discussing this subject, is met by experience, and observation by observation, and the question—When shall the education of the child commence?—remains unsettled, in the minds of many earnest inquirers.

It is generally admitted, that the earliest impressions are the most enduring—this being so, then it would seem to be a fair deduction—that as soon as the child is susceptible of comprehending impressions made upon the mind by words and by observation, should his systematic training and education be begun. The capacity of children like that of adults, differs, and so of necessity will the most suitable time to begin educating, be earlier or later according to the ability to understand and know.

The arts of reading and spelling are not generally easily acquired. Yet there are examples where boys and girls read and spell well at the age of four and five years; it has been remarked by a teacher of great observation, that if a child who has attained the age of six years, cannot read easy lessons fluently, the difficulty of doing so increases with increasing years. It is very disheartening to a child who has attained the age of seven or eight, to be still unable to read easy lessons with fluency. He feels keenly the odium that seems quietly to distil upon him who is denominated a bad reader—it is worse than being a bad speller. Early inferiority when one is fully conscious of it, is almost sure to prevent future progress, because it gets hatred for books and literary society.

Education then, as we have often urged, should be commenced in the home circle, and the mother should be the first teacher—for education of some sort is sure to be given and received by the child while at home, whether it be systematic or accidental—such as surrounding circumstances are calculated to impart. Every child should be taught to read the letters of the alphabet at home. This should not be required of a public teacher except under the most extraordinary circumstances. No one is so well adapted to do this as the mother, in our favored country—and not only should she teach the child its letters, but she should also teach it how to put them together so as to form words, and afterwards to put the words together so as to form sentences, which constitute the first steps in learning the art of reading. An old English teacher remarked many years since, that he always found those boys to be the best readers that had been taught by their mothers. Further, he remarked that boys thus instructed seldom had vulgar tones, but generally have read with unusual ease and elegance. This teacher says:

"Let then, the child be taught to read as soon as the infant faculties begin to exhibit symptoms of improvable expansion; his attention active in the extreme, must fix on a variety of objects, though by no means the only one. Let no long confinement, and no severity of reprimand or correction attend the lesson. A little will be learned at the earliest age, and with the easiest discipline. That little will infallibly lead to further improvement and the boy will soon, and with little pains to himself, or others, learn to read; an acquisition considered in its difficulty and in its consequences, truly great.

He, on the other hand, who is retarded by the theoretical wisdom of his friends, till he is seven or eight years of age, has this burdensome task to begin, when habits of idleness have been contracted, and when he ought to be laying the foundation of classical knowledge.—*Rur. N. Y.*

The Classification, Recitations, and Government of Schools.

Many teachers are now entering their schools for the winter term, and at this season a few suggestions will be appropriate, relative to the general arrangements of schools, and plans for instruction.

The first object of the teacher, on commencing a school term, should be to classify the pupils. The usual time for school instruction is about six hours daily, hence, generally, not more than *three hundred minutes* can be spent in actual instruction, after deducting time for recess, changes of classes, &c. Now, if a school contains thirty pupils (which is a less number than most schools average), it leaves about *ten minutes* of instruction for each pupil, if not classified.

By arranging these thirty pupils into

ten classes, each class might receive *thirty minutes*; and as many of the pupils would be in four or five classes, as spelling, reading, geography, arithmetic, and grammar, they would receive from two to two and a half hours' instruction each day. Here, then, is a great gain of time to the scholars from classification. Besides, the older pupils would receive much benefit by contact with the minds of other pupils in the class, which would otherwise be lost to them.

Intimately connected with classification are recitations. For these there should be regular and stated times, and the scholars should understand that when the time came for any recitation it must take place, and that no excuse of the pupil could delay it. It would be well to adopt some plan by which all the lessons may be learned by each pupil in the class.

In recitations teachers should endeavour by all possible means to draw out the mind of the scholars, to teach them how to learn, and how to use what they learn. In all school instruction it is the teacher's duty to develop those faculties and teach those principles which will make useful citizens and good neighbours. Probably the future conduct and usefulness of many may be determined for life by the influences of the very term of school which they are now attending. How important, then, that the influence of that school be such as shall conduct to paths of usefulness.

The government of a school is of vital importance to its usefulness. Let it then receive much careful attention. Have but few rules, and those of a simple and universal character. Do RIGHT, is the all-important one, and it will apply to all the multitudinous cases of discipline which may come before the teacher. Impress the importance of a just and strict observance of this rule upon the minds of every pupil. Make them feel they have a personal interest in all that relates to good conduct, order and improvement in the whole school.

By remarks upon general conduct, and by applying admitted principles of right and wrong to individual action, create a public sentiment in your school, which will frown upon everything bad, and approve of what is right in the conduct of the pupils. This accomplished, you will have a moral governor to regulate your school, whose influence will be tenfold more potent than any physical government which could be devised.—*The Student.*

NOTICE.**TO CLERKS OF COMMISSIONERS.**

These clerks who have not yet forwarded to the Superintendent acknowledgements of the receipt of their supplies of School and Library books for 1852, are requested to do so as soon as possible. If not received up to the present date, information to that effect is requested. Invoices have been forwarded by mail to the clerks of all the districts.

January 20th, 1853. J. W. DAWSON.