

of study in preparing lessons on seats. Children are sent to seats with lessons to prepare for recitation, sums to work, or rules to study, or some lesson to commit, with no hint how it is to be done, without any special direction or mode of study, by which they can more profitably, more correctly, and in less time, go through their studies, or do their work. For want of a system for preparing lessons, a great part of school time is lost, or very unprofitably spent. Every teacher should draw up—and with careful consideration—rules for preparing lessons—directing the pupil how to go through any and every part of his school-work, in a way most profitable to himself, and least wasteful of time. Were our educators to attend to this part of their duty more, scholars would come up, with lessons far better prepared, and be able to stand the test of the master's examination with more profit to themselves and satisfaction to him.

We now suppose the same class called up to test the results of seat preparation, on reading, and their knowledge of the substance and matter of the lesson.—How this may be profitably and efficiently done I have already explained. But as the etymological exercise at this stage should be more minute and more extended, the following directive illustrations may be found of some value to aid and guide the inexperienced teacher, and perhaps, be of some little advantage even to the experienced educator.

As the teacher is going on with this exercise, let him explain as plainly as possible how the stems or root-words are modified by the elements which enter into their composition, as, how, *plor* is modified by *ex*, *dore* by *ad*, &c.; how a root lies at the foundation of a word, or of a whole family of words as follows: *in-spire*, *ex-pire*, *con-spire*, *re-spire*, *tran-spire*, *as-pire*; and how the added elements alter, or vary the meaning; but not passing the exercise till well understood, and the pupils are able, and with considerable readiness, to use the words in sentences of their own construction. One of the greatest defects in our methods of teaching is passing over what we teach, or on which we train children, too hastily, and not unfrequently never again returning to it. These defects have to be corrected, if really we are in earnest in the matter of education.

At this stage scholars should know as much of the elements of grammar as to enable the teacher to exercise them on grammatical etymology, considerably, showing how words are modified in their meaning by grammatical changes; how a noun is modified by its changes of number, gender and case; an adjective by its degrees of comparison; a pronoun, by its various forms of person, number, gender and case; a verb, by its several inflections and compound forms; and also such other parts of speech as assume different forms. But such exercises should be followed up practically, in sentence-application.—The following examples will illustrate what I here refer to:

TEACHER. How does *est* modify the adjective smooth? PUPIL. It expresses the highest degree of the quality smooth in the things compared, as paper is smooth, my slate is smoother, but the window class is by much the smoothest. TEACHER. Exemplify *he*, *his*, *him*. PUPIL. *He* walks to school every day; *his* father allows *him* to remain at home occasionally; I sat by *him* to-day when writing. T. Explain. P. I use *he* as the agent, the person that walks; *his* to express relation, *his* father; and *him*, in the second example, as the object of the verb *allows*, *his* father allows *him*; and in the third, as dependent on the proposition *by*, expressing my relation to *him*. T. Show by examples how you would use *drink*, *drank*, *drunk*, *drinking*, and the compound form *had drunk*. P. He now *drinks* water; he *drank* beer before. My father has *drunk* water daily by order of the physician. I do not approve of *drinking* spirits. George *had drunk* a cup of coffee yesterday, before I sat down to breakfast.—And so on.

Exercises of this kind will do much to unfold the principles of grammar to pupils, and to familiarize them with their application.

I might now close my remarks and directions; but the advancement in improved teaching, of late years, requires that the subject be still farther followed up. The few hints I would still offer for the benefit of the teacher, I reserve for a future communication.

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### Object Lessons.

Many of the boasted discoveries of the age, in the science of teaching, are mere changes, not improvements. Many who talk loudly of progress are only marking time—stirring, not advancing. But the methods of primary instruction recently introduced into this country from Germany, and extensively adopted in our best schools,

are not of this character. They are changes from the false to the true, and worthy of all that has been said in their favor, and a great deal more. I refer to the recognition of the principles which have just been briefly sketched—that it is the facts and objects of the outer or material world with which we must first deal, and that the formation of habits of close and accurate observation is the great work of the elementary teacher. 'Object lessons,' as they are termed, form an important part of this improved method of primary teaching. Some familiar thing, as a book or watch, is selected by the teacher as the subject of the lesson. Attention is called to its several parts, with their names, the materials of which it is composed, with their sources, and the place and manner in which it is made. Its various uses, etc., are also explained. A great variety of questions relating to the object are asked by the teacher and children, and many points are suggested to the latter, upon which they are to seek further information from their parents, or older brothers and sisters. The important point to be noticed here is, that the article is present; its form, color, and parts, are seen as they are described. The knowledge acquired by children is, therefore, concrete, not abstract. The number of different things which can thus be brought to contribute to the purposes of instruction is unlimited, and the children will take great delight in bringing their offerings, since even the dullest finds he can take part in the exercises and add to the interest of the class. Natural objects may be used in a similar manner; a simple leaf, or flower, or pebble, affording ample scope and interest for many lessons.

Thus a spirit of inquiry and a healthy desire for useful information are awakened. The amount of valuable information communicated in this manner is very great. It is positive knowledge, not mere words representing knowledge. A thousand facts are thus secured to the mind, which, though learned repeatedly from books, would, almost inevitably, be quickly and hopelessly forgotten. So wide is the difference between passive reception and eager grasping. Children six years of age, who have been taught by this process, often exhibit an acquaintance with the familiar objects of common life not possessed by persons of maturer years and far greater pretensions to scholarship.

But the mere information gained, valuable as it is, is the least benefit accruing from this method of instruction. The attention of the child is arrested, his mind is interested, his mental faculties are quickened into vigorous yet normal activity—the impressions received are vivid and enduring. Instead of the listlessness and stupefaction produced by the dreary, monotonous repetition, all day long, of A, B, C, the eye is bright, the face radiant with pleasure, the movements elastic, and the whole being instinct with life. The child is thoroughly awake, because the teaching is natural, sensible, and philosophical.

The power and habit of accurate observation, of nice discrimination, and correct judgment, are among the best fruits of teaching by object lessons. Every one must have observed the astonishing difference in the ability of different persons in these respects. There are thousands who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not. They walk amid the clustering glories of the earth or beneath the star-jeweled draperies of the heavens, but perceive them not. The cadence and swell of music, the eternal anthem of the solemn sea, the silvery minstrelsy of birds, roll and die upon the echoing air in vain; they only hear a noise! In the domain of trees and flowers, so full of the poetry of form and motion, so exquisite with the touch and tracery of the finger of God, their enthusiasm is epitomized in the words of the poet:

"A primrose by the river's brim  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more."

They look upon the most gorgeous sunset and only know that there are clouds in the west from which, perchance, they predict rain on the morrow! The ingenuity of the mechanic, the taste and skill of the architect, the artist, the landscape-gardener, and the florist, are lost upon them. They may travel round the globe and they will be but little the wiser, while the keen vision and responsive ear of others find fitness, joy, and beauty, everywhere. Now, to a great extent, this loss of untold profit and pleasure to one class and gain to the other is due to the fact that the former do not know how to see and hear, the latter do. In the one case the eye and ear have not been cultivated, the habit of close observation has not been formed. So the vague sense of beauty which seems to be innate to childhood has been buried beneath the rubbish of life; the faculties of observation and discrimination have become rusty through disuse. In the other case the law of growth by use has been illustrated; every sense and faculty is kept fresh and keen, and has gathered power from year to year.