

BEGINNERS

A short time ago I met a teacher, who had recently entered the teaching profession, and who was already showing signs of discouragement.

She had started teaching with high ideals. She had meant to accomplish so much, but she was already feeling that she had failed.

Probably this experience is common to most beginners. They are discouraged if they do not see immediate results. They expect to reap as soon as they have sown. Experienced teachers know that we must allow time for assimilation and growth.

A teacher, relating to her early experiences, said that at the end of the first week she was puzzled to know what she was to do the second week, as she had told them all she knew. To her surprise she found that all she had told the pupils during the first week had made little impression on them. She soon learned that constant drill was the price of success.

Our young teachers should not be discouraged if they find that some of their best efforts fail to impress the pupils. Children do not acquire knowledge in lumps or flashes. By hearing certain things over and over again, they become familiar with them. By being in a certain atmosphere or environment, they gradually acquire certain habits of thinking and acting. To be permanent, the process must necessarily be slow.

The complaint, that children do not remember what they hear, should help us in our teaching. Knowledge should be presented in such a way as to appeal to as many of the senses as possible. What the pupil hears merely, does often "go in one ear and out the other." That which appeals to both the eye and the ear is more liable to impress the mind. That, which appeals to eye and ear and hand, is still more impressive.

I intended writing a few paragraphs on the teaching of geography to grade six—or rather the use of maps in teaching geography to this grade—but will take it up later, as there are two or three questions to be discussed, that may be of general interest.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

A. E. W. J.—Since the same pupils are tardy morning after morning, I would find out how far they live from the school. They may not leave home early enough, or they may loiter on the way. A visit to the parents is necessary in this case. If you walk to their home you will discover the distance for yourself. If they do not leave home early enough, a talk with the parents may remedy matters.

What about your opening exercises? Each morning you should have some pleasant feature at the opening session. The opening exercises should be of such a nature, that the pupil would feel that he had missed some-

thing, if he were not present. I have known teachers to read an interesting story as a part of the opening exercises. If the story is long, so much the better, as it may be continued from morning to morning until finished.

You are right about the importance of punctuality. It is a habit that we can acquire in our youth, just as easily as we acquire its opposite—the habit of being late.

B. W. J.—From what you say I would think that you give your younger pupils too much to prepare at home. If it takes all your time to "hear lessons," who teaches the pupils?

We must not expect too much from young children. I think that you should spend some time each afternoon going over the next day's lessons. Children must be taught to pronounce difficult words, and told what they mean. A word-drill on the black-board should precede every reading lesson, in the lower grades. How can we expect children to read with expression, if they cannot pronounce the words, and do not know what the words mean? The "monotonous drone" you speak of can be cured by "teaching" reading, instead of "hearing" the reading lesson.

X. Y. Z.—The only Notes for Teachers on the Ontario Readers (grades 9 and 10, Nova Scotia) that I have ever seen, were issued by some Toronto firm. The book, or rather pamphlet, consisted of a dozen typewritten pages. While the "notes" were very good, the price was unreasonably high, and the workmanship very poor.

E. R.

WHAT CANADA HAS DONE IN THE GREAT WAR

The director of public information has given out the following statement as to Canada's achievements in the four years of the great war:—

Canada entered the war with a regular army of 3,000 men. At the beginning of last month she had sent overseas 390,000, while there were being trained 60,000 in the country; 43,000 have been killed; 113,007 have appeared in casualty lists as wounded or sick, 2,224 are prisoners of war and 384 are set down as missing. Of the wounded between 30,000 and 40,000 have returned to duty and 50,000 have been sent back to Canada certified unfit for further service, 10,000 soldiers have received distinctions of one kind or another, of whom there are thirty with the Victoria Cross.

As to the supply of munitions, Canada has supplied fifty-five per cent. of the output for the British army in the last six months of 1917, in respect of shrapnel. Total production of shells to recent date 60,000,000 pounds; total production of explosives, 100,000,000 pounds; total production of airplane, 2,500; the total value of orders placed in Canada by