

history, etc., he will most generally make it a secondary work, and the pupils look upon it as of secondary importance, while the minds of both teacher and pupils are absorbed with the subject of the reading, history or geography lesson. Many good lessons in spelling may thus be taught in connection with every recitation, but for a thorough knowledge of words there must be a definite time for a definite study of words. The authors of text-books on spelling are beginning to meet the demands of the times and furnish new and better books.

With a good text-book in hand the teacher wants only to understand the object of spelling and its practical application in the business of life, and he is able to do pretty fair work, and he is on the road to still better work. Spelling embraces the naming of the proper letters in a word; the proper enunciation of these sounds, which may be called articulation; and the proper pronunciation of the word, giving the proper syllabic accent.

The use of words should be taught in connection with spelling. There are three ways in which the knowledge of words is applied to the practical affairs of life, viz., in reading or speaking, in writing, and in the use of words.

To meet the first spelling should be taught orally, embracing enunciation, articulation, and pronunciation. The second demands that spelling be taught by writing, that is spelling proper, or putting the right letters in the words. Seldom is one called upon to give the letters in a word except in writing. There are so many letters in English words not sounded that words must be remembered. The third application calls for a study of the meaning of words. Spelling, then, must be oral and written to meet the demands of its practical application. Oral spelling is elocutionary in its results, and aids in reading and speaking.

Writing is the best method by which the child may become familiar with the proper letters of every word, and it must be led to practise written spelling continually. Children must be taught to judge the accuracy of the form of a word by seeing it and writing it.

With the true object of spelling in view the teacher should have a book which contains the essential words of a good vocabulary. The spelling-book should present a series of lessons on the study of these words—they should be arranged in their natural order, presenting in the first lesson those words with which the pupil is most likely to meet first.

While spelling should be a subject of criticism of all written exercises connected with every branch, yet this cannot be made a substitute for the definite daily exercises in spelling, pronunciation, and the use of words as presented in the spelling-book. The text-book in spelling contains a better selection of words arranged in better order than the average teacher can select and arrange. There is perhaps one teacher in ten who can teach spelling without a text-book with some degree of success. Let them do without the books if they can, nine-tenths must have a book. An educator who has spent years of study on the subject, observing the order in which words are needed, and the words which are used; selecting and arranging them in exercises to illustrate their meaning, can give them in a spelling-book to pupils, presenting a more definite and more satisfactory plan of word-study than the ordinary teacher can give them, and at the same time giving the teacher a guide-book, into the application of which he may throw his own individuality.—*Iowa Normal Monthly.*

Teachers, you were well satisfied with the old Monthly School Journal, you will be much more so with the Weekly. Help the new venture.

REMOVING DIFFICULTIES.

BY JACOB ABBOTT.

An effective way to excite interest, and that of the right kind, in school, is not to remove difficulties, but to teach the pupils how to surmount them. A text-book so contrived as to make study mere play, and to dispense with thought and effort, is the worst text-book that can be made, and the surest to be, in the end, a dull one. The great source of literary enjoyment, which is the successful exercise of intellectual power, is, by such a mode of presenting a subject cut off. Secure, therefore, severe study. Let the pupil see that you are aiming to secure it, and that the pleasure which you expect that they will receive is that of firmly and patiently encountering and overcoming difficulty; of penetrating, by steady and persevering effort, into regions from which the idle and the inefficient are debarred, and that it is your province to lead them forward, not to carry them. They will soon understand this, and like it.

Never underrate the difficulties which your pupils will have to encounter, or try to persuade them that what you assign is easy. Doing easy things is generally dull work, and it is especially discouraging and disheartening for a pupil to spend his strength in doing what is really difficult for him when his instructor, by calling his work easy, gives him no credit for what may have been severe and protracted labor. If a thing is really hard for the pupil, his teacher ought to know it and admit it. The child then feels that he has some sympathy.

It is astonishing how great an influence may be exerted over a child by his simply knowing that his efforts are observed and appreciated. You pass a boy in the street wheeling a heavy load in a barrow; now simply stop to look at him, with a countenance which says, "That is a heavy load; I should not think that boy could wheel it;" and how quick will your look give fresh strength and vigor to his efforts. On the other hand, when, in such a case, the boy is faltering under his load, try the effect of telling him, "Why, that is not heavy; you can wheel it easily enough; trundle it along." The poor boy may drop his load, disheartened and discouraged, and sit down upon it in despair. It is so in respect to the action of the young in all cases. They are animated and incited by being told *in the right way* that they have something difficult to do. A boy is performing some service for you. He is watering your horse, perhaps, at a well by the road-side, as you are travelling. Say to him, "Hold up the pail high, so that the horse can drink; it is not heavy." He will be discouraged, and will be ready to set the pail down. Say to him, on the other hand, "I had better dismount myself. I don't think you can hold the pail up. It is very heavy; and his eyes will brighten up at once. "Oh no, sir," he will reply, "I can hold it very easily." Hence, even if the work you are assigning to a class is easy, do not tell them so unless you wish to destroy all their spirit and interest in doing it; and if you wish to excite their spirit and interest, make your work difficult and let them see that you know it is so; not so difficult as to tax their powers too heavily, but enough so to require a vigorous and persevering effort. Let them distinctly understand, too, that you know it is difficult, that you mean to make it so, but that they have your sympathy and encouragement in the efforts which it calls them to make.

You may satisfy yourself that human nature is, in this respect, what I have described by some such experiment as the following. Select two classes not very familiar with elementary arithmetic, and offer to each of them the following example in addition:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2

etc., etc.