

English.

All articles and communications intended for this department should be addressed to the ENGLISH EDITOR, EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL, Room 5, 11½ Richmond Street West, Toronto.

A LESSON IN PARAGRAPHING.

BY M. A. WATT.

"I am going to write a word on the blackboard, boys and girls, and you are to tell me what you think when you see it first. Tell me your thought in *one* word. Ready."

Miss Cheery wrote on the board the word "summer," and immediately a forest of hands waved in the air, and sparkling eyes were fixed upon their teacher's face, for they well knew the power of a well-directed gaze. Miss Cheery had a way of indicating who was to speak by nodding her head towards the pupil, who lost his chance to answer if his attention wandered.

Quickly the teacher wrote, on the left-hand side of the well-cleaned blackboard, the words given by the children, "Warm, flowers, vacation, cool, fishing, swimming, rowing, sailing, paddling, camping, picnics, racing, roller-skating, skipping, bees, swinging, shooting, games, thunderstorms, birds, playing, cheerfulness, singing, etc." Words of commendation fell very often from her lips as she wrote. She believed in a word of praise. "More harm is wrought," she often said, "by stinting praise than by a free but judicious dispensation of it, especially with young children."

"Now, that is fine. I am pleased with that list," she said, "but I want something else. You have all heard of the little boys and girls who live in Lapland and other places where such a thing as our summer is unknown. Now, suppose one of those children were to visit us, to-day, what would you tell him about summer? I mean what would you tell him the very first of all? No, not 'picnics' first, for he would wonder how you could sit outside to eat your dinner. Yes, 'warm' would likely be the first thing. Choose out the words in the list already on the board and I will put them here on this side of the line." Drawing a line, she wrote on the right of it, the words, in a column, "Warm, flowers, thunderstorms, birds, fruit, sunshine, bees, jolly, cheerfulness," etc., checking the list as she wrote.

"Now, I shall write down the things we do in summer that make the summer so pleasant in this climate."

In a second column she wrote: "Fishing, swimming, shooting, skipping, riding on horseback, riding on bicycles, camping, picnics, ball, paper-chase, sailing," etc.

"What days are there in summer which make summer a very happy time for little boys and girls, and which we would be sure to tell our little Laplander about?"

Again, in a third column, Miss Cheery wrote: "Queen's Birthday, Garden Party night, Dominion Day, Excursion Day, Holidays."

"Well, here we have three columns, and it would be very good if we had a heading to put above each one. Can any one tell me what would be suitable for the first one?"

After a little trying, they decided upon "A Description of Summer" for the first; "Sports of Summer" for the second; and "Pleasant Days of Summer" for the third.

"Now, I believe we all could write a very good composition on 'Summer.' But it is getting too late to write on all three topics, so, perhaps, we had better choose one topic to write on to-day. To-morrow, we shall take the subject up again, if we do well to-day. Who will write 'A Description of Summer'? Very well, begin writing. Who would like to take 'Sports of Summer'? Very well, you may begin your work, too. And who would like the 'Pleasant Days' best? All but Mamie? What is it, Mamie?"

Mamie wants to write on all three, and so she is allowed to make three separate stories. No time is being wasted, and the stories are ready when the time is up. Several are read by the writers, on each topic, before the work is changed.

Next day the words were ready on the board, having been written there by a boy who had had the honor of writing them in the teacher's "Composition Book" the previous day. (The said "Composition Book" is a scribbler in which the best, most original, or striking compositions are rewrit-

ten by their proud authors; there are some "poems" as well as prose articles inscribed in careful round hand on its pages.)

"First of all, children, we must take our Readers," and a page was named on which is a marked example of paragraphing. The subject of the first paragraph was quickly found, of the second, and so on with each paragraph.

"Can any one tell me when a new paragraph is begun?" Miss Cheery asked, and the answer was given that it was when the subject was changed.

"How does the writer of this story let us know that he is changing the subject, even before we read what he says?"

The indenting of the first line was then noticed, the distance from the edge of the paper was measured, and a deduction made as to what would be a convenient distance-measurer, when a slate was to be written upon, instead of printing on paper. The width of the fore-finger was decided upon, the books were returned to desk, and the slates were prepared for work; the title was written, "Summer," and the children began to write. Miss Cheery found that their chief error lay in writing the titles of each paragraph, thus making three stories, instead of one in three parts. A reference to the Reader cured that. The best stories were copied in the "Composition Book," and a reading-lesson period was spent in reading original work instead of the usual lesson; each child coming to the front of the room and facing the class as he read. This plan may not be new to most teachers, as, indeed, it is not original with the writer, who has adopted the plan, with more success than any other ever used, the interest of the pupils being aroused and their pride stimulated by the active share they take in the preparation of the skeleton of the theme. Besides this, the spelling of the more difficult words is before them; their vocabulary is also enlarged, each individual having the vocabulary of the class from which to choose.

An example of the work done:

BRUNO AND THE PIG.*

Mrs. Summers had a Newfoundland dog, it was a mere puppy. Mrs. Summer petted the dog, she liked it very much. But, one day, Mr. Summers brought home a pretty little pig, pretty enough, she thought, to take into her lap. She used to pet it a lot more than the dog. So the dog used to nip the poor little piggy.

One day, when Mrs. Summers was about her work, she heard a loud squeal, she ran out as quick as she could, and there she saw poor little pig stuck fast in a great puddle of mud, and Bruno came running back as if to say, I've fixed that little dunce now, haven't I?

She made Bruno go back and fetch him out, so off he scampered, and when he came back he brought back the dirtiest little thing you ever saw.

She had to get some warm water and a broom. And all the time she was washing him, Bruno laid his head on one side, his tongue half out, and I almost saw that dog laugh.

A HUMBLE SOUL.

BY PAUL BOURGET.

(Translated from the French for THE EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL.)

The heavy tramway coach which unites the station at Montmartre, Paris, with that of the Arc de l'Étoile is about to start. On this cold February afternoon but one place remains vacant, that next to the last on the left, a narrow seat, scarcely visible, between an enormous woman of the middle class, who holds upon her knee a black leather bag, and an aged man wearing a ribbon in his buttonhole, probably an old officer, whose bilious complexion, hard blue eyes, and thin lips, denote the poor sleeper and the one who would inevitably cry out, "Are we never going to leave? . . ." Just as he utters these words in a querulous tone, the coach, which was already moving, stops again. A short, corpulent man enters hurriedly, pushed in, rather than assisted, by the conductor. He seizes a strap overhead with one hand, while he carries in the other a lawyer's bag, shabby and worn, and stuffed with books. He makes his way without regard to knees which he knocks, feet which he

* This is just as he wrote it, with the exception of five words which he mis-spelled; these I corrected; one was "puppy," another "squeal," another "of," and "brought" twice for "brought." The story is a true one, he said. I send it as a sample of paragraphing and comma and terminal mark work. He forgot quotation marks, which he has been taught.—M. A. W.

treads upon, and umbrellas which he upsets, and finally reaches the woman and old man. With an "Excuse me," which no one deigns to notice, he takes his seat between these two formidable neighbors. One thumps him with his elbow, the other, owing to her dimensions, obliterates him. "Excuse me," says the newcomer, turning to the left. "Excuse me," he says, turning to the right. But the coach glides along, drawn by its two iron-gray horses, towards that boulevard made up of artists, small tradesmen, and working-people, who exhibit in their numberless bric-a-brac shops thousands of engravings of the first emperor—Oh! the cruel irony of the end of glory! Yet the man with the bag has settled himself as well as he could, opened his bundle at his last work, and brought forth about thirty pages, folded across and at the sides. From the pocket of his overcoat, roughly bound with galloon, and greasy at the collar, he has drawn a pencil, and pushed back his tall silk hat, battered and without nap. His hair is over-long, his beard unkempt, his heavy boots are muddy, his trousers bag at the knee, his black cravat, which encircles a paper collar, masquerading as linen, is frayed. The stains on one of his hands betoken the recent use of the pen, and when he turns over one by one the leaves, on which he traces in pencil cabalistic signs, his inquisitive fellow-travellers may read, "Vanaboste Institute, Latin exercise." The man with the bag is a professor, one of the saddest of the erudite species, a free professor as they call him, not having a place in a State college, and forced to live by private tutoring. This free professor is but fifty-two years old. One would readily take him to be sixty, so much does he show the wear and tear of his anxious life. For example, he rose this morning at five, without noise, for fear of rousing his wife, has dressed himself without a light, using the only pitcher of water, the only soap, and the only comb which belong to the household. Before six o'clock he walked from the Avenue des Gobelins, where he lives, for economy's sake, to a boarding-house in the street known as the Vielle-estrapade. From six to seven, he heard the lessons of and taught several pupils who take the courses at the Lyceum Louis-le-Grand. At eight, he presided at the desk of the Vanaboste Institute, recently removed, since it has increased, to an old hotel in Montagne-Sainte-Geneviève street, situated "between courtyard and garden," as the prospectus says, which fails to add that this garden consists of a square of ground as large as a pocket handkerchief, where three sickly acacias grow and where the sun never penetrates, so overshadowed is it by the neighboring houses. The professor's entire breakfast has been a roll in form of a crescent, costing one cent, and munched as he hastens along by the sombre walls of the Pantheon. At ten o'clock, he will go back home, where there will be four scholars to instruct by two until half-past twelve. It is now three, and he has had time since breakfast to follow another course at the St. Cecilia School, a young ladies' academy, where his age allows of his being admitted. There are still five lessons to give—three before dinner, two after—and his day will be done. The coach proceeds, stops, slows, stops again, then gets under way once more. The professor's pencil is busy making marginal notes on the copy, tracing *ms's* which signify mistakes in sense, *f's* meaning faults in language, *m's* mistaken interpretation, and *fo's*, the very frequent *fo's* signifying faults in orthography. And as he corrects his copy, this old slave of unattached instruction dreams of the reputation he is about to make. Claude Larcher, the writer, now so well known, has procured him lessons with a Russian lady in Paris for a short while. He is to give lessons for an hour four times a week to her little boy, who is somewhat pale and gentle. He is only to read and write at his dictation, and for this hour they are to give him thirty francs! Never before has the free professor been paid so much. He fondly indulges a dream, which is, to take advantage of the occasion to lay aside a little money that he may enjoy with his wife, after twenty-seven years of marriage, two weeks at the seashore. He has never yet been able to do it. His expenses have always been so heavy, yet he has always worked hard. At the age of nineteen, not having passed at the Normal School, he became a school-master to prepare for his degree. Having received it, he married the daughter of one of his colleagues, and, of course, there was the furniture to pay for, his first child had to be educated, then the second, third, and fourth. Now, his two elder daughters