

Such pupils continue year after year blundering over sharps, flats and naturals, unable to distinguish the notes on ledger lines above and below the staff, calling semibreves whole notes, and minims half notes, when a little more time spent over the notation would be of more service to the pupil.

What we have said applies with the same force to reading. Formerly teachers required their pupils to learn every letter of the alphabet, capitals and "lower case" of roman and italics, before they were allowed to read a word. Now they go to the other extreme, a knowledge of the letters being quite a secondary consideration, and pupils are suffered to go on confounding letters which look somewhat alike, such as *p* and *q*, *b* and *d*, *c* and *e*, and consequently miscalling one word and staring at another, when a little more effort at the proper stage would have saved all the trouble.

II. *Lessons must be progressive.*—

The importance of making the first lesson as easy as possible, and each subsequent lesson a little more difficult than the last, is well understood by every good teacher. In musical instruction the work of the pupils is divided between exercises and tunes, the former predominating with beginners, especially in instrumental music. Every teacher knows how difficult it is to keep the pupils at the exercises, and prevent their spending too much time at tunes. The tunes are generally more agreeable to the pupils, but the exercises are more adapted to the mastering of each difficulty in its proper place. If a set of tunes could be so arranged as to serve all the purposes of exercises, it would be a great relief to both teachers and pupils; but as this is not likely to be accomplished, it is evident that the best exercises are those which approach the nearest to the character of tunes,

so long as utility is not sacrificed for the sake of an agreeable melody.

With the system of Reading Books in use in the schools of Ontario little is left to the judgment of teachers in the way of progressiveness, as far as mere reading is concerned; but the judicious teacher may do much to adapt his explanations and illustrations to the capacity of the pupils, and also by studying the design of each lesson (if there be any), either for the mastering of some difficulty or the illustrating of some principle.

Take for example the subject of Prosody. The reading books contain selections of poetry as well as prose. No directions are given as to the time

which the study of prosody should be commenced, nor to what extent it should be taught. That a knowledge of prosody will greatly assist in the reading of poetry I think there can be no doubt, and the judicious teacher will introduce just as much as is desirable for the pupils at the proper time.

III. *Every lesson should be properly finished.*—

The teaching of music differs from that of reading, in this, that while in reading we usually have but one lesson in hand at a time, in music it is generally desirable to have several exercises in different stages of completeness. Some are nearly finished, others in a less advanced stage, and a few just commenced. A moment's reflection will shew that no exercise should be left until it is perfect, no matter how long it takes to finish it; for if any exercise be not so finished, the pupil is not ready for the exercises that follow, and is in danger of contracting slovenly habits, which are calculated to have a pernicious effect on all future work.

So it is with reading. Unless every lesson is properly finished before proceeding to a new one, the pupils are sure to get into careless habits of reading, and they are not so well prepared for the lessons which follow.