

## Primary Department.

## WORDS BY THE WAY.

RHODA LEE.

IN SOME mysterious and unaccountable way the "talk" with which we intended opening the Primary Department for the new term went astray. The strange and circuitous journey from our summer home must have been too much for it, and so instead of talking about the good beginning that is said to result in the satisfactory end, we plunge in *medias res*, assuming that all this has been accomplished, and that the machinery of the school-room is now running with its accustomed smoothness. We presume you have given your class definite drill in standing, marching, going to and from class, taking and returning slates and books, and other customary movements. By this time they understand something of your standard of good behavior and work, and what they for their own credit and the honor of the class should aim to be. It pays to take time at the first of the session for drill of this kind. It does not destroy any of the spontaneity of children to have all such movements made in a perfectly orderly manner.

## THE HABIT OF NEATNESS.

This is something we must cultivate from the very outset. Example is of great force here, for we know sometimes too well the truth of the saying, "A child's vocation is constant imitation." There are numberless ways of setting a good example in this respect to our pupils. A few incidental words on neatness and tidiness of person are necessary in most classes. Insist on sponges being used always and fresh slate-cloths provided at stated times. Inspect the desks and note the tidy ones. However, it is in the school-work proper that we wish to emphasize the necessity for neatness. Rule the slates, and if necessary the blank-books, if it will be of any assistance. Give special marks for neatness, and accept no work as perfect that has not this characteristic. The habit is one that seems decidedly foreign to the nature of some children, but those are the ones who need our attention.

## RULES.

Let there be as few rules as is possible, but when made, require them to be strictly observed. The best rules are those which the children help to make. It is by no means necessary to give reasons for everything one requires in school, but in making a rule it is well to talk it over with the children, showing them the necessity for it and the value of its observance. Let them see that they have a share in the making of the rule and they will be anxious to have it kept. Never consider anything too great a trouble that is necessary to insure its observance.

## SHORT LESSONS

Are better than long ones. There is a limit to a little child's power of attending, and when this is past the best of teaching is entirely lost. A brisk, bright lesson of fifteen or twenty minutes, in which every one is interested and, as far as possible, actively employed, is best. Every lesson

should have a definite aim, and should be left with its ends well fastened that nothing may be lost.

## LATENESS.

This is something with which we all have to contend, more or less. In country districts, where the children have long distances to cover and often bad roads for little folks, we do not wonder at the many late-comers. But in towns and cities, where there is no such excuse, we are troubled greatly by pupils coming late for line, if not after opening time. Let me tell you of a little device I heard of recently that settled the matter in one school. The teacher designed little flags and banners of colored cotton, on which she traced with gold ink and rope silk mottoes such as, "On Time," or "No Lates." The rows in which there had been no lates for a week were allowed to have a banner. The banners in a short time became fixtures, so thoroughly did they cure the "lates."

## VARIETY WORK.

1. Write three words that end in *y*.
2. Write names of two yellow flowers.
3. Write names of two red flowers.
4. Write names of two animals having fur.
5. Write names of two animals having hair.
6. Put letters to *old*, and make other words of it—*g-old*, *t-old*, *s-old*, etc.
7. Name three kinds of trees that grow near your home.
8. Write what stands for doctor, mister, street.
9. Write names of four birds you have seen.
10. What color is your house?
11. What animals dig holes in the ground to live in?
12. Write five girls' names.
13. Write five boys' names.
14. Write three names of dogs.
15. Of what color are lemons?
16. Of what color are ripe grapes?
17. Write three words of four letters each.
18. Name five things that can jump.
19. Name something that likes to live in water.
20. Name three things you like to do.
21. Tell what cows are good for.
22. Name some animals that have hoofs.

—*Laura F. Armitage, in American Teacher.*

## SILENT READING.

FINDING that the pupils in one of my classes moved their lips during silent reading, I interrupted them one day with:

"Close your books, children, and watch me read this page."

Having read the page silently, I asked:

"Did my lips move?"

"No, ma'am."

"Did anything move?"

"No, ma'am. Yes ma'am, your eyes."

"What did I read with, then?"

"You read with your eyes."

"Could you do that? Try, and see?"

I made no remark during the reading, but found occasion to say at its close:

"One little boy forgot. If you cannot keep your lips still, put your fingers on them, so."—*A. A. P., in Exchange,*

## MEMORIZING.

RHODA LEE.

SOME years ago a teacher of a class of girls was in the habit of writing once a week, in a conspicuous part of her black-board, a simple line or two which she expected her pupils to memorize and discuss with her. The custom was one of great interest to the girls, all of whom learnt and treasured the gems of verse which were thus studied. It is not a matter of wonder that this teacher's influence was indeed very great, far beyond the bounds of the schoolroom. Her scholars were her friends and remained so long after they were out of reach of her teaching. One of the verses—a couple of lines from "Lucile"—I remember seeing on the blackboard for some time:

No life  
Can be pure in its purpose and strong in its  
strife,  
And all life not be purer and stronger thereby.

The silent appeal of these written words seemed to me much stronger than any verbal repetition could be. The idea was too good a one for the primary grades to miss, so we proceeded to adapt it to the needs of our little folks. We thereupon devoted a part of the board to the weekly verse, and every Monday morning sees a new one in which the children take great interest.

Of course we consider what verses are best suited to the age and character of our children, and teach those that we think will be most helpful. The following were favorites with my children last term:

"There is nothing so kindly as kindness,  
And nothing so royal as truth."

"If you speak kind words  
You will hear kind echoes."

"True worth is in being, not seeming,  
In doing each day that goes by  
Some little good, not in dreaming  
Of great things to do by and by."

"If you're told to do a thing,  
And mean to do it really,  
Never let it be by halves,  
Do it fully, freely."

"Do not make a poor excuse,  
Waiting, weak, unsteady;  
All obedience worth the name,  
Must be prompt and ready."

"If a task is once begun,  
Never leave it till its done.  
Be the labor great or small,  
Do it well, or not at all."

"How many deeds of kindness  
A little child can do,  
Although it has but little strength,  
And little wisdom, too.  
It wants a loving spirit  
Much more than strength, to prove  
How many things a child may do  
For others, by its love"

## CLASS RECITATION.

## HOW THE LEAVES CAME DOWN.

"I'll tell you how the leaves came down,"  
The great Tree to his children said,  
"You're getting sleepy, Yellow and Brown,  
Yes, very sleepy, little Red;  
It is quite time you went to bed."

"Ah!" begged each silly, pouting leaf,  
"Let us a little longer stay;  
Dear Father Tree, behold our grief;  
'Tis such a very pleasant day,  
We do not want to go away."

So just for one more merry day  
To the great Tree the leaflets clung,  
Frolicked and danced and had their way,