

class for the day. But this exercise is not necessarily stupid; it requires, like everything else in life, variety to give it spiciness, and this may easily be secured.

1st. One of the best methods of teaching spelling is to have each pupil write the words of the lesson in a book designed for the purpose, or upon his slate. The advantages of this method are obvious. Each pupil spells every word in the lesson. Many persons in spelling a word orally, will give it correctly, but when writing the same word will spell it incorrectly. I have found in my own experience that many pupils, whose books denoted incorrect spelling, would make no mistakes when called upon to give the words orally. As, during our whole lives, we spell words more by writing than in any other way, the desirableness of learning to write words correctly is readily seen. This method may be used in all schools and in all grades of schools.

In the primary department, the little ones can print the words if they do not know how to write.

But perhaps some teacher will say "I have no time to correct these lists of words, for every hour is too full already." This need not necessarily devolve upon the teacher. Each school may be divided into divisions, and the leaders of these divisions may be collectors and correctors. In the primary classes, the slates can be corrected during the exercises, either by a pupil or by the teacher.

2nd. Another excellent way is to have the words of the lesson placed in sentences or phrases. In this method the meaning and the right use of the words are brought out. Care should be taken that the sentences do explain the word to some extent. If the word *besieged* was in the lesson, and the sentence written should be, "It is besieged," no advantage would be gained by the exercise; but the expression "The besieged city was captured" gives some idea of the meaning of the word. The exercise should be conducted in writing.

3rd. In connection with writing, it is well to have some portion of the school spell the words orally, giving definitions and derivations. Many times the definition of a word may be known from its derivation, and if the meaning of one word, formed from a certain root, is known, the meaning of all words formed from that root may be approximately inferred.

4th. Concert spelling has some advantages. Volume of tone is thus secured and confidence is gained. But mistakes are not readily detected in this method and it should not be used to the exclusion of other and better ones.

5th. One kind of concert spelling is to have each division of a school give one syllable, the whole school or class pronouncing the word. This secures attention and will do occasionally, for variety's sake.

6th. It is well, sometimes, to give a lesson upon synonyms. The synonymous words should be expressed in sentences, that the fine distinctions may be understood and appreciated.

7th. Phonetic spelling, or giving the sounds of each letter, is a good exercise if the pupil is inclined to indistinct pronunciation. This method is sometimes employed successfully when the child is first learning to spell, but should be used with care.

8th. One of the best methods to secure attention is the following: Pronounce a word to a class and have each member, in turn, give one letter of the word. To do this well and as it would be given by one person alone, requires close attention.

9th. Another similar method is called "Matching Words." The teacher gives out a word to one member of the class, and he assigns to the next a word the first letter of which shall be the same as the last letter of the preceding word. In order that this exercise may be successfully conducted, promptness and quick thinking are requisite.

10th. It is sometimes a good way for a teacher to assign as a spelling lesson, all the words in a certain number of paragraphs in the reading book; then, when the time for recitation comes, let the teacher read from the book, and pause at the words he wishes the pupils to write.

11th. One of the most interesting methods is called "Illustrated Spelling." I will illustrate this method. Suppose the pupil has the word *icicle*. He would first present the object and then say "I have here a pendant mass of ice, formed by the freezing of water as it flows down an inclined plane or drops from anything. The name of this object is derived from two Danish words, one meaning ice and the other cone. The name is *icicle*. Spell and define." A great deal of useful information is given in this exercise and when the words are well selected it cannot be surpassed in interest.

12th. It will not do wholly to ignore the good, old-fashioned way of "choosing sides." Many of us can remember earnest but pleasant contests for "our side" in the old red school houses, which, we are thankful to say, are institutions of the past. Let us

allow our pupils occasionally to "choose sides," if for no other reason, for the sake of "auld lang syne."—*Ella S. Smith in Connecticut School Journal.*

3. "LET NATURE BE YOUR TEACHER."

The natural sciences have never received their share of attention in our common schools. The order of studies are so arranged (or confused), that, like the utility people of the stage, though very necessary to the play, are seldom able to inspire the house with any great enthusiasm.

Now the craft all agree that the concrete should precede the abstract; and, if ever, certainly, when the child-mind is receiving its first unfoldings. If ever that philosophy is indispensable, it is in the primary school. "Give the mind food suitable to its capacities" is a truism harped by educators, too many of whom, like guide-boards, forever point the way, but never go themselves.

Now the operations of a child's mind can never be forced, at first, in any direction, but it may be *induced*. The mind must first be led through flowery paths, to give it the desired inspiration, the thirst for excellence.

Show it, at least, the *spires* of the distant city, if you ever expect it to enter therein. Set not the path too thick with thorns; enough will be encountered in the later journey, when the paths leading through duty and inclination shall coincide,—a result of this same early training,—and incentives have resulted in noble resolutions to grapple with the most disheartening obstacles.

"Discipline?" Oh yes, that word we have heard before; it is used occasionally as the "first, secondly and lastly" of arguments by some who, willfully or otherwise, continue to misunderstand the whole tenor of arguments urged for the natural order of studies and their philosophical presentation. It is in behalf of a true discipline that we appeal for just this thing. The study of the natural sciences, directed by a teacher, calls out the *brain, eye and hand* to their best and most delicate performance, and, while disciplining, training the pupil to arrange, classify, reason, judge, they people every hour of task with sweet and innocent shapes, that "glide into" their "inner musings."

Their introduction into the *lowest* grades is *practical*, and leads the pupil, be he ever so young, at once among organizations and laws that will ever be to him a discipline and a delight. If you are educating for *time*, they are *preëminently* practical, imparting information concerning the furniture of our physical abode. If you are educating for eternity, faith lays hold on a firmer foundation, through suggestions and proofs numberless of the First Great Cause. We know it is their province to catch us up while pondering over the tangible of earth, to a new atmosphere within the calm chambers of meditation, from which the world recedes and drops off into silence. There is *use* in them, and that, too, in the primary school. Their alphabet is as simple as the alphabet of the mother tongue, and appeals more directly to the perceptive faculty. Our order of studies is too much like some chimneys, built bottom up, giving the pupil, after being thoroughly disgusted with study in the abstract and books in the concrete, an invitation to enter the charming realms of the natural sciences. Only a few nibble at the bait, still less are caught.

God never designed that his "of such is the kingdom of heaven" should be met with crosses from A B C to cube root. There may be no royal road to learning, but a pretty good highway is being opened up over the Delectable Mountains of the natural order of studies. I glory in the sincerity of that English divine who said, "Work that is performed for some noble end is noble; but work for the sake of work alone, is no more noble than is the Hindoo penance of swinging on the hook." Nor does this idea degrade labor, but consecrates it to noble ends.

We have said the scientific course should commence with the first week in school; nor should it cease with the lower grades. As the pupil stops not at his alphabet, or learning to trace the hand of the Divine while studying his works, so lead him on and up, increasing in strength and appreciation of the true, the beautiful, and the good, until the infinity of science shall open before him, luring him into the paths of wisdom, that "shall bring him to honor when he doth embrace her."—A. A. W., in *Maine Journal of Education.*

II. Papers on Habits of Study.

1. OVER STUDY BY CHILDREN IN SCHOOL.

The *Boston Journal* says:—Two hundred and three parents and guardians directly interested in the matter, sixty-five clergymen and one hundred and fifty-three physicians of this city, have signed a petition to the School Committee to release the pupils at the Public Latin School from all studies on Saturdays, with the exception of