

whose books are not to be examined should slight their work. To prevent them from getting a clue to the grouping, he will do well to change it occasionally. In his division he will do well not to put all the good writers in one group and the bad ones in another, but in each group to have some of his good writers, some of those who do fair work, and some whose work is poor, if he has any such. The exercise will not be lost upon those whose work is not examined; the very exercise will have done them good. When the teacher comes to deal with the errors in the class, many of theirs will be pointed out, for in a large class, divided as I have indicated, there will be few errors that escape notice at any time, since we frequently find the same error made by several pupils. Then, too, the work was carefully mapped out, and all the pupils are writing along the same general lines, and this will increase the chance that errors that are made will be general ones. Even if some do escape notice similar ones will be met with afterwards and all cannot be corrected at once. The teacher will be greatly disappointed in the result, if he expects even those errors that he does detect and point out to the class, to be avoided without being pointed out many times more. Teaching composition or anything else would be very delightful work if every error were amended after being once noticed.

When the teacher begins to mark the papers, he will have to keep in mind that the aim of his composition teaching is to get his pupils to express their ideas freely and correctly. I think that is the order of importance at first for young pupils, *freely* and *correctly*. I do not mean to imply that correctness of expression is to be regarded as unimportant, but I am sure that every teacher of composition has experienced difficulty in getting the pupils to write freely. The teacher must bear this in mind, and determine that he will mark not only the errors, but also what will encourage the young writer. If there is a well-turned sentence let him give the boy his word of praise. If the composition shows life, thought and originality, let it be noted and rewarded in some way. Frequently, a composition may be brightly written and may show a good grasp of the subject on the part of the writer, and yet there may be a number of errors of comparatively little importance. Now to mark all these errors, and to say nothing of the general merit of the composition would be unjust, and would tend to discourage the boy and to give him a false idea of the value of his work. Of course it is impossible to name all the ways in which the teacher may give deserved praise and encouragement, but let him keep the duty of doing so before his eyes constantly, and his sense of justice and tact will tell him when and how to do it.

In marking the books, let the teacher use something that can be seen plainly. I use red ink. Blue pencil or anything of that kind will do. But what shall the teacher mark? Shall he underline the error, shall he write the correction above the error, or shall he do his marking in the margin? Well it is wrong to do for the pupil what he can do for himself, and so I favor the plan of putting all, or nearly all the mark-

ings in the margin. It is well to have a code of marks, such as the one given in Williams' "Practical English." These marks, or some of them, might be used, and one of them written in the margin, opposite the line where the mistake occurred. The kind of mark used would indicate the kind of error. Then the pupil might search out his own mistakes. But there will be some errors for which no provision was made in the code. There may be some that the pupils would have difficulty in finding, some local peculiarity of speech for instance. These errors may be underlined, and if in the judgment of the teacher it is desirable, the corrections may be written in.

But when the teacher has marked the books the work of correction is not finished. The pupils must do their share. While marking the exercises, the teacher should make a list of the most noteworthy mistakes. When he next meets the class he should discuss these errors with them, and here it is that his teaching of the theory of composition should come in. Then finally, at a favorable time, the pupils should re-write the composition, correcting their errors, and those whose books were not examined, avoiding the errors that were pointed out in the class. The teacher had better read some of the books again, not necessarily marking them. His object will be to see that the correction is fairly well done.

This is, in brief, one way of correcting compositions. You may think it requires a great deal of time to be spent on one exercise, but I think the thoroughness of the correction will repay the expenditure of time. I think the system, at least in its main features, is applicable to every school. It may require to be modified, in certain ways it may be improved, but on the whole I think it is sound. Certainly a system of some kind is necessary, if we are to give the pupils what every pupil ought to have, regular and careful practice in English Composition.

THE SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE.

C. M. IN THE "ZEITUNG FÜR DAS HÖHERE UNTERRICHTSWESSEN DEUTSCHLANDS."

"THE school of the future will be free from top to bottom. Neither in form nor in fact will it be the privilege or possession of the rich; for the state must rest upon the truth that virtue and usefulness, wherever found, are to be sought out and developed. Free instruction alone will not suffice to accomplish this. If the poverty of parents is not to be permitted to narrow, as it now does so often, the future opportunities of a child, the state must stand ready to care for him up to that time when he is able to pass an intelligent judgment upon his own prospects and provide for his own support. Up to such a time, perhaps then to the seventeenth year of life, the state must make proper provision for the sustenance and care of every child whose parents are too poor to provide either for his material or intellectual care. The question as to the parents' poverty could readily be determined by reference to the assessments made for the purposes of taxation.

"When this comes to pass there will be a royal aristocracy of the educated. One can readily see that then the German people

will exercise a material and intellectual influence in the world, to which that gained mainly by force of arms will be scarcely comparable."

EDUCATIONAL DOCTRINE.

THE principal thing done when a young man is selected as a teacher is to examine him in some branches of useful knowledge; generally these are reading, writing, and arithmetic. This procedure marks the conception of education possessed by those who employ him; it also impresses him profoundly with the fact that the knowing of these things constitutes his title to the place he seeks. Over and over again protests have been raised against this practice but it is in full sway yet and has all the appearance of continuing for many years. Against this is the plan of laying down a body of educational doctrine, and requiring the would-be teacher to possess it, as well as the knowledge he may find it needful to use. How many principals of schools have a body of educational doctrine? How many superintendents? A teacher with sixteen assistants was asked to give his foundation principle, and he replied after thinking awhile: "To make them get their lessons perfectly." The principal of a certain normal school was accustomed to repeat the following maxim (which is evidently of home manufacture), when asked for a rule to follow in teaching, something that would be sure to lead to success: "Lay down a line and hew close to it." This is a neat saying that has both an intellectual and a moral bearing; it possesses some of the marks of those oracular sayings that proceeded from the talking oak of Dodona.

Where is the educational doctrine the earnest teacher feels a need of to guide him in his important work? At what school is it taught? The question is not whether the pupils shall be made obedient, self-controlling, and studious. The demand is for great foundation principles to which such maxims as obedience, self-control, and application will be conclusions. What is the child's need—his greatest need? Is it a symbol to aid his expression? It would seem so, judging from the act of the teacher, for the first thing that is set before the child is a book containing the alphabet.

To make a practical problem for the teacher let us bring twelve children, from five to seven years of age, before him, and let us watch his procedure. What will he do? If he follows tradition he will teach them reading, will he not? But is that the right thing? Is not this the question he should ask himself? What are the needs of these children? Is not this the question the mother proposes daily and hourly to herself? She, be it noted, is the God-instructed-teacher.

Let the teacher ponder long and closely upon the question "What are the needs of these children?" For when he has done so he will conclude that there are pressing needs of a body of educative doctrine; that this doctrine will be mainly constituted of disclosures concerning the needs of youth and of discussions as to the right methods of meeting them. He will further conclude that this educational doctrine is yet to be written.—*N. Y. School Journal*