

## Primary Department.

### LANGUAGE LESSONS.

RHODA LEE.

Some day before all traces of summer are gone have a little language and composition lesson on flowers. Tell the children beforehand that you wish them to be prepared to state which is their favorite flower, and to be able to describe it at some length. If the scholars can write freely, let it be a written composition; if not, an oral exercise. It will not be possible to procure many flowers at this time of the year, but those that are brought may be examined and discussed by the class.

An observation and language lesson on an apple is a suitable one for this season, as every child can have one for himself. The teacher should cut the apple and let the pupil make his own observations, writing them on slate or paper.

When the leaves begin to fall they form an excellent subject for a similar lesson.

At first we allow the children to make the simplest of sentences and alike in form, such as:

I see an apple.  
I see a seed.  
I see the skin, etc.

Very soon, however, they must be taught to put their thoughts in better form than this. Their observations must be written in a connected and narrative form. For instance: I have a maple leaf. It has rough edges and a great many veins. It is not green now, but is red and yellow. It came off the tree in front of our house.

When a composition shows signs of originality and especial carefulness, read it aloud to the class.

It is of the greatest importance that as soon as pupils have sufficient power over written language they begin to write their thoughts about things. The written answer is immeasurably superior to the oral, in which we are never perfectly certain that the thought is original with the speaker.

### READING.

RHODA LEE.

#### II

Good class arrangement is very desirable in primary grades. Classes at the blackboard should not exceed twenty in number, better work being done with the beginners when the class consists of not more than twelve or fourteen pupils. If the newcomers at the commencement of a term number more than twenty, pick out the brightest as soon as possible and make them into a separate class.

When a class goes to the board for a lesson each child carries his slate and pencil with him. Arrange the children in two rows, the boys at the back, as they are generally the taller. When necessary, of course, a small boy may change places with a taller girl. Leave the space be-

tween the rows wide enough to admit of the teacher walking through and examining slates.

The work may be divided into two parts, namely, the eye problem and the ear problem. The latter I have found to be the easier one to grasp, and therefore we make most use of it at first.

In the eye problem the word or sentence is written on the board; the children discover what it is, and whisper it to the teacher. In the ear problem the word is dictated and the children write it on their slates.

For example:

#### REVIEW OF LESSON I.

Ear problem.—Teacher says, "Write *ma*."

Children write and teacher examines each slate. The pupils will at first utter the sounds aloud as they write. No harm is done by allowing this for a time, but overcome it as soon as possible.

Eye problem.—Teacher writes on the board the word *am*, asks the children to find the word and tell it to her.

As soon as they are able they raise the hand and whisper it to her.

In introducing the letter *t* we speak of him as "the little boy who stuttered." Make the form as simple as possible, calling the cross line the collar, and instruct the children to put it on straight.

We may picture three letters as living in houses, side by side:



In one lived little *A*, in another *M*, and to the third one *T* came. One day they all went out to play. A big dog came along and began to growl at them. *A* took hold of *T*'s hand.

*at*

(Let the children sound and find out what they said.) But the dog would not go away. Then *M* began to feel a little frightened, and he came and took *A*'s hand.

*mat*

(Sound and find the word again.)

Then the dog, when he saw the three together, thought he had better go home, and the little letters went on with their games.

Words which can be made are:

at  
mat  
tam  
tat  
ta-ta.

The combining of sounds is the greatest difficulty at this stage of the work. The separate sounds are easily remembered, and the form of the letter steadily improves with use. The one trouble lies in getting

the children to put the sounds together and recognize the word.

The best exercise to develop this power consists in the teacher separating words into distinct sounds, the pupils telling her the word. The greater the space between the sounds the greater the difficulty in recognizing the word. We will indicate the space by a horizontal line. The exercise need not be confined to the sounds and letters learnt, although special attention should be paid to these.

Teacher.—M—a—t.

Pupils. —Mat.

Teacher.—T—a—m.

Pupils. —Tam.

Teacher.—T—a—p.

Pupils. —Tap.

Teacher.—S—a—t.

Pupils. —Sat.

Teacher.—D—o—g.

Pupils. —Dog.

A great many exercises can be given in a very short time. The pupils in this, as in the eye problem, raise hands when they are ready to tell the teacher the word. This exercise should form part of every phonic lesson for some time.

#### A RAIN STORM.

Tinkle, tinkle,  
Lightly fall

On the peach-buds, pink and small;  
Tip the tiny grass and twinkle  
On the willows green and tall.

Tinkle, tinkle,  
Faster now,

Little raindrops smite and sprinkle  
Cherry-bloom and apple bough!  
Pelt the elms and show them how  
You can dash!

And splash, splash, splash!  
While the thunder rolls and mutters, and the lightning flash and flash!

Then eddy into curls  
Of a million misty swirls,  
And thread the air with silver, and embroider it with pearls!

And patter, patter, patter  
On the mossy flags, and clatter  
On the streaming window-pane.

Rain, rain,  
On the leaves,  
And the eaves,  
And the turning weather-vane!

Rush in torrents from the tip  
Of the gable-peak, and drip  
In the garden-bed, and fill  
All the cuckoo-cups, and pour  
More and more

In the tulip-bowls, and still  
Overspill  
In a crystal tide, until  
Every yellow daffodil  
Is flooded to its golden rim, and brimming o'er  
and o'er!

Then as gentle as the low  
Muffled whir of robin wings,  
Or a sweep of silver strings,  
Even so  
Take your airy April flight  
Through the merry April light,  
And melt into a mist of rainy music as you go.

—Selected.

My ideal of an educational institution is that it should be a home for the development of character quite as much if not more than a school of learning or a place for original research. The longer I live the more profoundly am I convinced that the highest type of character can only be formed on a religious basis.—Rev. Principal Grant.