

ed to those with which the child is well acquainted, and should contain only one power of each letter used. This principle should extend entirely through the primer and until each letter has been introduced. I believe we err in introducing new difficulties too soon. It is better to thoroughly master the first and simplest steps before proceeding to more difficult combinations. What is required is constant practice in reading, and this practice should be limited to the words already learned. If our primers contained more lessons for practice, and the more difficult combinations were not introduced until a later stage, I believe we should see a marked improvement in reading. Of course new words must be learned from time to time, but let them be as few as possible, and of the simplest form. When new words are introduced, they should be placed at the commencement of the lessons and the pupils thoroughly drilled upon them until they can be correctly named at sight.

Having thus briefly sketched the manner of teaching words, let us turn our attention to the sentence. Phrase reading should be practiced from the first, or as soon as the pupil can name a sufficient number of words at sight to enable the teacher to form a phrase or sentence from the words already learned. Sentences when formed should be plain, direct statements. Inverted or moderately complicated sentences should not be introduced until the pupil is well advanced in the Second Book, and even then it is better to adhere somewhat closely to the direct statement. By this I do not mean to exclude all imperative, interrogative or exclamatory sentences, but only those that are more or less involved in their structure. Those of a more difficult nature may be introduced in the selections for the Third Book, while

the Fourth should contain sentences of the highest rhetorical finish. Sentences that are obscure in their meaning, or that contain obsolete words, or quotations from foreign languages, should be rigidly excluded. The best literary style, both in regard to purity of thought and beauty of diction, should mark every selection, and nothing of doubtful propriety should be allowed. I confess that I have little sympathy with that class of literature known as "Nursery Rhymes" finding a place in our readers. In the wealth of our English literature selections can be made that will at once be attractive and instructive. Some of these rhymes may amuse children, but I have great doubts as to their utility in our school books, and am strongly persuaded that they should be relegated to their proper sphere, the nursery. Children, as a rule, have a strong desire for knowledge, and in many ways seek to gain new ideas. If any evidence of this is required, watch the eagerness with which they examine any new object presented to them and the many questions they ask concerning anything that attracts their attention or interests them. Let us then foster this desire by furnishing new thoughts, awakening a fresh interest in their work and supplying food for the mind. Simplicity of language does not imply childishness of thought, nor does it follow that children, because they are children, must be given the mental pabulum that simply amuses infants. Our school readers should be repositories of noble and elevated thoughts, clothed in chaste and elegant language, and the rising generation will be the better for it.

Before leaving this portion of my subject, I shall offer a remark or two concerning the questions, explanatory notes and other lesson helps that are intended as aids in preparing the