

3. **Positive attention cannot be secured by demanding it, or by coaxing, scolding, commanding, threatening, or reasoning.**—The maxim, "One man may lead a horse to the water, but ten men cannot make him drink," applies with great force here. *Negative* attention may be secured by compulsion, *positive* cannot be forced. We can force order, and submission, but not *active* attention. It must be *voluntary*. He who demands something entirely beyond the limits of his control, demonstrates his own weakness and presumption. Coaxing, scolding, commanding and threatening very soon lose their influence, and, if indulged in after that point has been reached, they secure for the teachers who use them the disrespect of their pupils. Even reasoning with pupils cannot permanently secure attention. It will certainly be of service for the teacher to show his pupils clearly the necessity for attention, and the benefits arising from it. This will produce in them a mental attitude favorable to attention, and will thereby make it easier for them to do their part, but it does not relieve the teacher of his responsibility for sustaining the interest in the lesson.

4. **Startling a class to make them attend is not a wise course.**—Some teachers try an explosive method of securing attention. They first helplessly allow their classes to drift into a state of disorder and confusion, and then suddenly comes a thunderclap; the desk is struck violently with a ruler, or the floor is stamped upon heavily. Attention gained in such a way is only of a *temporary* kind. The noise of the pupils yields for a time, but very soon it re-asserts itself. Attention to be valuable must be *fixed*. Teachers should, of course, never forget that giving fixed, active attention is an *exhaustive* exercise, and that relaxation in some form—music, free gymnastics or both combined—should be given to pupils at frequent intervals.

II. HOW TO SECURE AND RETAIN ATTENTION.

We have seen that attention should have three characteristics. It ought to be:

1. **Active, or Positive.**
2. **Voluntary.**
3. **Fixed.**

In order that attention of this kind may be obtained five things are necessary:

1. The physical comfort of the pupils must receive careful attention.
2. The teacher must exercise control.
3. The teacher must stimulate the pupils' curiosity or desire to know.
4. The teacher should gratify the pupils' natural love for mental activity.
5. Full sympathy of thought, feeling and aim between the teacher and his pupils.

Physical requisites for maintaining attention.—1. *The room must be well lighted.* Children cannot be bright and happy in a room that is insufficiently or badly lighted. The light should never come from the front or the right of the pupils. It is best when admitted *only from the left*, but a left and rear light is admissible. All windows should reach well up towards the ceiling, and they should not extend too low down. It is better if all the light is admitted above the level of the eye.

2. **The room must be properly ventilated.**—Unless it is, the health of the children is injuriously affected, and their spirits depressed.

3. **The temperature must be regulated.**—Pupils cannot be quiet and studious if their toes and fingers are cold. They become tired and indolent if the temperature rises too high. Cold feet and hot heads at the same time are bad for the health in many respects. The normal temperature is about 65 degrees.

4. **The pupils must be seated comfortably.**—The two essentials for comfort are—

1. The seats must not be *too high*.
2. The back should fit the pupils' spine curvature.

A child's feet should rest on the floor, so that no part of the weight of the leg is borne by the thigh bone. Many seats have backs *too high*, others are too low, and sometimes the seats in galleries have no backs at all. Either arrangement is a cause of pain to the children who sit on such seats.

5. **Pupils should be allowed to change their posture frequently.**—The body tires sooner than the mind. Even if supplied with comfortable seats, remaining in one position too long causes injury to the body, and compels the withdrawal of the mind from the lesson, to note the necessities of physical comfort.

If the teacher notices that his class is unusually restless and inattentive, he should allow them to spend say half a minute in simple physical exercises. Even standing up and sitting down will aid in removing listlessness and the disorder resulting from nervous restlessness. Exercises should always, if possible, be performed in time with music. They then form the most powerful and, what is of more importance, the most *natural* disciplinary agent a teacher can employ.

DIFFICULTIES IN PRONUNCIATION.—No. VIII.

BY JAMES HUGHES.

C (hard), G (hard), and K.

There is a common pronunciation of *calm, calf, cart, guard, &c.*, which is regarded as vulgar. By some means general attention has been directed to the subject in Canada, and in many places a speaker's reputation for correct speaking depends on his manner of pronouncing this class of words. Strangely enough, too, those teachers and others who are so strong in their condemnation of the "vulgarity," uniformly give incorrect directions for removing it. They do not make a correct diagnosis of the case.

"Change your vowel sound from the short to the grave," is the instruction given. One writer says, "To one who has pronounced c-a-l-f, kăf, for many years, the change to kâf may make him feel not unlike that animal for some time." Attention is uniformly directed to the vowel as the source of error.

Did any one ever use the short sound of the vowel in such a word? It is not probable, except as an experiment. Would any person say *alm* exactly like *am*, or *alf* like *af* in the word *African*? Certainly not, yet the *l* is not sounded in either case, nor does the *m* or the *f* change its sound. The difference—and it is a very marked one as uttered by even careless speakers—arises entirely from the *a*. The *l* is introduced for the purpose of modifying the *a*. *L* and *R* exercise kingly power over the vowels. The word *stopped* is a more expressive name for the sound of the vowel which we call *short*. *R* and *L* do not stop the sounds of the vowel which precedes them when the *r* or the *l* is not the final letter in a syllable. It is true that the sound given to *a* in the words quoted may not always be exactly *ă*, but it is certainly not *â*.

The mistake made by teachers renders it very difficult for any one to correct his erroneous pronunciation of such words. Children under eight years of age, and a few over that age, will make corrections by mere imitation, without difficulty. Older people must have the error pointed out more clearly, and usually require the formation of the vocal organs to be given. It follows, therefore, that if the mistake made is not properly defined, the learner will have to guess at the right sound; and he will not always be certain that he utters it correctly. The following is a