

by the Lord, it's serious—and I request you to take it accordingly!"

The realm of literature is to maturity what Hans Andersen is to childhood. It is fairy-land, and look askance as we may at the dictum, it is nevertheless a fact that man is rather a creature of sentiment and imagination than of prosaic fact, mathematical accuracy, or scientific acumen. Were it not so quacks, impostors and fanatics would have a sorry time of it, and the histories of Manichæus, Mohammed and Loyola would be unwritten. For one who studies the *Principia*, a thousand read *Don Quixote*; the journalist is more popular than the geometer, while Bacon is most frequently discussed with eggs. What makes the Bible so popular with the illiterate? It transports the believer from a city built with hands to the very suburbs of the heavenly Jerusalem. Once leaven the masses with philosophy and the family Bible will suffer.

As to the teaching of reading, there is a method of tuition insuring an accuracy of reproduction, while, at the same time, inculcating a taste for the subject, which, I think, is not widely enough followed in our schools; but which I for one deem a valuable aid to class recitation. It consists in the reading of chosen extracts by the teacher to his class—a method whereby the learners become the hearers, and the instructor the active agent. This method of course necessitates thorough ability in the teacher; that assured, I will answer for interest and improvement in the class. It is not enough for the members of a class to repeat, parrot-like, in turn a monotonous round of more or less imperfect iterations. We are, above all things, mimics; what we learn we learn best by imitations. An extract rendered by an efficient reader will go further toward instructing a class than though it had been mumbled through by thirty individual pupils. Be assured, if the

trained, fastidious, critical intellect will not only forego an evening's fire-side ease or social pleasure, but pay handsomely for the privilege of listening to a Siddons, a Cable, or a Bell, the wondering, open-eyed, sympathetic child-mind will yield golden tribute of interest and appreciation to the well-rendered expositions of literary fact or fancy, which, already blossoming in his mind, may, by their means, be brought sooner and more readily to bear its harvest of perfected fruit.

Yet, practice must ever walk hand in hand with precept, for they are twin sisters, inseparable in tuition. Not only must the instructor prompt, but from the instructed a response must be elicited. The echo must follow the trumpet-call. The ripples must eddy away in ever-widening rings from the centre of impact. This is natural. It is nature's law. Let it be mere rote reproduction, if you will, so that it be true. What care I if my friend cannot analyze his feelings of friendship for me, so long as those feelings be genuine. If he love and trust me, the time for analysis will come. We cannot make a child think as a man, any more than we can transmute an imperfect world into the refined idealism of the Christian heaven. I do not say that a child should not be made to understand all that it *learns*. I do mean to say that a child cannot understand, and from the very nature of things ought not to understand, all that it *reads*. This may seem downright heresy to some advanced unconservative minds. Well, let us not slight old landmarks. I too have been a child, and I too have been, and am, a reader. I know not how I learned to read. It seems to me that the faculty came like the bird's song—by that terrible alphabet method too—instinctively. I know that much that I read was misunderstood, ill-understood, or not understood at all; but I read on till the