

which is the case nine times out of ten, the teacher pronounces it and then he pronounces it, imitating the teacher. It very often happens that, instead of requiring the pupil to spell the word, the teacher pronounces it at once, the child following. The fact is, the pupil has learned to pronounce the word by hearing the teacher pronounce it. Why not teach the pupil to pronounce the word at *first* without the circumlocution of learning the alphabet, and of learning a little spelling? How has the work of learning to read been facilitated by the learning of the letters and the subsequent drill in spelling? But little, if at all. In the spelling drill the pupil meets the word he is to read, and by repetition the spelling and the pronunciation of it become associated in such a way as to enable the word to be recognized. But there has been no mental activity—repetition simply has produced the result. In some very few cases, the pupil may have learned, in a small degree, to associate with the letter the sound represented by it, and thus when he spells he may be able to pronounce better than if he had not spelled. But this is the exception—the very great exception. The pupil taught to read by the alphabet method learns to pronounce words by hearing them pronounced. His knowledge of words is a matter of memory, aided by the poorest kinds of associations. He is led from the unknown to the known, from the abstract to the concrete. For, in spelling he learns the words as abstract, and even if he gets the idea belonging to the word (which is not at all likely), it is in the abstract as well. The order of natural development is reversed by this process. If the child, by the alphabet method, learns to pronounce words by hearing them pronounced, why not begin at once to pronounce words for him to learn, instead of getting to that point after a weary pilgrimage to the shrine worshipped at, when men knew not a better? And why should a child know his alphabet, or be able to spell, before he is able to read?

LOCAL ITEMS.

Teachers' Association in connection with the McGill Normal School held its second ordinary meeting on Jan. 23rd, 1885. The President, Mr. Arthy, in the chair. After the election of several new members, Miss Peebles read several good selections from amateur patchwork and Prof. Barnjum followed with an interesting paper on Physical Education, Music and Readings took up the time until it was too late for the "Model Lesson" from Dr. Kelly, which was postponed until the next regular meeting.

A *County Teacher* writes thus to the editor of the *Record*: The *Record* is very instructive, but is impossible to follow your advice about amusing the scholars of this part of the world or making the school attractive with a museum. The scholars would likely kill one another with the mineral specimens. As for needlework, that would be counted loss of time. Even Scripture reading is counted loss of time here. You have never taught schools in this country. I feel as I felt one summer when I rode for months a very vicious horse, coaxing him a little, yet not too much, lest he should think, or rather find out, that I feared him, for then he would be sure to run away with me.