

This year the cold was less intense, the lowest point during the storm being $14^{\circ}.1$, while last year it was $-9^{\circ}.9$. On 9th, ordinary meteor in N fell W, about 40° high. High winds 4th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 12th, 14th, 17th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 25th. Snow 4th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 13th, 14th, 21st, 22nd, 25th, 26th. Rain 29th. Month cold and steady.

PEMBROKE.—Lake partly frozen before the end of November, and the whole surface frozen during night of 3rd December. On 24th, shortly after sunrise, patches of light observed, one on each side of the sun, and a few points from it, the edges near the sun being tinged with prismatic colors. 25th, double halo round moon, which was partly obscured by cirro-cumuli, the inner ring being grey, tinged with red, the outer of rather a greenish hue. Wind storms, 1st, 9th, 18th, 22nd, 25th, 29th. Snow 1st, 4th, 7th, 8th, 14th, 17th, 18th, 20th, 21st, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 31st. Weather during whole month unusually severe, but less so than last December. Much snow and good sleighing.

PETERBOROUGH.—On 12th and 17th, cloudy at NH, but on both occasions auroral light apparently showing over clouds; no other auroras observed. Snow 4th, 5th, 7th, 8th, 12th, 14th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 25th, 27th, 28th, 29th. Month generally mild and very cloudy—only slight snow-falls occasionally. No rain. Snow in Dec., 1867, 24.65 in.; Dec., 1868, 18.2 in. Sky overcast 50 observations out of 81.

SIMCOE.—Wind storms 17th, 18th, 19th. Fogs 30th, 31st. Snow 1st, 2nd, 4th to 9th, 13th, 14th, 22nd, 23rd, 25th, 27th, 29th. Rain 29th. Nothing unusual.

STRATFORD.—On 9th, sleighing good. 10th, at 4 p.m., parhelia visible. Storms of wind, 4th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 19th, 20th. Fogs, 4th, 6th, 16th, 30th, 31st. Snow 2nd, 4th, 7th, 8th, 11th, 12th, 14th, 18th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 27th, 28th, 29th. Rain 20th.

WINDSOR.—On 1st, meteor in E towards H; elevation 60° , 8th meteor from a point half-way between Castor and Orion, towards belt of Orion. 12th, meteor in E towards H, elevation 25° . 25th, at 9 a.m., rainbow about 25° from sun, which was bright, though almost surrounded by thin clouds; the bow appeared as two arcs, of 20° to 25° , one E and the other W of sun, and reaching almost to H; they were very distinct; westerly arc almost south of station; visible at least 30 minutes; clouds at the time strati on horizon, streaks of cirro-strati in upper air, in lower air particles of thin cirro-cumuli flitting past from NW, a belt of 60° of cirro-cumuli drifting across Z from NW; the previous night a wind storm, velocity 6. Windstorms also on 8th, 12th, 21st, 22nd, 31st. Fog 31st. Snow 4th, 7th, 14th, 21st, 22nd, 28th. Rain 19th.

V. Papers on Practical Education.

I. CLASS DRILLS IN READING.

It is not the purpose of this article to present the first steps in teaching a child to read, but rather to offer a few suggestions respecting the teaching of reading when blackboard and card lessons have been completed. How should classes in the first, second, and higher readers be taught? This is the inquiry to which we desire to give an answer.

The leading objects of a class drill in reading are (1) *a complete mastery of the words of the lesson*, and (2) *the correct reading of the sentences*; and it is to be observed that the first of these objects is preparatory to the second. The pupil can not read a sentence correctly until he has mastered the words of which it is composed. Hence, the first step in a reading exercise is the teaching of the words.

This suggestion explains much of the poor success which so often attends the reading drills in our schools, and especially in our primary and secondary schools. The pupils are thrust at once into the reading of sentences, and these are taken up not singly, but in paragraphs. The attempt is made to master the words through the reading of the sentences, and the result is that the words are neither mastered nor the sentences read. The pupils go stumbling and drawing through the successive lessons without acquiring the ability to read accurately and intelligently either silently or orally. It is exceedingly painful to listen to reading when pupils hesitate and stumble over unfamiliar words. The ability to call every word in a sentence at sight and utter the same with accuracy and ease, is a prerequisite to oral reading.

The above analysis of the objects of a class drill in reading suggests that it should consist of two corresponding exercises, one designed to secure a mastery of words and the other a correct reading of the sentences.

I. THE MASTERY OF WORDS.

The mastery, of a word includes the ability (1) to recognize or name it at sight; (2) to utter it with accuracy, force, and ease; (3) to spell or analyze it by sound and by letter; and (4) to comprehend its meaning and to use it intelligently. The second element specified and also the analysis by sound are not essential to silent reading, and would receive no attention in teaching the deaf and dumb, but the pupils in our ordinary schools are to be taught to read orally as well as silently, and hence all the elements specified should enter into a thorough word drill. When all the words in a sentence are thus mastered by a pupil, he is prepared to attempt to give oral expression to the thought. What we desire specially to urge is, that this word drill should precede sentence reading.

Among the various exercises which may be used to teach the words of a reading lesson, the following are the most valuable:

1. The pupils may be required to print or write all the *new* words. This will greatly assist in learning their pronunciation and spelling.

2. The words thus copied may be spelled orally from the slate in the class, and then pronounced rapidly up and down. This will secure accuracy in copying and fluency in pronouncing. Words which are peculiar in orthography or difficult to pronounce may be written on the board, and the class drilled upon them in concert and singly.

3. The words of the reading lesson may be assigned as a spelling lesson, and the pupils be required to spell them both by sound and letter. This will secure the study of the reading lesson, and will also enable the teacher to give due attention to the correct pronunciation and articulation of each word. We would urge every primary teacher to make this spelling exercise precede every exercise in reading.

4. The pupils before reading may pronounce the words from right to left, taking a line each, or the teacher may pronounce the first word at the right, a pupil the next word, the teacher the next, another pupil the next, and so on. Instead of pronouncing all the words, those containing two or more syllables may be given. If any pupil hesitates or blunders, the word should be pronounced by the class, separated into syllables, spelled by sound, etc.

5. The teacher may develop the meaning of each word by an easy object lesson, by familiar illustrations, and by using it in a phrase or sentence, easily understood. The importance of such instruction can not be too strongly urged.

6. The words thus familiarized should be used by the pupils in original sentences, both oral and written. This exercise is widely used in our best schools. It is not only valuable as a test of the pupil's knowledge of the meaning of words, but it is an excellent language lesson. The sentences thus formed should be read by the pupil, and subsequently examined by the teacher.

The above exercises variously combined and modified to suit the ability and condition of teachers and classes, will obviate largely all hesitation and stumbling in the calling of words, and, at the same time, will impart to the pupil such a knowledge of their meaning as will greatly assist in the clear comprehension of the thought, without which good reading is impossible. They may receive attention in the first part of the reading exercise, or each alternate recitation may be devoted to them. The latter plan was adopted by one of the most successful teachers we have ever known, and with excellent results. She devoted the forenoon exercise entirely to the words in the afternoon lesson, and thus alternated word learning and sentence reading. We attach great importance to the phonic analysis of words and to other vocal exercises which impart accuracy, modulation, force, and compass to the voice.

II. THE READING OF SENTENCES.

The preparatory drill having received due attention, the next step is to "take the thought out of its verbal husk," and plant it in the mind of the reader. Good reading is the correct utterance of the thought and emotion of a passage—not the mere distinct enunciation of the words—and the thought must be grasped and the emotion felt before the vocal powers can give them due expression. Hence the reading of each sentence of a new lesson should be preceded by such questions as will bring out the leading thought and the force of each modifying element. The correct reading of a sentence often depends on the due appreciation of the force of a single word, and, generally, wrong emphasis is due to a lack of correct comprehension. The mistake of the voice is but the expression of the mind's blunder. The thought to be uttered should be analyzed by questions so that the pupil may view each part separately—may feel the force of every word and rhetorical figure.

Take, for illustration, a sentence now before me: "Think of the generalship of Washington, who, with a handful of undisciplined yeomanry, triumphed over the royal army." Of what are we to think? *The generalship of Washington.* What shows his skill? *His triumph.* Over whom did he triumph? *The royal army?* Why is the army called "royal"? *It belonged to the King of England, and was brave and well disciplined.* What is said of Washington's troops? *They were "yeomanry"—men of industrial pursuits.* What was their condition? *They were "undisciplined"—untrained for war.* What was their number? *They were but a "handful"—few in number.*

Such an analysis as this will rarely fail to secure the right emphasis, and arouse the interest and feeling necessary to lead to earnestness and force of utterance. In primary classes the questions should be simple and numerous; the unfamiliar words (if any remain) should be explained; and the whole exercise should, if possible, be made to glow with interest. In more advanced classes the questions may