

"cat," it would indeed be "see ay tee." The more philosophical way would be to show the child the object or a picture of it, and then teach him the sign representing that object. This is the way the child learns to talk, and as reading is nothing more than talking from a book, it should be the method employed in teaching him to read. Having learned the word as a whole it should then be analyzed, at first by pointing out the different forms of its letters, and after the pupil has made some progress, the analysis might include the sounds of the letters as well as their names. It is necessary when the pupils come to spell orally that they should know the name of the letters of the alphabet, but we would recommend that they be taught incidentally in the progress of the lessons. What we object to is keeping the child for weeks, or even months engaged with these arbitrary characters as preparatory to his beginning to pronounce words. We believe that children learn to pronounce much more easily by associating their names with their forms, than by any synthesis of the names of the letters of which they are composed. We also object to the construction of words from their elements, because it is opposed to the natural way in which a child learns. To teach the First Book according to the system we have attempted to explain, we would use the first part for teaching the pupils to pronounce the words at sight, and for making them acquainted with the forms of the letters, remembering always in teaching words which are the names of objects, actions and qualities to convey to the child through the medium of the senses, the idea before giving him the sign or word. The order which I would adopt with the first ten lessons would be somewhat as follows:—

- 1st. Learning to pronounce the words.
- 2nd. The forms of the letters of which the words are composed.
- 3rd. Reading sentences.
- 4th. Printing words of lessons on slates at the seat. The slate exercise will

keep the pupils' minds pleasantly engaged, and their little hands out of mischief. Dr. Sangster while holding the Institute here, and in his lecture on this subject, strongly recommended that the teacher take the words learned and combine them into other sentences than those found in the book, as an additional exercise in reading. He considered that this part of the exercise could be made valuable by requiring the pupils themselves to form the sentences, as it then would be a beginning in oral composition.

When we come to the second section of the book or the 12th lesson, it is proper that in addition to pronouncing the words we teach the sounds of the letters, and their names. The order would now be: 1st. Pronounce the whole word. 2nd. Sounds of the letters of which it is composed. 3rd. Combine the sounds so as to form the word. 4th. Names of the letters in each word. 5th. Read the sentence. 6th. Print the lesson on slates at the seat. I am persuaded that the greater part of our poor reading in schools is attributable to the fact that we do not drill sufficiently on the elementary sounds of the language. I am satisfied that if we paid more attention, not only with young children but with the older ones, to this exercise, the low and indistinct utterance now so common would be the exception not the rule. And as these children in speaking to themselves or their parents, even when very young, scarcely ever make a mistake in the inflection of the voice—the force, tone, and pitch of which being nearly always perfect, why should we in teaching reading from the very commencement, not insist upon reading their little sentences with minute correctness as to these points? This drawling monotonous tone, in which children somehow or other glide, should not be tolerated. Remember that bad habits contracted in the junior classes are almost impossible to eradicate, when the pupil has been advanced to a higher grade.