

tions. In five minutes the scene changes; the windows are closed, half the pupils take their slates with simultaneous movement, place them in position, and proceed to print, draw or write exactly what has been indicated and illustrated for them as a copy. The rest stand, ranged soldier-like, in a compact line with book in hand, and take their reading-lesson. Not one is listless or inattentive. Sometimes they read in turn, and sometimes they are called promiscuously, or they are permitted to volunteer; or the teacher reads a sentence or two, and the whole class read in concert after her; or they are allowed to read a paragraph silently. Now a hard word is spelled by sounds: then there is thrown in a little drill on inflections or emphasis. Many judicious questions are asked about the meaning of what is read, and all needful illustrations and explanations are given with such vivacity and clearness that they are sure to be comprehended by every pupil, and remembered. The time for the lesson quickly glides away, every pupil wishing it would last longer. A stroke upon the bell brings the whole school to "position" in their seats; the slates are examined, and returned to their places; a general exercise on the tablets, or an object lesson, follows. If the latter, perhaps it is on colors, the teacher having prepared for this purpose little square cards worked with bright-hued worsteds, or the children have brought bits of ribbon or colored paper or water-color paints—very likely some one has brought a glass prism to show the colors of the rainbow. A verse or two of poetry on the rainbow is repeated. Now comes the music. A little girl takes the platform, and, with pointer in hand, conducts the exercise on Mr. Mason's charts. She asks about the staff and notes and bars and clefs. They sing the scale by letters, numbers and syllables; and close with a sweet song. They are next exercised on numbers, not in mere rote repetition or table, but by combinations with visible objects,—the ball-frame and marks on the blackboard,—writing figures on the slates being interspersed with oral construction. And thus goes on the whole session. You would gladly remain the whole day, such is the order, harmony and cheerfulness of the school. You see that the children are both pleased and instructed, that they are wisely cared for in all respects. Neither body, mind nor heart is neglected. The teacher is happy. She is happy, because she is successful; and she is successful, because her heart is in the work. She has the right disposition, and this qualification multiplies ten-fold all others. This is no fancy sketch, nor is it a flattering picture of some single school. It is only an imperfect outline of what may be seen daily in not a few schools. When I contemplate the excellences of these first-rate schools, I say to myself, All honor to the admirable teachers who have made them such.—*From a report of the Superintendent of Boston Public schools.—R. I. Schoolmaster.*

New and Useful Spelling Rules.

Among the numerous orthographical difficulties which prove stumbling blocks to the young student of English, and too often, we are sorry to say to adults also, perhaps none is more perplexing than the position of the vowels *e* and *i* in a large class of words which contain them combined as a diphthong. The diphthong is almost invariably pronounced like *e* in *me*; but sometimes the *e* stands first as in *deceive*, and sometimes the *i*, as in *believe*; how are we to remember their correct position? The following rules, which have been found exceedingly useful in my class-room, will set the matter right. They cover every common word, in which the diphthong occurs.

RULE I. When the diphthong commences a word, or is preceded by an *s* sound—that is, *c* soft or *s*—*e* stands first; as in *either*, *conceive*, *seize*. Only exception *siege*—easily remembered, because derived from the French, *siège*.

RULE II. When the diphthong is not preceded by an *s* sound, *i* stands first; as in *chief*, *friend*, *piece*. Exceptions, *neither*, *obesance*, *obesant*.

Let these rules be taught in the class-room, and the rising

generation will be saved from a vast deal of trouble and thousands of blunders.—*American Educator.*

Anecdotes of Queen Victoria.

Grace Greenwood contributes to the first number of the *Weekly Advance* the following, among other anecdotes of Queen Victoria:

"Another little anecdote, which shews her simplicity of character and shrewdness of perception, was told me by a gentleman who once enjoyed the pleasure of a very informal interview with her under rather peculiar circumstances. My friend, Mr. W—, is a person of very artistic taste—a passionate picture lover. He had seen all the great paintings in the public galleries of London, and had a strong desire to see those of Buckingham palace, which, not being a "show house," were inaccessible to an ordinary connoisseur. Fortune favoured him at last. He was the brother of a London carpet merchant, who had an order to put down new carpets in the state apartments of the palace—and so it chanced that temptation came to my friend to put on a workman's blouse, and thus enter the royal precincts, while the flag indicating the presence of the family floated definitely over the roof. So he effected an entrance and when once within the royal halls, dropped his assumed character, and devoted himself to the pictures. It happened that he remained in one of the apartments after the workmen had left, and, while quite alone, the Queen came tripping in, wearing a plain white morning dress, and followed by two or three of her younger children, dressed with like simplicity. She approached the supposed workman, and said:

"Pray, can you tell me when the new carpet will be put down in the Privy Council chamber?"—and he, thinking he had no right to recognize the Queen under the circumstances, replied—'Really, madam—I cannot tell—but I will enquire.' 'Stay,' she said abruptly, but not unkindly, 'who are you? I perceive that you are not one of the workmen.'

"Mr. W—, blushing and stammering somewhat yet made a clean breast of it and told the simple truth. The Queen seemed much amused with his ruse, and for the sake of his love for art, forgave it; then added smiling 'I knew for all your dress that you were a gentleman, because you did not 'your majesty' me. Pray look at the pictures as long as you will. Good morning! Come chicks we must go.'

"Another anecdote, illustrating Victoria's admirable good sense and strict domestic discipline, came to me directly from one who witnessed the occurrence. One day, when the Queen was present in her carriage at a military review, the Princess Royal, than rather a wilful girl of about 13, sitting on the front seat, seemed rather coquettish with some young officers of the escort. Her Majesty gave several reproving looks without avail winked at her, but she wouldn't stay winked.' At length in flirting her handkerchief over the side of the carriage, she dropped it—too evidently not accidentally. Instantly two or three young heroes sprang from their saddles to return it to her fair hand—but the awful voice of royalty stayed them. 'Stop, gentlemen,' exclaimed the Queen, 'leave it just where it lies. Now, my daughter, get down from the carriage, and pick up your handkerchief.' There was no help for it. The royal footman let down the steps for the little royal lady, who proceeded to lift from the dust the pretty piece of cambric and lace.

She blushed a good deal, though she tossed her head saucily, and she was doubtless angry enough; but the mortifying lesson may have nipped in the bud her first impulse towards coquetry. It was hard, but it was wholesome. How many American mothers would be equal to such a piece of Spartan discipline?"