

first few times he taught them : another year, relying upon the familiar look of his Latin page, his preparation was more hurried and superficial; a fourth year, he probably said to himself, "I have been over this so many times it must be familiar, I cannot be at a loss, there is no need of any preparation for the class." The consequence was, that those niceties of meaning, oftentimes logical as well as rhetorical, which discover themselves in the position of antithetic words or correlative particles, and the peculiar argumentative force of the connectives, or the shades of thought conveyed by words aptly chosen from among the synonyms, gradually escaped his notice, and were no longer part of his knowledge or instruction.

A similar process of deterioration goes on in every branch of study, if we teach without at the same time studying the subject. No sure dependence can be placed upon any dead mass of intellectual material, stored in the vaults of a mind not alive with thought.

It therefore becomes a double duty of the teacher, to be acquiring knowledge in those branches in which he instructs. Want of time is not a good excuse for not doing this. The philanthropy which prompts one wholly to neglect his own cultivation, in order to do good to others, is at least a mistaken policy. Nor have we a right, considering our immortality, and the relations of our present to our future life, to neglect ourselves. It is in the economy of nature, that those who neglect their own highest interests for the sake of others, who defer devotions, shorten their prayers, or neglect lessons (to come closely to the topics which concern us here) for the sake of spending the time for the good of others, *shall* fail to prosper in those very attempts in proportion to such neglect. Such is the testimony of universal experience.

Do you ask if you are never to rise above the subjects you are teaching? I answer in one sense, no. Never above a deep interest in the simplest truths or facts you teach; never above a love of presenting them in new lights, and advancing them with new illustrations; never, indeed, above the conviction that there is wealth in them of which you are not fully possessed—a sacredness which you do not yet fully appreciate. However far you go on in investigations or studies of any sort, "take" with you the *elements* of that study, not as slaves to help you on, but as friends. You will find their relations to be infinite, their speech to be words of ever-deepening wisdom, their beauty to be a divinely-increasing radiance. Cease to feel so towards the simple elements of learning, and because you do not recognize *their* truth, all your way onward is through smoke and fog. The figure is not so striking as the fact is real. You can know a true scholar as well as a good teacher, and they are identical, by this very mark, his freshness of interest in the very elements of his study.

Who is he who points out the structure of a leaf with the greatest delight? It is the Botanist, who having acquired all that books can teach him of trees and shrubs and transient herbs, is a learner still, in the secret nooks and hiding places of nature. And why has he not in his higher speculations lost his interest in the leaf? Because the simple leaf is to him an exhaustless subject; in itself it is still a mystery, in its relations wonderful, and the things about it which long since became familiar, share indistinguishably in the general interest.

So with the arithmetician, admiring the art of notation; so with the grammarian, finding marks of divinity, and a prompter of constant wonder in the structure of language. All the best teachers of the reading world are *learners*, and learners (if we will widen the term to include those who receive instruction for the heart also) are the wisest of men.

I wish to present to you some short and common sense remarks on the *studies of teachers*. Without any spirit of dictation, but simply for clearness of expression I may be pardoned for giving these remarks a dogmatic rather than an argumentative form.

My first rule would be, *make special preparation for each recitation*. Guard against too general study of the subject at first. Go over all the lesson by yourself, and master it all before appearing before your class. This is the general practice with professors of colleges and universities everywhere. Men of the character they possess never depend on what they have before learned for their ability to teach. As often as the same lesson comes round, term by term, or year by year, so often do they renew their study of the same thing, and that with new enthusiasm. So should we renew our study of the subject, though it were but a month or a week ago that we went over all the same before. Our examination may be more rapid, but never less thorough on a review than on an advance; and pupils should be made to see that we feel, that the lesson which should be best learned is not the *advance* which has been before them but *once*; but the review which has been their lesson more than once. Should we or they know what we have examined *twice* less well than what we have examined only once?

Even if we did not need this preparation, in order to quicken our memories, still the power we should gain in recitation, from having beforehand recalled the class to mind and thought over the lesson with distinct reference to them, devising ways to adapt the truths to

their various capacities, would more than repay for the time and pains.

But we do need this study in order to refresh our own minds. We should feel ashamed to ask a question in Geography, which we cannot answer ourselves without reference to a book or map. Will the pupil think it important to know that of which teachers are ignorant? But we cannot retain all we need to know without both recurring to the subject, and keeping up that discipline of mind by which our items of knowledge are made to be servicable. The oftener a thought or fact recurs to the mind the oftener may we connect it with our other knowledge by new links of relationship, and by this means give it a new value.

Such reviews will not unnecessarily consume time. The mind learns to act with astonishing rapidity, so that all those facts and relations which it would take considerable time to express vocally, may pass clearly through the mind in a wonderfully short time. A true arithmetician demonstrates a rule (say of the extraction of a root) faster than one can enunciate it; the reasons, the relations, appear before his mind in order, and receiving the sanction of his understanding pass fully through the mind, while the sluggish tongue is plodding through the first part of the rule. Now, so long as the mind does *not* step unhesitatingly and quickly from process to process; so long as connected facts, like those of grammar, do not present themselves in *orderly* array, and not confusedly, so long certainly, the study of the subject should be considered a necessity by the teacher. When the order, the process, the relations *are* all so familiar, the review becomes a pleasure, quickly performed; and because of the endless relation of ideas, profitable still.

Our interest in these truths and facts will thus be kept alive. A truth is not fitted for effective work, not even a grammatical or an algebraical one, unless it has been warmed and cheered first in the heart of the speaker. Entertain there the rules of fractions, or of the agreement of verbs and nouns, until your interest is excited in them; and then the instruction will be better, although you may not have added anything to your stores of knowledge.

Look over your spelling lesson. See that you understand the principle on which the words in it are arranged—see if that principle is adhered to; see that you know the signification of its words, and whether you have been accustomed to the proper pronunciation of each; note the words which are not in good use, the words whose form of spelling is determined by fixed rules; if you possess other dictionaries, compare; and then go before your class, interested in words, and this interest will be imparted, and amply repay you for your toil, even though you should not say one word which resulted from this study.

Study your reading lesson. Without doing so you cannot read it properly yourself. Reading is one of the fine arts, like music and painting; is like them, the expression of realities through a medium which differs from those realities in kind. It is a neglected art, because teachers are themselves deceived, and have no knowledge of what constitutes good reading. A congregation has sometimes been made to wonder at a familiar psalm or parable, or other scripture, when some man's grave and unaffected reading has given reality to its representations and power to its words. The audience feel that they never heard the passage before. In truth they never had; the sound of the words, tame, with not a tinge of their significance, had imposed itself upon them, as the passage's meaning, for years. Words are but symbols; it is we who bestow upon them, from out the treasury of our minds and hearts, all their value to us. A good passage of descriptive, didactic, or imaginative prose or poetry, is a mine of wealth and beauty, yielding them forth to us just in proportion to our preparation for them.

We must then feel the individual force and beauty of the words; the laws of selection and arrangement must be apprehended; every figure of speech must be appreciated; every allusion to other times and events must be familiar; the imagination must have put together, with somewhat of the vividness of reality, the scenes and scenery described, and the feelings be enlisted according to the predilection of the author, before we understand a piece, or are prepared to pronounce it properly. Who can read well what he does not understand, and feel the force of? Now what a preparatory work is here. Good language is, indeed, quite an exhaustless source of culture. Scarcely any study so well repays the teacher for his labour as that bestowed upon it. No reading class should be heard, in words of more than one syllable, without special preparation for it.

Then comes the art of vocal expression; a noble art, which I hope we shall no longer so generally neglect.

We might go through the whole round of studies, and show in each the need of fresh, of thorough review of each lesson before recitation.

How shall this study be conducted? Without some plan we shall fail to pursue the best course. I would say then:—

My first rule should be, confine your study to your text-book, until the lesson is fully mastered. This is a necessary caution; for it is pleasanter in our study to read other text-books on the same subject, to compare opinions and weigh arguments, and gather illustrations,