

advanced as much at home as at school. This affront he must put down at once.

"Off with your coat, sir."

"I'd rather not take off my coat," said Peter.

The reason was that the boy had no vest on and his suspenders were mere strings, for the Cowels were poor—yet they had pride; in fact this was the strong point of the family. Mr. Allen did not know that Peter was resisting to save the reputation of the family, but looked at his resistance as displaying a further depth of depravity.

Then ensued one of those scenes, then so common, but happily less so now; a scuffle between the teacher and pupil. The teacher was armed with a cut ruler and used it as a policeman does a club, but the cruelty he displayed aroused Julius Cone and he held the master's arm.

"You ought not to strike him like that, and I'll not stand by and see it."

The younger children and girls rushed out of doors, but returned at the quiet that ensued. The teacher sat in a chair and two of the older boys James Barnes and Julius Cone were beside him.

"We don't intend to hurt you, but we cannot see that boy beaten with a club for nothing."

Mr. Allen was in a quandary; it was necessary for him to teach school; he felt there was justice in what the boys said; and so after a moment's thought he said,

"Do you mean to prevent me from keeping order?"

"No sir; we shall only prevent you from abusing that boy."

"Well, boys, take your seats, call in the pupils and let us talk this over."

The result was that the teacher and the older pupils came to an understanding. It seemed to the master at first that he was humiliated and that his influence was gone, but it was but for a brief period. He soon felt that James and Julius were his firm friends; as they came to know each other better, each respected the other more. Mr. Allen had the making of a good teacher in him and the school that winter was declared by many "the best we ever had."—*New York School Journal*.

### CONCISENESS IN STYLE.

In teaching children to write the first effort is to induce them to write as much as possible about a given topic. Later, however, the great point should be to express a given thought clearly in the fewest words. A good rule to follow is this: First, write out your thoughts fully on the subject under consideration. Second, revise your composition and cut out from one-fourth to one-half. What is left will contain all the essential ideas, and be more pointed than the first draft.

Conciseness, especially in written speech, is a great virtue. Teachers need to study it—they should teach it. Writing telegrams is an excellent exercise. A minister who was taken to task for preaching a whole hour, apologized by saying that he had been over-worked, and did not have time to make his sermon shorter. Hawthorne is acknowledged to have been a master of a pure English style. You will not find an italic letter in any of his books. His emphasis was in the sense of what he wrote. He used, almost entirely, words of few syllables. There are no big, heavy words in his works. He used no foreign words or phrases, either ancient or modern, in any of his writings. Those who would write well should follow his example. Use short sentences; if long ones, break them up. Have one member of a compound sentence longer than another. Use words to make things clear. Think of your reader; have it before you that he understands just what you have said.—*Indiana School Journal*.

### TEACHING COMPOSITION.

#### 1.—Directions for Teachers.

1. When you take charge of a class not previously trained in composition-writing, set the pupils to copying short reading lessons. Let them exchange papers, and, with open book, correct one another's exercises with reference to spelling, punctuation, capitals and paragraphs.

2. Next, let them write out an abstract of some familiar story, told or read to the class.

3. When you require a formal composition, select a subject for the entire class, and give the necessary directions, explanations and suggestions. Select subjects about which your pupils know something. Never abstract subjects, such as happiness, or knowledge, or virtue.

4. Train your pupils to correct one another's compositions, and require them to re-write corrected exercises.

5. "I call that the best theme, which shows that the boy has read and thought for himself; that the next best which shows that he has read several books and digested what he has read; and that the worst which shows that he has followed but one book, and followed that without reflection."—[*Thomas Arnold*].

6. "Training in the appropriate use of the English language ought not to be limited to the mere grammatical exercise of composing sentences. Even in our common schools it should extend to the cultivation of taste by which neat as well as correct expression is acquired as a habit."—[*Russell*].

7. "I hold as a great point in self-education that the student should be continually engaged in forming exact ideas, and in expressing them clearly by language. Such practice insensibly opposes any tendency to exaggeration or mistake, and increases the love of truth in every part of life. Those who reflect upon how many hours and days are devoted by a lover of sweet sounds to gain a moderate facility upon a mere mechanical instrument, ought to feel the blush of shame, if convicted of neglecting the beautiful living instrument wherein play all the powers of the mind."—[*Prof. Faraday*].

8. "The study of rhetoric in high schools ought not to be completed in fourteen weeks. It should be continued through the entire course, at the rate of one lesson a week, because it relates to language, which is the instrument used by teacher and pupil throughout the course. This method will give time to write the exercises assigned in works on rhetoric, and will not interfere with other studies relating to the English language."—[*George W. Minns*].

#### 2.—Directions to be Given to Pupils.

1. Think about the subject and make some plan of arrangement.

2. Do not run together a long string of statements, connected by *ands*, *buts* or *ifs*, but make short sentences.

3. After writing the first draft, examine it critically, cross out superfluous words or phrases, interline, correct, and then re-write.

4. In correcting, examine with reference to: 1. Spelling; 2. Capitals; 3. Punctuation; 4. Use of words; 5. Construction of sentences.

5. Acquire the habit of crossing *t's*, dotting *i's*, and punctuating, as you write.

6. Do not put off writing until the day before you must hand in your composition.

In school-work true principles must underlie correct practice; just as truly as good soils underlie the production of good grains and fruits.—*Education*.

There is no harm, but on the contrary there is benefit, in presenting a child with ideas somewhat beyond his easy comprehension. The difficulties thus offered, if not too great or too frequent, stimulate curiosity and encourage exertion.—*Sir Walter Scott*.