

Whispering in general is caused by a lack of interest on the part of children, and by their need of activity and occupation. Idleness is the source of all vices. Accordingly the teacher should know (1) how to awaken interest, and (2) how to occupy the children and make them participate in the instruction.

Not all subjects of teaching are capable of being made particularly interesting. This is not the task of instruction, but properly comes within the province of method. In order to put life into instruction the teacher should be clear and intelligible in his statements, keep going forward, explain how the lesson can be applied, and call attention to the difficulties it presents, which yet are to be overcome.

The teacher must not teach too much nor too long at a time, but must examine the pupil in what he can find out, infer, and conclude by himself. In these questions the subject should be grasped from all sides, beginning from the end and going backward, breaking into the middle and so on, in order to show what goes before and what must result. At the end of the week there should be a review of what has been done during the week. The same should be done at the end of the month and term; in one case the teacher should pay attention to details, and in another be satisfied with a summary and make comparisons. In this way the lessons constantly assume a new aspect, and offer new points of view, and the pupils are obliged to reproduce them independently according to different perspectives.

In order to encourage this independence, the teacher, should cease explaining at the point where the pupil can draw the conclusion for himself. Or the teacher can point out the aim, and ask what means are suitable for reaching it; or what has been learned can be applied in similar cases. In this way the pupil shares to a certain extent in demonstrating the lesson; the result is evidently his work, and this excites his ambition and interest and impels him to an activity which leaves no time for whispering.

The teacher should avoid questioning the pupils in regular order, but should skip about so that no one will be sure but that he may be called upon suddenly. Nor should he stop too long with one pupil, lest the others become tired. If the one who is questioned cannot answer, the teacher should ask another to help him out, and the first one should then be made to repeat the correct answer. Between whiles the other pupils should be asked why the answer was right or wrong. In brief let every question be directed to all, and then no one is sure but that it is meant for him. It is injudicious to call the pupil by name before answering the question. The question should be asked before the scholar is called upon for the answer. All must be prepared in this way to give the answer. It is well, after an answer is made, to ask another scholar whether it was right, and for what reason. If a scholar has something to write on the board, the others should meantime be examined on what he has to do. How shall he begin? What shall he do now? What mistake has he made? Why? What has he left out? etc. If the questions are put here and there, to this one and that one, whispering is stopped. If a chatterer is discovered, he must be made to repeat what has been said, and be more frequently questioned than the others.

If the scholars have to read from a reading book, the teacher must not keep his eyes fixed on his book, but glance about frequently so as to keep the class constantly under his eye. He must know what is in the book, and be able to tell from what is read where the place is. If a pupil looks up from his book and sees that the teacher is looking, not on his book but on the class, he knows he is watched. His glance meets that of the teacher. If the teacher moves about the room and calls, "John isn't looking at his book," the class knows that they are carefully watched, and stop talking. If, during the lesson, the teacher notices that one or another scholar is talking with

his neighbor, he should suddenly stop. The whole class is startled as well as the chatterer, who should be asked whether he is ready to let the recitation go on. If these measures are of no avail, the whisperer should be shown to a separate place, as has been said, and be made to stand in such a position that the class shall be behind him, and that he can make no signs or grimaces. In order that he may not be altogether tired out, he should be allowed, after ten or twenty minutes, to sit down close to the teacher's desk. He must be a very hard case if these measures will not lead him to stop making trouble.

The entire cure for whispering rests simply in the inquiry "When and for what reason do the scholars whisper?" They are tired, either because they feel no interest in the lesson or because they lack employment and active participation in the work. If these causes are removed the necessary results will not be manifested.

In visiting schools one often notices that the teachers pay special attention to a few scholars,—usually the best,—while the others find the time hanging heavily, and know in advance that they will not be watched. Accordingly they look about for some way to make the time pass,—and talk, play, and plan all kinds of mischief.

THE TEACHER AT HOME.

Let us talk of the teacher in her home, or rather in the boarding-place. For it is sadly true that the great majority of our teachers are compelled to board. It is also sadly true that, with rare exceptions, boarding-places are not true resting-places. Often a room without a fire compels the teacher to share the general sitting-room with the family, and happy is that teacher whose nerves are so sound that she can endure the day's demands upon them without craving a quiet evening for recuperation. There are teachers who can lock their school-room doors five minutes after the session, and give no further thought to school and its duties until they arrive next morning, just in time to ring the bell. It is barely possible that these gifted geniuses can do as faithful work as those who spend hours of patient thought and study outside the regular session. We will give them the benefit of a doubt; but most teachers need to give some study to their work, out of school-hours.

Every teacher ought to have a place, however small, where she can have at least one hour of perfect quiet every evening. Nothing rests the tired nerves so much. Just in proportion to the energy with which the teacher throws herself into her work ought she to rest. You do not realize, young teacher, now in the bright flush of womanhood, with pulses bounding with health and strength, that this constant nervous activity is quietly sapping the foundations of life. You are prodigal of your strength. Perhaps at thirty-five you will find that the nerve-power God intended should last you to three-score-and-ten is already wasted. Then, with nerves strung to the pitch of agony, you may be called to lay aside your work, to resign the pleasures of independence, and to linger out an existence fraught with pain and sorrow. Do not be guilty of such criminal carelessness and self-neglect. Insist, from the very first, on a room to yourself, comfortably warm in winter. Your salary is so small you can't afford it? Undoubtedly that is true, but it pays here to be what seems extravagant. Keep your health sound, and you may work for years; ruin it, and you will soon become a burden instead of a help to others.

Sleep is God's best gift to school-teachers. Sleep as much as possible. Let your head be on your pillow at half-past nine every night, and keep it there just as long as the family breakfast-hour will permit. Try it for one year, and see how much easier the government of your school becomes, when you come to it fresh from