

ideas as they flow through the mind, the ear must catch each sound, while the memory keeps them in place ready for use as the fingers jot them down ; the imagination, judgment and reason are all vigorously at work deciding where one sentence begins and another ends, while the will holds the mind to the subject in hand. Such an exercise will be seen, on reflection, to be many-sided. This is not all. The reflex habit engendered is invaluable. Dictation exercises show connected or related sentences, and the careful attention the pupil is obliged to give to this class of work begets in him the very habit that is so necessary to his future progress in written language. To read a class a sentence or a part of a sentence at a time, the writer must think how he will write it, and then the act of comparing his own effort with the work from which the extract was read, forces him into the habit of seeing the logical connection of sentences, and this passes over into the habit of logical thinking and logical writing. Spelling, punctuation, a taste and feeling for all the elements involved in a good literary composition, without which no good writing is possible, all force themselves into and become a part of the mental fibre of the pupil. Much practice in this kind of composition will give one a correct idea of what good writing is, and thus almost imperceptibly a good style is acquired. This plan is not designed to supersede entirely what is called original compositions, or rather formal language work.

As the child makes progress in writing from dictation, he should try his skill on such topics as lie clearly within his range of knowledge. By this is not meant that the assignment of a topic to a child is to hunt up in books, read himself full and sit down and try to empty upon paper what he has gathered, and call it an original composition. Such a performance is simply a memory effort to reproduce what he has read, or else a poor paraphrasing of the authors he had dipped into. It is evident that little value can be derived from such work.

To show the logical connection of sentences, the teacher may derange the sentences in a paragraph, and have the class pass judgment upon the changes thus made. There is generally an orderly unfolding of the sentence in a paragraph, and to get the pupil to see this point is always a great gain in constructing his own paragraphs. The act of