

in mental as in physical feats. Its mind, no less than its body, delights in doing hard things.

The principle we wish to reach is this, and we enunciate it confidently. The more and the harder things a pupil can be led to find out and do for himself, the more rapid will be his progress and the greater his joy in study. Every true teacher will know how to recognize the kindly eye and the flushed cheek which tell of mental effort and conscious triumph, and will delight in calling them forth. The true aim of educational reform is not to make the pathway too level, or the grade too easy for the foot of the little learners, but to see to it that the exercises are such as to bring not merely memory, but reason, reflection, judgment, imagination, and every faculty into vigorous and successful play.

Special Articles,

TEACHER'S LANDMARKS.

1. Lead the pupils to discover what in the present lesson is new, to distinguish between the matter of this lesson and the matter of the last one. The passage from the known to the unknown is natural to the mind; knowledge grows from knowledge. Here emphasis should be laid on the importance of finishing the lessons day by day, if possible. Experienced teachers know how sluggishly the majority of pupils work on matter that they have worked over before. Threshing old straw is never interesting. Hence the aim should be to make every lesson successful, to have as few failures as possible, and to keep the edge of curiosity sharp. One conquest prepares the way for another conquest; and few things are more valuable to the student than the habit of success. An excellent scholar of my acquaintance partially failed as a teacher from making his lessons too long, the result being that the same matter was often under study for two or three days. Let the lesson be such that it can be finished, and then let thoroughness in preparation be insisted on.

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3. Successful primary instruction is strongly realistic. The teacher should cause the pupil to understand that material things are behind all language relating to material things. Formal object lessons are far less important than objective teaching. Only too often school arithmetic is merely a manipulation of figures back of which nothing is seen. Attention should be paid to teaching children adequate ideas of distance. How high is the school house? What are the dimensions of the school room? How large are the school grounds? How far is it from one familiar object to another (say from one street to another)? When he has formed an adequate idea of a half mile or a mile, the pupil can the better judge of the width of a river or the height of a mountain. Such efforts as these stimulate the imagination, furnish a ready means of associating ideas, and fix facts in the mind. The pupil should not be left to think that the Mississippi River is a streak of black ink on a sheet of white paper. However, it must not be forgotten that the time comes when, relatively, illustration must recede towards the background. There is abstract as well as concrete thought; there are concepts as well as percepts, general as well as particular ideas. At the proper time the pupil must be put in the way of dematerializing or unsensory things. An intelligent school boy, well taught in book ways, expressed a desire to go to the boundary between Pennsylvania and Maryland. Asked what he supposed the boundary is, he answered—"A rope!"

4. Teach the pupil to look carefully into the meaning of language; that is, challenge him with constant questions as to words used in definitions, rules, descriptions, and examples. An example in arithmetic is put before the pupil; before he begins to "cipher" let him look searchingly through the example to make sure that he understands all the elements that it contains. Teach him to lay hold of the key words to a sentence—to seize the salient ideas of a paragraph.

I cannot resist the impression that teachers as a class fail to appreciate the extent to which the instruction of school children is in words merely. Words are memorized, and then handled as though they were facts, things, thoughts. It is both instructive and amusing to call a class of children out into discussion, and to listen to their arguments. I shall here record, as literally as I can, two discussions in which I have borne a part. The first is with a class of boys that have just passed a very satisfactory oral examination in the history of the United States, including the Emancipation Proclamation of President Lincoln.

"What is slavery?" "There isn't any now." "Isn't there still slavery in some countries?" "Yes, sir." "Then you mean that slavery doesn't now exist in the United States?" "Yes, sir." "There was once slavery in the United States then?" "Yes, sir." "Where?" "In the South." "Well, what was slavery when we had it?" The universal silence that follows this question leads me to change the abstract for the concrete form. "Well, then, what is a slave?" "A negro." "A negro! were all negroes slaves—the negroes in the North?" "No, sir." "Then it is not a good answer to say a slave is a negro,—is it?" We must try again. "What is a slave?" "A slave has a master whom he has to mind." "Yes; and so a boy has a father whom he has to mind,—hasn't he?" "Yes, sir." "Then what is the difference between a slave and a boy?" "A slave has to work very hard." "And some boys have to work very hard: is that the difference—the slave has to work harder than the boy?" "A slave, if he does wrong, gets whipped." "And so boys sometimes get whipped; what is the difference then?" "If the slave does wrong he gets a terrible whipping; but a boy only gets cut once or twice." "Are you all satisfied with this answer?" Silence seems to show that the class cannot throw more light on the question. So I change my tactics again. "Can a master sell his slave?" "Yes, sir." "Can a father sell his boy?" "No, sir." "Then is not this the difference—a slave is property, a thing, or chattel, that can be bought and sold, while a boy is not?" "Yes, sir." This dialogue shows how pupils of considerable intelligence, able to recite memoriter good lessons in the history of the United States, can go on hearing and using such words as "slavery" with no just idea of what they mean.

The second discussion is excited by the use, by pupils, of the phrase, "The New World." "Did you say 'The New World'?" "Yes, sir." "Is there an Old World also?" "Yes, sir." "Then there are two worlds, are there?" "Yes, sir," and "No, sir." "You do not agree; what do you mean by the New World?" "The western continent." "And by the Old World?" "The eastern continent." "Then in this sense there are two worlds?" "Yes, sir." "Why is the western continent called the New World?" "Because it was made after the eastern continent." (One boy says four hundred years after!) "Because it was made after the Old World! Is that the reason?" "Because it was discovered after." "Discovered after! Who discovered the new world?" "Columbus." "When did he discover it?" "In 1492." "Who discovered the Old World?" No answers. "Was it ever discovered in the sense that the New World was?" "No, sir." Evidently this discussion had reached its limit with primary children, and so it