

combination of these, is to elevate one or more virtues in the mind of the child by indirectly depressing every other. Every member of a well-ordered School must become acquainted with a variety of subjects of study, and have varied duties to perform. Every subject and duty is equally important to the pupil as a member of the School, and the regularity, promptness, good spirit and devotion with which every school obligation is discharged, are scarcely if at all of less moment than the obligations themselves. If it is unsound to emphasize the importance of one prescribed intellectual task to the indirect disparagement of another, it is no less unsound to emphasize intellectual attainments to the virtual exclusion of other elements of a successful school life. The converse is equally true. But it is legitimate and wise to acknowledge and reward those who distinguish themselves in the discharge of all their obligations, as members of the School. The conditions, therefore, on which School prizes should be awarded, must include regularity and punctuality of attendance, conduct, quality of school work, and application to all school duties; and these elements of school life are not to be divorced from each other, but regarded as parts of one whole—character. Prizes thus conditioned would afford a pleasant and many-sided stimulus to every pupil, and would prove an important auxiliary to the efforts of Parents, Teachers and Trustees in behalf of regularity of school attendance, and at the same time facilitate the best discharge of every other school duty. No prizes should be offered in any school except through the Board of Trustees, who should be responsible for the character and general suitability of the same. These prizes should be awarded by the Trustees on the written report of the Teacher of the School or department.

METHOD.

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I.

A child seems to be a bundle of paradoxes. His likes and dislikes often appear to be contradictory and capricious. In nothing is this more apparent than in his attitude with respect to new truth. He is irrepressible in his curiosity to pry into the unknown; importunate with his questions to find out why this is so, and what that is for; and yet, no sooner do we adopt a systematic plan for satisfying this craving, than he regards our efforts with indifference and opposition. The school-room is to him a prison-house, and lessons are tasks burdensome as Egyptian bondage.

But the child is not such a contradiction as we may suppose. If we examine his case, we shall find that it is perfectly simple and intelligible. The mistake is where it generally is—with the one who fancies all the world wrong but himself. It does not follow, because the chemist in his laboratory can by some chemical process convert sawdust into starch or sugar, that we ought to consider sawdust good, nutritious food, and that we should be greatly surprised that an animal fed on it becomes emaciated and dies. The fact is, we often present to the child as knowledge, something which to him is no more knowledge than sawdust is food. Of this nature are those general principles and abstract statements with which the young learner is too frequently bewildered and discouraged. No one would expect a child to gain any ideas from committing to memory the words of an unknown language. No one would expect him to take an interest in such work. Nor should we hope for any better results from learning unintelligible English words. The child's reflective powers are yet feeble; he has used them but little; and that knowledge which is the product of thought, generalized truth, is to him wholly unintelligible. Ignoring this fact, we block up the way to almost every study by an

impassable barrier of rubbish in the form of definitions. Our arithmetics, geographies, and especially our grammars, give ample proof of this absurd practice.

The beginner should be made to feel that knowledge is a matter of things, and not of mere words. We should present knowledge in the concrete form, give individual objects and examples for the child's inspection. By examining these individuals, and by comparing them, he frames his own definitions and deduces his own rules. In pursuing this course, every step the child takes is intelligible; the idea is developed first, and then he receives the appropriate term or expression to represent it. We shall find, too, that as we are gratifying the natural desire for knowledge by giving the genuine article, the child's interest is awakened, and his attention is fully secured. But, further, that exercise of thought by which he works out the definition or rule for himself, tends to strengthen and develop mental power. He is encouraged and made confident in himself by a consciousness of power, and a feeling that he is capable of becoming an independent worker in the search after truth. Instead of taking knowledge second-hand, he begins to realize that he can get it fresh from its very sources in the field of nature.

Teaching principles through examples, sometimes called the *Analytic Method*, and also the *Inductive Method*, is carried on through the medium of oral lessons. It affords a fine opportunity for the display of skill on the part of the teacher. The child is placed in the position of an investigator who is exploring a new subject. The work must not be simply an investigation conducted by the teacher in the presence of the children as silent spectators. The learner is not to be treated as a passive being, or a mere receptacle of knowledge. In fact, the knowledge acquired is of less value to the child than the discipline and power which he secures through the efforts which he puts forth in obtaining that knowledge. The learner is a co-worker with the teacher, and he is guided in the working out of knowledge by a process of questioning carried on by the teacher.

The method of teaching here indicated will be exemplified in a future number.

THE FIRST STEPS OF READING AS TAUGHT IN NEW BRUNSWICK.

BY WM. CROCKET, A. M., PRINCIPAL NORMAL SCHOOL, FREDERICTON.

Perhaps the best way to gain from paper an idea of the method of teaching the First Steps of Reading as practised in the schools of New Brunswick is to visit in imagination one of these schools and witness the teacher at work on a lesson. A class of little children is in front of her. She has secured their attention by a short and animated conversation held with a view of leading them to use the words which are to form the subject of the lesson, and of developing those pleasant tones which are to be carried into their reading. The visitor will see that the teacher has so diverted the conversation as to lead them to express in words some one idea which she has brought vividly before them. Her object is now to teach them to recognize in printed form the words they have just used, and to this end she prints the sentence neatly and rapidly on the blackboard, at the same time engaging their attention by keeping up the conversation. Suppose such a sentence as "Tom has a dog" is the one in question. The children, while observing its form, repeat it simultaneously and individually. They are then required to distinguish it from among other sentences placed on the blackboard. In this way the sentence is recognized as a whole; the separate parts of it are yet, however, unknown.

As a first step towards leading the child to the recognition of