

Another hindrance to the efficiency of our country schools is the irregularity of attendance. In most of the districts pupils have to contend with distance to go, coupled with bad roads, so that in bad weather, this irregularity is such that the teacher cannot do justice to all concerned.

Still another great defect of the country school is the want of permanency of teachers. This is to be deplored. Our country schools might be much better than they are were it not for this. Almost as soon as a teacher gets well acquainted with his pupils, begins to know their real wants and capabilities, he leaves, and his successor wastes much valuable time until he finds out how the land lies, when he, too, soon yields his place to some one else. Thus it goes on in the same ceaseless round of succession from year to year. Is it any wonder that the country school cannot do better work than it does?

Another serious defect of these schools is the neglect of primary work. This kind of work is sadly neglected in theory, but more so in practice. Our educators do not impress the importance of using advanced methods of instruction in the primary work of the country schools. Our educational journals do not insist that these methods be carried into these schools and adapted to the wants of the children in them. Yet it can and should be done, and is done in many parts of the country. In too many of these schools the idea prevails that a primer, slate and pencil are all that a child needs in its start on the road to knowledge. Too little heed is paid to writing and numbers, and all that the child does is to draw meaningless pictures. The sooner a greater interest is manifested in the primary work of the country schools, the better the pupils will be off that attend them.

Of man, the poet has said that he "wants but little," but this is not the case with our country schools. They need a great deal to make them do the work they were intended to do; and first and foremost among their wants are *better teachers*. When we say *better teachers*, we do not mean to say that all country teachers are not what they should be; on the contrary, in many of these schools are found some of the noblest, grandest souls that are laboring for the advancement of the cause of humanity, men and women who shall one day "shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever." We do say, however, and say it without fear of successful contradiction, that there are still too many among them who are a dead weight, a hindrance to the true progress of the schools, fossils that had better be gathered and exhibited to future generations, in some museum, as the remains of ages past and gone in the history of the race.

If our country schools, however, suffered only from the proverbial "old fog" as teacher, matters would not be quite so bad as they are. But I fear me that more damage is done in "teaching the young idea how to shoot" by the use of *fossilized methods* than by anything else. And these methods are used by many teachers who ought to know better. We have only to step into many of our country schools and observe the recitations to be convinced of the truth of this. In primary reading the old a b c method is still in vogue, and we can hear the little folks cunning over their a-b-cs in the way that their fathers used to do. When it comes to reading in the higher grades, all that the pupils read is "words, words, words." In United States History, the use of the text-book as a reader is not obsolete, but in spite of all remonstrance it goes on from year to year. In arithmetic, the little folks are often too sadly neglected and must get their first idea of number as best they can. In advanced arithmetic, too much stress is laid upon "getting the answer" to the neglect of the principles involved in the operation. In writing, the child is left to help himself. If he learns to write, well and good; if not, "allice same" to teacher. In geography, the old question and answer method is used right along, without fear of contradiction. Reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, and a modicum of spelling, and, perhaps, grammar, comprise the average education that can be obtained in the country school; and were this not supplemented by the education obtained from wood and field, our "country cousin" would be but poorly equipped for the battle of life.

Another need of our country schools is more apparatus for the teacher to work with. Too many of them have nothing whatever in this line, and the teacher is thus thrown upon his own ingenuity in supplying his wants in this direction. But "there's the rub." Too many of the teachers do not do anything at all in this line, and whenever boards of education occasionally open the public purse to supply the deficiency in part, the teachers do not use the apparatus they get. Is it any wonder that boards of education are sometimes a little stingy?

Another crying need of our country schools is intelligent supervision. There is nothing like unity of action. Each district is a little realm by itself and has nothing whatever to do with its neighbors. With intelligent supervision, all would be changed. There would be a union of the different districts and each would feel that it is but part of a greater whole. A course of study could be adopted, and thus the school work could be directed with some definite aim. The teachers, too, would feel the influence. No one who does his duty well would have cause to fear the visit of the superintendent, and the sooner the others are gotten out of the way the better for the honest workers. Intelligent supervision would make the teacher feel that he is observed by one who will judge his work by its merits, and reward accordingly. It would also encourage the timid but faithful teacher, for he knows that this friend, the superintendent, will stand by him no matter what may come. It would also have its influence with the pupils, as they would be brought in friendly competition with their neighbors, and each school would strive to lead in the race for excellence. In several townships of our State, the supervision has been tried and found a success. May the day speedily come when all the country schools of Ohio will receive its benefits.

Thus has been sketched, very briefly, the country school with its bright and dark sides. Although there are many who are concerned in their advancement, the burden of responsibility must fall upon the teacher. He must labor more than any other to bring these schools up to a higher plane. He must lead the pupils higher up, so that they can get a broader view. But he must not alone strive to make the children good citizens of this republic, he must do his part towards making them good subjects of the King of Kings. When the true teacher feels this great responsibility and his own incompetency to meet it, he cannot but pray with Aurora Leigh:

"Alas, long-suffering and most patient God,
Thou must be surelier God to bear with us
Than to have made us! Thou aspire, aspire
From henceforth for me; Thou who hast thyself
Endued this fleshhood, knowing how as a soaked
And sacking vesture it can drag us down,
And choke us in the melancholy deep,
Sustain me, that with Thee I walk these waves,
Resisting—breathe me upward, Thou in me,
Aspiring, who art the way, the truth, the life—
That no truth henceforth seem indifferent
And no way to truth laborious."

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TO JUNIOR THIRD.

GRAMMAR AND COMPOSITION.

1. Tell what is meant by Proper names, Common names, and Material names, and give an example of each.
2. John gave Mary a pretty doll; and Mary, thanking John for giving Mary the doll, told John John was very kind.
 - (a) Write the above sentence as it is given, underlining the names.
 - (b) Write the sentence again, putting, where you think it necessary to do so, other words instead of the names.
 - (c) "A pretty doll." Why not an pretty doll.
 - (d) "A pretty," "the doll," Show how to pronounce "a" and "the."
3. Correct the following:—
 - (a) One of my books are torn.
 - (b) Me and Henry is to go for the water to-day.
 - (c) Was you at Robert's wedding?
 - (d) Each of the men have a little lantern.
4. Re-write, with any necessary changes:

i seen Henry George and James setting their dog Mr. G. R. Browns cat.
5. Write five simple statements about apples.