

become more and more interesting as they advance towards the conclusion; and therefore the children will have a natural tendency to listen to the information given for their benefit, without giving the Teacher any extra exertion to maintain their attention.

The following suggestions for securing attention and good order while giving an oral lesson may perhaps be acceptable to some of your readers:

I. That the pupils be strictly prohibited talking, and be made to sit in a convenient manner, with their arms folded.

II. That the Teacher should stand at such a distance, and in such a position, as to enable every pupil to see his face.

III. That all black-boards, maps, diagrams, &c., required to illustrate the lesson, should be ready for immediate use when wanted, and placed in such a manner as to enable all the pupils to see them without moving from their seats.

IV. That the Teacher should make it a general rule never to leave the class while engaged in giving an oral lesson.

V. That, if possible, the Teacher should find some attractive name for his lesson, which will enable him to secure the attention of his pupils. This plan can be very successfully pursued in the giving of Scripture lessons. For instance, if the Teacher wished to give a lesson on "Noah," let the title of the lesson be changed to "The first shipwreck," or some equivalent phrase. If on "Dives and Lazarus," to "The rich poor man and the poor rich man." If on "Jonah," to "The living ship." If on "Naaman," to "The little slave," &c., &c., &c. In some case (when most convenient) it would be a good plan to disguise the real name of the lesson, and not make it known until near the end.

VI. To divide each lesson into four parts, and, at the conclusion of each part, to examine the pupils on the part previously explained to them.

VII. At the conclusion to make an examination (oral) on the whole of the lesson given.

VIII. To place the incorrigibles (if any) nearest the Teacher, and to trouble them with the most questions at the time of examination.

If Teachers arrange their lessons in a logical and interesting way, they will find, that, after obtaining the attention of their pupils once, their lessons will afterwards be courted, and that no extra exertion will be required for the preservation of order and attention. —Charles F. Redman in the *English Pupil-Teacher*.

### Peddled Books and Newspapers.

"A good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life."—Milton.

"Books are men of higher stature, [Browning.] And the only men that speak aloud for future times to hear."—Mrs.

Yes, good books are worthy of this high praise. But good or bad, books and newspapers are now playing a most important part in popular education,—hardly second to that of the living teacher, whether in the pulpit or in the school-room. Their character and influence must not be left out of account, unless we can be content to see our efforts as teachers paralyzed and the public taste debased, or be willing to neglect a co-operative agency of greatest power.

The subject is one of no little difficulty, and we can only throw out a few hints that may possibly prove suggestive to other minds.

Our people are fond of books. Few families are so poor that they can not point you to a parlor table or cupboard filled with them. But what are they? We will venture to say that in three-fourths of these little libraries, at least one-half of the books have been purchased of itinerant book-peddlers, or subscription agents, and are either the unsaleable refuse of the cities, or compends of history, travels, third rate novels, got up by some "enterprising house," especially for the popular market in showy covers and with abominable wood-cuts. Not a small part of these are the lives of highwaymen, pirates, records of bold and wicked adventure. Every minister in the habit of visiting his people, and every school master that has "boarded round," can verify the truth of this statement. The evil prevails most in the country, where the people feel more dependent on these strolling agents; and even in the large villages, how few families can show sterling or standard works in their collections? How few really good works, which issue month after month from the English and American press, are to be found, in comparison with works of little or no value, either to elevate the taste, inform the mind, or purify the heart? Thousands of dollars, rather, tens of thousands, are annually drained from the State by unprincipled book-sellers in the large

cities, for their worthless publications. It is not too much to say that the amount thus drawn from the State for second rate, worthless, and bad books—including such papers as the *New York Ledger* and *Mercury*, which even the genius of Everett and Bayard Taylor can not make respectable, and all the insipid love-story weeklies from Boston, New York and Philadelphia; including also many of our "fashionable" monthlies and our highly seasoned "yellow covered" religious" literature of all sorts and sizes, however recommended by men and Journals of whom we have a right to expect better things, the money, we say, thus drawn from the country during the last ten years, would have supplied every town with a school library of a choice collection of standard English and American authors.

Who can estimate the value of such libraries to our youth, to the character of our young men and young women, to society generally, in promoting solid attainments, sound views on all the great questions of life, in elevating the taste of the community and furthering the efforts of our public teachers?

What are we to do? Let all teachers and friends of education by word and example, at all fit times and places, at the fire-side, at town and country associations, and through the pen, resist this enemy that is coming in upon us like a flood, instruct the people on this evil, and so create a healthful sentiment. Let all parents look to the books and papers their children and themselves are reading, bravely purge their tables and book-shelves, and get a little honest light and heat by a bonfire of their otherwise worthless or bad books. And then buy only good books and take only good papers. If unable to trust your own judgment, consult not with the paid advertisements of the newspapers, but with some one upon whom you can rely. Never deal with irresponsible book-agents or peddlers.

And when you have got a good book, read it, and make your friends and neighbors read it. By-and-by it will not be the less valuable to you for its soiled and well-thumbed pages.—*Vermont School Journal*.

### Monotony of School Exercises.

All teachers have felt this creeping shade of depression and enervation, which naturally results from a regular order of exercises in the school-room. The teacher is not alone the sharer of this incubus of monotony; the same is both felt and acted in the person and spirit of the pupil. This is the rock upon which so many of the craft are ruined. This with that other, and not less dispiriting cause, the departure of a class of mind that held the front rank in the school-room, upon whose characters, the teacher has given the last stroke of his skill, ere crossing the threshold to struggle in life's battle. With them too often goes the life, the energy and the courage of the teacher. Having smoothed the rough boards of their minds, and fitted them for their position in the social fabric, he feels disheartened as a new supply of the rough materials rolls itself up before him for the same care, handiwork and burnishing process as before. The mind, upon which any one of these causes so operates, as to discourage and unfit it for labor, needs to look well to the nature of things, and see if there is not a remedy for this evil, which loses to the profession many of the noblest, and most successful of workmen. We think that the cause lies in the fact, of keeping within the narrow limits of instruction, and not enriching and amassing intellectual wealth—current truths connected with every branch we teach—to be imparted as freely as obtained. In so doing, we invigorate our own thoughts; keep in constant expectancy, the minds of those we instruct, and dispel wholly that appalling cloud of monotony so begrimed with gloom and despair. Every task should be made a living embodiment, a real life, created anew, stripped of formality and dull verbiage. To effect this, the teacher must be an eclectic, a gleaner, a kaleidoscope, turning up new shapes and beauties at all hours in the day. Let us do this, and the flickering shadows of monotony will be lifted, and an intellectual sunlight will be felt reciprocally by both teacher and pupil.—*New-York Teacher*.

### Charity among Teachers.

"Charity suffereth long and is kind, charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." What a beautiful picture is this. How this crowning excellence adorns human character. Nothing appears more beautiful in all the duties and relations of life. The charity that "envieth not and seeketh not her own,"—the beautiful economy of human happiness.