

best language; but it is necessarily technical, often absurd and unfamiliar.—Such phraseology should undoubtedly be learnt by children, but they are too often confined to it. Teachers suppose that if the facts are learnt in book language, their work is done, and nothing more is necessary; forgetting that the facts require to be set before a young mind in a great variety of forms, and that it is especially necessary to *translate* the language of a school book into that of ordinary life, in order to make it interesting or even completely intelligible. Moreover, the desire for exactness and precision in statement, which is in itself a commendable thing, often makes teachers afraid to deviate from the phraseology which is used in books, or which they themselves have been accustomed to use when they studied the subject. The private reading, also, especially of the best and most faithful teachers, is apt to be confined almost exclusively to professional books, or to books whose main purpose is to furnish facts. Thus they are apt to acquire a hard, professional and unattractive style of expression, which they habitually use, without being conscious that there is anything remarkable or pedantic about it.

The great cause however, of the prevalence of this evil, is the tendency which exists, in all but persons of the highest cultivation, to do their work mechanically, and to be content with only one way of doing it. Routine is, after all, much easier than an independent or original method. Mechanical teaching, in the words prescribed for us by others, is not absolutely impossible, even when but half our minds are occupied; but the teaching which invests the subject with a new dress, and which presents knowledge in exactly the form best suited to the learners, requires the whole mind. The true reason for the dullness, for the meagreness of language, and for the coldness of style so often complained of in schools, is that teachers do not always give their whole minds to the subject. They do not sufficiently identify themselves with it, nor make it thoroughly their own before they teach; above all, they are content to be the channels by which the words of others are to be conveyed to a learner's memory, instead of living fountains of instruction, imparting to others what

springs naturally and spontaneously from their own minds.

The consequences of the deficiency to which we refer are often shown in many ways. Children feel an interest in their lessons in exactly the same proportion in which these lessons appeal to their own sympathies and to their own consciousness of need; but their attention is languid and their progress slow, when no such appeal is made. Unless the subjects talked about in school connect themselves with the duties of ordinary life; unless the mode of treating them in school bears some relation to the mode in which they are to be treated elsewhere; the learner begins to feel that he lives in two worlds—one in the school-room and one outside it—and that the language, the pursuits, and the modes of thinking of these two regions are wholly unlike. The one is a world of duty and restraint, the other of pleasure and freedom. In the one he speaks in a sort of falsetto, and uses words which are not natural to him; in the other he speaks his own language, and feels at ease.—Some of this is perhaps necessary and proper; but the worst is, that he too often feels that there is no intimate relation between the two; that the duties of the one have nothing to do with the requirements of the other; and that it is possible to fail in one and succeed in the other. It is not only by the substance but by the style of school lessons that this impression is often unconsciously conveyed, and when once gained, it doubles the work of teaching, and goes far to destroy a learner's interest in his school work.

If any teachers are conscious that these remarks apply even partially to themselves and their own experience, we may remind them that one or two simple correctives for the evil are in their own hands. We will speak of these in order, and will not apologise to teachers for using in this case the briefest form of expression,—the imperative mood.

Study the school books thoroughly for yourselves. Make yourself completely familiar with their contents, and try to bring as much information as you can obtain from other sources to bear upon their illustration. Do not be satisfied with an explanation of the hard words which occur; but be ready to give a clear, effective, and interesting paraphrase of the entire lesson. You will