

## READING.

The chief objects of the instruction in reading shall be to impart to the pupils the power of fluent reading, with clear enunciation, correct pronunciation, tone, and inflexion, and expression based upon intelligent comprehension of the subject-matter; to cultivate a taste for and an appreciation of good literature; and accordingly to lead the pupils to form the habit of reading good books. The reading of such books might, indeed, well replace all other kind of home-work. There should be at least two or three reading-books in each class. The requirements in reading shall be held to be met by the use of the *School Journal*, together with continuous readers suited to each stage. Silent reading should be largely employed in the case of children in the upper classes, and some of the composition should be based thereon. Generally, the instruction in reading must be such as to secure within the limits of the pupils' ordinary school course the ability to read at sight with ease and intelligence any reading-matter suited to the age and mental development of children completing the primary stage of their education.

The most careful attention must be paid to the teaching of reading in the preparatory classes, the method recommended in the early stages being a combination of the Phonic and Look-and-Say methods, the Phonic predominating. The children should not learn the alphabet first, nor is it necessary to follow the usual order of the alphabet. The sounds of the letters must be taught in so thorough a manner that the child on seeing a letter immediately associates with it the sound, and on hearing the sound immediately associates it with the letter.

Words, syllables, and letters can be written to the teacher's dictation at stages suitable to the children's progress. Loose letters on bits of cardboard will be found useful in the early stages of word-building.

Great care must be exercised by the teacher to see that the pupils obtain the correct sounds and the correct means of producing them. It is necessary that the children watch carefully the lips, teeth, and tongue of the teacher when he produces the sound of a letter. Inability on the part of a child to give the proper sound is mostly due to the incorrect position and use of some part of the vocal apparatus, and it is the duty of the teacher to see that the child uses its vocal organs correctly. Short words of regular notation pronounced by the teacher and imitated by the pupils will provide exercise for training the vocal organs.

Teachers are recommended to teach the first lessons in reading from the blackboard, and recourse should not be had to the book until the lesson has been thoroughly mastered by the children. It is also very desirable that the child should, as far as possible, understand the meaning of the words that he reads.

The teacher should in all classes endeavour to secure expressive reading, and this can be done satisfactorily only when the children fully grasp the meaning of what they read. Even in the very earliest stages, as soon as the children are able to read single words, they must be trained to attach a distinct idea to them.

After reading a lesson the pupils should be required to reproduce the substance of it in their own words, the teacher assisting with questions when necessary, and taking care that the answers are given in complete sentences.

Poetry set for recitation should, while suited to the age of the pupils, be chosen for its literary merit as well as for the interest it arouses. There is such a wealth of simple and beautiful poetry in English literature that there is no reason to select for repetition verse that is not worth the trouble of learning by heart. One of the objects in making children learn verse or prose by heart is that they may have stored up in their memory masterpieces that may develop their imagination, and may, whether the children themselves are conscious of the operation or not, mould their taste for good literature. A sufficient amount of poetry and prose, suitable for learning by heart, will be provided in the *School Journal*.

The children should have an intelligent comprehension of the poetry set for recitation, and be able to answer questions upon the subject-matter of it. In some classes the pupils might be trained to reproduce in their own words the substance of poetry previously committed to memory. These exercises link the recitation to the composition lessons.

## SPELLING.

Spelling should be taught by means of systematic lessons on word-building, based on a general phonetic scheme, or on the meanings of the words, or on both principles combined. This teaching should be regularly supplemented by transcription from script and print. Dictation is a useful test, but not in itself, it should be remembered, a method of teaching