



EDUCATION AT PARIS

Source: *New England Journal of Education*, Vol. 10, No. 18 (Nov. 20, 1879), p. 289

Published by: Sage Publications, Inc.

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44771248>

Accessed: 06-07-2023 06:41 +00:00

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These are only a few of the many exercises that may be arranged from a reading-book. They are perhaps, mostly adapted to the upper grades, but even for the youngest children, this writing should never be omitted. The very beginners can write the name of the lesson or the first sentence, or the things in the picture, or the words with three letters, or some little sentence of their own making; or can fill blanks in short sentences with words that make sense.

All the essentials of English grammar, by which I mean those points of discrimination which require only intelligence and attention on the part of the pupil, and which are partly the effect and partly the cause, of the thorough understanding of what is read,—all these essentials, as distinguished from mere technicalities and grammatical intricacies, fit only for the high school, can be easily, pleasantly, and advantageously learned from the Readers. Subject and predicate, and the analysis of simple sentences, if presented rationally, is very interesting and perfectly intelligible to children from ten to twelve, and can be constantly illustrated from the Reader, and exemplified in their own daily compositions, in so thorough a way that they can never forget it, because it has become perfectly their own, and has not been merely learned for a grammar lesson, recited, and left behind.

And as with grammar, so with rhetoric, from the earliest years, where figures of speech and beauties of diction can be pointed out to even young children,—on by gradual stages, till in the later years of the grammar school, all the more important rhetorical rules and figures can be studied from the reading-lessons, and reproduced in the written exercises.

It is needless to point out the familiarity that can be gained with interesting periods of history, with important points in geography, with questions of natural history, with literary biography, and with the lives and works of the best authors, by a thorough study of every reading lesson. Research into cyclopædias and other books of reference, should be required to such a degree as is suited to the capacity of each class, and "supplementary" reading should often be supplied, that would give the context of the extract given in the Reader.

I end as I began: let our Readers be studied more, rather than less; not for the sake of being able to produce a perfect mechanical reading of any piece on exhibition-days, with every inflection just so, and every word glibly pronounced, but for the sake of teaching our pupils how to study thoroughly this precious language of ours, in order that they may better enjoy, more intelligently appreciate the works of the best authors, outside the Readers, both now and through all their future years.

GYMNASTIC EXERCISES FOR SCHOOLS.

NUMBER IV.

LESSON X.

1. With closed fists, bent elbows, body and arms stiff, neck well back, head up, trot easily and noiselessly and in strict time, on the toes, once round the room.

LESSON XI.

1. Raise left foot far out in front, stoop slowly down wholly on other foot.

2. Rise slowly, then do the same with right foot.

This is a very difficult exercise, and should be tried only once at first.

LESSON XII.

1. Gradually draw the head and shoulders backward as far as possible, keeping the rest of the body steadily vertical.

2. Return slowly to position.

LESSON XIII.

1. Holding the body and head firmly erect, and arms akimbo, throw the elbows and shoulders forcibly back.

2. Let them return to place.

Repeat twenty times.

THE UNFINISHED PRAYER.

BY MRS. E. H. MORSE.

'Now I lay me,' say it darling:
'Lay me,' lisped the tiny lips
Of my daughter, kneeling, bending
O'er her folded finger-tips.

'Down to sleep,' 'to sleep,' she murmured,
And the curly head dropped low.
'I pray the Lord,' I gently added,
'You can say it all, I know.'

'Pray the Lord,'—the words came faintly,
Fainter still, 'my soul to keep';
On my knee her head sank gently,
And the child was fast asleep.

But the dewy eyes half opened
When I clasped her to my breast,
And the dear voice softly whispered,
'Mamma, God knows all the rest.'

O, the trusting, sweet confiding
Of the child-heart! Would that I
Thus might trust my Heavenly Father,
He who hears my feeblest cry!

EDUCATION AT PARIS.

[Dr. John E. Bradley, principal of the Albany High School, was one of the American Commissioners to the Paris Exposition, and was designated to report on the Educational Exhibits. The following article from his pen on Paris Education will be of interest.—ED.]

PRIMARY EDUCATION.

Infant schools of various names and grades abound in the large cities of Europe. Indeed, not to mention the hospitals and asylums, multitudes of children come more or less under the guardianship and instruction of teachers and nurses in the *crèches* long before they are old enough to go to school. *Crèche* is the name given to the public nursery, where poor working-women can leave their infants in the morning when they go to their work and take them home at night. One might at first regret that these children should thus be deprived of a mother's tenderness all day, but it is probable that they receive quite as judicious care and attention as the children of the wealthier classes who are left so largely to the tender mercies of servants and nurses at home. At all events, such institutions seem to be, if not a necessity, a most benevolent provision for both mother and child. Attention is given to all things that bear upon the health and comfort as well as the physical, mental, and moral development of the child. The nurses are chosen with the utmost care, and physicians regularly visit each *crèche* and inspect all its sanitary arrangements, as well as prescribe for the sick.

After the *crèche* come the kindergarten and the *Salle d'Asyle*, the former being generally designed for those who are able to pay tuition, the latter for those who are too poor to pay; the former more distinctively German, the latter largely French. The *Salle d'Asyle* receive their pupils at a very early age, and make very little attempt to grade or classify them. The number of pupils is generally small, and as little restraint as possible is imposed upon their freedom. The children are received in a large entrance-hall, where they leave their outside garments. The school-rooms themselves contain very little furniture, except the long, low benches for the children and the chair for the teacher. There is usually a case in which the objects used in teaching are kept, a small blackboard, a stand for pictures or figures, and a few cradles for the younger ones when they grow weary. A considerable portion of the room is kept free from incumbrance, to afford an open space in which the children perform their evolutions and exercises. A yard or playground, carefully adapted and arranged for the purpose, is considered essential to the *Salle d'Asyle*. The teaching is, of course, far from systematic. The little ones are taught a variety of calisthenic exercises, some of which border on the military drill, and various games and exercises. Object-lessons and stories on a great variety of subjects,—often including theology and demonology,—are given at brief intervals. Learning to read, count, draw, and sing seem to be largely postponed, though some attention is given to these subjects. The underlying theory appears to be to awaken the child's curiosity, and supply it with something which

will gratify it and lead it to further acquisitions of knowledge. In the oral lessons, the pupils are constantly questioned upon what they have been told, and encouraged to express their ideas in language of their own. While open to some grave objections, it must be confessed that the *Salles d'Asyle* are in the main well managed, and adapted to meet the requirements of a very large class in every country where they exist. About 25,000 children are in the *Salles d'Asyle* of Paris.

The companion institution, the kindergarten, is already widely and favorably known in this country; indeed, some of the best kindergartens in the world are to be found in St. Louis and other American cities. In the United States educational exhibit were some fine specimens of children's weaving and drawing, and other scholars' work from such schools in various parts of the country. Besides these articles, schools of this class in France, Hungary, and Belgium exhibited specimens of children's needlework, and many fine models in clay and plaster purporting to have been made by pupils.

In some respects, the instruction in the kindergarten is quite similar to that in the *Salle d'Asyle*. Objects are substituted for books, the child is trained to observe the properties of familiar objects, and his imitative and constructive instincts are guided and developed in the production of articles of almost endless variety. Large quantities of these articles were to be found in most of the educational exhibits, but it must be confessed that many of them were rude, and but few gave evidence of much progress. It is safe to say that multitudes of mothers and little ones all over the world are, fortunately, engaged in the construction of just such figures and toys, sometimes with, oftener without, a knowledge of the fact that it is the best way to train the senses and budding faculties of the child. The products of these home schools are often little inferior to those exhibited at Paris; but their artistic excellence is a minor consideration. The little girl who is taught in the nursery or at the fireside the mysteries of paper dolls, birds, animals, and houses; the little boy who learns in the fields or woods to make a whistle, a jack-o'-lantern, or a trap; the little one who learns to build houses of blocks, tents of cards, or, in short, to extemporize new playthings out of the materials at hand, is being trained in the kindergarten method, and his pleasure and improvement bear constant witness to the excellence of that method. Not only are the hand and eye trained, but the perceptive faculties are admirably developed, and the imagination stimulated to a vigorous activity.

As an indication of the pleasure and advantage derived by the child from such employment of his time, the advocates of the kindergarten confidently point to the superior intelligence and gentler dispositions of the children trained in these schools. And in this connection it is well worth our while to note the necessity of toys to the child. How warped and one-sided has been the manhood and womanhood developed by those whose parents and teachers overlooked or denied the importance of play and playthings for little children! In such persons the imagination lies almost dormant, and every event or experience is clothed in the most somber hues. Their lives constitute a most prosaic round, which steadily grows more dull and monotonous from beginning to end. Children who have no toys grasp the realities of life slowly and imperfectly, and never idealize. The art instinct is developed very young, if at all. Those nations which have produced many celebrated artists have provided their children with an abundance of toys. The French toys illustrate the peculiar characteristics of the nation. The same is true of the Italian, Swiss, and English toys. And it is a significant fact that those nations which have produced the greatest variety of playthings have been able to compete most successfully in the markets of the world in the sale of the finest fabrics and productions of artistic skill. If it would not lead us into too lengthy a digression, it would also be interesting to note the effect of an abundance of suitable toys upon the child's emotional nature. Deprive him of playthings, and he becomes uncivil and morose, morbidly introspective, and often suspicious and repulsive.