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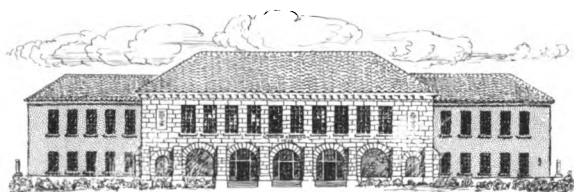
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Language lessons

Wilbur Fisk Gordy, William Edward Mead



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LANGUAGE LESSONS

LANGUAGE LESSONS

A FIRST BOOK IN ENGLISH

BY

WILBUR FISK GORDY

PRINCIPAL OF THE NORTH SCHOOL
HARTFORD, CONN.

AND

WILLIAM EDWARD MEAD

PROFESSOR OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

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PREFACE

OF late years complaints have been general that our schools are failing to teach pupils how to write and speak good English. If such complaints are just—and there is reason to fear that in some measure they are—a remedy must if possible be found. The obstacles in the way of success are in many cases almost insuperable, owing to the lack of proper home influences. But in so far as the schools are responsible they must revise their methods of instruction with a view to greater efficiency.

Where the difficulties are admittedly so great, the authors of the books in this series do not pretend to have discovered a complete remedy, but they venture to hope that the course they have marked out may at least aid in the more successful teaching of English in elementary schools. To this end they have provided in the first book an abundance of fresh material designed to stimulate the interest and the originality of the pupil. This material has been selected with constant reference to the every-day life and thought of boys and girls, in the belief that if they have something in mind that they really care to tell, they will talk or write naturally.

To yield the best results, material for exercises in

language work should not only furnish thought for expression in words, sentences, and paragraphs, but should also quicken the feelings and kindle the imagination. Hence, as a basis for simple story-telling, the use of pictures, mainly such as suggest movement and action, is emphasized; and in the work based upon stories and poems a special effort is made to develop the pupil's picture-building power. To reach the feelings and imagination alike, such classic stories and poems as enrich life because of their beauty and truth have been carefully selected. A taste for good literature cannot be formed too early, and without it the best results are rarely attained.

In what has just been said emphasis has been laid principally upon the inner content of language—the vital quality of thought and feeling embodied in words. But there is a mechanical side of expression which has to do with the forms of words, sentences, and paragraphs, with spelling, punctuation, and the correct use of capitals. These formal elements of language are not learned incidentally. On the contrary, they require much skilful teaching and patient drill. But this drill may be given in connection with matter whose ethical or thought content makes it worthy of study. And such has been the guiding principle in the shaping of the lessons here outlined.

But it is dangerously easy to present difficulties on the formal side of language too rapidly for the pupil to master them. Technical English grammar is analytic, not synthetic; critical, not constructive. It helps

us to get at the meaning of another's thought, not to express our own. In a word, it does not enable us to speak or write naturally or fluently, though it may aid in detecting or correcting faulty expressions. This being true, the schools may well postpone detailed consideration of the parts of speech and the logical relations of the elements of the sentence until the pupil has developed some power of analysis. A few simple lessons in technical grammar appear in Part II of this volume, along with a considerable body of concrete illustrative matter. Yet in Part II, as in Part I, the aim has been not merely to offer an abundance of material for language work, but to suggest how language lessons may be made an essential part of the teaching of every branch of study in the curriculum. Well-directed drill in language, whatever the subject, will result not only in developing better habits of expression, but in giving a larger stock of definite ideas and a greater power of clear, orderly thinking.

The authors have approached their task after much consideration of the difficulties involved in it and are not unaware of their shortcomings. But they trust that their intimate acquaintance with the workings of schools of elementary grade and with the problems there pressing for solution may be regarded as at least a partial qualification for the work they have attempted.

They have not introduced technical grammar in Part I of Book I because they have thought it desirable to put all the lessons in formal grammar together and to defer technical details until the pupil is pre-

pared for them. But in those schools where technical grammar is taken up early the lessons of Part II may easily be selected when work in grammar is called for by the requirements of the course of study.

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SUGGESTIONS TO THE TEACHER

IN the opinion of the authors of this series of books on elementary English, the successful teaching of language in elementary schools depends upon four things: the presentation to the pupil of suggestive ideas, the awakening of his interest, the encouragement of intelligent imitation, and an adequate amount of practice. Boys and girls acquire most of the language they use by imitating what they hear others say, whether at home, on the play-ground, or at school. It should be borne in mind, too, that when in the school-room their standard of good English is the language of the teacher; and he should therefore strive to make his language a model, not of stiff and formal expression, but of easy, cultivated speech.

Most of us find no serious difficulty in communicating in ordinary conversation the thoughts we wish to convey. Our language may not be elegant, but the thought we *desire* to express finds ready utterance. It is a commonplace of rhetoric that the two conditions of effective utterance, whether by tongue or by pen, are knowledge and interest. Unfortunately, much of the language work in the average school is based on matters of which the pupils have but misty notions and to which they are utterly indifferent. It is not uncommon for a boy to be required in a language class to talk on some subject about which he knows next to nothing and cares less. He naturally stumbles and flounders about, or else glibly says

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something that has no meaning. Such a pupil fails to talk intelligently—just as we all do under similar circumstances—because he has nothing to say.

Of course it is all well enough to test pupils in ordinary recitations to find out whether they remember what has been assigned them to learn, or what they have been told in the class-room. But let us not call such testing of the memory a language lesson. Coherent language presupposes ideas, and clearness of statement necessarily involves clearness of ideas. The practice, unfortunately too common, of requiring pupils to tell or write what they have not had time to master is responsible, we believe, for the failure of much of the language teaching of to-day. Teachers—often goaded by the feeling that they must hurry forward at a galloping speed—try to compass the impossible by requiring exercises in language from young people who as yet have not grasped the ideas which they vainly endeavor to express. To counteract this tendency, the suggestion is repeatedly made in this first book that the pupils get a thorough acquaintance with the thought they wish to express before trying to talk or write. *It is frequently worth while to give several oral lessons on a subject before requiring a written language lesson upon it.*

But while knowledge and interest may result in expression of some sort, the language of the pupil is liable at first to be more or less crude. A natural, fluent use of language must be acquired, if at all, after long and patient practice. And just here a hint may be given to the inexperienced teacher. Every pupil should be afforded ample opportunity to talk in the recitation period. A few bright boys and girls should not have an undue share of time, nor should the teacher do too much talking himself. He may well make an estimate now and then of the average number of minutes that

each pupil actually talks in the class-room during an entire school-day.

Practice in expression has two sides, one of which, the formal, has to do with the external structure of language, and the other with its inner life and meaning. We urge that the teacher keep these two things clearly in mind. Pupils cannot talk without using words and sentences: they cannot write accurately without a knowledge of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, to say nothing of sentences and sentence-grouping, or paragraphing; and such knowledge they cannot get without an abundance of formal training. These things we have emphasized in a variety of ways throughout this book. Believing that the best spellers are generally those who learn to observe words carefully, we have suggested, here and there, some work in spelling that experience has shown to be invaluable. Of course this sort of training can be given with any book the pupils use, and may well be made to supplement the spelling-book.

Much of the best teaching of spelling and of sentence-form may be done by giving drill in dictation lessons, and to this matter we have therefore accorded special consideration. For a variety of reasons we believe that much dictation should be given in the grades for which this first book is intended. It has been our aim to make the dictation exercises interesting, or at all events valuable for the facts they contain. It is a waste of time to dictate sentences that are essentially meaningless.

Dictation lessons can often be studied to best advantage by means of the blackboard.¹ The work can be greatly facilitated

¹ Another exercise that will be found invaluable may be conducted by letting the class criticise the pupils' work which has been transferred to the blackboard. This form of correction, if skilfully managed, will prove very helpful and stimulating.

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by using the following simple device: Upon a wire or string attached to a portion of the blackboard suspend a curtain so that it may be moved easily, to and fro. Let it conceal the dictation exercise until the lesson has been given. Then draw the curtain aside and lead the pupils to detect their mistakes by referring to the correct copy on the board. For all such exercises a general correction will often prove more helpful than the correction of individual papers, over which some teachers waste many hours. We believe that as soon as possible pupils should be taught how to correct their own and one another's papers, and thus save the teacher some of the drudgery inseparable from such work.

The work in dictation will help to lay the foundation for a definite knowledge of sentence-structure. No school-work requires more patience and skill than sentence-study. We have at various points in the book suggested that the pupil talk slowly and think about what he is to say. But great care should be taken not to make the pupil unduly self-conscious by too many critical suggestions while he is talking. There are times—especially in the case of very sensitive or nervous pupils—when it is a great mistake to interrupt the flow of ideas by questions and criticisms.

From the sentences the next step forward in the orderly development of the pupil's power of expression is the production of the sentence-group, or paragraph. We have given suggestions for some typical work in teaching the form and meaning of the paragraph, but much more than this should be done by the teacher if definite results are to be secured.

In teaching the paragraph, the "Stories from Brief Hints" will be found to be of great service. It will be noticed that in these stories, as here outlined, the paragraph divisions are often

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indicated by figures. In order to teach the *meaning* of the paragraph in such a way that the pupils may arrange and express their thoughts in correct paragraph form, the steps to be taken are the following : 1. The pupils are to learn to make out topics from simple narratives ; 2. They are to write simple narratives from topics made out for them, as in the "Stories from Brief Hints" ; 3. As a final step they are to make out a plan for their own work and from this write their own paragraphs.

It must be emphasized, however, that this third and final stage will not be reached until the pupils are in the sixth or seventh year of school-life. By that time, if the work has been adapted to their capacity, and enough of it has been done, they will easily make out their own plans and follow them in paragraphs of a fair degree of correctness. In thus acquiring the power to make an orderly arrangement of their thoughts and to clothe them in clear language they will receive some of the best intellectual training of their school-life. But while teachers are giving careful attention to written language they should not, as is so often the case, neglect the oral. We earnestly recommend that all reasonable effort be made, from the first week of the pupil's school-life, to develop the habit of talking with ease. We believe that much time should be devoted in the primary grades to telling orally the best classic stories in legend, myth, biography, and history. We venture to repeat that in such work great care should be taken to give the pupil an opportunity to be heard without frequent corrections of inaccurate expressions. Let the one thing to be kept in mind be ease and fluency of expression. The teacher may well take note of certain inaccurate forms of speech, and give special exercises, such as are repeatedly suggested in the "Notes" of this book, to correct such mistakes. But if we try to em-

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phasize a number of things in one exercise, we emphasize nothing.¹

It is hardly necessary to say that the reading-lesson will furnish one of the most valuable opportunities for effective language teaching. Too much stress cannot be laid upon the importance of kindling an interest in the subject-matter, and reading it until the pupil has made it a part of his thought and feeling. Then, as already suggested, he may be encouraged to talk freely and without self-consciousness; and the material thus developed may be utilized for written work.

In all the work in language every possible opportunity should be seized to train the sensuous or picture-building imagination. Whenever suitable material for visualizing is at hand, and it will be found on almost every page of Part I of this book, the question should be asked, "What mental picture do you get from this paragraph or from this stanza or line of poetry"? Such exercises, too, as are outlined under the captions, "A Story Begun," "A Story Suggested," "A Story from Brief Hints," will, if wisely used, prove invaluable for strengthening and developing the pupil's ability to form clearly defined mental pictures. Particularly stimulating for this purpose also will be found the illustrations. Most of these, notably the serial

¹ Some years ago a brilliant teacher secured unusual results in fluent and natural expression by allowing her pupils to write stories suggested by pictures of their own selection. After writing fifteen or twenty minutes each pupil read his story to the class. One day a teacher from a neighboring school was present, and, observing the excellence of the work, decided to try the plan with her own pupils. She failed completely, and the reason was this: While her pupils were writing she passed from one to another, calling attention to errors in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, and thus made the pupils so self-conscious that it was impossible for them to write in a natural way. She forgot that fluency should have been her only aim, and she defeated, by her very zeal for thoroughness, the only end that the exercise was intended to serve.

pictures, suggest action, and thus especially appeal to young people.

Some of the best work in training the sensuous imagination may be based upon the poems. To this end we call particular attention to the reading-lesson on "Poetry" and to the "Note" on teaching poetry, for we believe that in elementary language teaching the study of the best poetry affords a peculiarly favorable opportunity for quickening the imagination and arousing latent powers of expression. If language is rightly taught, the pupil will grow in his ability to appreciate the best things that have been thought and written as well as in his power to tell what he himself thinks and feels.

But after all, if the books of this series fulfil their mission, they will do their most helpful work, not in actually furnishing materials for language lessons, but in pointing out the rich abundance of such materials on every hand. For instance, how easy it is to read a few introductory sentences from some classic story and then to direct the pupils to finish it in their own way. This is "A Story Begun." How easy to make out "Brief Hints" on the same story and have pupils tell or write what is suggested. A fifth-grade class, reading *Robinson Crusoe*, finds in it plenty of attractive material for both oral and written exercises. We have recently seen such a class present an excellent written exercise from "Brief Hints" suggested by their reading and conversation lessons about the first meeting between Robinson Crusoe and his man Friday.

In thus glancing at the salient features of these books we have by no means exhausted the number of possible suggestions as to the teaching of particular lessons. But we wish to leave the teacher for the most part untrammelled, and to lay emphasis chiefly on the spirit in which the subject should be approached.

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LANGUAGE LESSONS

PART I

INTRODUCTION

We do not always use words when we wish to tell another person something. A nod of the head, a wave of the hand, a picture, will sometimes convey as much meaning as many words. But in most cases we cannot be content with such ways of expressing our meaning, and we feel obliged to say something in words.

Most of what we say is spoken for the purpose of making other people hear and understand what we mean. But often people are too far away for us to make them hear, and we are compelled to write to them what we wish to say. Writing is, then, merely another way of talking. It is really a strange thing that by making marks of various forms, we can tell other people what we mean as well as if we spoke to them. Yet this is what we do when we write.

Now, what you are going to try to do is to learn how to speak and write properly. At first you may not succeed very well, for you are more likely to think

about your pen or pencil than about what you wish to write. But after a good deal of practice you half-forget that you are not really talking, and then your writing becomes natural. But you must always be sure that you know what you want to say, for if you begin to tell something and do not know how you mean to end, or if you change your mind and begin to tell something else, you will only confuse those to whom you are writing.

Almost anyone can succeed after a time in expressing on paper one's plain meaning. Such every-day language is the sort most commonly written, as in ordinary letters, in newspapers, and in books that give information. But in some writing there is an attempt to do more than use words to convey mere information or to ask for it. The writer wishes to entertain the reader or to stir his feelings. In such a case the words may be simple, but they will be chosen with such care that the form of the sentences as well as the thought that they contain will be beautiful. You may not be able to produce such writing yourself, but you will see in some of the poems and other selections in this book how perfect is the language that the writer has used, and you will thus have a high standard by which to judge your own work.



LESSON I

FOR CONVERSATION

Tell what you see in the picture. What have the little boy and the little girl been doing? What is the dog doing? What do you think the children will do after they finish their snow-man?

LESSON II

FOR CONVERSATION

The two children went with their sleds to the top of a hill near by. There they found four boys, each of whom had a sled. The hill was long and very smooth. Soon the six sleds darted like arrows down the slope and across the white frozen field to the brook. Each boy would shout for a clear track before he started, so as to hit nothing as he went down. They kept up the sport as long as they could see, and then scattered to their homes.

Suppose we look for a moment at the way in which the words in this little story are put together. If in telling about the children we simply say, "The two children," you will ask at once, "What about them?" For you feel that something more is to come. We say, "The two children went," and the words tell something that you still feel does not tell the whole, but is made more complete by the words, "with their sleds to the top of a hill." The two most important words are "children went." We can go on adding to these words until we can say: "The two young children, a boy and a girl, went with their new sleds, brightly painted red and blue, to the top of a long, high, slippery hill, which sloped down to a noisy brook." But still the two important words in the sentence are "children went."

How many groups of words are there in the story? What thought does the first group suggest to you? The second? The third? The fourth? The fifth?

A group of words so put together as to express a complete thought is a sentence. In other terms :—

A complete thought expressed in words is a sentence.

Sometimes two words express the full meaning :—as, Dogs bark.

LESSON III

A STORY FROM A PICTURE

The first picture in the book tells a story about some lively boys. Look carefully at the picture until you know what every part means.

Where are these boys, in the city or the country? What is the season of the year?

What are the boys doing? Where do you think they have been, and where are they going? Why have they so many flags? Is the boy drumming merely to make a noise? Tell the whole story as you think it must have occurred.

In telling a story you should always try to make clear to yourself where the scene is laid, who are the persons that do something, what they do, and why they do it.

LESSON IV

FOR CONVERSATION

Let the teacher do certain things requiring movements, and let the pupils tell what is done.

NOTE.—This exercise may be greatly varied and will prove interesting and profitable to the pupils.

LESSON V

FOR CONVERSATION

Have you a dog at home? If so, tell what kind of dog he is; also his size, color, and disposition. What tricks can he do, and what sort of games can you play with him? Do you like your dog, and if so, why?

NOTE.—If a pupil has a cat, a bird, or other household pet, suitable questions may be asked of the same general nature. The aim is to appeal to the every-day interests of the pupils.

LESSON VI

HINTS ON READING POETRY

Poetry may at first seem difficult to you, since it is somewhat removed from your ordinary forms of expression, but close study will usually make it clear.

Before you begin to read poetry, you may well take a moment to ask what a poem is. The answer is not very easy. In common speech we call anything in verse a poem, even though it be as simple as,—

“Hickory, Dickory, Dock,
The mouse ran up the clock.
The clock struck one,
The mouse ran down,
Hickory, Dickory, Dock.”

This is in verse, and it rhymes tolerably.

But though we may carelessly call these lines a poem, there is no poetry in them. In fact, they merely tell us that a mouse ran up into a clock, and then ran out

again when the clock struck. The three nonsense words are useful only in helping out the rhymes.

Poetry, then, is something more than a mere senseless rhyming jingle. We may describe it as a sort of writing intended to quicken our interest or stir our feelings, and having the form of verse.¹ We see a great number of things every day,—trees, birds, old buildings,—without stopping to think what they might mean to us. The poet sees them too, but he feels as well as sees, and he tries to put some of his feelings into words. It does not matter what the object is if it stirs the poet's feelings. It may be a single flower with pure white cup that meets the poet's eye; it may be a white-sailed boat dancing on the blue waves; it may be a child sleeping in a cradle. The *facts* can be stated by anybody. The poet tries to use the facts to make us *feel* as he does.

We can make this clear by an example. We may say of a gentian blossoming beside the road that the flower is covered with dew, that it is of a sky-blue color, and that it opens in the early morning after a night of sharp frost. The poet may say the same thing, but he may imagine that the flower can hear him when he addresses it:

“Thou blossom bright with autumn dew,
And colored with the heaven's own blue,
That openest when the quiet light
Succeeds the keen and frosty night.”

¹ This definition does not include satirical and didactic poetry, but it describes fairly well all the poems we have selected for your study.

We may also say in plain terms that the gentian does not bloom in the spring or summer, but just before winter, and this may state the simple *fact*. But the poet is not satisfied with the bare fact. When he thinks of the spring he thinks of violets and columbines, and he presents in pictures the fact that we have just expressed in plain prose:

“Thou comest not when violets lean
O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen,
Or columbines, in purple dressed,
Nod o'er the ground-bird's hidden nest.
Thou waitest late, and com'st alone,
When woods are bare and birds are flown.”¹

One principal difference between the poet and the ordinary man is that the poet thinks in pictures, and uses them to help express his feelings. If, therefore, we are to understand a poem we must read it so slowly as to see the pictures that the words paint for us. When reading for mere information we may sometimes hurry over whole pages with a glance. But we can seldom read poetry to advantage in that way. Sometimes the whole picture is contained in a single line or in a word or two, and we must pause long enough to make the image clear. In a good poem every word is important.

NOTE.—*This lesson is for reading only.*

¹ For the whole poem, see page 108.

LESSON VII

FOR READING AND MEMORIZING

WHO HAS SEEN THE WIND?

Who has seen the wind?

Neither I nor you:

But when the leaves hang trembling,
The wind is passing thro'!

Who has seen the wind?

Neither you nor I:

But when the trees bow down their heads,
The wind is passing by.

CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI.

In this little poem the thought is so simple that it is expressed in the simplest words, such as we all use every day. The wind blows lightly, and the leaves tremble: it blows strongly, and the trees bend before it. The beauty of the poem lies in its very simplicity.

What picture is suggested in the first stanza? Why should the leaves tremble?

What is the picture in the second stanza? Why should the trees "bow their heads"? Are the trees thought of as being alive? What could you put in place of "hang trembling," "passing thro'," "bow down their heads," "passing by"?

NOTE.—It is suggested that before a poem is studied in detail it should be read through so as to determine in general what it means and what the poet is aiming to do. The poem may then be taken up line by line, and the exact meaning of each portion made clear. If the lines

contain a picture, this should be vividly realized. In short, the pupil should as far as possible be brought to share the feeling of the poet, and to view with the poet's eyes the object he sees.

In the early stages it is probably unwise to attempt much study of metres, but pupils may well commit to memory some of the best lines, and thus become familiar with the movement of the verse. They may point out the lines that seem to them most musical, and that they most enjoy. But they should not be asked to give reasons for their preference.

LESSON VIII

FOR CONVERSATION AND REPRODUCTION

The Milkmaid

A country maid was carrying upon her head a pail of milk. She was also thinking of what she would do when she had sold it. "I shall buy a hundred eggs, and from them I can easily raise ninety chickens. When they are grown I can sell them for enough to buy me a new gown. It shall be of blue, for that suits me best. All the young men will flock about me, and I may choose whom I wish." At this thought she danced with delight, upset her pail, and lost her milk and her fortune.

Tell your teacher, in complete sentences, what the milkmaid was doing; what she was thinking of; what she said about the eggs and chickens she expected to get; and what she expected to buy after selling her chickens. What did she say about her gown and the young men? Then what happened?

Now read the story once more to yourself, and tell it without being asked any questions.

NOTE.—If pupils are habitually using "seen" where "saw" should

be used, they should have special oral drill to correct the error. They will not stop making such a mistake after one or two or even after many corrections. We must teach them to form the habit of using the proper word or expression. This we can do only by giving them much practice. Let the pupils make many oral statements with "saw" in them. Then let them repeat such statements when written upon the board. Lastly, let them copy some of these statements.

LESSON IX

FOR CONVERSATION AND REPRODUCTION

*How Daniel Boone Outwitted the Indians*

Daniel Boone was a fearless hunter. He liked to live in the depths of the forests, where he was often in danger from unfriendly Indians. Once while in a shed looking after some tobacco, four of these dusky warriors with loaded guns came

suddenly to the door. They told him that this time he could not get away from them as he had done once before. But Boone slyly took a dry tobacco leaf, rubbed it to dust, and threw it into the faces of the Indians. Then while they were coughing, sneezing, and wiping their eyes, he slipped by them out of the door and made good his escape.

Read this incident first aloud to your teacher, then silently, and lastly aloud once more. Now tell in complete sentences who Daniel Boone was ; where he liked to live ; how four Indians came upon him suddenly one day ; what they told him ; what he did then ; and how he made his escape.

Next tell the whole story without being questioned.

NOTE.—*Let the pupils select two lists of words from this story, one of words of two syllables and the other of words of three syllables. This exercise will lead to the habit of closely observing the forms of words, and will therefore help pupils in their spelling.*

LESSON X

FOR DICTATION

STATEMENTS

1. Frank and his sister Ethel went skating on the river.
2. The day was clear and cold.
3. Ethel wore a frock of bright red and a gray fur coat and hat.
4. Frank had a red jacket under his thick brown coat.
5. Their friends, also, were skating on the river.

6. They were a merry company as they went skimming over the smooth ice.

With what kind of letter does each of these sentences begin?
With what mark of punctuation does each sentence end?

Write five sentences about your school-room; five about your home; and five about what you read in your last reading-lesson.

A sentence that tells something is called a statement.

Every sentence that makes a statement should be followed by a period.

LESSON XI

FOR CONVERSATION

Abraham Lincoln and the Birds

Abraham Lincoln was a tender-hearted man. Riding along a road one day with some friends, he saw upon the ground two young birds that had been blown from their nest. He alighted from his horse, lifted the birds carefully in his hands, and placed them again in the nest in the tree.

Ask questions about the following topics:—What kind of man Abraham Lincoln was; what he saw when riding along the road one day; and what he did.

Write the questions you have just asked.

LESSON XII

FOR READING AND CONVERSATION



THE FOUNTAIN

Into the sunshine,
Full of the light,
Leaping and flashing
From morn till night!

Into the moonlight,
Whiter than snow,
Waving so flower-like
When the winds blow!

Into the starlight
Rushing in spray,
Happy at midnight,
Happy by day!

Ever in motion,
Blithesome and cheery,
Still climbing heavenward,
Never weary;—

Glad of all weathers:
Still seeming best,
Upward or downward,
Motion thy rest;—

Full of a nature
Nothing can tame,
Changed every moment,
Ever the same;—

Ceaseless aspiring,
Ceaseless content,
Darkness or sunshine
Thy element;—

Glorious Fountain!
Let my heart be
Fresh, changeful, constant,
Upward, like thee!

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

In *The Fountain* the poet has tried to express in words the beauty of water as it flashes in the sunlight, the moonlight, the starlight, and seems to have a life and joy of its own. He, too, would be like the fountain.

What is “leaping and flashing”? What makes the fountain white? What is “whiter than snow”? What is waving? Why like a flower? What is spray? Where have you seen or felt it? Why is the fountain happy? Do you think it is because it is playing? What word could you use instead of *blithesome*? instead of *awearry*? How can motion seem to be rest? How does a spinning-top sleep? Why can nothing tame the fountain? How can it be

“Changed every moment,
Ever the same”?

The fountain is constantly leaping into the air, and yet contentedly dropping back again; and it plays as well by night as by day.

Can you understand how the poet wishes to have his own nature like the fountain,—fresh, changeful, and yet ever constant and ever looking upward?

LESSON XIII

FOR CONVERSATION

The Dog and His Shadow

As a dog with a large piece of meat in his mouth was crossing a bridge over a brook he saw what he thought was another dog with meat in his mouth. “I’ll have that too,” said he, dropping his own piece as he spoke. But his meat sank out of sight, and he saw nothing but his own angry shadow in the water. Then he knew he had been too greedy for his own good.

After reading this story silently and then aloud, tell what the dog saw when he was crossing the bridge; what he said; and what happened next.

Now tell the whole story without being questioned.

NOTE.—We sometimes hear young people use, at the beginning of sentences, the expression “They are” instead of the correct form “There are.” Let your pupils use the correct form in at least ten oral sentences. In these sentences the pupils should

pronounce "there are" slowly and distinctly. Much concert work is in order here. The aim should be to impress the correct form as deeply as possible.

LESSON XIV

FOR CONVERSATION

King Alfred and the Cakes

When the fierce Northmen, or Danes, as they were called, invaded England more than a thousand years ago, they laid waste the country on every side. Alfred the Great, who was then king, was often compelled to flee for his life, and to live in the woods with his nobles and soldiers.

One day, as the story goes, he was in the hut of a humble cowherd, and was mending his bow and arrows before the open fire. Full of his own thoughts, he gave no heed to the cakes, which had been made for the supper, and which were beginning to burn. But the cowherd's wife, who supposed him to be a poor peasant, snatched the cakes from the fire and said angrily: "Can't you mind the cakes, man? Don't you see them burn? I'll warrant you'll eat them fast enough when they're done."

The king gave no sign of annoyance, but he said to himself: "If I can't even keep cakes from burning, how can anyone suppose I am fit to rule a kingdom?"

After reading the story twice, ask questions about the following topics:—

What the Danes did when they invaded England;

what Alfred the Great was compelled to do, and where he was compelled to live; what he was doing one day in the cowherd's hut; what happened to the cakes; what the cowherd's wife did; and what she said.

Tell the whole story without question or suggestion from your teacher.

Copy the first paragraph. Be careful about your spelling and punctuation.

NOTE.—After the pupils have made a study of the first paragraph, dictate it to them. We need not at this stage stop to explain what a paragraph is or how it should be indented.

LESSON XV

A STORY FROM BRIEF HINTS



THE CAT AND THE ROBIN

1. The bright morning—dew on the grass.
2. The robin-redbreast—his song—the feast of worms in the grass.
3. The sly cat—the slow creeping toward the robin—the cat's sudden spring—the robin's narrow escape.

From these brief hints tell the story suggested.

LESSON XVI

FOR CONVERSATION AND REPRODUCTION

How a Bird Changes His Clothes

It takes a bird weeks to put on a new suit of clothes. He has nothing but his feathers to protect him from cold and wet, and as feathers cannot grow out in a minute, he would be left without covering if he lost them all at once. For that reason he changes his dress one or two feathers at a time.

If you could watch him, you would see some day a feather drop from each wing. If you could look later, you would see that new feathers had started out in the same place, and pushed the old ones off. When the new ones are well grown another pair falls out.

If all dropped out at once, he would suffer with cold and be unable to fly. He could not get his living, and anybody could catch him. But losing as he does only one from each side at a time, he always has enough to fly with.

The soft little feathers that cover his body drop out one by one. Thus while he is putting on a new suit he still wears part of the old one. In this way he is never left without clothes for a moment.

Adapted from OLIVE THORNE MILLER.

What are a bird's clothes? How fast does he put them on, and how long does it take him? What happens to the old feathers? If all the feathers dropped out at once how would the bird be injured? What is meant by saying that while a bird is putting on a new suit he is still wearing part of the old one? Tell

three ways in which the bird's feathers are of use to him.

Make a neat copy of all the words of two syllables in the first two paragraphs.

LESSON XVII

FOR STUDY

WRITTEN IN MARCH

The cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The ploughboy is whooping—anon—anon:
There's joy in the mountains;
There's life in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing;
The rain is over and gone!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

This poem does little more than mention some of the things that are seen and heard in early spring. The poet is delighted with the new life that is stirring every-



where, and he points out what most strikes his attention.

How many of the things that the poet sees and hears have you noted in March? Does the poem help you recall some day you spent playing in a field or beside

a brook in the early spring? What kinds of birds did you hear? What else did you see or hear? In how many ways does the poet tell you what he sees in March? What does he hear? What sort of weather has there been? What has taken its place?

The poet does not mention the grass. How do you know it is growing? How does a field sleep? What work are "the oldest and youngest" probably doing? What more do you learn about the snow by being told that it "fares ill on the top of the bare *hill*" than you would if you were told that it had melted in the valley? What does *anon* mean here? Does it mean every now and then? Why is there "joy in the mountains"? In what sort of weather is there "life in the fountains"?

LESSON XVIII

A STORY FROM BRIEF HINTS

PLAYING MARBLES IN THE SPRING

A warm day in March—a dry sheltered spot—the ring—the marbles—the boys about the place.

Tell the story.

LESSON XIX

FOR CONVERSATION AND REPRODUCTION

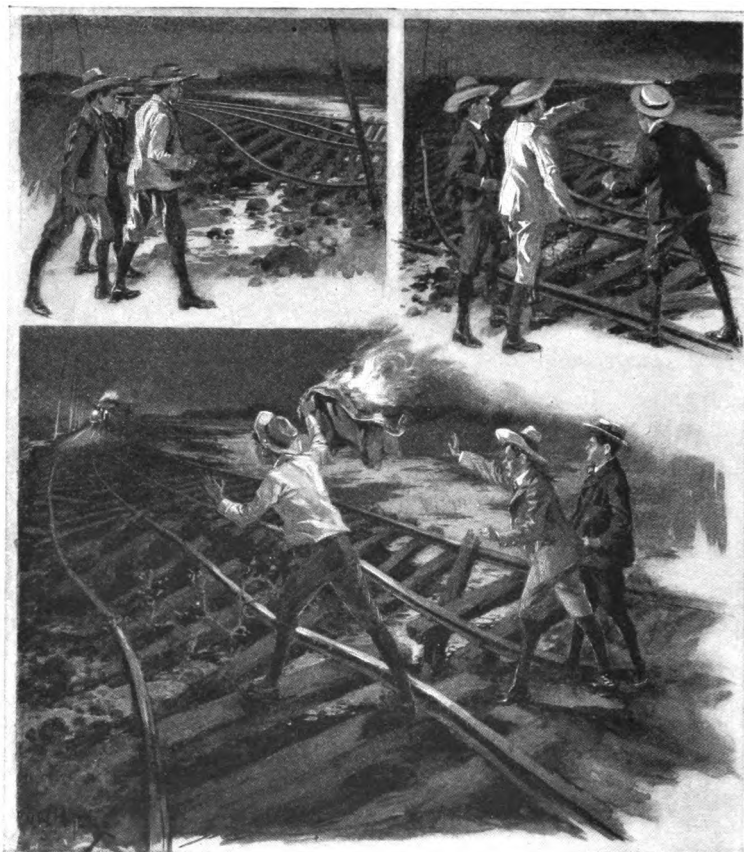
Bruce and the Spider

Six hundred years ago the Scotch were at war with the English, and their great hero was Robert Bruce. One day,

after he had been defeated, he was compelled to hide in a deserted hut to save his life. He might well have been discouraged, for his men were scattered, and the English were everywhere. As he was considering what he should do next, he saw a spider which was trying to spin a web across a hole in the broken roof. Six times it almost succeeded in drawing a slender thread from one side to the other, but each time it was blown back by the wind. In spite of all obstacles the busy spider continued to work until it fastened the thread, and then it finished its web as it pleased. Bruce had watched every movement, wondering more and more at the spider's patience. "I will not be outdone by a spider," said he. "I have lost six battles, but before long I will spin a web about those English, and make Scotland free." From that moment he took new courage, and he succeeded so well in his fighting that the English were glad to leave the Scotch to themselves.

After reading the story silently and then orally, put the book aside and write five questions on the story. Then tell the story to your teacher.

NOTE.—If your pupils are using "ain't" for "isn't" or "aren't," give special oral drill to correct the mistake. Let them hear and use the correct form until the desired habit is established. Put a number of sentences before the pupils for them to copy. Then use the same sentences for dictation. Continue the concert oral drill.



LESSON XX

A STORY FROM PICTURES

BOYS SAVING A TRAIN

What has happened to the rails? What is the boy pointing at? In the lower picture what is the boy waving in his hand? Why? Now tell the whole story from the beginning.

LESSON XXI

FOR DICTATION

QUESTIONS

1. Were you in the meadow yesterday?
2. Did you see the cows at pasture?
3. Was there a bobolink singing?
4. Could you find his nest under the daisies and clover?
5. Did you look at the five eggs in the nest?
6. Were there green grasshoppers jumping about?
7. Were black ants running to and fro?
8. Did you see white butterflies flitting from flower to flower?
9. Was that a snake that glided by?
10. Is the bobolink afraid of snakes?

A sentence that asks something is called a question.

Every sentence that asks a question should be followed by a question mark.

Before writing these sentences note carefully the spelling of the following words:—

Meadow, yesterday, bobolink, daisies, grasshoppers, butterflies, flitting, and afraid.

With what kind of letter does each sentence begin?
How does each sentence end?

LESSON XXII

Write a complete statement for each question in the preceding lesson.

LESSON XXIII

FOR CONVERSATION



THE OWL

I

When cats run home and light is come,
And dew is cold upon the ground,
And the far-off stream is dumb,
And the whirring sail goes round,
And the whirring sail goes round;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

II

When merry milkmaids click the latch,
And rarely smells the new-mown hay,
And the cock hath sung beneath the thatch
Twice or thrice his roundelay,
Twice or thrice his roundelay;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON.

In this poem we are told little more than that in cold weather and warm weather the white owl sits in the bell-tower. But to this simple statement of fact the poet adds a series of pictures which you must try to find.

When do "cats run home"? Why? Does the dew ever become warm? What happens if it does? What makes the stream dumb? Is it because the stream is frozen? What "whirring sail" is meant? Could it be the sail of a windmill? What season is pictured in the first stanza? Warm or cold? What "five wits" (senses) has the owl? Why should he warm them? Why does he sit in the belfry? Does he ever fly about? When? By day or by night?

Why should milkmaids "click the latch"? Is it merely to make more noise, or is it likely that in opening and closing the door the latch would click? In what season is the hay new-mown? What is a roundelay? What sort of roundelay does the cock sing? At what time of day? Does this tell us why the owl is still warming his five wits?

In what lines of the poem do you find no picture? What line do you like best?

LESSON XXIV

FOR CONVERSATION AND REPRODUCTION

Nig and the Chipmunk

One day in early spring a chipmunk that lived near me met with a terrible adventure, the memory of which will probably be handed down through many generations of its family. I was sitting in the summer-house with Nig the cat upon my knee, when the chipmunk came out of its den a few feet away, and ran quickly to a pile of chestnut posts about twenty yards from where I sat. Nig saw it, and was off my lap upon the floor in an instant. I spoke sharply to the cat, when she sat down and folded her paws under her, and regarded the squirrel, as I thought, with only a dreamy kind of interest. I fancied she thought it a hopeless case there amid that pile of posts. "That is not your game, Nig," I said, "so spare yourself any anxiety." Just then I was called to the house, where I was detained about five minutes. As I returned I met Nig coming to the house with the chipmunk in her mouth. She had the air of one who had won a wager. She carried the chipmunk by the throat, and its body hung



limp from her mouth. I quickly took the squirrel from her, and reproved her sharply. It lay in my hand as if dead, though I saw no marks of the cat's teeth upon it. Presently it gasped for breath, then again and again. I saw that the cat had simply choked it. Quickly the film passed off its eyes, its heart began visibly to beat, and slowly the breathing became regular. I carried it back, and laid it down in the door of its den. In a moment it crawled or kicked itself in. In the afternoon I placed a handful of corn there, to express my sympathy, and as far as possible make amends for Nig's cruel treatment.

Not till four or five days had passed did my little neighbor emerge again from its den, and then only for a moment. That terrible black monster with the large green-yellow eyes,—it might be still lurking near. How the black monster had captured the alert and restless squirrel so quickly, under the circumstances, was a great mystery to me. Was not its eye as sharp as the cat's, and its movements as quick? Yet cats do have the secret of catching squirrels, and birds, and mice, but I have never yet had the luck to see it done.

It was not very long before the chipmunk was going to and from her den as usual, though the dread of the black monster seemed ever before her, and gave speed and extra alertness to all her movements. In early summer four young chipmunks emerged from the den, and ran freely about. There was nothing to disturb them, for, alas! Nig herself was now dead.—JOHN BURROUGHS.

Have you ever seen a chipmunk? How large was it? What do chipmunks eat? Tell anything you know about their habits. Can you tell any incident about

chipmunks? In what sort of den do you suppose this one lived? Tell in your own words what the chipmunk and the cat did first. Can you form a mental picture of the scene? Describe your picture. How would choking make the chipmunk limp? Why was corn put beside the mouth of the den? How long before the chipmunk ventured out of her den again, and how long did she remain outside? How did the chipmunk behave a little later? What did the four little chipmunks do?

What is meant by "my little neighbor" and "that terrible black monster"? Why are they not called by their real names? Did the writer dislike "the black monster"? If not, why did he use the word *monster*?

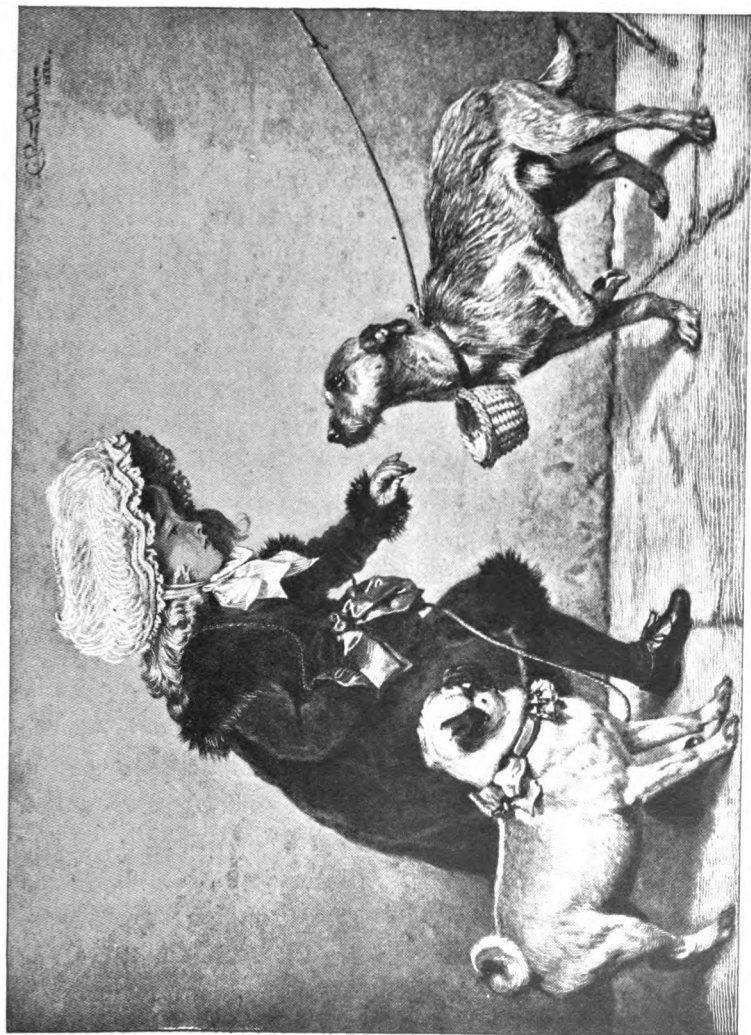
Now read the story carefully once more and tell it without being questioned.

LESSON XXV

A STORY FROM A PICTURE

MUTE APPEAL

Why has one of the dogs a basket on his collar? Where does he seem to be? Why is he tied? Is he trying to get away? Is the season summer or winter? Who is the little girl, and what is she doing? Tell the whole story.



Mute Appeal

LESSON XXVI

FOR DICTATION AND MEMORIZING

PROVERBS

1. Lost time is never found again.
2. Half the truth is often a great lie.
3. The discontented man finds no easy-chair.
4. Haste makes waste.
5. A rolling stone gathers no moss.
6. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.
7. Strike while the iron is hot.

Write a story illustrating one of these proverbs.

LESSON XXVII

FOR CONVERSATION AND REPRODUCTION

*William Tell and the Apple*¹

One of the most famous stories in the world is that of William Tell and the apple. Many hundred years ago the Austrians were in power in the little country of Switzerland, and ruled as harshly as they pleased. One day, as we are told, the Austrian governor, whose name was Gessler, set up his cap on a pole in the market-place of a village, and required everyone who passed to salute it. On a rich throne Gessler sat and watched the men as they went by, bowing low to the cap as it glittered in the sunlight with gold and gems.

¹ In telling this and other famous tales we, of course, do not pretend to vouch for their historic truth.