

day that he could not explain the line, "And all the air a solemn stillness holds" without a knowledge of the objective case.

H.M.: Why, what difficulty is there in it?

M.M.: That's what I would like to know. It does not seem to matter whether the "Air holds the stillness," or the "Stillness holds the air." I think a 12-year-old would understand it at once if he knew it was in a graveyard.

H.M.: I find children like grammar, and find no difficulty in it. It is good mental training.

M.M.: We don't give children subjects merely because they like them; and as far as mental training is concerned, wouldn't it be better to train them to express their own ideas better, and to increase the number of those ideas? I think the time spent on Formal Grammar in the Primary School could be put to better use.

H.M.: Yes, it is better to train children to make things than to pull them to pieces; but that doesn't get away from the fact that the Bursary demands Formal Grammar.

M.M.: No, unfortunately; the examination system demands a lot of useless matter, merely because examiners have whims in certain directions, and aim at setting questions in a form the pupils have not met before—"trippy" questions I call them.

H.M.: Well, I think the Formal Grammar of the Primary School might be much simplified, at any rate, so that all that would be required would be the parts of speech, and a knowledge of grammatical expressions.

What time is it? By jove! We'll omit drill to-day.

## THE JONES METHOD OF TEACHING READING.

Mr. G. E. Jones' demonstration to the Infants' Mistresses in his method of teaching, attracted a large audience, who thoroughly enjoyed his most interesting and instructive address, and accorded him as hearty a vote of thanks at the close, as a lot of kiddies out for a picnic would give.

Briefly, the inventor of this fascinating method outlined the necessity of reducing the difficulties of learning to read. He dealt with the phonetic deficiencies of the ordinary alphabet, and the difficulties of overcoming these under older methods. The limitations of the phonetic method, and the lack of association between the letter and sound under the Alphabetic. The Look and Say also has its defects, owing to so many words being alike in form, but different in sound.

The Jones' System overcomes all these by the phonetic signs used: every word is made phonetic. The child discovers the sounds for himself. Thus self activity is developed, and a much improved articulation results at once.

The Chart: Divided into seven progressions. These were demonstrated, and the teachers present joined in the action.

Hand Play: This creates and sustains the interest from start to finish. All the sound signs are made on the hands. The child learns from the hand, and even in the Kindergarten the whole can be learnt with ease and pleasure. Numbers of word sounds are mastered before entering the sub-primary school.

Sign Writing: Numbers of words can be written with signs only. These become very interesting to the little tot. The signs themselves can be made with plasticine, string, thin wire, etc., and made to "talk." Here there is excellent fun for free period.

Script and Type: The two are taught simultaneously. Examples of how type can be drawn from the hand forms, and then converted into script, were given. The evolution of script forms, from the capitals downwards, proved interesting. The whole scheme is so simple and interesting that the tiniest tots learn with ease and pleasure. By its application in the right spirit learning to read becomes much easier, and takes a burden off both teacher and child, which is an immeasurable blessing.

The writer advises teachers to procure from Messrs. Philip and Co. a copy of the Chart, 1st Primer and Teachers' Hand Book, with which all will be pleased, and much valuable help and gain will result.

## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

(The Science Teachers' Association by Professor Vonwiller, Nov., 1920.)

I have taken for the subject of my address the topic at present largely occupying the minds of examiners, teachers, and pupils, i.e., examinations.

It has been remarked that Australia is the most examination-ridden country outside of China. As yet we do not find a man advertising himself as "failed, matriculation examination," but one feels that there is a tendency in that direction. One is inclined to think the national vice of Australians is not gambling, but examinations, though perhaps the latter is a special case of the former.

Twenty or thirty years ago there were few examinations. With the change of educational policy, making it possible for almost all who can benefit by higher education to have the opportunity of obtaining it, the number of secondary schools has grown and the number of children attending them has increased enormously.

The present examination system is a development of the great extension and advancement of education.

In spite of the fact that children appear always to be preparing for some examination, and higher educational ideals are possibly sacrificed to the idea of passing examinations, yet in some directions the increased use of examinations appears as just a good thing. In the old days appointments to positions both small and great depended often on influence—a good old English system. Pressure of public opinion caused the change to the examination system.

Let us consider some advantages of outside examinations:—

1. They secure the removal of suggestions of disadvantage through personal dislike.
2. A spur is often needful to the student to work reasonably well.
3. The teacher is stimulated to see that pupils make certain progress within a given time.
4. The examinations act as a guide to teachers in their work. Some of the less original teachers do very good work with guidance, instructions and advice as to subject matter and presentation.

Some of the disadvantages of the examination system are:—