

**Educational Department.****An Impertinent Criticism.**

The daily *Oregonian* of January 20th says some sensible things about our western Colleges under the above heading. We reproduce them here with much pleasure:

"Oregon colleges" have been much sneered at by thoughtless people, and in an eastern educational journal we find a letter from this city which descends to downright impertinent criticism. It is asserted that if "all the so-called colleges and universities in the State were to unite their resources and faculties, they would not form a college worthy of the name." This is not true. No one pretends that any of the Oregon colleges can compare in general excellence with the old and rich institutions of the East. It would be unreasonable to expect them to; but they are all respectable in their way, and at any of them a boy or girl may acquire a good knowledge of the sciences and of classical studies—in short, may become a thorough scholar. There are scores of Oregon graduates whose scholarship will compare favorably with that of graduates of the Eastern schools. The State University at Eugene City is already equal to many of the Eastern universities. The Willamette University at Salem, the State Agricultural College at Corvallis, the Pacific University at Forest Grove, Christian College at Monmouth, the Ashland College in Southern Oregon, the Blue Mountain University at La Grande, and Philomath College, and several other schools of lesser note are all good institutions and capable of giving thorough training to any ambitious student.

**Heterodoxy:**

Where there are schools there must be text books, and where there are text books there must be publishers. But because there are publishers, is it necessary that we use every kind of text book in series? It seems to me that these series of books on the same subject, are one of the most insidious evils of our schools. Readers must be graded and carefully, too; but it does not follow that everything must be graded. There is sense in giving the child at first maps with only the general outlines of the continent and the principal rivers and mountains, and not confusing his eye with the innumerable details which ought to be left till

later in the course, and most of which ought never to be given at all. But the equator remains persistently the equator and cannot be simplified. It is no easier to learn its definition from a small quarto, with a picture on the outside, than a large octavo. If the idea can be grasped, it can be grasped once for all, and it should not be given till that time has come. These series of geographies, and of arithmetics as well, have their most striking success in dulling and stupefying the minds of the children who are so unfortunate as to have them. It is, however, especially of arithmetic that I want to speak. I venture to express the thought that too much time is spent on examples of very simple numbers when the same practice might be secured by longer numbers, and something practical learned at the same time.

For instance, when children are adding, why may they not just as well perform examples consisting of three or four numbers of five or six figures each, as to add simply orally? and I should not stop at sums which do not exceed nine. If you do not make any difficulty about the setting down the three and saving the seven (the answer being seventy-three), the child will find none. One will accept this as naturally as he accepts the house he lives in. But if you stop him to state that ten units makes one ten and that seventy-three units equal seven tens and three units, and that he must set down his three units and save his seven tens for the column of tens—then he loses his way and gets tired because he does not understand. Few people realize how short sentences must be, in order that the child's mind may hold them. The general trouble when a child does not understand, is that like old Father Taylor, of Boston, he "has lost track of his nominative case." The child of seven has not reached the stage of relative pronouns or conjunctive adverbs. Let him work simply. Take it for granted that he can do a simple thing in a simple way and he will do it. Confuse and aggravate his mind with long explanations, and he becomes worried and disgusted.

Let him have real examples in addition on his slate. Teach him to set his examples down properly and neatly, to rule his lines straight, to put his figures in straight rows. All this is work that ought to be done at first. But it cannot be done if you keep him on real work.

Never mind about the "tens and units column" rigmarole. *Let him add.* He will have quite enough to do to remember the number he

is to save for the next column without thinking whether it is tens or units, and it is of no consequence. The main thing is to give him plenty of varied practice to make him accurate.

But why keep him so wearily on addition? Push on! An example in subtraction has no difficulty if the lower figures are smaller than the upper ones. Then when the upper number is the smaller, and the child says he "can't do it," and turns to you to see what can be done—again do not bother him with explanations. He can take one from the next figure and that makes 13 or 15, as the case may be.

Now subtract; and he goes on. Then he must be careful to remember when he comes to the next figure that he took one away and that it is not "what it seems." And after helping him two or three times he will need only practice and care. Multiplication is easy, too. Here he has to be careful as to the number he is to save for the next column, but he need not do this in addition, and don't stop here. Go right on. Short division will offer no great difficulty. It needs only care.—ANNA C. BRACKETT, in *Journal of Education*.

**The Study of Words.**

The study of words may be tedious to the school-boy, as breaking stones is to the wayside laborer; but to the thoughtful eye of the geologist these studies are full of interest;—he sees miracles on the high road, and reads chronicles in every ditch. Language, too, has marvels of her own, which she unveils to the inquiring glance of the patient student. There are chronicles below the surface, there are sermons in every word. Language has been called sacred ground, because it is the deposit of thought. We cannot tell as yet what language is. It may be a production of nature, a work of human or a divine gift. But to whatever sphere it belongs, it would seem to stand unsurpassed—nay, unequalled in it—by any thing else. If it be a production of nature, it is her last and crowning production, which she reserved for man alone. If it be a work of human art, it would seem to lift the human artist almost to the level of the divine Creator. If it be the gift of God,

it is God's greatest gift; for through it God spake to man, and man speaks to God in worship, prayer, and meditation.—*Mac Mulier.*

**Memoriam.**

WHEREAS, By the decree of our Heavenly Father that man must die, And

WHEREAS, Our esteemed Bro. G. J. Baskett has been called to the realities of the unseen. Therefore be it

Resolved, That Oakpoint Grange has lost a zealous member, the community a good citizen, the wife a devoted husband, and the children a loving father.

Resolved, That the members of the Grange extend their heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family, beseeching them to be reconciled to the will of Him who doeth all things well, and let us all say in our hearts to God, "Thy will be done."

Resolved, That the Grange hall be draped in mourning for thirty days and a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family with the seal of the Grange, a copy placed on the record of the Grange, also a copy sent to the county papers with request to publish.

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