

THESIS.

Subject, Pictures as a factor in the
Education of Children.

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Next to the objects themselves, pictures are the most valuable in exciting ideas and thoughts; in creating a love for the beautiful, in forming a means for language study; in creating an interest for a subject; and they are valuable for numerous other reasons. In fact, the value of pictures in regard to education, can hardly be over-estimated.

Pictures may be used in the same manner as objects are used when a description is wanted and they may be used as a basis for imaginary stories. This may prove a good foundation for language work, as it furnishes opportunity for the children to write what they see, and it would be original work. If the children were to write

on some other subject apart from the picture, the composition would hardly be of such an original nature. In the case of the younger children it may require some questioning before they are able to write the stories, but the older pupils may be able to write the story out in full without any preliminary questions.

No one doubts that pictures excite ideas and thoughts. A story is told of a home in which there was such a striking picture of a ship that it influenced all the boys of the home to go to sea. So a striking picture in a school-room may prove to be just as influential.

Perhaps the one use of which we would all think is that love with which pictures inspire us for the

artistic and beautiful. The child has an inborn love for the beautiful and his nature so responds to his surroundings that his life will be a result of these surroundings.

The Japanese think it very queer for Americans to use portraits of their heroes and statesmen on postage stamps licking them on one side and pounding them on the other. The Americans are not cultivated to high artistic ideas as are the Japanese. That we should be cultivated in this line is beyond question, and the place to begin is with the child in the school. By placing beautiful pictures before them they can get correct ideas as to form and color and they will soon become so well-trained that the

faults of a picture will be readily detected by them.

A fully cultivated man or woman must have a high aesthetic appreciation, for if they lacked this we would be justified in saying that their natures were defective and deficient. If the growing child be surrounded by the beautiful in art, he cannot help but imbibe into himself its beauty, and the character of the life it shows him. Therefore we should be very careful what kind of pictures we are giving the children for study. Let them have the noblest subjects so that the child may feel strengthened and uplifted by them.

If the common school-books contained no pictures, they would certainly not be very attractive to

the child. The pictures are placed there to interest him. For example, if the lesson were about a battle and the child were to read only the description of it, he would have no good mental picture of the battle and the description would not long remain with him. If the picture of the battle were studied along with the description, what a picture the child would form in his mind, a picture that would remain long after the description had been forgotten.

He all as does the child, recall act events by forming mental pictures. If that is such a marked activity of the mind, then picture study might be made a form of study for children instead of the

descriptions.

The art of photography has proved a great aid to the school-room instruction, since it is now within the reach of the pupils to see all those beautiful pieces of ancient sculpture and painting. The children can learn from the pictures much ancient history, the difference between ancient and modern architecture, the character of ancient people compared to the people around them, and many other important facts. Mr. Harris says that photographs of the greatest works should be selected rather than the inferior ones. He thinks that about twice a month explanation should be given to the children, as to the notices the artist shows in his

pictures.

Comenius, one of the greatest of educators, was the first to advocate picture study. He, by his "Orbis Pictus" has shown us in what line he thinks children may be educated to good advantage! Surely, when such a man found pictures beneficial and when we know that such good results, come from their study, then we know that they are a great factor in the education of children.

Bibliography

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