

will excite admiration; in fine, who can quicken the heart and lead men to think of something high and noble. Such being the case, it stands the teacher in hand to cultivate a taste for oratory in the American youth.

There is nothing except music, perhaps, that gives more tone to a school than rhetorical exercises. There is something solemn and earnest about it. It gives variety to school exercises, and seems to bind the teacher and pupil in closer friendship. The little speeches committed while in childhood strengthen the memory and store the mind with useful knowledge. Well do I remember my first speech in school. "Thousands of men breathe, move, live and pass off the stage of life and are never heard of any more. Why? Because they did not a particle of good in the world."

The question is, How conduct rhetorical exercises? How make them interesting and instructive? The reason that the pupil becomes discouraged and does not take an interest in this work, is because the teacher has violated the law of gradual development. In this exercise, as in all others, he must proceed from the known to the unknown. In this truth lies the secret. There is perhaps no greater scope for improvement than is found in these exercises. The teacher often assigns work far in advance of the pupils' education. He will announce that on a named day a certain little girl must have an essay, when the child has had no training in essay writing, or assign a speech to a little boy, which he cannot comprehend. This should not be: it discourages the child. Upon entering a school, I would say nothing about this feature of the school work until everything else was fixed, and I had ascertained the advancement of each pupil. I would begin by having the general exercises consist of language lessons. Lessons upon the art of essay writing. Have the pupils write letters of various kinds; beginning with the business letter. I find there are very

few who know how to begin and close a letter properly. Give them drill in vocal culture and gesture, this can be carried to any length. After conducting these exercises every day for two or three weeks you are then ready to commence rhetorical on Friday afternoons. Once in three weeks is often enough for beginners. The more advanced pupils can come on every two weeks. A word in regard to essay writing. Let the essays be upon subjects with which the student is perfectly familiar. Let the best production in the language class be read on rhetorical day. As thoughts suggest themselves in classes in history, geography, reading, physiology, or any other branch, assign them to different members of the class to investigate and write upon. Again, select some subject to talk about and analyze; after the school has analyzed the subject, give it to some one to fill out. By so doing, essay writing becomes easy and natural. I can think of nothing that will develop the power of thought more than writing essays. The great object of every school should be to teach the students how to think. All declamations and select readings should be of a proper character; should be adapted to the ability of the child. I have given but a general outline of this work and what I have said applies more to the common school. The common school is the starting point and should be well guarded for the destiny of every individual depends largely upon his education in youth.

"SAMSON."

NORMAL LOCALS.

- Sociable to night.
- "I want my mitten."
- The Board met on the 5th inst.
- "The river is up and the channel is deep."
- If you want a square meal, call at the dormitory. If you want a good dish of oysters call at Letton's.