

**AMERICAN PRIMARY TEACHER. A
MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE
INTERESTS OF PRIMARY INSTRUCTION IN
AMERICA. VOL. I. OCTOBER, 1877 -
JULY, 1878, NOS. 1-10**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649047635

American Primary Teacher. A Monthly Magazine Devoted to the Interests of Primary Instruction in America. Vol. I. October, 1877 - July, 1878, Nos. 1-10 by Various

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A Monthly Magazine,

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STANFORD LIBRARY

BOSTON, MASS.:
T. W. BICKNELL, PUBLISHER,
No. 16 HAWLEY STREET.

57

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THE
PRIMARY TEACHER.

VOL. I.

OCTOBER, 1877.

NO. 1.

EDITORIAL.

To the Primary Teachers of America :

We present you the first number of our new monthly magazine, **THE PRIMARY TEACHER**. Its name clearly indicates its field and its work. It is to be devoted exclusively to the advancement of the interests of rudimental instruction in America, commonly classified under the grades of the Kindergarten, and Primary and Intermediate schools. All the discussions of this magazine will relate to the studies to be pursued, methods to be adopted, and objects to be attained in each and all of these departments of common-school instruction. Our aim will be to present the true philosophy of primary education, and the best methods as well as the true spirit of child-discipline and government.

Several reasons have lead us to the publication of **THE PRIMARY TEACHER**. The first is, that it will occupy a field hitherto, to a large extent, uncultivated. Other magazines have given articles or departments to the presentation of views on primary instruction : none have been published with the sole purpose of aiding the teachers of this country in laying the foundations of a true, a solid, and a symmetrical training.

Another reason lies in the fact that the majority of the teachers of America, and, in fact, of the whole world, are in the class we now address. Our constituency is numbered not by tens of thousands, but by hundreds of thousands, and to such a host we present our offering of aid and service. To each and all of this vast company to which our readers have the honor to belong, we come with greetings and words of counsel and instruction.

A third reason which exists is the conscious need of the primary teachers of our country, and the consequent demand for a professional literature especially adapted to their peculiar position and grade of instruction. The call is almost universal, at least so far as an intelligence can interpret its own wants, for specific aid for our primary school work,

and the complaint has been as universal that our educational magazines have shot "over the heads" of the great mass of the teachers of the country. In *THE PRIMARY TEACHER* we propose to remedy this difficulty, and to aim at the heads, the hearts, and the lives of this great body of educators. In doing this it is our purpose to secure the best talent in our country,—that best adapted by experience and study to teach teachers. So far as possible we wish to use the experience and observation of those who are serving in the ranks of primary instructors, and who consequently know whercof they shall affirm by a practical acquaintance with the topics on which they speak.

Still another very good reason for the existence and wide circulation of *THE PRIMARY TEACHER*, is found in the fact that the teachers whom we shall address are doing the first work in education next to that of the parents; they are laying the foundations, more or less surely, on which the higher schools must place the superstruction. If the former work is well done, the latter must be successful; it can hardly fail of a fair share of success. The intelligent primary teacher is second to none in the rank or the inspirations of his work, and as so much of weal to every child rests on his fidelity as well as ability, there is need of "line upon line, precept upon precept," in this all-important work. And the responsibility is enhanced by the fact that the great majority of children under public instruction in the United States never pass out of primary grades of instruction, but graduate from the school before reaching grammar grades.

With these and other weighty considerations in mind,—all of which have impressed us with the great dignity and honor of this rank of public benefactors, and also with something of a sense of the magnificent possibilities and grand inflowings of power and outflowings of influence, as well as technical instruction, which primary teachers may possess, we have decided to publish this new work. It goes forth dedicated to the great interests of Christian education in its full compass of body, head, and heart. Our aim will be to show intelligent methods of action, coupled with the noblest purposes. We hope to give stimulus and courage to the most patient, self-devoted, and self-sacrificing toilers. Our aid, comfort, and sympathy, fellow-teachers, shall be yours in all that we can give or procure for your advancement and encouragement. And in the name of the Great Teacher, who has sanctified our work by his own personal benediction upon it, in laying His arms about little children in blessing, we send forth our *PRIMARY TEACHER* to be a guide, an instructor, and an inspiration to the great army of teachers in whose arms are the little children of to-day, the men and women of to-morrow, the life for eternity!

PRACTICAL LESSONS IN THE KINDERGARTEN.

BY MRS. KRAUS-BOELTE.

I.

THE BALL, AS INTRODUCED IN THE KINDERGARTEN.

The Kindergarten has just been opened with a simple, child-like prayer and a morning song. Now the little ones are all seated in a circle with their teacher, their expectant eyes turned towards the latter and the long wooden box she holds in her hands. The box is opened, and the children clap their hands when seeing their dear play-fellows, the balls. Six balls are contained in the box, each ball having one of the colors of the rainbow,—blue, green, yellow, orange, red, and violet (purple).

Frœbel used the ball as the first of his means of occupation, because he based all his means of play on mathematical foundations, and because the ball is the simplest and completest ground-form, in which all other forms are contained. He also observed that the ball is the first plaything the mother gives to her little one; wherever we find a child, we find a ball: as, indeed, it is a favorite plaything alike with young and old.

One ball is first taken out,—it may be the red one this time. A child quickly learns to observe and compare. The ball gives the elements for form, color, and motion, and the child finds the best opportunity in this simple body for the observation and comparison of size, form, color, and motion. The child is led to observe that the ball is small, light, soft, and simple; also, that in the six balls appear the three primary colors,—*blue*, *yellow*, and *red*; and their intermediates, the three secondary colors,—*green*, formed by the combination of blue and yellow; *orange*, formed by the combination of yellow and red; *purple*, formed by the combination of red and blue. By a knowledge of these combinations, the harmony of colors can be explained. At first the ball may be compared with other balls or forms of the same shape,—for example: the globes on the gas-fixtures, an apple round button, the head, seed, buds, etc.

Once, a child in our kindergarten named "a plate" and "a ring," when a little five-year old boy burst out: "No, no; one is flat, and the other is only outside round, but the ball is round every way," and he accompanied his words with motions of his hands, as if he wanted to mould a ball. Next, the color calls forth the child's attention. Each

in turn, the children compare the ball with the red cherry or strawberry; the rosy cheeks, red lips, with the stockings or sash of a child, with the paper strips they used in mat-weaving, etc., etc. The ball fascinates the child because of its tendency to constant motion. The ball may be thrown up and caught again, which experiment the round little hands can not accomplish at first. He looks disappointed, but the kindergartner quickly suggests that the ball is like a little bird, who tries hopping in the nest, and soon the children will try themselves to "hop," when a little song may be introduced to heighten the interest,—for example :

"The little bird hops in its nest—
Tip, tip, tip, tip, tip, tap;
It tries to do its very best.—
Tip, tip, tip, tip, tip, tap."

Now a string of the same color is fastened to the ball, and in order to add new ideas, the following game is introduced, the children all standing in a circle :

"Raise the ball,—sink it down;
Raise the heels,—sink them down;
Raise the arms,—sink them down;
Move your right leg up and down;
Move your left leg up and down;
Now stand straight,—now bend down."

Also,—

"Take the ball and swing it round;
Swing your arms now round and round,"

In connection with this latter exercise the song of the windmill is introduced, each child representing a windmill :

"See the windmill, how it goes,
While the wind so briskly blows;
Always turning round and round,
Never idle is it found."

A conversation on the wind, and windmills, would naturally follow.

The ball may be swinging from right to left, from front to back, which movement may be compared to the pendulum, and the child may try to make the same movement with his arms, and sing :

"And whate'er the ball can do,
I can try, and so may you."

By and by the child's eyes, hands, and arms are so much strengthened that, when the ball is thrown upwards, almost without failure it will be caught. When throwing it thus *three* times upwards, it may be accompanied by the following words :

"Once, twice, thrice,—
This is very nice."