

language with propriety" is the old definition of grammar, a definition that obviously includes the arrangement of the parts, not only of the sentence, but also of the paragraph. It is unfortunate that grammar is, by the public, considered to consist in parsing and analysis—mere classification, or, as it is sometimes irreverently called, "gerund-grinding"—dry bones that have no connection with the living tissue of the written page. For this view there is, no doubt, ample justification; but, if our teaching answered to the old definition, the public would, we feel sure, be quick to recognise both its educational and its practical value. It is easy to say, "Let the children read and read, soak them in literature, in the best that has been said, in the noblest thoughts of the noblest men in their noblest moments, and they will imbibe a knowledge of the qualities of good style." In the first place, the teacher cannot soak in literature the minds of boys and girls who leave school at thirteen or fourteen years of age; and, in the second place, most children, like most adults, are (metaphorically) blind. They have to be taught to see as well as to read; and the teacher who does not train them to see what conduces to good form in the sentences and paragraphs he selects for his grammar exercises does not give his pupils the training in the principles of English composition that we ought to expect him to give them. A scheme of grammar-teaching that does not rise above mere classification ought not to be regarded as a satisfactory one; and classification is all our syllabus provides for in the two highest standards. It ought, we think, to provide also for the study of the laws of arrangement both of the parts of the sentence and of the sentences of the paragraph. Grammar in this wider sense, the sense of the old definition, is, apart from its usefulness, an instrument of mental discipline not inferior to physical science. It was, our experience has convinced us, a profound mistake to remove it from the pass-subjects. Undoubtedly it ought to go with composition, and we hope the Department will yet see its way to revert to this grouping.

The treatment of object-lessons and elementary science is not what it might be made if teachers were less dependent on what the books say about this subject and that. With both teachers and taught there is insufficient contact with things, insufficient personal observation and comparison of and reasoning about things and their qualities and relations. The spirit of the teaching is, not "*Do this and observe what follows, examine this and tell what you see,*" but "*If you do this and observe what follows, or if you examine this, you will see so-and-so.*" This is in no sense the spirit of science, which is, "*Do and observe, examine and see.*" The distinction is important; it is the distinction between good teaching and bad in all subjects alike, for science is not, as some seem to think, the only subject that affords a training-ground for observation, comparison, and induction. It is not what we learn, but how we learn, that should be our chief concern. The spirit of science is of more importance than science, and the spirit of science does not belong to science alone. The teaching of arithmetic, of English, and of other subjects, by some contemptuously called "book-subjects," can and should be made as scientific in spirit as the teaching of botany and physics. We are, of course, aware that much of the teaching of "book-subjects" is in spirit not scientific; but we are also aware that the teaching of botany and physics is in spirit not infrequently not scientific. The truth is, all depends on the teacher. Where he is a man of accurate *first-hand* knowledge of the subjects he teaches, and of abundant resource, you will have teaching that is truly scientific; but where he is without these qualifications, no matter what the subjects, the teaching will be devoid of the spirit of science.

The sewing continues to reflect great credit upon the female teachers of our schools. During the past year we have been especially pleased with the large amount of excellent knitting presented for examination by many of the schools.

In the schools the manners of the children are generally good, and the children of many schools are well-mannered outside the schools; but good manners in the road and in the street are not so general as they should be. In many parts of the district we never meet the children without receiving a polite salutation, but in others we receive no response, or only an awkward one, to a polite "Good morning, children."

Some of the school properties are not so well cared for, and some of the schoolrooms and out-offices are not kept so clean, as they should be. We have frequently to call attention to black, greasy floors after dancing.

The following table shows the percentages of attainable marks gained by the several classes of pupil-teachers in the examination for 1895:—

Class.	Subject.									
	English.	Gram-mar.	Dicta-tion.	Geo-graphy.	History.	Arith-metic.	Latin.	French.	Mathe-matics.	Latin.
Fourth ...	45·6	42·2	89·5	57·6	43·6	48·5	63·3	60·5	...	86·6
Third ...	54·5	52·1	78·4	65·7	55·6	39·4	54·5	73·4	76·1	76·8
Second ...	58·3	57·3	66·4	69·9	...	44·4	78·9	73·2	69·4	61·1
First ...	70·8	51·7	63·1	68·9	...	43·3	61·5	65·0	63·7	80·3

These figures disclose weak work in English, grammar, arithmetic, and history, and work ranging from satisfactory to good in the other subjects. Owing to the death of our late lamented colleague we are unable to give the percentages of marks for teaching. We may say, however, than many of the pupil-teachers examined by us did not acquit themselves to our satisfaction. They had obviously had too little training and practice in the work prescribed by the Board.