

qualifying for the pass. Methods of working are not always wisely chosen, many teachers preferring those that are of easy application in simple cases to those that, though more difficult at first, are of much wider range and greater power. Invariably that method should be chosen that goes to the root of things, includes a wider range of work, and gives power.

In the lower classes the elements of number, though pretty thoroughly taught, are generally treated in too abstract a way. Too little use is made of eye and hand; the children are not made to see and make concrete representations of the components of the numbers they deal with. Hand and eye are all-powerful in education, and it is certain that we do not make sufficient use of them. Teachers of junior classes would do well to read Rix's "Pictorial Method of Teaching the First Steps in Arithmetic."

Tables of money and weights and measures are, with most children, pure abstractions. A few days' playing at shop-keeping, actual money passing from pupil to pupil, is the proper preliminary to money sums, and the proper preliminary to exercises in weights and measures is experiment with the actual weights and measures themselves. Here, again, hand and eye are not made to help the head. We proceed as if the child's experience were equal to our own, and wonder why what is so simple to us is a matter of such difficulty to him!

We are glad to note decided improvement in grammar, especially in that of Standard III. In the senior classes, especially in Standards V. and VI., the subject is often very weak, the children showing great ignorance, not only of the elements of sentence-structure, but even of inflexion and the "parts of speech." In these classes there is, in a large proportion of our schools, much room for improvement in the teaching of this very important branch of education, the study of the beautiful mechanism of the mother-tongue. Even in schools in which the technical parts of the subject are well learnt there is often but little known of the practical application of such parts to spoken and written speech. To the majority of pupils of these standards such questions as the following are a complete stone of stumbling: Correct the following and give reasons for your corrections: "In the corner of the room stands the boys' guns." "One of our best men were drowned in crossing the river." "We have done our best, father and me, but our best is not good." "Thou who art wise can advise me." "Let the man name the two gentlemen who he would like to break a spear with." "The author related the story of a lady's life and of the tragedy that ended it, with no little skill."

We give one such question to the senior classes of every school, but seldom receive correct answers. Even when the correction is made there is, in most cases, assigned for it either an incorrect reason or no reason at all. Our inference is that the parsing exercise is mechanical and not directed to what ought to be its chief aim—viz., the acquirement of a sound working knowledge of the rules of syntax. Again, children will analyse correctly a sentence of three or four members, but ignominiously fail to build up a similar sentence of which the members and their relations are given to them. The truth seems to be that, from beginning to end of the study, analysis of sentences is taught rather for its own sake than for the purpose of discovering and learning the laws of phrase and clause arrangement. In the Senior Scholarship examination, for instance, the competitors gained 86 per cent. of the marks assigned for the analysis of a long sentence of nine clauses, but only 41 per cent. of those assigned for the synthesis of a sentence of only four clauses. To get into proper position some of the clauses of this sentence one of them had to be inverted, and a large proportion of the competitors, ignorant of this common device for bringing related parts together, simply wrote down the clauses in the order in which they were placed in the examination paper, an order perfectly consistent with the statement of a question in synthesis, but entirely at variance with the laws of clause arrangement. It cannot be too emphatically insisted on that the teaching of grammar in elementary schools should, from beginning to end, be made to bear on the requirements of composition, and that to this end the sentences selected for study should be selected for purposes not of furnishing *tours de force* in parsing and analysis, but of bringing before the minds of the children examples of good literary form, types of sentence-architecture impressed upon the language by a long line of masters in expression. The thought-content must, of course, be simple, but this condition is not inconsistent with good form. There is, in truth, no lack of suitable material. It abounds in the class-readers, but requires selection and classification by the teacher. Every example should tell something, and the sum total of all the examples studied during the school course should tell all that is necessary for a sound appreciation of the structural elements of the sentence and the paragraph. But the method of treating the material is of even greater importance than the material itself: the examples must be made to tell their own tale. There should be no dogmatizing; what the example teaches, that the pupils must, under wise guidance, find in it. Placing two or three examples of a construction before his class, the teacher should train his pupils to learn by *observation* the principles of arrangement they exemplify, thereafter make them search their reading- or grammar-book for other instances of the same construction, and finally make them use the construction in sentences of their own making. The materials for such sentences should, at first, be given to the children in the form of sentences analysed into their clausal constituents, the relation of the clauses being indicated as in general analysis, and the children being required to solve the problem of placing them in their proper setting. Original sentences of the same type should follow. Analysis of sentences without this supplementary synthesis is of no practical use in training children to understand the mechanism of their mother-tongue and to speak and write it correctly, which should be the chief aim of grammar-teaching. The method we are recommending is both useful and interesting; it is, moreover, in entire accord with the methods of science, for it puts the children in the attitude of discoverers, substitutes the productive for the receptive attitude, and induces a most important habit of mind—viz., the habit of learning by *personal observation*. It is, we are glad to say, adopted wholly or in part by some of our best teachers of grammar, and naturally with good results on the composition exercises of their pupils. The method undoubtedly makes large demands on the teacher's knowledge of sentence-structure, but demands not larger than it is fair to exact from every teacher of