

find little evidence of sound teaching. Technical grammar receives a good deal of attention ; but it is not made to bear on the child's spoken and written speech. It is treated rather as a thing apart from the child's life, as a thing that is concerned with the printed words of a book and not with the spoken and written words of the child. Of parsing and analysis there is, as with us, more than enough ; but of *the power of a word in the right place* there is nothing. In this department of grammar there is no examination, and therefore no teaching. One of the best teachers of technical grammar I met in Australia told me that he was careful to present to his pupils nothing but the best sentence-forms he could lay hands on. I agreed with him as to the selection of good models, and asked him to show me a sample of his work. From a well-filled pocket-book he chose the following :—

His restless, capacious, and inventive mind had formed this scheme at a time when the ablest servants of the company were busied only about invoices and bills of lading.

It would, however, be unjust to criticize with severity a book which, if the author had lived to complete and revise it, would probably have been improved by condensation.

These sentences were analysed and certain of their words parsed in the orthodox way ; and, from the point of view that parsing and analysis are the all-in-all of grammar, the work was excellent. Much was said about the difficulty of recognising the adjective clause beginning with "when," of parsing the word "only," and of analysing a sentence containing two conjunctive words in juxtaposition ("which" and "if" in the second sentence) ; but nothing about the position of the adverb "only," here properly placed before the phrase it qualifies ; nothing about the function and place of "however" ; nothing about the placement of the phrase "with severity" and the clause "if the author had lived to complete and revise it" ; nothing about the punctuation ; in other words, nothing about the very features that make the sentences good in form. The children got out of the exercise nothing that could be of use to them in their own *constructive* work nothing that could help them to a judgment of what is good in literary form. Every year I see in many of our own schools the same treatment of good sentence-forms, the same absence of attention to the points that make the forms good. I am unwilling to believe that these points are unknown to the teachers. It is my experience that the average teacher teaches to the best of his ability what is prescribed for him to teach. The kind of work the absence of which I am pointing out is not prescribed, and is therefore not taught, or taught only in a perfunctory way. Parsing and analysis ought to be held to include thought and form. However much the Philistines may decry it, there is no more productive mental discipline than the study of grammar ; but it must be study of the right kind, and the study that limits itself to parsing and analysis is not of the right kind. It is, indeed, precisely of the kind that evokes and goes far to justify the condemnation of the critics.

Poetry is another department of English in which the larger schools of Otago are in advance of similar schools seen by me in Australia. I do not say that our treatment of this class of literature is adequate ; it is often very inadequate ; but in our large schools it is, I think, better treated than in the large schools I visited in Australia. What is the teacher's work in the teaching of poetry ? It is to make the reading and recitation of it a genuine enjoyment to his pupils, not to turn the poet's garden into a valley of dry bones. He has to construct for his pupils a suitable background for the poem, to put them at the point of view of the poet, to make them realise the poet's pictures and feel his emotion and the rhythm and music of his verse ; in brief, to aim at making the poem live in their imagination as it lived in the imagination of the poet. This is his work, and it is precisely the work of which I found little evidence in the classes I tested and saw tested in Australia. Poetry is *the* culture subject of primary schools, and the pity is that it should be treated so inadequately. We talk (foolishly, as I think) of our primary education being too literary. The truth is it is altogether too unliterary.

Arithmetic is well taught in South Australia, the authorities having made a specialty of the subject, greatly, as I think, to the detriment of English. Indeed, this opinion is shared by some of themselves. In the senior classes of New South Wales and Victoria I saw some very good work in this subject ; but the teaching of the junior and middle classes of the former State seemed to me inferior to that of the corresponding classes of the latter. It would be difficult to better the number-teaching done in some of the infant departments of Victoria and South Australia. I was frequently struck with the unsoundness of the reasons assigned for the steps of reduction sums. It is my judgment that the best schools of Otago are in this subject level with the best schools seen by me in Australia.

In the South Australian and Victorian schools I saw some very good writing and drawing, and heard some excellent singing—singing that was sweeter and more expressive than ours. I find I have no note of what is done in these departments of work in New South Wales. Victoria is, I think, greatly in advance of South Australia and New Zealand in the provision she has made for the teaching of drawing, which she has placed under the direction of a very capable Art Inspector, part of whose duty it is to visit the schools of the State and advise the teachers and Inspectors as to right aims and methods. He insists that, in addition to being a training for hand, arm, and eye, drawing is a mode of expression, and that it must before all else express intelligent conception of the thing drawn. He allows no aids even in the junior classes, and kindergarten squares are to him an abomination.

In history we are, I think, easily first ; but in geography I give the first place to South Australia, where the child begins with his own experiences, and is trained to interpret the unseen in terms of the seen. Nothing could be more dreary and uninspiring than most of the "lessons" I saw in Victoria and New South Wales ; they were almost wholly divorced from the life of the children. I am of those who think highly of geography as a culture subject, but who condemn as worthless much of the work that has so long masqueraded under the name. It is not geography at all ; it is mere paper study of names, and often not good at that ; and the teaching is what it is partly because the work prescribed is badly drawn, but more largely because we do not generally realise how great