

petals or stamens, buds or roots, leaves or pistels; but it is desirable after beginning any topic, not to abandon it until many of the various forms have been thoroughly studied. After a day, two, three or more of study of the specimens pertaining to one topic, comes the study of the book. A young man of eighteen begins and pursues the same course as a child of ten, only he will progress faster and go deeper. As students advance, subjects for descriptive compositions are assigned them. Each pupil studies the living plants for himself and makes his own observations, experiments and notes, the only help afforded him being brief hints as to how to set to work intelligently. For instance, - one studies and writes upon the arrangement and development of the parts of the flower with reference to its self-fertilization or fertilization by birds, insects, wind or other means; another the climbing of virginia-creeper: another the times of opening and closing of flowers: and so on *ad infinitum*. When completed the theses are read in the class-room. Throughout the academic year full three-fourths of the time is given to object lessons, books serving only for reference. But little time is occupied with lectures, short talks of ten or fifteen minutes being occasionally given. In the whole course there is kept constantly in view how best to prepare students to acquire information for themselves with readiness and accuracy, in other words, they are trained more than they are taught.

This, or some modification of it, is the system of teaching botany now most in repute, and wisely so. I agree fully with Prof. Beal that the great object should be to put students in the way of becoming independent and reliable observers and experimenters, and that the method of study pursued should be primarily objective, and based upon the actual examination of appropriate material. To my mind, however, a certain, though slight, amount of knowledge gained by the old system is necessary before much can be accomplished by the new, and I would prefer, if teaching, to first of all give my pupils some idea of what plants are, how they grow, the nature of their structure, and the number of their parts. This to be done in a short series (three or four) of familiar talks, made as simple as possible, with each point illustrated by drawings, models, dried specimens, or, best of all, freshly gathered plants. With-