

ANALYSIS BY DIAGRAMS, a collection of sentences with Diagrams and Explanations, by W. F. L. Sanders, Bloomington, Ind. Published by the Author, 1879.

During the last few years a great deal of attention has been given to what is called the "Analysis" of sentences. Time was when it was deemed sufficient to be able to separate a sentence into its so-called "logical" subject and predicate, but it is now required to account—as an exercise distinct from parsing—for every word and phrase, and to label it with its supposed function. The object is to enable the learner better to understand the meaning of what he reads, or to compel him to find the meaning of certain passages in order to analyse them, or merely to give the scholar a certain amount of mental training. Perhaps a good deal might be said both for the exercise of "Analysis" and against it; but whatever conclusion we come to about it, it would not be difficult, we imagine, to prove that too much time is given to the subject. It is more than doubtful if dissecting a sentence in this way ever does show its meaning, for a scholar, with a slight knowledge of Latin, for instance, might analyze many a Latin sentence, and yet be ignorant of the meaning of the verb; and on the other hand he might know the meaning fully and yet misplace in his columns the "extensions" and "enlargements," and so, in either case, mislead the examiner. Add to this, that no two writers on the subject agree in their methods or results. Does it not seem strange that a passage, the meaning of which no one can miss, should present topics for discussion, when the whole principle of the "analysis" is based upon the meaning? May we not ask whether it be analysis at all? If two anatomists in their dissection of some animal organism, should reach different results, and if a third, in examining those results, should dissent from the views of both the others, we might safely affirm that the analysis of the organism was a failure, and if all anatomists disagreed thus as to matters of fact, and not merely in their theories, we should be justified in saying that, as yet, no analysis had been reached. Parsing is the true analysis of

a language, and to this in all its departments too much time can hardly be given. Parsing, and stating the relation of each word to other words, may, of course, be extended to phrases and even to sentences, since a phrase or a sentence may be as distinctly a "part of speech" as a single word. If then, each word, each phrase, and each sentence in a passage be parsed and its relation shewn, there is really nothing left for "Analysis" to do. What we really object to, is that "analysis" should be separated from parsing, of which it only forms a part, and that, from its name, it should arrogate to itself a higher importance.

If, then, we consider the so-called analysis of sentences as only a department of parsing, we shall see why we might expect authorities to differ, just as physiologists, who are agreed about the anatomy of an animal, often differ materially in attributing functions to certain organs. The growth of a language is the result of so many various forces, and so often seems, to the superficial glance, a matter of hap-hazard, that if we find phrases with more or less meaning than their individual parts seem to warrant, we must be content, if we can approximately explain their nature, and be indulgent and not too presumptuous in our judgment of those differing from us. It might possibly help to correct a tendency to conceit, and prevent an outbreak of the "*odium grammaticum*" if it could be shewn to be as unreasonable to expect to be able to parse or analyse every expression, as it is to require chemistry to possess no difficulties. Another objection to the separate exercise of "analysis" is that it takes up too much time. A long, intricate sentence is given to the pupil to prepare at home, and if he be unlucky enough to have no "big brother" to show him how it is done, he must work it out alone, or copy his school-mate's exercise, which is easier. His father and mother may be unable to help him, for in their school days, no time was given to "analysis."

To perform the task, a sheet of paper must be ruled into a certain number of compartments, each headed appropriately, "subject," "predicate," "extension," and so on, and