

With some the interest of their scholars does not seem to be sufficiently considered. While others, failing to receive the encouragement they expected from Trustees and parents become disheartened and labor on in a desponding, mechanical sort of way. But I am very decidedly of the opinion that, leaving the incompetent out of account, so far as the blame lies on the teachers, the principle cause of want of success is deficiency of tact for managing the school. It is not given to all to secure at once diligence and quietness in a very high degree; yet such results are necessary for attaining the highest degree of success in teaching. Unless school work is proceeding quietly and orderly yet diligently, the attention of the teacher is distracted, the work of the hour is not receiving justice, sentences are read or gone over of some of which he hears perhaps not a word, or only an occasional word, and the scholar takes his seat when the time is up rather more than ever confirmed in faulty habits of execution. Then there is a manifest want of thoroughness. The scholar's blunder is corrected, he is told the correct pronounciation of the word or the proper method of performing his work, but is permitted to pass on to something else, so that he never masters anything thoroughly. I am persuaded that where the new "Reader" is adapted, results as to reading will be still more unsatisfactory than at present, unless the pupils are required to master each lesson before they leave it finally. Their eye must become so familiarized with the words that they can read them readily at sight, otherwise they will only be more hopelessly helpless the farther they advance. For, while the Series is unquestionably good, it is undoubtedly a difficult one; and new difficulties rapidly arise. Pupils must be taught to read at sight and to syllable rather than to spell words of more than one syllable.

I have referred above to the complaint which is almost invariably made by teachers, especially with respect to Arithmetic: "I had to put the scholars back to the fundamental rules." Now I do not believe that any method can be adopted which will altogether do away with the necessity of "putting back." All our life long we are under process of education. And, alas! how often do we require to be put back to learn the old lessons anew. The stage and the subjects are indeed different: but it cannot be expected of children, any more than of adults, that they will assimilate and make their own permanently facts and principles which when presented they seem to apprehend with a reasonably firm grasp. Still there is a good deal in method, and I am strongly inclined to believe that the necessity for putting back so generally, is to a considerable extent attributable to a defective method of teaching, widely prevalent. I have said that in order to make a good reader, the teacher must familiarize the pupil with the appearance of the words and teach him to syllable long words, rather than permit him to spell them or attempt to grasp the whole at once. There must be no hurry in changing the lessons or pages, especially in the earlier stages of reading. Now to make a ready and correct thinker there is the same necessity for familiarizing the mind of the pupil with facts, principles and their application. He only is really learning who comes or is brought by whatever method or methods into intelligent relations to the *what* or the *how*, and is becoming able to embody or illustrate these in practical forms in so far as they admit of it. But how is this to be attained? The method to which I refer largely if not entirely, repudiates the aid of exact Definitions and Rules briefly yet clearly expressed, and prefers and superabounds in explanations according to the ability of the teachers. I am told that carefully committing Definitions and Rules from the book is irksome, tends to make learning a matter of the cultivation and loading of the memory, discourages personal thinking, and altogether is old-fashioned: whereas the new method aims directly at the cultivation of the reasoning powers, teaches the scholar to think for himself, &c. "I would prefer," said a Grade C. female teacher (with which class, by the way, the new method is particularly in favor),