

## INTRODUCTION.

As many of the pupils in the Fourth Class of the Public Schools are preparing for the Entrance Examination to High Schools, it is naturally expected that considerable attention will be given to the lessons prescribed from time to time for this examination. It is not necessary, however, that the whole time allotted to Literature and Reading should be devoted to these lessons alone. Perhaps it would be a good plan to read over all the prescribed lessons early in each term to find out their general meaning. Other lessons may then be taken up concurrently with the more minute study of the prescribed lessons; the former being used, wherever possible, to explain and illustrate the latter.

In entering upon the teaching of Literature, as of any other subject, the first business of the teacher is to assign the lesson. To do this properly is not so simple a task as may at first appear. The teacher must first have studied the lesson himself, before he can assign it intelligently to his pupils; and it is impossible for him to teach intelligently and profitably unless he be master of the subject he intends to teach, and have in his own mind some clearly-defined plan of teaching that subject. This statement may seem a truism, yet it is to be feared that too often the teacher's knowledge of the lesson he undertakes to teach is not as clear and full as it should be, and that his notion of the proper way of teaching it is very vague and indistinct.

Some hints as to the method of dealing with a lesson are given below, *Boadicea* being selected for the purpose; but these are offered merely as suggestions, for it must not be forgotten that a uniform method of treatment cannot be prescribed for all lessons. Neither would it be possible or desirable for all teachers to pursue the same plan. The teacher's own individuality must be a potent force in teaching, and to lose that would be to lose much of his power as an instructor. He would become a mere teaching machine.

*How to assign the lesson.*—As the first object is to get at the meaning of the lesson, it is necessary for the teacher to draw attention to any technical or difficult expressions likely to confuse the pupil, and either to explain such expressions or give hints that will enable him to find out the explanation for himself. The teacher should then give a short account of the Romans, and of their invasion of Britain. The story of *Boadicea* should be told, or the class instructed where to find the story for themselves. A few leading questions should be asked to put the pupil in a fair way of getting an intelligent meaning from the lesson. The length of the lesson must be determined by circumstances. It is better to err on the side of brevity.

*How to teach the lesson.*—First, get back from the pupils all the information given them when the lesson was assigned—explanation of difficult expressions, the story of *Boadicea*, etc. Then require the pupils to read the lesson, questioning them as the reading proceeds to find out what general impression they have received from their study