

lectual preparation for the mature life of manhood and womanhood than that furnished by the public school. This does not necessarily imply that formal text-books should be used for the purpose. The common schools provide some instruction in chemistry, geology and botany, much more than would as yet be proper for the science of language, and special text-books are not considered necessary for the imparting of elementary or useful facts in these sciences. There would seem to be no good reason why even elementary grammars should not contain some essential principles of our science. Indeed, it ought perhaps to be a primary postulate that the grammar of no language can be satisfactorily taught without some reference to the principles of general grammar. Even elementary grammars of Greek and Latin now recognize this necessity, and there is no reason why the teaching of other languages should not follow suit. It may be added that the English language affords special advantages for the suggestion of important doctrines of comparative philology.

In the first place something should be taught in our schools about the process of speaking. There is no justification for keeping our children in absolute ignorance of the nature and office of that which is the distinguishing characteristic of the race; which has made the race what it is; without which in fact the race would not have been at all; which is their most common employment; and the use of which determines their place and influence in the world. The organs of speech could in a general way be exhibited, as well as the muscles of the arm, the bones of the leg or the organs of digestion; while as illustrations of adaptation or design they are as instructive as the organs of hearing or sight. Then, as to the

classification of articulate sounds represented by the letters of the alphabet, there is no reason why the labials, dentals, linguals and palatals, or so-called gutturals should remain unintelligible phrases till, and perhaps after, a favoured few among the pupils come to a sense of their importance at the threshold of Latin and Greek grammar.

Again, as to the history and preservation of language, school children should be taught that writing is a means of giving accuracy and permanence to what is uttered as well as a means of communication when the voice cannot be heard. But it must be impressed upon them that writing is only secondary, that language is essentially a spoken thing, that the alphabet is not primary and fundamental, but a most imperfect clumsy working instrument for recording the elements of our words; that the word itself is not the original thing but the sentence. They should be initiated into some of the capital mysteries and illusions of our historical and present system of writing: silent and inconsistent letters should receive at least some general explanation. Further, in the analysis of current English words and their proximate derivations as given in grammar or spelling-books, an excellent opportunity is given of setting forth some leading principles in the growth of language, not merely in the composition of words, but in the development of ideas.

In like manner reading-books might contain some allusions to the world-wide and most important results of our science; and there would be no difficulty about the problem of making of popular interest that which may be shown even to young minds to be of universal importance.

With regard to the High Schools (including of course Collegiate Institutes) it is obvious that in the teach-