

gation, observation, comparison and thoughtfulness, which are so desirable?

In this matter, as in Manual Training, the course of studies and exercises should be graduated to the abilities of the children. Such courses have been followed with great success for many years in European countries, and of late years they have become part of the school system in some places of our own country, under the name of Nature Studies. Perhaps what is needed most is the help of experienced teachers, who know the true educational plan to put below such work and study by the children, that it might not degenerate into only a means of giving them a mass of scrappy and disconnected information about a great number of things. Books do that well enough, or badly enough, now. The purpose below this newer method should be to train the faculties of the children in natural ways, and to make the objects, the exercises, and the information acquired, all strictly serviceable to that end.

The difficulties which have hindered progress in the past are said to have been: Want of money, the fact that the time table was already too full, and the fact that teachers are not properly qualified to take up fully these better methods.

Reforms of a permanent sort must necessarily be brought about little by little. The teacher and the school trustees, without substantial outside help at the beginning, can go only a little further than they are followed and supported by local opinion.

ABOUT SUBJECTS AND METHODS.

In considering the subjects which should be to the very front in the school course, one is warranted in saying that those which deal with nature should come first, and perhaps those which deal with human nature should follow. It seems to me that a great deal of nonsense has been talked about the cultural value of the subjects, which have been grouped under the name of Humanities, for children in the elementary schools. In the elementary schools, the children are very much children, and it is obvious that their faculties can be called out into activity, and trained better, on what they can see and handle and even make for themselves, than on subjects more or less (and usually a great deal more) theoretical.