

Really, these attacks on the study of English Grammar have done good in arousing the friends of the science to the necessity of presenting its principles in a more palatable as well as a more rational way, that the children may pursue the study with interest. Doubtless many teachers have failed to appreciate the necessity of making the study interesting. But this is no fault of the study itself. It is true that to most of us the study was not presented in an interesting manner. This was the fault of the old systems of teaching. We took our tasks as we took our medicine, because we were told that it was necessary and that it would do us good. It was not ours to question the wisdom of the teacher. We memorized because we knew no better, and doubtless many of us, when we first entered the schoolroom as teachers, did as many of us do to-day, imitated our own teachers and our own teachers' ways as nearly as we could. We were loyal, but it was a loyalty that lacked good grounds for commendation, and some of us are guilty of the same fault to-day in following blindly the suggestions of those who would lead us, without weighing the arguments and adopting the suggestions with all necessary modification to our individual wants. Looking at this matter in a reasonable way, may not all departments of grammar be important? It is popular, but neither witty nor wise, to 'third person, singular number, masculine gender' the subject as some have done. The ridicule makes an audience laugh, but the good sense of the proceedings may well be questioned. Parsing may be useless when every modification of a part of speech together with the reason for each modification is mentioned, but good teachers of grammar do not conduct a recitation in that way. If the relation and the government of the words in a sentence be pointed out we have sufficient, and these as processes of judgment or reasoning are quite as strengthening, we think, as learning the number of legs to either a spider or a fly, and quite as useful in after life. The same is true of the subject of analysis. It is not necessary to descend into the minutiae of the first, second and third class elements. For the purpose of understanding and appreciating the force of words in a sentence in the expression of thought, it is probably sufficient to point out the basic elements and the effect of each of the modifiers without even knowing whether these elements are adjective, adverbial or objective, and yet this latter knowledge does the student no harm, but, on the contrary, leads him to think more closely in the forming of his judgments. Let the whole subject of grammar be taught in such a way as to lead to symmetrical