

liberty to set it aside than you can permit your pupils to take liberties with it.

#### TEACHING COMPOSITION TO JUNIOR CLASSES.

DR. SANGSTER next took up this subject. After a few introductory remarks, he said it was not sufficient that the teacher should exhibit to his pupils correct models of expression, though that was very important. You must insist on those models being followed. Every incorrect expression in your hearing must be corrected. It is not sufficient that you point out the mistake; you must insist upon the pupil there and then correcting the mistake and uttering the correct expression, not only in school but whenever you come in contact with your pupils. It is only by continually doing this that you can hope to weed out the incorrect modes of expression that they may have learned at home. In the answers of your pupils you must correct the mistakes in the form of expression as well as in the answers themselves. By the time your pupils reach the age of 10 or 12 years, and you have taught them by oral teaching to give you readily sentences of any prescribed form, you may commence your formal teaching in written composition. The great difficulty with children, and even with older people is to get consecutive ideas on any subject. So when you do give them a composition give it on a subject they know something about. Take the cow, for instance. Show them a picture of a cow; and get them to tell you all they know about it. Then let them take their slates and write what they know about a cow. Your experience will tell you that certain mistakes will be made. Write some of these on the blackboard and point them out; and afford the pupils an opportunity to correct their mistakes. Then take a few of the best slates, and read the composition, criticising it kindly. Then having pointed out the errors in these slates you give the pupils another opportunity to correct as far as they can their faulty forms of expression. The next step is for the teacher to examine every one of the slates; that work cannot be delegated to another. The work may be done in the evening. He (Dr. S.) never knew a teacher worth his salt that considered his work was over at 4 o'clock. Indicate the errors, but not correct them. That connection is the most important part of the exercise to the pupils. Neither is it sufficient to say it is wrong. Write

the faulty sentence on the blackboard and try to draw out from the pupils where the error lies. You may give your pupils certain words and let them connect them so as to form sentences. Or you may take the reading lesson and let them give expression to it in their own language. Or repeat to them some short striking narrative and require them to give it in their words. Or write on the blackboard a short composition of your own purposely making some mistakes, and let your pupils criticise it. Or after an object lesson let them state what they know about the object. As soon as the pupils become tolerably familiar with writing, you should require the corrected forms to be written on paper, or better still in a book. When they become more advanced the rough draft might be written on paper leaving a margin. On this margin you indicate the errors in some such way as this. Write *s* for fault in spelling; *f s*, false syntax; *c*, wrong capital, &c.; leaving it to your pupils to find out whereabouts in the line the mistake is and what it is. Then the pupils should take these exercises, correct them and transcribe them into a book. The writing of compositions should be done at school; the corrections and transcriptions into a book might be done at home. The Doctor concluded with some remarks upon teaching composition to more advanced classes, dwelling upon the importance of teaching letter writing, and the addressing and stamping of envelopes.

#### OBJECT LESSONS.

Dr. Sangster addressed the teachers on this subject. There has been, he said, a growing conviction on the part of advanced educators that our system of primary instruction has been radically wrong in principle and therefore barren, or worse than barren, of results. There is no doubt that in the past the laws of nature and of mind have been recklessly set at defiance in our system of infant culture. The natural order of the development of the faculties has been ignored, or even the attempt made to reverse it. The whole teaching has been directed to loading the memory with the dry worthless lumber of the text book. Yet the memory is not the first to develop itself; the perceptive faculties are the first to unfold themselves, and it is through these that the mind must receive the pabulum that will nourish the