·CORRESPONDENCE.

We have received the following question from a correspondent:—

"I would be glad to ask through your journal (without my name appearing) for hints as to the best and most practical method of teaching arithmetic to a class of beginners—the majority of whom are *dull*, and hard to learn, or to commit to memory."

The subject is one which shall receive attention in a future number. Meanwhile we fancy that we can discover a clue to the "dullness" of the majority of the class, quite apart from the natural inaptitude of beginners when brought face to face with the mysteries of numbers. Does the teacher use his best endeavours to make his own mind clear about a subject before expounding it to his class? And, in teaching, does he strive to express his meaning in language, free from confusion and calculated to put matters in a clear light? These queries are forcibly suggested by the careless wording of the question which we have reprinted. It is very unusual for the majority of a class to be dull, and where a teacher fancies that they are so, the fault not uncommonly lies with himself.

SCIENTIFIC DEPARTMENT.

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION.—LAWS OF RAINFALL.—CAUSE OF LOSS OF NITROGEN IN SOILS.—ANTS PROTECTING ORANGE TREES.—CARBON IN STEEL.—ROUMANIA AND SCIENCE.—AMERICAN GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—SMALTITE IN COLORADO.

At this season of the year the scientific men of France, Britain, and America are as a body looking forward to and preparing for the meetings of their respective Associations for the Advancement of Science. This year the French Association meets at La Rochelle from 24th to 31st August. The British Association meets at Southampton about the same time, whilst the *rendezvous* of the American Association is our own city, the exercises commencing Aug. 23rd. This Montreal meeting is expected to be one of the largest and most successful ever held. All the Scientists of this Continent will be present as well as several distinguished men from abroad. Of the latter, the following have signified their intention of being present: Dr. W. B. Carpenter, brother of the late Dr. P. P. Carpenter of this city; Herbert Spencer, the celebrated philosopher; Dr. Haughton, of Dublin, well known as one of the authors of the series of Mathematical Manuals, termed Galbraith and Haughton's. Professors Rénard of Brussels, Szabo of Buda-Pesth, and Stephanesco of Bucharest, will also be present. The Association is divided into sections, each with its own President and Secretary; whilst the whole is under one President, who for this year is Principal Dawson. The meetings of the Association will be held in McGill College, each section occupying a separate class-room. Public meetings will be held on certain evenings in the Queen's Hall; where, on the evening of the opening day the address of the retiring President will be delivered. On the