

### THE TEACHING OF DRAWING.

In a paper on the teaching of drawing, read before the New York College of Preceptors by T. R. Ablett, Esq., the educational value of the subject is brought out with a strength and clearness that render the paper of more than usual interest to our educators. Mr. Ablett considered drawing simply as a means of education, and explicitly set aside any treatment of it as an accomplishment or as a training for artists. He pointed out that the mode of instruction in drawing, taken in this sense, would naturally differ from that followed when the production of artists was aimed at, and must be adapted to school-children, most of whom have no special aptitude and little time for practice. To raise drawing to its proper position, we must prove that it is one of the bases of education, and should be taught to all children, whatever their future vocation. We must also prove that it can be taught by collective methods as readily as arithmetic or reading. The speaker then summarized the educational advantages of drawing as follows: I. It brings into active use certain faculties and powers of the mind which can be reached to an equal extent in no other way. For example: correct ideas of proportion and scales are developed, the graphic memory is improved, accuracy in observing is promoted, the powers of description are increased. Although drawing is a universal language, yet few are able to use it. II. Drawing facilitates the acquirement of the simple elements of education. For example: spelling demands a power of remembering the look of words, since in English the sound is not always a trustworthy guide. The improvement of the graphic memory will aid in learning to spell. Again, a child may be taught to draw before it is possible or desirable that he should learn to write. The pen is the worst of drawing-tools, and should not be the first to be put into the hands of children. The earlier use of simpler drawing instruments will facilitate learning to write. Again, drawing teaches the arithmetic of space, as figuring teaches the arithmetic of numbers. There is no reason why the child should be taught the one and not the other. The arithmetic of space may be taught as soon as a child can use a ruler and can understand something of drawing to scale. Furthermore, facts which in figures make no appeal to the mind can be readily grasped by means of drawing, especially if these are made by the pupils themselves. In all these ways drawing actually improves the mind's capacity for learning other subjects.

As a rule, the teaching of drawing is in a very backward state; for art teachers, so called, as a rule are poor teachers, and the whole instruction in this

branch has been hampered by the prevalent belief that no one should learn drawing who has not a special talent for it. Then, too, collective methods of teaching have not been properly developed. To accomplish the last-named object, it is essential that the members of the class be so arranged that each one can have approximately the same view of the object to be drawn. Object-drawing is the most difficult branch of the subject to be taught collectively, but it can be done. For good class teaching of object-drawing, three vital principles must be observed: (a) the object must be a large one, that all can easily see; (b) all members of the class must obtain approximately the same view of the object; (c) the teacher must be acquainted with class management and with the subject, and able to demonstrate principles and methods with ability and enthusiasm.

Mr. Ablett then presented the pedagogic aim of drawing in the different grades. In Class 1 it is (1) to develop accurate observation, (2) to connect writing and drawing, (3) to ward off color-blindness, (4) to cultivate the perceptions, (5) to teach outline-drawing from real objects which present no difficulties in foreshortening; in Class 2, (1) to call attention to the difference between the real and apparent forms of simple objects and curves, (2) to cultivate the graphic memory, (3) by the dictated drawing to insure a knowledge of art terms and give facility in working from verbal instructions; in Class 3, to teach the leading principles of drawing in outline from the things of everyday life; in Class 4, to develop a useful power in drawing from rounded objects (plants and casts) that will serve as a stepping-stone between drawing from simple objects and drawing from the antique; in Class 5, to give a knowledge of shading from real things (this will assist the pupil materially in acquiring the principles of painting, should he ever want to do so); in Class 6, to enable those who have passed through the preceding classes to begin the study of the higher branches of art.—*Science*.

"How do you spell deceased?" asked the sergeant of the doorman.

"With a z, I guess," returned the doorman.

"Come off! There is no z in deceased. Where is that dictionary?"

"I don't know, sir. Sergt. ——— was looking for it last night."

"That's tough. I'm not sure about that word, and I don't want to make a mistake."

"Follow Sergt. ———'s plan, then," suggested the doorman. "Whenever he gets stuck on spelling a word he writes it phonetically, and quotes it,"