

ralists; but a teacher should not be content with these, he should go to the great authors themselves. So if his inquiries lead him to the study of mental or moral philosophy, or to poetry, he should read the works of the poet or philosopher for himself. Always, when studying any subject, study the works of the ablest men who have written on it. Never be content to know what has been written about English literature. Read for yourselves the best works of those men who have made English literature famous, and who have secured a permanent place in its annals. Do not complain that such books are not expressly written for your profession; the best books that are written are not expressly written for any profession. Nor is it wise to wait till some one selects and adapts from the works of a great poet or historian, so much as will suit your special needs.—Obtain such works for yourself, and

adapt them to your own needs.—Make the style of such books an object of special study, and occasionally write brief themes on the same subject, and compare your own style with your model. In this way you will acquire a wide range of new thoughts, and a dexterity and facility in the use of language, such as can never be obtained by merely reading school books and periodical and modern popular works on science and history. And do not suspect that in the study of Milton, Pope, or Addison, or Bacon or Locke, or Grote or Mill, or Wordsworth or Southey, nothing will occur which will help you in your daily work. Every such author will help to make you think more clearly and see more deeply, will give you a command of more copious illustration, will add to the general culture and refinement of your mind, and therefore will certainly make you a better teacher.

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## MISCELLANEOUS.

### GRAMMAR.

SOMETIMES we are asked (and the enquiry is an interesting one) at what age children may be taught grammar. All such inquiries depend upon two other questions. First,—What particular faculties of the mind does the subject appeal to? Secondly,—At what age of the child do those faculties begin to develop themselves? The faculty of *observation* is the earliest in the order of development, and such subjects of instruction as excite and direct the power of observation should be the first to which the attention of children should be introduced. On this account *object lessons on natural history* may be given to infants even before the power of reading is attained. On this account also *geography* should be taught before *arithmetic* and *grammar*. To limit our observations to grammar, it should be borne in mind that it has not to do with the perceptive or observing powers so much as with the faculties of *abstraction*, *classification*, and *induction*. It is important, therefore, to ascertain at what periods of child-life these faculties are beginning to be developed. Of course it is possi-

ble to override the question of mental science altogether, and to make lessons of grammar—what they too often are—lessons of mere memory, the understanding being left uncultivated & unfruitful. And, again, although grammar, for the right comprehension of its principles, requires the exercise of faculties higher in the order of development than perception, and so should be taught later than geography or natural history; yet there are portions of it that do not require these faculties, or at least may be simplified by a skilful use of the power of observation, and so brought down to the level of younger children. To make our meaning clear, we may give very young children a clear notion of a *noun* by bidding them look about them for objects which they can see around them; and as clear a notion of an *adjective* may be mastered by pointing out the properies of that object. For example, the teacher takes a flower, which the child has named as an object he can see. The word *flower* is a *noun*. It is *white*, *beautiful*, *fair*, or whatever other properties the class may observe; for the co-operation of the whole class should be expected and their attention by this means