

✻ Hints and Helps. ✻

THE STUDY OF NATURE.

TWO persons take a walk in the country. They are, perhaps, on the same errand, they traverse the same ground and are, for the time being, surrounded by the same circumstances; and yet to one the walk is full of pleasure; new beauties have been noted, new facts of nature have been learned; the walk has added treasures to his store of mental pictures, knowledge to the mind, and new thoughts for mental food: to the other the walk has been a walk—simply that and nothing more, a necessary preliminary to some errand. The difference is that one is observing, the other unobserving.

It follows then that whatever is done for a child to stimulate observation of nature is to enlarge its possibilities for enjoyment and culture throughout life. The following questions are suggestive of others in the line of stimulating observation of nature. They may be used as the basis of opening exercises or of language lessons as may seem best suited to circumstances.

Why is it possible for the earth to be so soon clothed with verdure in the spring?

What is the character of the plants that appear first in the spring?

These questions may lead to a discussion of the way different plants protect their buds, how nourishment is stored; and this latter question may lead to a lesson on the forms of roots, bulbs, tubers, etc. Just now is a good time to question about the maple keys. What are they? From what developed? Does the maple, in maturing seed before the leaves are grown, follow the usual order of plants? Why is it possible for it to do so? What other plants follow the same order? Are keys formed on all the maple trees? Questions about the shape of the keys, and about the ripe dandelion heads, and why we so frequently find berry bushes growing by fences, and under solitary trees, may, after sufficient time for thought and investigation has been given, lead to an exercise on the general subject of "Distribution of Seeds." After a series of such questionings the pupils may be allowed to tell of independent observations, what they have seen of interest on their way to school, etc.

A subject, such as "The Robin," may be given out a few days previous to its discussion, and pupils requested to observe, question, and learn all they can of the robin. The exercise might be appropriately opened or closed with the song "The Robin," in the Franklin Square collection of songs, and pupils should be encouraged to tell anecdotes and to recite poems appropriate to the subject.

Right here let me make a plea for the literature which should accompany such observation. The child's own observations will be stimulated by it, and his mind enriched by the observations and beautiful thoughts of others. He may now gain treasures in such literature that shall be to him a joy forever, or lacking them now he may lack them forever. In childhood the mind is more receptive. In active life, the newspaper, and the literature of his business will form the bulk of his reading. Happy is he if his school days have left him a legacy of songs of nature which will prove a fountain of refreshing. He will remember with gratitude the teacher who leads him to these songs, and induces him to commit them to memory. Tonight at sunset I heard a robin's song. Instantly from far off school days there came to mind this little gem:

"Do you hear the robin singing,
Little one,
When the rosy dawn is breaking,
When 'tis done?
Do you hear the wooing breeze
In the blossomed orchard trees,
And the drowsy hum of bees,
In the sun?"

* * * * *
"All the earth is full of music,
Little May,
Bird and bee and water singing
On its way.
Let their silver voices fall
On thy heart with happy call,
Praise the Lord who loveth all,
Night and day,
Little May."

and the highest statesmen of the land—and, better than all, they win. At a great cost it is true: but what great conquest was ever accomplished without cost?

Of course the labor classes have the power of numbers to support them. But that power has been won by sacrifices. Sixty years since they could not count hundreds in their ranks where they now count millions. Teachers will never equal them in numbers, but it has not been by mere numbers that the labor classes have triumphed, but by unity of purpose, by sacrifices and by the necessity for the products of their labor. The teachers cannot count their numbers by millions—probably never will; but the necessity for their work is as urgent as that for any other labor, professional or otherwise. The people have learned that they cannot do without the Public school any more than without the products of labor. I do not propose strikes as the remedy, though beyond doubt they have been the grand means of success for the labor class, and always will have their place as factors of irresistible power when right has to struggle against might. We may adopt wiser methods and applications of other powers in our hands. We have right on our side, and the nation cannot do without us any more than without the labor class. Besides, let Public school teachers remember that they belong especially to that class, in rank and in usefulness. When the Press or the public speaker tells us that the Public school is the nursery of freedom and the safeguard of law and order, they mean that the Public school teacher is the guardian of liberty and law; they mean that the labor class represents the power of a nation for evil or for good, and that if it is to be for good it is because the salvation of a people lies in the union of the Public school teacher with the masses. The battle the Public school teachers have to fight is that in which the masses are now engaged, and one class must unite with the other to win. Let Ontario take the lead, and her example will give courage to the teachers of other lands—forming a federation like that of the army of laborers—whose issues will be crowned with success. Their cause is a just one, and, if they unite and work, and, when necessary, sacrifice personal advantages, they will win.

In conclusion, I urge my fellow-teachers to agitate these important views at their meetings and wherever they have access to the public mind. The EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL has already opened its columns to the cause, and it has already expressed its sympathy with the movements in its editorial comments on Mr. Bolton's address. Let other teachers follow the example set them so courageously by Mr. Bolton, and sustain the agitation, and their reward will be beyond measure, ultimately greater than any suggested either by Mr. Bolton or

Yours respectfully,

RICHARD LEWIS.

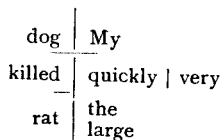
School-Room Methods.

GRAMMATICAL ANALYSIS.

BY J. T. BRADSHAW, PRINCIPAL GOODWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL.

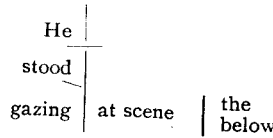
AS the study of botany begins with a plant, so the study of grammar should begin with sentences—the unit of discourse. In teaching the "parts of speech" we merely have to teach the part each word plays in the formation of an expressed thought, so the analysis of sentences should begin the study. I have found the following method of diagramming very useful in getting pupils to comprehend the relation of words to one another.

1. Sentence: My dog very quickly killed the large rat.



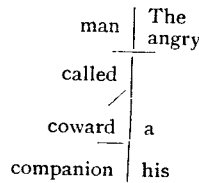
EXPLANATION. Subject, predicate and object are written on the left of the main line and modifiers to the right. The horizontal line that separates the object and predicate does not cross the main line. *Very* modifies *quickly*, so is placed to the right and separated by a vertical line.

2. Sentence: He stood gazing at the scene below.

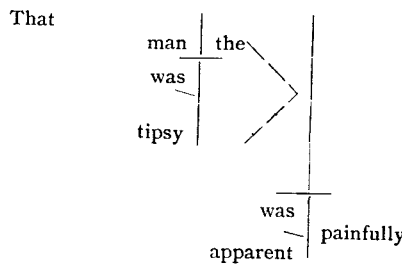


EXPLANATION. The verb and complement are separated by a slanting line, which slants toward the subject to mark the *subjective complement*, and toward the object to mark the *objective complement*, as in next sentence.

3. Sentence: The angry man called his companion a coward.

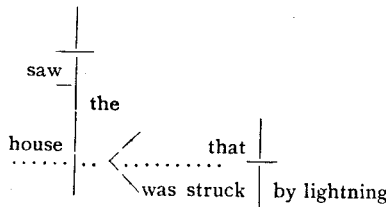


4. Sentence: That the man was tipsy was painfully apparent.

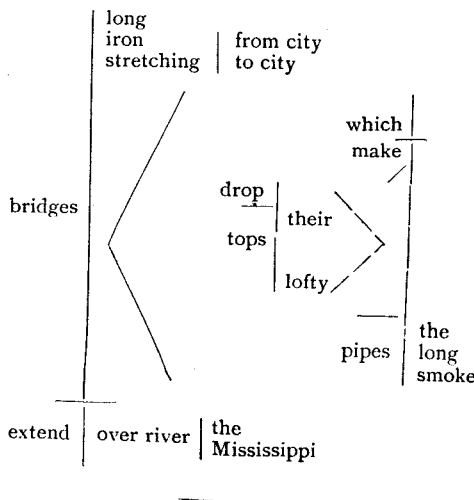


EXPLANATION. *That* is merely introductory.

5. Sentence: I saw the house that was struck by lightning.



6. Sentence: Over the Mississippi River, stretching from city to city, extend long iron bridges, which make the long smoke pipes drop their lofty tops.



1. The teacher's desk should be an object lesson in order and neatness. It should not be a receptacle for bits of string, marbles, waste paper, broken pencils, etc.

2. All places for storage of copy-books, etc., should be as neatly arranged as the desk.

3. The floor should be as clean from unnecessary dirt at 3 P.M. as at 9 A.M. The floor is not to be used as a waste basket.

4. Teach the pupils how to avoid dropping ink upon the floor or desks. Have all ink spots removed daily. Do not allow them to accumulate. —Colorado School Journal.