

by such methods as the following:—Place several groups of the same number of objects on the table; ask the pupils to count each group, and the number of groups, then the total; also the reverse operation, i. e., take a number, twelve, and ask them to arrange them in groups of two, three, four, or six each, and at the end of each operation require the result to be expressed in words.

Such training prepares the way for reduction, which is the foundation of all the future reasoning in arithmetic. When a pupil has properly mastered the tables of the weights, measures, &c., and has been taught the meaning of the operations of multiplication and division, as previously indicated, he will have little difficulty with the compound rules and reduction. A few of the simpler weights and measures are necessary, a carpenter's rule or a tape-line being the most useful. Measure off a few feet on the black-board, marking the end of each foot, and ask for the number of inches. Give no rules; if the pupils cannot answer, let them really count the inches on the tape-line, carefully observing that twelve inches is repeated as many times as there are feet, and then ask for the same to be done with figures. Then reverse the operation, giving a number of inches to be changed into feet; and for a few times allow them to mark off the 'twelves,' and then count how many twelves there are. Proceed in the same way with the other tables, always using numbers and denominations with which the pupils are familiar; and require such operations to be repeated until the connection between the figures on the slate and the things signified is perfectly familiar.

DISCONTENTED TEACHERS.

There appears to be a general discontent among the teachers of this country. So, at least, we infer from the tone of communications published in the educational journals. The other day we made a list of complaints contained in about a dozen of these periodicals.

It is not necessary to mention the chronic complaint of insufficient income, because that is common to the whole human race. We have met with all sorts of people in our pilgrimage through this vale of tears, but we have rarely encountered any one who had *quite* money enough. Passing this by, we find our teachers complaining of the following things:

1. Their profession, they say, has no prizes. A soldier can win promotion as well as glory, and can come at last to be one of the chief personages of the country. A man of business can acquire wealth, and surround his family with elegance and safety. An author can make a "hit," and soar at once into fame and fortune. For the teacher there is no outlet, no issue, no reward. For the few prizes which the profession might claim, the presidentships of colleges, even these are almost always bestowed upon members of another profession.

2. The teacher has no hold upon his place, and can acquire none, no matter if he is the best teacher in the universe. He is no better off in this respect than the politician, who may at any moment, and without a moment's previous notice, receive a note in a yellow envelope, turning him out of a place he has held twenty years.

3. The teacher is compelled to obey his inferiors. The average member of our school committee, say our educational journals, is not equal in knowledge and capacity to the average teacher.

This assertion might be questioned; but probably the average school committee does not know as much about *teaching* as the teachers whom they elect, direct and dismiss.

4. Holding his place at the mercy of the school committee, the teacher cannot speak his mind freely even on subjects relating

to the management of the school. He must *please*, he must flatter them by acquiescence. He can be sincere, direct, and wise only at the risk of his position.

5. He has no standing in the community. Or, as one of our journals has it, "In a small village he is a man of some importance, but in a large city, the teacher has virtually no social standing."

These are the principal complaints, and there is some cause for them, except, perhaps, the last. If there is any circle in the city where a good teacher would not be held in honor both for his own and for his profession's sake, the discredit belongs to the circle, not the teacher.

Our great lack is a better organization of the whole teaching service, so as to keep out the incompetent, and to enable the competent to gain due promotion and reasonable emolument. Either this will be done, or the common school system will gradually decline in efficiency.

In an ideal state, teachers would constitute an order of nobility, and would consist of the very choicest of the inhabitants. The chief business of each generation is to rear and educate the next, and civilization progresses when the best of the present generation does the greater part of the work for the next. How to bring the best minds to bear upon the mass of mind—that is the sublime problem of republican statesmanship.

So many of our readers expect to become teachers that they may as well begin to think of these things.—*Youth's Companion*.

LANGUAGE.

The purpose of the lessons in language is to develop the power of oral and written expression, and can only be accomplished by abundant exercise in the use of language as the expression of thought. In the three lower grades, the work will mainly be done by the pupils while at their seats. The inspection and drill should be in connection with the reading exercises. The fourth grade is entitled to special time for this exercise, and the teacher should not fail to so provide in arranging the programme.

The pupils have already learned the nature of declarative and interrogative sentences, and these terms may be given to them now. Teach the imperative and exclamatory sentence. Teach the pupils that what we talk about in a sentence is the subject, and that which we say about it is the predicate. Give a list of subjects, as fence, field, John, road, tree, Mary, carpenter, etc., and require the pupils to build sentences. The teacher should state the kind of sentence to be built, whether declarative, imperative, etc. Give a list of predicates, as run, play, sing, etc., and require certain specified kinds of sentences to be built. Give rows of promiscuous words to be arranged into certain specified kinds of sentences. Teach the pupils to combine sentences by having them make two or more statements about an object, and then unite them in one expression. Continue the use of pictures by requiring the pupils to write stories about them. No doubt the pupils will at first, and for some time, require much assistance, which may be given chiefly by suggestive questions. As pupils advance, more particular descriptions may be brought out, and the wider play of the imagination secured by judicious questioning. Read once or twice carefully to the pupils, a story or anecdote, and require them to reproduce it in their own language. A great deal of work of this character should be given. The reading should not be given at the time the lesson is assigned, but when the pupils commence to prepare the language lesson. Teach the pupils of this grade to write letters, and make letter-writing a frequent exercise through the entire year. The pupils should understand the meaning and use of the following parts of a letter: heading, address, salutation, body, subscription. Teach the above parts, their position, punctuation, and the use of capital letters. Give the pupils drill in writing each part, appropriate for a business letter, a friendly letter, a letter to a brother, sister, etc. In requiring the pupils to produce entire letters, definitely specify the nature of the work. The following will serve as illustrations:—

1. Write a letter to your father, who is supposed to be away from home, stating three things that have occurred during his absence,