

result of such effort. If the questions are too easy the mental effort is unnecessary, the exercise ceases to be interesting, and consequently the pupils become careless; while questions that are so difficult that pupils cannot reasonably be expected to answer them, lead either to guessing—a most injurious habit—or to the discouragement of the class, which should always be carefully avoided.

With regard to the third requisite, viz., Experience, I will merely remark that questioning is an art, and in this, as in all other arts, proficiency can be attained only by long-continued and careful practice. The teacher should studiously avoid any system which has been found defective, or is not calculated to act advantageously in the education of the pupil, and constantly aim at finding out and using that system which will best promote the educational interests of the class.

I shall now offer some general observations on what I consider defective and what proper forms of questioning and answering. Questions should be clear, concise, definite, and adapted to the capacity of the class. They should be uttered distinctly, so as to be heard by every member of the class, and in order to necessitate close attention should not be repeated by the teacher. They should be correct in form, so that no change of phraseology will be necessary, as such change causes loss of time and tends to confuse the pupil. They should be in plain, simple language, intelligible to the comprehension of the most deficient in the class, and should at once direct the attention of the pupils to the specific point of which they are to speak. Indefinite or general questions, such as "Tell what you know about the Pacific Railway," or "Sketch the reign of John," may do for written examinations, where the pupil is ex-

pected to say all he can on a given subject, but in oral examination it saves time and prevents the introduction of much irrelevant matter to confine the pupils to definite answers by definite questions.

As a series, questions should be logical—should omit nothing—should develop every point in its proper place, and constantly lead to the ultimate fact to be brought out in the lesson.

Ambiguous questions, or those that allow of a choice of answers, should not be used, as they encourage the habit of guessing. They should not suggest the answer, either by the form of the question, tone of the voice, inflection, emphasis, or, as is sometimes done, by contrast, as, "Is the elephant a very small animal?" As a rule, questions should not admit of being answered by a simple "yes" or "no," but should generally require an answer in the form of a complete sentence. Mere assent or dissent does not require much intellectual effort; and questions that admit of such answers do not thoroughly test a pupil's knowledge, as he may know enough about the subject to enable him to answer correctly in this way, and still have very vague ideas regarding it. Another weighty objection to such answers is that they are useless as a means of cultivating language, while the complete sentence form accustoms the pupil to correct and fluent expression and thoughtfulness—shews more clearly the amount of his knowledge, and thus leads to more pointed and suitable instruction—and if, as should always be the case, the teacher requires answers to be grammatically correct, forms one of the very best exercises in composition and grammar; for I firmly maintain that grammar can be far more practically and usefully taught by requiring pupils to speak correctly in the ordinary conversation of the