

them, doing as little as possible with them, shirking them at every opportunity, the consequence will likely be that he will always be slow and inaccurate. We have frequently had scholars come to us from schools where they had not been particular in giving full exercise in the fundamental rules, and although they had been through fractions and compound numbers, and some of them even through interest, they moved with great slowness in short division, and were not free in long division.

The mechanical work of reducing several fractions to a common denominator, where the numerators and denominators are somewhat large, is a very laborious and unpleasant task. Where this state of things exists, it is discouraging to both pupil and teacher. Many times it may be owing to the influence of the parents. They are desirous that their children should advance as rapidly as possible. This is right in itself. But they are apt to associate *real* progress with the rapidity of passing from page to page and from rule to rule. Deceptive, deceptive! Dissatisfied with continuous examples from the black-board and exercise in mental arithmetic, the parent places an arithmetic in the hands of the child and with it Johnny walks proudly into the school-room and tells the teacher that his father wishes him to commence with written arithmetic. What shall the teacher do? In many of our elementary schools the teacher is hired for a period of a few months only. She will soon be away, or, if she desires to remain for another term, she must be careful to meet the wishes of most of her patrons and thus feels *compelled* to acquiesce in the matter, although she may be satisfied that it would be for the best interest of the child to have slate and black-board exercise rather than examples from the arithmetic. Thus, often, against the wishes and better judgment of the teacher, the child is forced into written arithmetic. But in these cases, the teacher may be able to correct the wrong greatly, by giving many exercises in proving their work, such as addition proved by subtraction or by different methods, so as to make the most of the fundamental rules. The work can thus be pretty well controlled by the teacher, while acceding to the wishes and sometimes whims of the parents.

In our graded schools, or in those schools where there are three or four teachers employed, this thorough work in the primary and intermediate departments should be insisted on. If there are four divisions, most of this work will con- *1 the range of the teacher next to the primary.* If the children are tolerably regular in their attendance, by giving them a fair course through that form, with some review of the work in the third form, such a knowledge and command of numbers should be acquired as to make all operations in them easy and accurate, and the use of the slate will usually secure this with *no detriment to any other subject.* The time occupied by the teacher in looking over the work and writing down the examples on the blackboard need not exceed ten minutes at the opening of the school and the work done by the pupils