example, or allusion what must loom in the minds of uninformed youth as little more than mere forms of words; more seldom still do they pause to point out the beauty, force, and depth of thoughts or the loveliness of the form in which they are expressed. There is, in country schools, but little time to devote to this aspect of the reading-lesson; but if only one selected paragraph in each lesson were exhaustively treated the pupils would derive great and lasting advantages.

Spelling, as far as children are concerned, is almost entirely a matter of practice, the chief mental power evoked being memory. In this, as in other subjects, teachers sometimes forget to point out to their pupils the readiest path to mastery, thereby depriving the exercise of whatever educative value it possesses. At the same time spelling may be regarded as a subject in which method is at a minimum, thoroughness at a maximum; and when at examination teachers stand aghast at the number of errors their pupils make, the inference is that both method and thoroughness have been at a minimum.

The practical side of grammar is held in high estimation by our teachers, who are ever ready to impress on the minds of their pupils the importance of acquiring the habit of speaking correctly. As a factor in mental development this subject is in a number of schools not altogether generously treated. In Standard IV. especially, too much time is spent by pupils in unenlightened essays at spelling out the parts of speech, and too little by the teacher in unfolding the principles that underlie classification. The more intelligent teachers, proceeding on the lines of the syllabus when it describes grammar as "school logic," have made the subject a means of sound mental discipline.

There is large scope for giving the composition lessons a practical turn, and much good has been done in this direction during the year. With respect, however, to the quality of the methods used there is reasonable ground for apprehension. Many of our teachers are not sufficiently progressive to think out and drive home by easy and interesting ways the principles of elementary composition. This being so, it is vain to expect the composition lessons to take their legitimate place as a factor of mental development. Yet in this respect the lessons surely ought to rank high. From the very first they should be made, and in some of our schools they are made, a powerful means of strengthening the powers of observation, of memory, and, to some extent, of judgment also.

In many schools geography is poorly taught; very rarely indeed does it take its place among the rousing lessons of the day. The rule of proceeding from the known to the unknown, from a thorough knowledge of the pupil's own district to a knowledge of other and unknown lands, from an experimental knowledge of the phenomena of nature at home to a knowledge, through imagination, of such phenomena abroad, is all but forgotten. The geography lesson accordingly is often an aimless endeavour to drive lists of barren names and facts into unwilling heads, with no semblance of discrimination, no co-ordination, no enlivening ray of human interest. Teachers are not expected to give a geography lesson to each class daily, but they should give at least one model lesson to each class every week, leaving the pupils, with atlas and textbook in hand, to study, on the teacher's plan, other districts and other lands.

Writing, to the pupils almost a matter of practice, is always creditable in schools where lessons are given on a definite plan. Success in this subject depends much more on the skill of the teacher than on the kind of copy-book; but even with the Board's instructions in their hands teachers sometimes forget the very essentials of a writing-lesson.

Drawing, now a pass subject in all standards, is by some teachers regarded as the *bête noir*, by others as the peculiar excellence, of the syllabus. Its usefulness in securing manual dexterity in the mechanical and decorative arts everyone who has given the matter the slightest thought allows; but, until its utility becomes better known to the people generally, it will be hard to create enthusiasm for an art so little loved by many teachers as well as parents.

In history, facts, dates, the doings and times of great historical personages, are better known than in previous years, the reason, no doubt, being that with the narrowing of its scope has come an increased intensity in the study of the parts selected. It were to be wished that more of the teachers had time and inclination to enlarge their pupils' minds by unfolding in orderly array the series of causes of which notable men are the spiritual product; and to give the subject a practical turn by making a few of the first or last lessons of each year's course bear directly on the elementary principles of our constitution, and on the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizenship.

The educative and practical value of elementary science and object-lessons is not yet adequately understood by a number of our teachers. The object-lesson at all events is regarded by pupil teachers—and by some certificated teachers, too—as a repulsive imposition, and, when the time for giving it comes round, they appear before their pupils leaning on that contemptible substitute for brains, the object-lesson book. One's spirit quails when it is intimated that an object-lesson on a book-built elephant is to be given to a class of little children, and at such times one inwardly expresses the pious wish that the whole race of object-lesson books were honoured with a bonfire. There is really nothing very formidable in a quiet chat with a number of children about some common thing. Let pupil teachers try some such scheme as the following:—

Stage I. Infants and Standard I.: Field of selection—The home or classroom; power to be developed—observation. The pupils will, with the teacher's aid, find out the form, colour, exact size, number of parts, use of whole, use of each part, materials, and the mode of construction or combination of parts of the thing selected.

Stage II. Standard II. or Standards I. and II.: Field of selection—Common things well within the experience of pupils; powers to be developed—observation and comparison. The pupils will traverse the same ground as in Stage I., with a view to comparing on each point different objects of the same class.

Stage III. Standard III. or Standards II. and III.: Field of selection—Objects within the pupils' experience, or of which there are good wall-pictures; powers to be developed—observation, comparison, classification, judgment, and imagination.

The pupils will here study materials, texture, whence derived, why from particular places, relative values, tools and machines used in manufacturing, mode of manufacture of principal materials or of whole object, why made thus and not otherwise. The treatment will vary according to the thing selected, whether animal, plant, or inanimate object, the best scheme ever being the teacher's own, and the great aim of the lesson ever to develop a love of nature by developing mind.