

ENGLISH  
AS  
'THE SECOND LANGUAGE'

HARVEY WILLIAMS

WESTON TRAINING COLLEGE,  
ROYAPETTAH, MADRAS.

ENGLISH,  
AS ‘ THE SECOND LANGUAGE ’



# ENGLISH, AS 'THE SECOND LANGUAGE'

*A Record of Thirty Years' Teaching*

BY

HARVEY WILLIAMS

M.A. (Cantab.)



OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS  
LONDON HUMPHREY MILFORD

1936

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY HEADLEY BROTHERS  
109 KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C.2 ; AND ASHFORD, KENT

## DEDICATION

THIS book is dedicated to a large number of Egyptians who were my students from 1912 to 1915, and who now hold important posts throughout Egypt. Their responsive attitude as students, and kindness since, have been my chief encouragement in writing it.

I may perhaps be allowed to express my satisfaction, also, in being able to publish it at a time when the important reforms in the Egyptian Educational System outlined by His Excellency Naguib Bey Hilali are being put into force.



## PREFACE

WITH some reluctance I have added a second or explanatory title, a *Record of Thirty Years' Teaching*, to this book, as being the most immediate way of indicating to the reader that the ideas and the practice set out in it have matured slowly. The writing was started in 1914 whilst I was first employed as a Master of Method by the Egyptian Government, abandoned on account of the war, and resumed after I had returned to the Egyptian Government Service some fifteen years later. The period following the war, 1918-31, was spent in Army Educational Service. The vicissitudes of the pioneer stage of a new army educational scheme, the exacting nature of its administrative work, and the large amount of examining as well as instructing, precluded the possibility of completing the book during those years. The book owes its inception and its completion to the stimulus of the liberal conditions as regards freedom of enterprise enjoyed by me on both occasions whilst working under the Ministry of Education in Egypt.

The Introduction was written a long while ago, but I do not see any reason to alter it : for, despite the great advances which have been made since it was written, it interprets sufficiently closely the spirit in which language teaching should be approached. Rather than add to it, I would just say here that I am conscious of the incompleteness of the last section, Part III (c) *Linguistic Studies*. Its sketchiness is due to the insufficiency of my own knowledge, and to the tentativeness of most of the work that has so far been

done in that direction. I would merely insist upon the importance for teachers of language of keeping before them the new work that has been done on the study of the word, the sentence, the predication,<sup>1</sup> and the paragraph as units of language and express the hope that combined effort from a number of sources will help to make the scientific study of language more generally fruitful than it has been up to the present time.

The great advances in language teaching to which I have referred have rendered the practice outlined in my Part I incomplete in respect of any systematic treatment of pronunciation, intonation, and of a scientifically restricted vocabulary. In these matters much progress has subsequently been made, notably by Mr. Harold E. Palmer (Heffer), Dr. Michael West (Longmans) and by Dr. Lawrence Faucett (Oxford University Press), and in a somewhat different field by Mr. C. K. Ogden and his collaborator in *The Meaning of Meaning* (Kegan Paul), and in some part of his Basic English experiment by Dr. I. A. Richards. However, I have felt that the lessons, as I had prepared them some sixteen years ago, represent in a certain sense the matrix of the theory and practice out of which the subsequent carefully systematized courses have developed. I wish to take this opportunity of thanking Dr. Lawrence Faucett for his kindness in allowing Lesson Sixteen—Reading Book Two of the Oxford English Course (Oxford University Press) to appear as an appendix to this book.

It is noteworthy that much of the improvement in the methods of teaching English (and, indeed, of

<sup>1</sup> The term adopted by Dr. P. B. Ballard, *Thought and Language*. University of London Press, 1934.

English Literature) in its various school phases has come from writers who have gained experience in Africa, India, and in the Far East. It would seem that the discipline of finding suitable methods of teaching English to Orientals reacts favourably upon the methods of teaching English in English-speaking communities.

My belief that the teaching of English to foreigners increases one's capacity to teach it with quickened understanding to those whose mother-tongue it is, must be my excuse for the excursions (mainly in Part III) into the domain of the teaching of the finer uses of the language to English-speaking pupils. And I hope that this small book may prove of service to them, and, also, especially to warrant officers and non-commissioned officers of the British Army with whose valuable educational work—largely a matter of stimulating good habits of reading—I am still in keen sympathy.

H.W.

Brecon

*September 1935*

Languages were the traditional medium of education throughout Western Europe for centuries. We have to some extent preserved the tradition ; a “second language ” is still regarded as an essential element in higher education : but in preserving the tradition we seem to have missed the substance.’

LORD EUSTACE PERCY,  
*Education at the Crossroads*, p. 42

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   | PAGE |
|---|------|
| PREFACE   | 7    |
| CITATION from <i>Education at the Crossroads</i> by Lord<br>Eustace Percy | 10   |
| A GENERAL INTRODUCTION. Some Practical Hints<br>on Teaching English       | 13   |
| PART I.— <i>Junior Stage</i> : 7-11 years. ‘Composite<br>Lessons’         | 23   |
| The Principles  | 23   |
| The Choice of Topics  | 25   |
| Treatment   | 26   |
| Reading and Writing   | 33   |
| PART II.— <i>Middle Stage</i> : 11-15 years. ‘Separate<br>Exercises’      | 35   |
| General Remarks   | 35   |
| (a) Oral Composition   Topics, Treatment                                  | 36   |
| (b) Reading   | 43   |
| (c) Written Composition   | 54   |
| (d) Dictation   | 58   |
| (e) Grammar   | 63   |
| (f) Recitation  | 71   |

|   | PAGE |
|---|------|
| PART III.— <i>Senior Stage</i> : 15-18 years. ‘Direct Studies’  | 76   |
| General Remarks   | 76   |
| (i) The Study of Prose  | 77   |
| (a) Critical Reading  | 77   |
| (i) Ditto for Foreign Students  | 99   |
| (b) Critical Exercises in Prose Composition   | 103  |
| (ii) Ditto for Foreign Students   | 115  |
| (ii) The Study of Poetry  | 120  |
| (a) Ditto for Foreign Students  | 129  |
| (iii) Linguistic Study  | 130  |
| APPENDIX A. A Reprint from <i>The Oxford English Course</i> by Dr. L. Faucett   | 133  |
| APPENDIX B. An Extract from <i>The Spectator</i> , dated 2 December 1932. <i>James Boswell</i> . By C. E. Vulliamy. (Geoffrey Bles. 10s. 6d.) | 138  |

A GENERAL INTRODUCTION

SOME PRACTICAL HINTS ON TEACHING  
ENGLISH

The following suggestions for the teaching of the English language are the outcome of three years' work under the Ministry of Education in Egypt as Master of Method at the Sultania Higher Training College, Cairo, and of experience gained in a junior capacity at Bristol University Day Training College and the Normal College, Bangor.

The standpoint is that of a Master of Method to students in training for the profession of schoolmaster.

In consequence, an interest in the logical and psychological aspects of the subject has been assumed, and the reader is referred occasionally to well-known writers on these subjects whenever such reference is deemed likely to benefit him.

It is a commonplace nowadays that a ready and fluent use of a language can best be obtained by oral methods in the early stages. This is true of all learners, young or old, but its applicability to the young learner who would make little or no progress by the grammatical method has especial cogency. The writer's ideas took shape whilst he was engaged in teaching English to Egyptian pupils, and it is hoped that the suggestions may have a special value for others who are engaged in that kind of work.

Language is an instrument for the expression or communication of our wants, feelings and thoughts. The writer considers this conception of language as an instrument to be of the highest degree important for the novice who undertakes the teaching of language to children or adults.

Before examining this conception more closely, it seems desirable to digress slightly from its central topic, language conceived as an instrument, to the wording of the latter part of the statement. Observe that the 'expression' is not of 'thought' only, nor, indeed, of thought primarily, but of 'wants' and 'feelings'. This fact is of high significance for those who have entrusted to them the instruction of young children, for whom it is often so difficult to supply in the most educative form a sufficient motive for what they are called upon to do especially in the case of the language lesson. The matter will be referred to again more explicitly when the teaching of the younger pupils is under consideration. Suffice it to say here that in refusing to overlook the other motives to employ speech besides the expression of thought, we are led to appreciate the efforts that have been made of recent years to associate manual occupations, etc., with the older school studies. Manual occupations which stimulate interrogation of the teacher by the pupils and afford an unimpeachable ground for enquiry into their aims and plans by the teacher, merit the fullest investigation by the teacher of languages. This association of language teaching with manual work and the ever-widening range of so-called educational handicrafts should react to the benefit of both of these branches of the modern curriculum.

To return from the digression, the analogy between language and an instrument must obviously not be

pressed too far, but its suggestiveness for the inexperienced teacher is of wide application, and, therefore, forms one of those strong rallying calls of which he not infrequently finds himself in need.

Three principles of wide application arise from regarding language as an instrument, and in consequence of looking upon the acquirement of language as an art, postulating in its turn the development of skill in the learner, viz. :—

- (i) A good model,
- (ii) Proper guidance, through the influence of practical hints and working rules,
- (iii) Properly graded exercises, in short, intelligent practice.

It is not contended that the educational value of language teaching resides solely in the acquirement of expressional control of language, for there remains also the critical appreciation of its literature and its grammatical structure. But it is not necessary nowadays to insist further that it is the expressional side that counts for most both with the quite young and the backward adult.

It will not be without interest for the more advanced student of the science of education to trace in these three principles certain psychological influences which supply further justification for their adoption. These psychological influences, the tendency to imitation, suggestibility, and motor activity as aids to retention and habit formation, are rapidly growing in recognition amongst writers on the theory of instruction.

During the early stages of instruction in a language, nothing is more important than a good model, for example the use of the simple and correct idiom by the

teacher. Benefit will be reaped by the pupils both by conscious imitation of it, and by unconscious imitation of it through constant association with it. The value of such a model will be greatly enhanced if the personality of the teacher is such as to win for him a prestige influence over his pupils. In such cases the instruction given gains acceptance in the pupils' minds with a minimum of effort, almost without the exercise of reason by that form of suggestion which penetrates to the sub-conscious self and is beginning to claim a very important place amongst the studies of theorists in educational work, and also, one may note, in the treatment of mental disorders. The young are especially suggestible and responsive to ideas suggested to them by a teacher whose personality invests him with this kind of prestige.

Such a teacher, provided that his prestige is based upon real skill and knowledge in his subject, will be able to give his pupils far more effective guidance than one who does not possess such an advantage. For example, a teacher with a good voice, a pleasant manner and vigorous presence who has established a prestige influence over his pupils through his skill and attainments has a far better chance of success in teaching reading, for example, than a diffident, hesitating teacher who is not sure of himself, nor his pupils of him.

Finally, just as we do not learn to swim on dry land, it is necessary for the pupil to do more than merely imitate, or follow suggestions of his teacher—he must practise intelligently. Practice results in the formation of habits which, if properly formed, confer facility and ease which are the essential qualities of every form of skill. It is almost superfluous to point out that mere

repetition of an action, be it the pronunciation of a difficult word or the playing of a difficult stroke in cricket or golf, is not enough ; for the resulting habit is not necessarily good nor, indeed, likely to be so, unless during the early stages of its formation due attention is paid to the model and suggestions given by a teacher already skilled in the performance of such acts. Repetition will, however, soon relieve the pupil of the need of attention to his model, free him of the guidance from his teacher and confer the requisite skill upon himself.

Before leaving this topic, the final stage in the acquirement of skill, the stage that follows the acquirement of facility and power of independent performance should be briefly noted. This final stage is one in which the power of invention or of self-initiated forms of expression is attained. Needless to say, it is one that does not call for much attention except where advanced pupils are concerned, but, perhaps, opportunities occur in the earlier stages more often than is commonly supposed, and a thoughtful teacher will bear this possibility in mind.

It remains to notice various phases of capacity to learn through which the normal individual passes from the age of seven to eighteen years in his acquirement of an effective use of language, and certain matters closely related to this such as the division of the study of language into its familiar parts.

Every teacher of wide experience in teaching language to pupils whose ages range from seven to eighteen years is conscious that there are certain well-defined stages in the progress of his pupils. The agreement upon this is general, but as regards any very exact description of these stages, giving their precise

characteristics and age limits, there is certainly no such complete unanimity. The Board of Education circular on the teaching of English does not in the 'Suggestions' attempt anything more detailed than Preliminary, Junior, Middle and Senior stages for the school periods falling within the ages of seven to fifteen years. In the present state of knowledge on this matter it is of doubtful advantage to attempt anything more detailed.

Very closely connected with the division of the course of teaching into stages adapted to the growing capacity and developing interests of the pupils, is the breaking up of the subject into sections. Only a few general considerations can be touched upon.

For beginners (the infants and juniors) the subject should preserve its unity and the lesson be for them an English lesson simply wherein conversation, reading, and written work would enter only so far as the general plan of work adopted by the teacher required. Occasions for their use arise out of this plan, as illustrated in the text of this book, in the most natural and spontaneous way possible.

As the pupils become more capable of sustained effort and of recognizing in some degree the form as well as the substance of what they acquire, it becomes then profitable to divide up the field of their linguistic activity into various distinct sections, e.g. oral composition, reading, recitation, written composition, dictation and, also, a little grammar ; enough, at any rate, to render the recognition of the more obvious structural features of the language easier through the possession of names for them. This stage would normally begin at eleven years and continue for two years.

The next stage, thirteen to sixteen years—the senior period of the elementary school—the point at which English Elementary and Secondary School curricula are dovetailed, is characterized by a different spirit. Education tends to reach its final and illimitable characteristics as self-education. At this stage it will probably be found possible to omit dictation, unless the language is being taught to foreigners, and to give greater prominence to literary studies. When this stage is reached the evolution of the language lesson from its proto-plasmic unity in the simple English lessons of the Junior stage to its comparatively highly differentiated structure in the secondary school is complete.

It is not sufficient for the teacher to recognize this gradual emergency of separate sections or branches of study : he must also recognize a tendency of some of these sections to fall into groups—we may call them ‘correlation groups’—where each section may be made to support the other sections of the group. An example will make this clear. Written composition, grammar, and dictation form such a group, because frequent cross-references can be made from one to the other, e.g. methods of punctuation form a natural and an important feature of the technique of written composition, but at the same time there is no more effective opportunity for testing and deepening the pupil’s grasp of it than by the dictation of a piece specially chosen to illustrate known difficulties in this matter. Dictation, likewise, provides opportunities for the most convincing form of correction, viz. self-discovered, by the comparison with the original version. The grasp of general principles or grammatical rules may be tested by reference to his grammar

—an educative opportunity for the use of books, and one, by the way, which teachers in elementary schools were at one time much inclined to neglect.

In bringing these prefatory remarks to a close, it must be pointed out that they are by no means intended to be exhaustive, but merely suggestive of the leading ideas informing the book. They are addressed to professed students of teaching whose period of training is more accurately represented in metaphor as a seed time than as harvest. They are not in search of a stock of showy lessons on this topic or that, but rather how to shape their knowledge and experience so as to develop a personality, strong in their confidence in certain tried principles, fertile in ideas and resourceful in action. These are the essentials of leadership in any sphere of human activity, and the teacher's function is largely one of leadership.

There are two simple tests that can be applied by a student anxious to gauge his progress in these directions. The first may be described as the feeling of confidence which enables him to initiate steps for himself where hitherto he could but adapt the work of others. Even if the departure is slight, it is evidence of real power and an earnest of the power which comes with complete mastery.

The second is a condition of the advance of the first, viz. the realization that the faculty to learn is still alive within him. For this is the true inspiration of every sustained effort in good teaching and the well-spring of its freshness and vitality.

Obviously all directions of study are not equally profitable for a teacher, but, nevertheless, it is probably true that there is hardly any pursuit which a man can take up with wholehearted zest that will not react

favourably upon his powers as a teacher, however far divorced it may be in material and method from the ordinary employment of his school hours. But a disquisition upon hobbies would be out of place, since our main concern is rather with the more immediate and direct formative influences available for the teacher of language.

The professed teacher of language certainly need not look to such extraneous sources as those referred to above for the preservation and, still less, for the advancement of his powers as a teacher. Probably no successful teacher of language has ever escaped the subtle fascination of the study of words or the allurements of sense and sound conveyed by genuine poetic speech. It is true that for advanced research purposes the field of purely linguistic studies (philology, semantics, etc.) is made distinct from that of literature, but for the teacher of the young and uneducated adult alike, no such distinction is valid ; the ' living ' word or the ' winged ' word is not rightly separable from the pulsing emotion or the soaring thought whose hermetic messengers they are. In plain words, the study of words and of the best forms are sources of inspiration which no teacher should, or need, neglect. Of attractive books there is no lack, ranging from Archbishop Trench's book, *English Past and Present*, or on the study of words to modern works like Weekley's *Romance of Words*.

Finally, for those who, like Pestalozzi, are ' psychologically-minded ' there is an interesting field of study in which writers like Stanley Hall (in *Youth, its Regimen and Training*) and Claparède (*Experimental Psychology and Education*) are pioneers, and particularly that part of it which deals with the various types and phases

discovered in the growth of the so-called 'Glossic-Interest' ranging from the babbled repetition of a newly acquired word by an enterprising two-year-old to the multifarious quest of 'stumpers' in the shape of long words and the gratifying sense of superiority over baffled contemporaries which such achievements confer on the youth of sixteen or seventeen years. These and the phases intermediate to them are opportunities, for the vigilant teacher and student of speech developments, too good to be missed.

The above are but some of the many directions which a young teacher may pursue as means of self-training to the mastery of his craft. In good time he will, no doubt, stake out for himself a claim in the quite illimitable field of linguistic or literary studies, to the immense benefit alike of himself and of his pupils.

PART I

JUNIOR STAGE    7-11 YEARS

‘ COMPOSITE LESSONS ’

The best practice at this stage appears to reveal three broad principles, viz. :—

- × (i) *the singleness or unity* of the subject matter of the lessons,
- × (ii) the employment of the *direct method*,
- × (iii) the need of a *sufficient motive* for the use of speech by the pupils in the lessons.

A few words on each of these principles are necessary to make their significance quite clear.

(i) *The singleness or unity* of the subject matter must be preserved. By this is meant that language lessons must not be divided up into separate and distinct branches, e.g. conversation lessons, reading lessons, writing lessons, etc., as is the case in the later stages, but each lesson must be so planned that these activities enter into it in the most natural and spontaneous manner possible.

(ii) The use of the *direct method* may be amply justified on three grounds, i.e. (a) that indirect or translation methods are fatal to the direct apprehension of the words and forms of the foreign language ; (b) that children of this age cannot possess that full

understanding of grammatical principles which alone makes them an effective aid in the acquisition of a foreign language, which they undoubtedly often are to adult learners ; and (c) that a broad basis of oral experience is necessary before the later linguistic developments of reading or writing can be indulged in with advantage.

The prejudice in favour of the indirect or grammatical method of acquiring a foreign language through the medium of the mother-tongue is so strong even now, that it is worth while to oppose to it the following convincing argument from psychology.

Whenever we employ the indirect method or resort to translation, we are establishing a mental association between three things, viz. the object or idea, the word representing it in the mother-tongue, and the word in the foreign tongue ; and in so doing, are incidentally interposing between the object or idea and the word for it in the foreign tongue, the word in the mother-tongue which by reason of its far greater representative force (i.e. power to re-enter the mind or be recalled) will always tend to come into the mind first, and so hinder the immediate recall of the required word in the foreign language.

Hence the *direct method* seeks to establish direct relations between the foreign word and the object or idea for which it is a symbol, and thus eliminate the obtrusive influence of the corresponding native word altogether.

(iii) To find a *sufficient motive*—a *raison d'être* for the pupil's part in the lesson, so that he finds himself in the position of having something to say (or enquire about) rather than being under the obligation of saying something merely because he is required to do so by

the discipline of the school—must always be a primary object of good teaching method.

In addition to these three broad principles of general attitude towards language teaching at this early stage, there are two other minor principles deserving of notice, viz. (i) the need for *variety* within the lessons, which may be attained by introducing reading and writing and active manual occupation into the oral lessons, and (ii) the need for repetition in the form of drill exercises in the use of certain necessary phrases.

This latter principle is particularly important in the early stages of language teaching when the nucleus of words and phrases from which the pupil can extend his knowledge of the language for himself, is being built up.

A thorough grasp of these principles should enable the teacher to deal confidently with the details of the two following important matters :—

- (a) the choice of lesson topics, and
- (b) the method of treatment of them.

(a) With regard to the first of them, experience has shown that a very wide range of topics is suitable for this stage of language teaching. A certain degree of classification of them is possible and, no doubt, is helpful, but individual preference is the best guide if the most is to be made of the teacher’s special aptitude and skill, especially as regards manual occupations.

Amongst the topics most commonly used, the following types or groups may be distinguished :—

- (i) *Naming Lessons*—an adaptation of the *old object lesson*, e.g. parts of the body ; clothes ; food ;

food utensils ; common household objects, e.g. furniture, writing materials, etc. ; toys ; models of carts, boats, bridges, etc.

(ii) *School Occupations*—paper folding ; cardboard cutting ; clay-modelling ; brush-work ; stencil cutting ; plaiting ; weaving ; knot-tying, netting, etc.

(iii) *Pictures*, particularly those that suggest a story or incident capable of simple narration, or description.

(iv) *Stories*, particularly those adapted to simple dramatization.

No special knowledge is called for in regard to such topics as are mentioned in (i), but those in (ii) will require a good deal of preparation and some degree of special skill on the part of the teacher. A number of books have been published in recent years on the subject of Handicraft for Schools, one of the most comprehensive being in the form of an encyclopaedia called the *Book of School Handwork*, edited by H. Holman to which all the best known writers on the subject have contributed. As regards the types of (iii) and (iv), the most illuminating writer is probably Laura Plaisted, whose *Early Education of Children*, published by the Oxford Press, should be read by all teachers who wish to attain a special proficiency in the earlier stages of language teaching.

(b) With regard to treatment, it will be desirable during the first few lessons to adopt the following plan. The teacher points to the object or part of the object whose name is to be learnt, and clearly pronounces the word, making certain individual pupils pronounce it

in concert. He will then teach them the simple forms of question and answer, which would be used in asking or giving the name of some object, e.g. ' What is this ? ' ' A pen ', or ' It is a pen. ' ' What is this called ? ' ' A knife ', or ' It is called a knife. ' ' What is the name of this ? ' ' Wax ', or ' Its name is wax. ' Of these alternative forms of answers either should be equally permissible to the pupil. At any rate it is hoped that no teacher trained on modern lines will insist on the worn-out doctrine that answers must always be given in complete sentences. A very slight acquaintance with the forms of speech in actual use will dispose of this deeply-rooted pedagogic heresy. Consider a single instance such as the following :— ' Why are you so late ? ' ' I am so late because my train was late, sir ' savours most distinctly of impertinence compared with the briefer but more natural ' Because my train was late, sir. ' Variety can be introduced into this type of lesson (i) by providing slips of paper with short sentences containing the words recently learnt written upon them for the pupils to read, or (ii) by requiring them to complete sentences or answer questions written upon such slips or on the blackboard, or (iii) by the simple transcription from the blackboard to the pupil's notebook of typical questions and answers of the kind used during the earlier part of the lesson.

The warning most needed by young teachers undertaking Junior work of this kind for the first time and more particularly if they already possess some experience of teaching more advanced pupils, is to use the blackboard with discretion. A little reflexion will show that it is useless to place long words or words of difficult spelling upon the blackboard when

boys are only just beginning to read. The eye impression will not in such cases at once reinforce the ear impression, but only increase the pupil's mental confusion. Nor should it be forgotten that the ear is the primary avenue by which language finds entry into the mind.

There is nothing then to prevent a teacher from introducing his pupils to words such as bristle, trousers, etc., the spellings of which are wholly unphonetic, but which can easily be acquired as spoken words.

After some ten or a dozen lessons of this type have been given and a fair competence in the use of a small vocabulary of commonly recurring words and phrases has been acquired, some exercises of the following type may be attempted.

Each pupil is provided with two sheets, say, of different coloured paper, for example a blue sheet and a red, a pair of scissors, and a foot rule. Preliminary questions are asked about the materials such as 'What is this called?' as the teacher holds up each article in turn. Then, addressing individual boys, he will enquire, 'How many sheets of paper have you?' 'What colour are they?' Some boys will intentionally not have been served with all the materials or with two sheets of the same colour, etc., and thus be provoked to declare the omission, and ask that the missing articles be supplied to them.

At this point the characteristic feature of this type of lesson will be introduced by the teacher giving clearly-worded directions, e.g. 'Cut a strip of blue paper one-quarter of an inch wide, and another strip of red paper of the same width.' Ample time should be allowed for the execution of this order, which is a good test whether the pupils understand what is

said to them. The teacher will probably find some pupils who have not understood the order or have executed it badly. Thus some strips may be too wide, and some too narrow. In either case the remedy lies in the pupil carefully measuring the strip with his foot rule, and this gives occasion for further simple directions or questions as the teacher may deem fit.

When several strips have been cut in this way, further orders are possible, e.g. ' Lay five red strips close to one another in a row. Take a blue strip and slip it over the first and under the second red, and so on with the third, fourth and fifth.' In this way the teacher will lead up to the question, ' What do you call this kind of work ? ' ' Weaving.'

Then, by varying the process of weaving by taking two red strips together, different designs will be worked out and the idea of ' design ' or ' pattern ' made clear. This and other simple variations will readily occur to the mind of any teacher undertaking this sort of work.

A fitting conclusion to lessons of this type will be either a written or spoken account by the pupils of what is meant by ' weaving ' and ' pattern ' or ' design '.

Lessons based upon the study of a picture form a third type of lesson in common use. Success depends on a slight knowledge of how to look at pictures and a certain degree of skill in questioning. With regard to the first, children may be encouraged in a suggestive rather than a direct manner to note in suitable pictures such points as the season of the year, the time of day, direction of the wind, and other similar physical details of which there are usually a variety of indications, such as the leaflessness or budding of the trees,

sunset, length of shadows, the drift of spray or foam, movement of leaves, etc., as well as the more obvious intention of the subject represented. With regard to the second point, the importance of good questioning is not likely to be challenged, and if the teacher has studied the picture well and knows the capabilities of his pupils, it is easy to avoid such vague and fruitless questions as 'What do you see in this picture?', 'What are they doing?', etc. Once a fair start has been made in the examination of the picture, it is generally easy to proceed. Variety in the work can be introduced by allowing the pupils to read an account of the event represented by the picture when the immediate suggestions arising from looking at it are exhausted.

A more effective lesson, perhaps, of this kind may be built up from a series of pictures illustrative of a simple story. The first chapter of *Alice in Wonderland* can be readily adapted for this purpose. The first appearance of the White Rabbit, forming the first subject for a picture, the hall at the bottom of the well a second, and the glass table, golden key and glass box in the hall, and the small door giving a glimpse of the beautiful garden, a third.

After the pictures have been exhausted as centres of conversation, the pupils might be allowed to hunt in the book for the passages describing the pictures, and individual boys prove that they have discovered them correctly by reading the passages aloud which they think describe the pictures most fully.

A fourth type of lesson, the story that is capable of simple dramatization, is quite effective if it is managed—one might almost say stage-managed—correctly. Pictures can be used here, also, when the situation is

being learned by the pupils. In fact, the success of the lesson depends greatly upon the clearness with which the situation is explained to the pupils. Each picture should represent an incident in the story to be dramatized, and should be treated somewhat similarly to the above picture lessons except that the pupils may be allowed to read the parts of the story represented in the picture preparatory to acting them. A decidedly strong motive is thus provided for their reading. It frequently happens that some little thing—a necessary accessory to the acting, a table, a chair, a stick, etc., has to be obtained or made—and the teacher can often make this an opportunity for conversation.

The type of story suitable for this kind of treatment may be set out in skeleton form, thus :—Picture i.—A rich and well-dressed gentleman, as he is leaving his house in London, is asked appealingly by a small lad to buy a box of matches ; he protests that he has no change but only a sovereign in gold. The lad offers to run and get change for it. The gentleman scrutinizes the lad's face for a moment, decides that he is honest and hands him the sovereign. The boy darts off but does not return. Picture ii.—The interior of the gentleman's house, with a small boy bearing a strong resemblance to the boy in the former picture, standing before the gentleman, to whom he is explaining that his brother had met with an accident on his way to get the change, but that he had brought it for his elder brother. The gentleman makes enquiries about the brother's condition and decides at once to visit the boy. Picture iii.—A squalid room occupied by the two orphaned brothers, containing a shake-down of straw in one corner at which the injured boy is lying. He recounts the circumstances of his accident

to the gentleman and begs him to take care of his little brother should he not recover.

The Appendix A should be consulted for a further example<sup>1</sup> of the kind of lessons outlined above.

It remains to sum up and further emphasize the general principles involved in the above examples of the language lesson. Let the speech of the teacher be simple and direct, a good model to his pupils ; let his suggestions whether verbal, or arising out of situations contrived by him to stimulate his pupils' activity, be as slight and devoid of elaboration as possible ; let the opportunities for practice in the use of language be as numerous and *well-motivated* as possible. These exhortations contain the essentials of the above doctrine of language training.

Two vitally important practical points cannot be too strongly insisted upon, viz. (i) the importance of the drill exercises in the ready use of certain essential words and phrases, forming the nucleus from which the pupil can extend his knowledge of the language by his own enterprise, and (ii) the need of careful discrimination in correction of minor errors. It is a great mistake to insist upon too rigid accuracy when readiness and fluency are things most desired. To interrupt pupils for trifling errors of a grammatical kind merely disconcerts and discourages.

The other subsidiary aspects of the language lesson at this stage, reading and writing, demand a few words further to elucidate the parts that they are called upon to play.

<sup>1</sup> If the reader is interested in this form of teaching, he will find in *The Oxford English Course* by Dr. Lawrence Faucett (Oxford University Press) the most complete exposition of present-day language teaching at this stage.



READING AND WRITING (JUNIOR STAGE)

The first point to be insisted upon in regard to reading and writing is that the occasions which call for their use in the language lesson shall be as spontaneous as possible. In the foregoing illustrations of language lessons this point has already been urged, but one or more examples will perhaps help the reader to realize better its importance.

Imagine a lesson with beginners in which the general aim of the lesson is to familiarize the pupils with the vocabulary used in making purchases, say, at a grocer's shop. The teacher will prepare advertisements and notices such as are found in the ordinary shop—'Buy our 1s. 8d. tea', 'Butter is cheaper to-day', 'Sunlight Soap saves time, life and labour', etc., or he will have hectographed copies of an order to a tradesman for various goods, written in the form of a letter. Occasion for writing may be found in the preparation of labels for various goods, tea, coffee, sugar, etc., in the case of the absolute beginners, or of accounts, invoices, etc., with the more advanced.

When pictures are used, the opportunity for reading has already been indicated, and in some cases the pictures can be hectographed and the class required during the latter part of the lesson to write a brief account of each picture.

Even at this early stage it is possible to introduce a little recitation of a very simple kind which is not only intelligible to the pupils, but is thoroughly liked by them.

The following plan has been found effective in these lessons with quite young pupils : the subject of a very simple poem such as Tennyson's ' What does little



Birdie say ? ' is introduced by pictures, and any other form of illustration which may help the pupils to realize it vividly. It is then read or recited to them and any verbal difficulty there may be removed. Then the first verse of the poem is shown to the class written in bold clear writing upon the blackboard and a boy is called upon to read it aloud. When this has been successfully accomplished, the teacher expunges an important word in each of the first three or four lines, asking a pupil to read it and fill in the missing word. Further words are removed and the procedure described above repeated, until at length the pupils can read the *skeleton outline* and fill in all the missing words. Finally, as a written exercise they transcribe the poem into their books, filling in the missing words and, when this is done, close their exercise books and one or two pupils recite the poem.

## PART II

### MIDDLE STAGE 11-15 YEARS

#### ‘ SEPARATE EXERCISES ’

The subjects included in the language lessons at this stage are Oral Composition, Reading, Written Composition, Dictation, Grammar, and Recitation. Thus it will be seen that the scope of the language lesson has been widened to include Dictation and some Grammar. The chief departure, however, during this stage is the tendency towards distinct lessons in each of the above subjects, a departure which becomes possible now owing to an increased power of sustained effort on the part of the pupils. It must not be overlooked that the principle of correlation is also at work bringing oral composition and reading into one group, written composition, dictation and grammar into a second group, and reading and dictation into yet a third group. There is a distinction between the correlated lessons of this stage and the inclusive single lesson of the earlier stage which the student should be careful to grasp. The latter may contain, within the limits of a single lesson, conversation, reading or writing, whereas in the former each lesson would be exclusively a reading, conversation, or grammar lesson as the case might be, but each might be used as part of a wider plan of instruction to assist or reinforce the work of the other. Thus a reading lesson might be taken prior to a conversation lesson as a means of providing a subject of conversation with which the whole class was acquainted, or this order might in some cases be

reversed and the discussion of a topic be made a stimulant to the pupils to seek fuller information by reading.

The staple subject at this stage will still be Oral Composition, followed in order by (b) Reading, (c) Written Composition, (d) Dictation, (e) Grammar, and (f) Recitation.

#### (a) ORAL COMPOSITION

Experience has shown that the following types of lessons are suitable for oral treatment during this middle stage :—

(i) *Object Lessons*. The making of tea, coffee, or even bread, the roasting and grinding of coffee beans, the cleaning, trimming, and lighting of a petroleum lamp, and filling of a seltzer-gene, where the whole process is carried out in the presence of the pupils and with their active help.

(ii) *Constructive Lessons*, e.g. the making of bows and arrows, a kite, a fishing rod and tackle, a model of a bridge, cart, boat, etc., where the models can be constructed from easily obtainable materials by the use of simple and easily obtained tools.

(iii) *Situations of Common Occurrence capable of Simple Dramatic Treatment*, e.g. the steps to be taken by a man intending to build a house, an advertisement for a servant, selection and engagement of one, the summoning of an ambulance or a doctor by telephone in the case of an accident ; a doctor's visit, payment into and withdrawal of money from a bank, consignment of goods by rail or for shipment.

(iv) *School Occupations*. This type of lesson should still afford scope for conversation, more careful work and elaborate planning being expected than in the earlier stage, e.g. the making of boxes of various shapes and designs, models of rabbit hutches, hen coops, dog kennels, etc., in cardboard; of calendar frames, picture frames, etc., and their ornamentation by brush or stencil designs.

(v) *Descriptive Subjects to cultivate accuracy of wording, etc.*, e.g. the filling of a fountain pen, (b) the care, winding and setting of a watch or clock, (c) the setting up of a pocket folding camera, (d) the repair of a punctured bicycle, (e) the sowing of seeds, etc.

(vi) *Stories* based on pictures, or on stories previously read, or built up from a skeleton outline of suggested key-words.

*Treatment*. The reader who has thoroughly familiarized himself with the types of treatment recommended for the Junior stage will have little difficulty in acquiring those best suited to this stage.

The first type of lesson is one in which a simple process is performed. For example, some tea is to be made or ‘ brewed ’. The teacher begins by inviting opinions as to how this may be done. The preliminary questions may disclose that one of the pupils knows how to do it. In this case his services may be employed to give directions as to what is to be done by the teacher or, better, by one of the pupils who has been chosen to help. The rest of the pupils remain a critical audience to be appealed to by the teacher for suggestions when anything goes wrong. The making and serving of tea with sugar and lemon or milk will give

ample opportunities for questions both by pupils and by the teacher, and simple explanatory statements in reply.

The teacher should require the pupils to anticipate as far as possible the next step in the process and so be able to give the necessary directions for carrying it out. Where he finds that a boy cannot describe the next step, but thinks that he can perform it, he should be given the opportunity and then required to describe it afterwards.

The second type of lesson (ii) appeals to a very strong instinct, the constructive instinct which is responsible for our first impulses towards mental activity in several important directions. In this case a simple model is discussed, planned and executed. The general attitude of the teacher is similar to that adopted in the former type, viz. he endeavours to obtain intelligent anticipations from his pupils of what is to be done or what the next step should be. The next step is carried out strictly as the pupil directs. If it is successful he is shown that his conception was right, but, what is more important, if it fails he is shown in most cases that his conception was wrong, or, at any rate, inadequate. This self-correcting form of work is most valuable, and a skilful teacher will seize every opportunity for its employment.

The third type of lesson (iii) deals with situations capable of simple dramatic treatment. The same general ideas underlie the treatment of these lessons as the corresponding lessons of the earlier stage. The chief difficulty lies in making the situation sufficiently clear to the pupils to enable them to improvise the remarks appropriate to the various situations.

Certain boys are selected for the several parts, and the rest of the class forms a highly critical audience

like the chorus of Greek tragedy to which the teacher should and, indeed, must appeal from time to time, or lose their interest, for expressions of opinion upon the success or failure of any part of the acting and for suggestions for its improvement.

The work may be enlivened by the introduction of such incidents as letters to be written, delivered or read ; advertisements issued, etc., which arise naturally out of the situations represented.

The fourth type of lesson (iv) continues the treatment given to the School Occupation lessons in the earlier stage. The chief difference will lie in the greater elaboration of plan in all the work that is attempted and the more definite appeal to the aesthetic sense. Design and pattern will receive greater attention. For example, if a flowering plant, say a spray of jasmine, is made the subject of study for a floral design, the ' set ' and ' poise ' of the blossoms and the balanced alternation of the leaves will come in for an appropriate share of consideration.

The range both of subjects to be made and of materials to be used should be increased. It will be found that pupils who have had experience of this kind of work in the earlier stage, will be ready with suggestions both as regards articles that might be made (e.g. handkerchief boxes, notepaper and envelope holders, etc.) and of additional materials that might be used, such as cotton wool, to give a rounded effect to a box lid.

It is needless to multiply instances of this kind of work that may be made the manual basis of these conversation lessons, but where the pupils are interested in nature study and in drawing, the teacher will sometimes find a seasonal scheme of lessons, taking the

fruits in season at the time as the subjects for modelling in plasticine, cutting out in paper and for drawing and brush work, as giving a greater continuity to the work than can be otherwise obtained. But much depends upon circumstances, i.e. whether such things are easily obtainable, and upon the knowledge the teacher possesses of the artistic aspect of the work. Whatever subjects are taken, it must not be forgotten that in all these varied forms of manual activity the object of the teacher is to provide real motives for the use of language, definite stimuli for enquiry and natural occasions and opportunities for widening their vocabulary on the part of the pupils, and not the making of useful and ornamental articles. Nevertheless, the better the thought expended on them the better incentives are they to a clear expression of thought about them.

The fifth type of lesson (v) has for its special aim the cultivation of accuracy of wording. The general plan is similar to that advocated for type (ii), only that greater importance will be attached to exactitude. Here, as in the other type, something has to be done or some process carried out in strict accordance with the directions given. One pupil gives the directions and another pupil or the teacher carries them out whilst the rest of the class look on, ready to be appealed to by the teacher for criticism or suggestions.

Suppose the subject of the lesson to be 'How fountain pens are filled'. The teacher produces a fountain pen with the cap fixed on and, holding up the pen, asks the pupils, 'What is this?' 'What makes you think so?' 'Can you make certain, if I allow you to handle it?' 'Describe the parts to

me ' (cap, nib, inkwell, etc.). ' How do you fill it ? ' ' What is the little glass thing used for filling it called ? ' ' Tell so and so (naming one of the pupils) carefully what to do in order to fill it properly.'

It will be noticed that the self-corrective principle (cf. (ii)) applies during this stage of the work, for if the directions given are intelligible and in correct sequence, then the process will be carried out properly ; if not, the flaws in the directions will probably be apparent at once either to the pupil giving the directions or to the class which is looking on.

The various types of pens, the self-filling and stylographic varieties, may then be distinguished and classified after a careful examination of their parts has been made.

The sixth type (vi), in which stories are made the basis of the conversation lessons, do not require many words to describe the treatment best suited to it. The class may in some cases be allowed to read up stories and relate them to the class. If genuine success is to be achieved by this method, there must be a stock of suitable books available from which the pupils may equip themselves with a story to tell in class. As a practical expedient the teacher will find that at first it is desirable to tell off two or three boys a couple of days beforehand to prepare a story to tell the class, and he should invite such pupils to come to him and discuss the story with him, and perhaps even rehearse it privately with him. Opportunities such as these for gaining an insight into the characters and capacities and tastes of his pupils should be welcomed by any teacher who aims at the education as well as the instruction of his pupils. Moreover, the correlation of the work with private and individual reading will be

most valuable, particularly as giving a powerful incentive to undertake the latter in a normal way.

Sufficient has probably been said in the earlier stage about the use of pictures to make clear the use to which they can be put in connexion with conversation lessons. It remains to say a few words about the lessons in which a skeleton outline of suggestive key-words is employed.

In these lessons the teacher writes upon the black-board a few suggestive key-words such as seashore, three boys, a solitary boat, accident, rescue, and asks the pupils to try to make up a story about them. It will, perhaps, be desirable to do this preparatory work some day or so in advance, so that the ideas suggested by the key-words may have had time to sink well into the minds of the pupils and have taken hold of their imaginations.

If this precaution is taken, it will be found necessary simply to ask a pupil to give his version of the story, and then ask for improvements and criticisms of his story from the rest of the class.

The outlines of the treatment given above do not aim at being exhaustive, but merely at pointing out general directions of proved value which young teachers may follow with confidence whilst at the same time a sufficiently large demand is made upon their own industry and enterprise to ensure the work being substantially their own.

The notes upon reading which follow are, of course, not so closely related to the foregoing work in point of treatment as the written composition which comes after, but reading claims the prior place by reason of its utility in providing subject matter or a part of the subject matter of the conversation classes.

Before parting with the subject of Oral Composition altogether, it is perhaps well to remind the young teacher that great discrimination is needed in the matter of correction. He must know how much to expect, and must not expect even that amount all at once, for a large part of the most successful methods of all kinds of training works at the sub-conscious level. Sound methods alone will not suffice without that staunch faith in them which enables the teacher to pursue his course without faltering.

(b) READING

It is assumed that by the time this stage has been reached the initial difficulties of word recognition and their analysis into separate sounds and symbols have been largely overcome, and that only the longer words hinder recognition and defy enunciation.

It will be agreed, I think, after the perusal of these notes, that reading at this stage may be looked upon for practical teaching purposes as having two chief aims, i.e. (a) to gain information, and (b) to communicate to others for their edification or pleasure the contents of printed or written matter.

Obviously the former is an integral part of most forms of study, not even excluding the study of science conducted on experimental or practical lines. Not less obvious is the fact that the student has no occasion to utter aloud the words that he reads, in fact to do so would be a hindrance in most cases to his progress. Hence for the purposes of study he must learn to read silently, viz. to apprehend the meanings of the printed or written symbols as soon as they are perceived by the eye (or, if a psychological standpoint be adopted, apperceived by the mind).

In the latter case the reader is obviously called upon to read aloud, and to exhibit, if his reading is to be worthy of the name, the skill of an artist in a marked degree. For reading aloud clearly is one of the expressional arts, although one that is not commonly held in much repute.

For practical teaching purposes, then, reading must make provision for both of these types, which will be referred to subsequently as (i) Reading for Information and (ii) Reading Aloud.

In the past, teachers have not sufficiently clearly distinguished these two types of reading, and for reasons which it would be tedious to discuss here, have attached undue importance to reading aloud. I propose to discuss each type separately, and to deal first with (i) Reading for Information, as being capable of closer correlation with the foregoing notes on oral composition and also because I wish to emphasize its importance.

(i) *Reading for Information.* The association of this type of reading with study has already been alluded to above. Now study is essentially (and etymologically) the pursuit of some end, a quest to win deeper meaning from life and all experience by eager but patient enquiry. Reading, then, which is one of the chief instruments of study, must naturally partake of some of its characteristics. It also is purposive, i.e. is pursued, to resolve some doubt, to throw light on some difficulty, or discover the additional facts requisite for the solution of some problem. It certainly is not a mere desultory perusal of printed matter such as every prospective examinee has probably found himself slip into at some time or other when getting up special books in which no direct or intrinsic interest in the subject sustains him.

Since the reading here intended, then, is purposive, the lessons in it must be so contrived that the purposive element is present. In fact provision must be made in them for a supply of live motives for all the reading of this kind that our pupils are required to do. To achieve this, close attention must be given to :—

- (a) the selection of the subject matter ; and
- (b) the treatment of it or the procedure of the lesson.

These two matters are very closely interdependent, but nevertheless, it is convenient to deal with each separately.

(a) One broad principle underlies the choice of subject matter to be read in these lessons, viz. that the subject be well within the range of the ordinary experience of the pupils, but that at the same time there must exist aspects of it to which their experience does not extend, but of which they may reasonably be expected to desire a knowledge. These surely are the ordinary conditions under which the student turns to books, and the more clearly he realizes what he wants from his book, the more likely he is to obtain it. It is these conditions, then, that the teacher should endeavour to reproduce in these lessons.

The kind of subjects that best fulfil the above requirements are those which describe the growth, preparation, or process of manufacture of some commonly occurring product, e.g. the growth, preparation, etc., of tea, coffee, or cocoa, or the raising of coal, mining of diamonds, or manufacture of soap, casting of iron, etc. It would not be difficult to extend the list.

The reader is referred to the appendix<sup>1</sup> for further examples of the subjects suitable for this type of lesson.

(b) From what has already been said of the purposive character of these lessons, it will be clear that the primary aim of all successful procedure must be to provide adequate motives for the reading. Motives of this kind can most readily be derived from a suitable question, and in this case a suitable question is one which the pupils, whilst able to grasp its intention perfectly, either cannot answer at all or can do so only in a very imperfect manner. One other condition attaches to the suitability of these questions: they must be such that clear answers are given to them in the passage or passages that the pupils are to be asked to read.

A brief sketch of how one of these lessons is conducted is probably the most serviceable way to convey a clear impression of what is required of the teacher.

If the class is quite inexperienced and, say, of an average age of eleven years, the teacher will be well advised to have with him a sample of the product which is to form the subject of the lesson, and to ascertain by a few simple questions what they know about it. He can then proceed to propound the first of his 'posers' (difficult questions); and, whether he gets incomplete answers, or no answers at all, his main object of convincing the pupils of the inadequacy of their knowledge will have been achieved. This is the right moment to direct them to their books to find an answer to his question, and as the pupils are

<sup>1</sup> Great changes have taken place in the literature best suited for this type of reading, and, as choice exemplars of the newer mode, the reader is referred to the lectures of Sir William Bragg before a juvenile audience at the Royal Institute (*The World of Sound, or Concerning the Nature of Things*. G. Bell & Sons).

inexpert, he is careful to refer them to a definite paragraph in which the answer to the question is to be found. To ensure that their reading is of the purposive kind which it is his aim to cultivate, he is careful to repeat his question, and may in the early stages of this kind of work find it necessary to write up the question clearly upon the blackboard. His directions will be that they are to read the passage silently and try to find an answer to his question, but that after a few minutes they will be given an opportunity to ask him the meaning of any difficult words. When this interval has elapsed, he asks one of the pupils whether he has understood the passage or whether any of the words have puzzled him. If the pupil asks for the meaning of a certain word, as a first step he should be required to read its context. It should be noted in passing that the context of a word is not always given fully in the actual sentence in which it occurs, but the real clue to its meaning may be supplied either in an earlier or a later sentence. It not infrequently happens that a careful re-reading in this manner suffices to reveal the meaning of the difficult word. But this depends upon the nature of the context and is by no means always the case. Accordingly, the teacher must be prepared to reveal the meanings of words in other ways. These may be summarized briefly as follows :—(i) by producing the object, illustrating the action or the relation, etc., implied by the word ; (ii) by describing in words a situation which brings out the significance of the word.

After the passage has been cleared of its verbal difficulties in this manner, the teacher will require from one of the pupils an answer to the original question in the light of what he has just read. If his

answer is satisfactory, well and good, and the teacher may pass on to another question to which an answer will be forthcoming in the next paragraph to be read. If, on the other hand, the pupil's answer is not satisfactory, the teacher may either invite other answers, or, what is perhaps a sounder practice educationally, he will require the boy to read aloud the exact words of the passage upon which he based his answer. In this way a pupil can often be led to correct his errors with a minimum of intervention on the part of the teacher.

The remaining paragraphs will be read in similar fashion, and the lesson brought to a close by a general summary of the answers obtained by reading to the several questions put by the teacher.

It is claimed for this type of lesson that it does tend, to a considerable degree, to cultivate a habit of reading purposively which will be of high value not only to the professed student, but also to the general reader.

It will doubtless have been noted that this type of lesson, though mainly a silent reading lesson, does not altogether exclude reading aloud. There are sound practical reasons for requiring that some part of the reading should be aloud. In the first place, it is only in this way that the teacher can trace certain mistakes to their origin, e.g. to such entire mis-reading of a passage as to render it unintelligible ; in the second place, his pupil is enabled to lay the foundation of the valuable habit of reproducing accurately the sense of a written passage under the penalty of conviction out of his own mouth of false witness as he reads the passage aloud. Moreover, the occasions for reading aloud in such cases are pedagogically sound, for definite motives are supplied for the reading, viz. either to show the context of a word, or to produce the

evidence chapter and verse for an assertion that a pupil has just made.

There are, of course, other types of reading lessons in which the capacity to read silently requires cultivation, as well as the one described above at some length. There is a wide range of fiction, fairy tales and tales of travel and adventure, stories of animal life, etc., towards which the boys of the age which we are now considering are impelled with the same kind of zest that fires the zeal of the adult reader of fiction.

The motive force in these latter instances is very different from that met with in the former type. The teacher is not required to supply it so much as to refrain from discouraging it, or rather by a discreet sympathy to encourage it. This point becomes clearer when the nature of the procedure to be adopted in these lessons is realized.

Given a sufficiently varied supply of books, the most sound method educationally is just to allow the pupils to read individually what they choose, the teacher's function being simply to give help when called upon to do so, and to lend countenance, so to speak, to the subject selected by each pupil. Boys are very sensitive to public opinion of a certain kind, the makers and rulers of which are the leading spirits among the class and the teacher if he has been able to establish that personal prestige of which I spoke in the Introduction, can do much to guide the formation of good taste and lay lasting foundations for a love of good literature. The 'index' of what is taboo amongst boys is controlled by principles which defy definition, but a wise master will take particular pains that the kind of things for which he wishes an enthusiasm do not get put on the list.

Failing this method of complete individual freedom, a sectional treatment of these reading lessons may be tried. By this is meant that the class is divided up into sections in which there is, as far as may be, an equality in numbers and attainments. The teacher will then deal with these several sections individually, much in the same way that he treated individual pupils as described above.

Failing the adoption of either of the above methods, the teacher must retain the ordinary class method ; this is especially likely to be the case where the lesson is conducted in a foreign language. The most distinctive feature of the teaching is the reduction of the stories, etc., into self-contained sections of suitable length, which will interrupt as little as possible the continuity of the narrative. At the end of each section the teacher will go through the passage that the pupils have read to themselves silently, first of all clearing it of verbal difficulties in a manner similar to that described above, and will then require an account of the phase of the story just read, from one or more pupils. If their accounts are unsatisfactory, they will be required to read the passages aloud by way of correcting the blunders which their version of them revealed.

It will be gathered from the above remarks that the various types of lesson in which silent reading is the dominant feature, whilst differing in some important respects, have most of their vital points of treatment in common. It remains to complete the discussion of reading at the Middle Stage with a few words upon Reading Aloud. The close correlation of these reading-periods or lessons with the oral composition work at this stage has already been stated.

(ii) *Reading Aloud*. In the silent reading lessons the pupil was called upon simply to absorb the message conveyed by the written or printed page and adapt it to the requirements of his own intellect or feelings, but in the present instance he has to carry the process a step further and interpret the message to other minds by uttering it aloud in such a way that a just impression of its meaning may be conveyed to his audience.

In determining the kind of topics that are suitable for reading aloud, there is one general principle that may safely be followed, viz. select a passage with which, for its beauty, wit, pathos and humour, a boy might easily be conceived to be so pleased as to wish to share his pleasure in it with his intimate friends by telling them about it, or by reading it to them. The choice of suitable subjects for reading aloud in class resolves itself largely into a knowledge of what boys of this Middle Stage can appreciate in the shape of the beautiful, witty, the pathetic, or the humorous. On such a matter as this, it is impossible to give suggestions of general application, because so much will depend upon the particular conditions of previous training and culture, for in no branch of school work do these count for more than in the development of a sense of literary appreciation. But a sense of literary appreciation there must be—conscious or unconscious—if the development of the expressional side of literary training is not to be merely mechanical.

Naturally, simplicity and directness are the qualities which commend themselves most to the young in both prose and poetry. And beauty possessed of both these qualities may be of the content as in the lines :—

My heart leaps up when I behold  
A rainbow in the sky.

or of form in the opening verse of Shelley's 'Cloud' :—

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers  
From the seas and the streams,  
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid  
In their noonday dreams.

where the hissing of the recurrent sibilants is suggestive of the sizzle and the 'fr' and 'fl' of the pouring of heavy rain and the drowsiness suggested by the lingering diphthongal sounds in 'noonday' and 'dreams'.

What is suitable in the sphere of pathos, wit and humour must, for the reasons stated above, be left to the discretion of the individual teacher, who alone can be in possession of the requisite knowledge of the existing attainments of his pupils.

As was pointed out in the Introduction, students of expressional art (music, painting, sculpture, etc.) have at all times relied upon the imitation of good models, upon the direction of a master of the art, and upon assiduous practice as the only sure path to competence. Now Reading Aloud being an expressional form of art, also, is no exception to this rule. The general lines, then, upon which the teacher of the art of Reading Aloud should proceed, are not far to seek.

Given a suitable subject, the procedure should be as follows (i) It is necessary for the teacher to invoke the mood in his pupils which will bring with it the 'atmosphere' appropriate to the piece to be read. The necessity of this will be readily granted in the case of a class that has just returned from the boisterous merriment or poignant personalities of the playground, and has to be set to work to read a piece of poetry, or prose for that matter, with a strong tone of pathos

about it. Great skill and tact is necessary to do this effectively. Sometimes a few short incisive sentences by the teacher may be the best way to induce in the class the feelings proper to the subject. Sometimes again, perhaps I might say more often, it will be more effective if the teacher plunges into the task without any prefatory remarks of his own, and relies upon the effect of his reading of the piece or of some part of it to induce the right mood.

(ii) The class will be required to read silently the first paragraph or stanza, as the case may be, with the knowledge that they may be called upon to read it aloud.

(iii) When this has been done, they may be allowed, as in the earlier type of reading lesson, to ask for the meanings of difficult words and receive the necessary explanations. With poetry this may not always be desirable. A discussion of word meanings where the true word values are rather some peculiar enchantment of sound, is indeed unprofitable.

(iv) When the verbal difficulties have been removed, the teacher may read the first paragraph or stanza as a model and, if necessary, draw attention to any peculiarity in word or phrase which he thinks may help the class to a better appreciation of the passage.

(v) After the preparatory steps (ii) and (iii) have been taken in reference to a fresh passage, he will require a pupil to read the passage. If the boy's reading prove to be ' wooden ' and lacking in expression, or disjointed through a false grouping of words into phrases, it has been found a good practice to require the pupils to point out the most telling words in the sentences, and to discover the correct grouping

of the words. At first it will be advisable for the teacher to write up the passage on the blackboard, and do this work with the class, adopting some simple system of signs to indicate the words which carry the greatest emphasis and those words which should be grouped together. This is about as far as foreigners can go in their appreciation of English literature at this age, but it is not difficult for the teacher of English boys to adapt and extend the suggestions given here.

If the choice of the matter read has proved a lucky hit, opportunity for memorizing the more striking passages should be given and emotional moments, a *sursum corda* of life-long value, may be gained.

Even at this stage some pupils may benefit from a little formal regulation of their reading by being taught the expressional values for good reading and recitation of pace, pitch and pauses. This bare suggestion will be elaborated in Part III, where its importance with older pupils is considerable.

### (c) WRITTEN COMPOSITION

In the Junior Stage, language was introduced in a written form only when a definite occasion for its use arose out of the other work which was being conducted as an oral lesson. It concerns us now to see how best to conduct more continuous periods of written work.

In making the transition from these occasional efforts in written composition to the stage of continuous prose writing, it will be well to pass through a stage in which the earlier part of the lesson is conducted upon oral lines. For example, a picture may be 'read' or 'interpreted' in the manner described in Section (vi) under the heading Oral Composition, but

the teacher will break off the oral description at a certain point and require the pupils to complete it for themselves individually in writing.

Here, as in the case of Oral Composition, much depends upon a proper selection of topics. It is convenient to divide these into certain typical groups :

- (a) Topics suitable for narration, e.g.
  - (i) A story previously read.
  - (ii) A picture, or set of pictures, suggestive of a story.
  - (iii) A story-plot supplied by suggestive key-words.
- (b) Topics suitable for description, e.g.
  - (i) *Real objects and their uses* : a bicycle, football, etc.
  - (ii) The construction of well-known objects bridges, canals, tunnels, etc.
  - (iii) *Common occupations* : the carpenter’s, blacksmith’s, fisherman’s, etc.
- (c) Topics suitable for the cultivation of a simple direct and incisive style, e.g.
  - (i) Drafting of instructions for the use and care of articles in common use :—
    - (1) A Primus Stove How to clean, fill, trim and light it.
    - (2) A Safety Razor : How to assemble its parts, strop it, use it, etc.
    - (3) An Acetylene Lamp How to take it to pieces, clean it, charge and light it. Precautions to be observed, etc.

(ii) Answers to advertisements :—

(1) Vacant posts.

(2) Second-hand articles for sale.

(iii) Short reports of games seen, accidents, fires, big ceremonies, etc.

The above groups are not intended in any sense to be exhaustive but merely to indicate some general sources which may be tapped when a supply of topics suitable for written composition is being formed.

As regards procedure in these first lessons in written composition, it is particularly desirable that the pupils shall be hampered in their writing by as few restrictions as possible that might discourage them in their efforts. The main appeal will be to their imaginations, which are only too easily crushed under the weight of an exacting standard of grammatical accuracy, or a prematurely awakened consciousness of any burdensome ideas of style. If any sort of restriction should be obtruded at this early stage, it should take the form rather of a motto than a rule, such as 'Be sensible !' 'Write simply, write sense !'.

These early efforts, especially if the language be a foreign one, are very exacting, and so a careful gradation in the exercises given is very necessary. It has already been pointed out that the telling of a story, or reading of a picture, may be carried to a certain point, then broken off, and the pupils allowed to complete the narrative in their own words. This method clears the pupil's path of the difficulty of having to make a start, so aptly summed up in the French proverb, 'c'est le premier pas qui coûte.' Another method, viz. of dictating a series of questions upon a subject which has been discussed or

demonstrated, such, for example, as the repairing of a punctured inner tube of a bicycle tyre, or the soldering of a leaky tin vessel, etc., and of requiring the pupils to write answers, may be used to pave the way for more independent work.

During the later lessons of this course it will be found advantageous to separate by some considerable interval the setting of a topic for composition, and the actual writing of it, but during the earlier lessons it will be better to make provision for the setting, writing, and correction of work within the same lesson period. The advantages of separating the two periods are fairly obvious : more time is thus allowed for the topic to sink into the minds of the pupils, before they are called upon to write about it, and more time, also, is available when the time for writing comes.

Important as the question of ' setting ' composition is, there is little doubt that the correction of it is no less important. In the first place the standard by which the pupils' composition is to be judged must be a real one, i.e. it must be adapted to the experience and attainments of the pupils. It is not difficult to discover what this standard should be, if the pupils themselves are given a due share in setting it up ; if, for example, they are allowed to appraise the worth of alternative renderings occurring in their written work, instead of having the teacher's, perhaps, too superior version foisted upon them. Ample provision, therefore, must be made in the distribution of the time allotted to these lessons for a critical examination of selected parts of the written work by the class as a whole, in which mere negative criticism unsupported by any positive suggestions of a constructive kind will be regarded as ' not playing the game '. The general distribution of the

work in one of these lessons would be as follows :—

(i) the correction or critical examination of the previous exercise with the aid of the class, during which only important and typical matter indicative of good and bad work would be dealt with ; (ii) the class would set to work upon the topic that had been set at the close of the previous period, and whilst they are thus engaged in writing the teacher will avail himself of the opportunity to run through previous compositions individually with their writers ; the interruption of their present work thus occasioned need not be very great ; (iii) when the time allowed for the written work has elapsed, the teacher will introduce the subject for the next composition.

If progress is more than usually rapid it may be found necessary to devote one whole period in part to a critical examination of the previous composition, and in part to the setting of a subject for a new composition, and devote the next whole period to writing only. But this necessity is not likely to arise, and it is wiser on the whole to reserve it as a distinctive feature of the next, the Advanced Stage.

The next subject in the scheme for this Middle Stage is Dictation which will be shown to be in certain aspects an auxiliary of the written composition work on the side of its correct technique.

#### (d) DICTATION

The claims usually set out on behalf of dictation for inclusion amongst the language lessons refer to its value as a means of teaching spelling and overlook the important contributions which it can make to written composition by way of improving its technique in such matters as the proper use of capital letters, punctuation,

etc. For it is a far sounder educational practice for the pupils to acquire the proper use of these by careful usage in this way than by the halting application of grammatical rules.

There is one other direction in which dictation may be made to subserve the teaching of Composition, viz. by helping to cultivate a sense of the unity of a well-built paragraph. Its action is perhaps all the more effective in that it is indirect, and made without conscious reference to paragraphing at all. All that is required to achieve this subsidiary aim is for the teacher to select from time to time self-contained paragraphs describing some incident, event, etc., for which the pupils could readily suggest a suitable heading or title. A successful effort to extract a suitable heading for such a paragraph can hardly fail to reveal in some measure at any rate its underlying unity. The importance of this will be admitted when it is remembered how few people who possess a quick intuition of balance of the unity of a sentence possess in anything like the same degree—if at all—a sense of the unity and fitness of a paragraph. There are other disciplinary reasons for the adoption of this idea which will be mentioned below.

We may summarize the reasons for continuing the practice of dictation, which is in present ill-favour—perhaps to an undeserved extent—as threefold :— (1) it is a valuable means of learning spelling both through the ear, through the eye, and through the hand ; (2) it affords opportunity for carefully graded practice in the technique of written composition ; and (3) it provides frequent opportunities for the cultivation of a quick sense of the true unity of a paragraph in a gradual, indirect, but educationally sound manner.

The foregoing paragraphs have left but little more to be said in reference to the conditions that passages suitable for dictation at this stage should fulfil. In fact if the passages fulfil the special requirements mentioned above, it remains simply for the teacher to see that the pieces that he selects are of a literary kind which from the nature of their subject will appeal to the interests of his pupils. To say more on this subject would merely reopen the question of literary appreciation and interests which has already been dealt with in the earlier sections of the book dealing with reading aloud and silent reading.

The procedure in dictation lessons may be varied to a greater extent than might at first sight be supposed, but this variation lies rather in the methods adopted for correction than in the actual dictation itself. Having chosen a passage which fulfils the requirements of the lesson in respect to practice in spelling, in punctuation, etc., the teacher proceeds to cut it up into what have been aptly described as 'sense-units' of a length suited to the span of attention of which his pupils are capable. Notice this last point, for it should certainly be one of the aims in teaching dictation to train the pupils to increase the number of words which they can retain in the same act of attention. The passage is then ready for use.

The next two steps are universally adopted. First the whole passage is read aloud, at such speed as to make the enunciation deliberate, but not so slow as to hinder a quick apprehension of its meaning ; next it is dictated according to the 'sense-units' into which it has been cut up, without any repetition of the words, unless something extraordinary occurs to render this necessary, otherwise there is a danger of cultivating a

habit of inattention. The next step again is not much disputed, viz. the re-reading of the passage as a whole so as to give a final opportunity to the pupils for checking their punctuation and spelling of certain words.

It then remains to correct the work and, if the choice of subject permits, to find a suitable heading for it. Where the system of assigning marks for this sort of work holds, conscientious teachers for reasons best known to themselves will often collect the dictations and themselves laboriously correct the work of each pupil. This is misplaced zeal, originating either in a mistrust of the pupils’ capacity to carry out the work of correction properly or in actual *distrust* of the pupils’ capacity to do the work honestly when marks are at stake, and even when the pupils are not required to correct their own work. It is the marks are the root of the evil ; do away with the marks, and the atmosphere of distrust, if not of mistrust, is cleared. If the meaning of correction were better understood, I think that there would no longer be room for these alternatives ; for surely the best person to correct a mistake is the person who made it. He at any rate is the person who should have the strongest interest in doing so. Moreover, as Mr. Rankin points out, he avoids contact with other people’s mistakes, which is clearly a desirable thing. If marks, then, are abolished, the one set of objections to allowing each pupil to correct his own work vanishes, and those that refer to the pupil’s inability to correct the work with sufficient thoroughness, would seemingly rob the pupils of a valuable training in careful and thorough work with some little sense of responsibility attached to it, and so may be set aside.

Granted then that the pupils be allowed to correct each his own work, it still remains to consider how this

may best be done. Various alternatives present themselves, the teacher may show the class a correct version written up on the blackboard, from which the pupils will make their corrections in spelling, punctuation, etc., or he may spell out the difficult words and write them up on the blackboard ; or again, he may require the pupils to spell the more difficult words, being careful always to insist on a clear enunciation of the word before the attempt to spell it is made, as it is certain that one of the chief aids to correct spelling, particularly by those whose retention of word-forms is mainly through the ear, is this ability to sound each syllable of the word exactly and clearly. The appeal to other modes of word-form retention through the hand and the eye must, also, be provided for by insisting that words wrongly spelt are written out carefully several times. This writing out of the word correctly several times should establish what the psychologist terms a motor-memory for the movements involved in writing the word. The potency of this form of memory can best be realized by recalling occasions when one has been interrupted in one's writing and one's attention distracted momentarily from the work in hand. It will be found on looking again at what one was writing that not the word which should have been written appears on the paper, but the one next after it in the line of one's thinking. This proves how mechanical the memory for the correct muscular movements in writing familiar words has become.

Whilst the writing-out of words mis-spelt is being carried out the required number of times the teacher should tell the pupils that as soon as this task is completed they should read the passage through

carefully and endeavour to find a suitable heading for it. Very useful work can be done in this way both in helping boys to grasp the meaning of what they have read and, as mentioned earlier, of cultivating a ready sense of the unity of a paragraph. Moreover, this procedure has the important disciplinary advantage of filling in the time of the quickest and probably the most intelligent boys who will have finished the writing out of their mistakes long before the slower and more backward boys have completed theirs.

The last step of all is to require one of the pupils with a large number of mistakes to read the piece through aloud, beginning with the title that he has assigned to it. This has the salutary effect of causing the pupils to be careful about filling in omissions and about their correction work generally owing to the risk of being found out.

As a last precaution against careless work the exercise books are collected and revised by the teacher. In this way considerable all-round educational benefit can be got out of Dictation.

#### (e) GRAMMAR

It has been the fashion for some time past amongst educationists to decry the usefulness of grammar in a vague and general way, with the result that a good deal of uncertainty about it exists in the minds of many young students of education. One notable exception, viz. Mr. B. P. Ballard’s Essay on ‘ Formal Grammar ’ which is bound with a series of other essays entitled *Handwork a Medium of Education*, I would strongly commend to their notice.

The most pernicious of the old ideas about grammar, viz. that it is of direct value in helping one to speak

one's own language or, stated a little less generally, that we learn to speak or write a language by the application of the grammatical rules relating to it, has long since been successfully combated. For it is certainly not the natural way for a child to set about learning his own language ; nor, indeed, of improving his use of it. Abundant practice amongst surroundings where pure speech only is heard and skilled assistance is at hand is the best medium for the cultivation of pure speech and correct pronunciation. But because grammar is not of use in this sense to the child as a direct aid to his acquisition of his own tongue, it does not follow that it is of no use to him at all. Most certainly is this not the case, if he is at the same time learning a foreign language ; since boys of eleven or twelve can easily be led to distinguish the various parts of speech and their usages, and resolve a sentence into its subject and predicate ; and this knowledge will be of considerable assistance to them in rendering the use of a foreign language more consciously correct, and, also, in breaking themselves of some special faults. For example, Egyptian pupils find the greatest difficulty in using interrogative forms correctly, and will persist in the use of such expressions as ' Why you do that ? ' despite the most persistent efforts to correct them. The discovery of the rule of inversion of the subject from the examination of a number of examples should be used to reinforce the teaching supplied by the mere substitution of the correct form for the incorrect form every time it occurs. Again, in reading poetry it is sometimes necessary that the pupils be made more fully conscious of the exact meaning by an analysis of the sentence into subject and predicate and their extensions ; e.g. ' Here oft the tear-besprinkled grass

Llewellyn’s sorrow proved’ (from Spencer’s ‘Bedd Gelert’) ; or where the omissions of the verb may make the exact meaning somewhat hazy ; e.g.

Look down. What groves that scarcely sway.  
What ‘ wood obscure ’ profound !

(from Austin Dobson’s ‘An Old Fish Pond’) ; or, still again, where inversions of subject and predicate occur as in ‘Beguiling is the pleasant way, and softly breathes the air’ (from Mrs. Abdy’s ‘The Street of By-and-Bye’). The pupil’s grip of the meaning of such lines as these will be strengthened by processes of grammatical paraphrase which help to fill in the omissions and restore the natural order of the words (i.e. the normal grammatical order for prose-language).

It must not be inferred from the above examples that it is desirable always to subject obscure lines in poetry to this sort of dissection. To do so in the following lines would be to rob them of their spontaneity and the directness of their appeal as music and vivid imagery :

Duck, drake in the rushy lake ;  
And the deer lives safe in the breezy brake ;  
And the timid, funny, pert little bunny  
Winks his nose, and sits all sunny.

(Christina Rossetti, quoted by Miss Plaisted in *The Early Education of Children*.)

This particular point is dealt with very clearly in a small volume on the *Teaching of English*,<sup>1</sup> by Roberts and Barter on page 197 under the general heading of ‘paraphrasing’. The remarks upon ‘Grammar and

<sup>1</sup> Published by Blackie & Son, Ltd., 50 Old Bailey, London, price 2s. 6d. net.

Word Study' in the same volume will be found very valuable for more advanced work. It will be seen then, that whilst it is difficult to give precise rules as to the kind of poetry which may be subjected to this form of grammatical paraphrase in order to render its meaning more exact, it is not difficult to state the kind which should not. To quote from the volume mentioned above: 'Poetry written in a reflective, philosophic, and more thoughtful mood . . . may be used.' On the other hand, poetry which appeals to the emotions and sense of music is not suitable. The difference between these two types may be seen vividly by contrasting the lines of Christina Rossetti's quoted above, with the following witty and satirical lines in which the appeal is to the keenness of our sense of wit and satire :—

In good King Charles's golden days,  
When loyalty no harm meant,  
A zealous, High Churchman was I,  
And so I got preferment ;  
To teach my flock I never missed,  
Kings were by God appointed ;  
And lost are those who dare resist,  
Or touch the Lord's anointed.

Sufficient has been said on this matter of the right and wrong occasion for the use of grammatical paraphrase to enable the student to develop for himself a sense of what is and what is not appropriate for the purpose. In any case much must be left to his discretion. It remains, then, to point out how it can be done.

At the outset it must be quite obvious that, before any of this kind of grammatical paraphrase, or modified

form of analysis, can be employed to elucidate the meaning of doubtful passages, a certain amount of systematic grammar must be done ; correct forms for nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs in respect of case, number, comparison, tense and mood must be known ; correct usages, so far as it concerns the concord of the verb and subject, and distinction between subject and predicate must be made clear. In other words, a certain amount of accidence and a little syntax must be taught.

*Systematic Grammar.* The keynote of all this purely grammatical work should be to enable the pupils *to make clear distinctions*, not absolute, but practical working distinctions such as are justified by a careful examination of their own experience ; e.g. between singular and plural forms, adjective and adverb forms, present and past tense forms in the verb, and the correct usages or functions of these various parts of speech in sentences. In the early stages distinction between the functions of the different parts of speech should precede distinctions of forms. The method here must be inductive, viz. the rule or the nature of the distinction must be discovered from the examination of instances, and its discovery be as far as possible the work of the pupils.

There is ample scope in this kind of work for a skilful presentation to the eye of the material under examination by well-devised tabulations for the black-board whereby with the use sometimes of coloured chalks the essential facts on which the distinction rests may be so emphasized as to aid greatly the pupils’ apprehension of it. These devices have been so widely used for such a long time that one example will suffice to illustrate what is intended. In a lesson in

which the aim is to reach a definition of a pronoun, the following work might appear on the blackboard :—

| <i>Sentence.</i>                                   | <i>Part of Speech.</i>                            |
|--|---|
| 1. John hit <i>John</i><br>himself                 | Noun.<br>Word used instead of the<br>noun 'John'. |
| 2. He hit himself                                  | Word used instead of the<br>noun 'John'.          |
| 3. What did <i>John</i> do,<br>John?<br><i>you</i> | Noun.<br>Word used instead of the<br>noun 'John'. |
| 4. <i>I</i> (John) hit <i>myself</i><br>(John)     | Both words used instead<br>of the noun 'John'.    |
| 5. John hit <i>Tom</i><br><i>me</i>                | Noun.<br>Word used instead of the<br>noun 'Tom'.  |

The extraction of these examples from members of the class would require a procedure somewhat as follows. A pupil is asked his name, and giving the reply 'John', is told to hit his arm with his hand. The teacher writes on the blackboard sentence 1—'John hit *John*'; then, addressing himself to another pupil, asks whether this is correct English. The boy will probably say 'No', and give the correct form, which may then be written up, and the point clinched by entering opposite 'John' its part of speech, and opposite 'himself' 'Word used instead of the noun "John."'

Sentence 2 might be obtained by asking another pupil, 'What did John do?' He will get as answer either 'John hit himself' or 'He hit himself', which

will, then, be dealt with in similar manner to the first example.

Sentence 3 could be obtained by requiring a pupil to ask John what he did ; his question ‘ What did *you* do, John ? ’ should be compared with the form ‘ What did John do, John ? ’, and the substitution of ‘ you ’ for ‘ John ’ again noted. John’s answer, if correctly given, might be added to the list, viz. ‘ *I hit myself* ’ and the double substitution for ‘ John ’ noted in the form ‘ I (John) hit *myself* (John) ’.

The fifth sentence would be inserted to break the association with the noun ‘ John ’, and could be obtained by authorizing John to assault his neighbour mildly, and then enquiring first of one of the other pupils, then of Tom, and finally of John, what took place. Their answers would be placed on the black-board and the various substitutions for ‘ Tom ’ and ‘ John ’ noted. It should not be a difficult matter, then, for the pupils to collect from these examples the definition that is required. Finally, the reference in all these examples to persons should be used to justify the term ‘ personal pronouns ’ and enable the teacher to warn the more alert minds amongst his pupils to be on the look out for other kinds of words used instead of nouns—other pronouns, demonstrative, relative, indefinite and interrogative.

In conclusion it seems necessary only as regards this systematic grammar work to reiterate my earlier statement that the constant aim should be to enable the pupils to *make clear distinctions* and so arrive at such working rules and definitions as their present experience justifies. By applying these rules their shortcomings will be discovered and an intelligent understanding of the reasons for amending and extending them will be felt.

For example, it is unlikely that children who have mastered the meaning of a pronoun in the restricted manner indicated in the above lesson will fail to grasp the pronominal character of the words underlined in such a sentence as :—

Here are two books : *this* is John's, *that* is Mary's ; and, in consequence, be ready for a further short lesson on pronouns, in which the object is to distinguish demonstrative pronouns from personal, and of course from the corresponding demonstrative adjectives.

My object is not to write a grammar, and so I have not thought it necessary, in view of the excellent grammars in existence (such as Nesfield's, published by Macmillan), to do more in reference to sentence analysis than refer the reader to one of these volumes. There is one recent publication, *Marlborough College, Notes on Analysis*, by Stagg, published by Blackie & Son, Ltd., at 8d. net, containing a number of useful examples which would be of considerable value to a young teacher.

### *Grammatical Paraphrase*

Enough has been said to enable the teacher to discover in the reading, recitation and composition work with his pupils opportunities for the application of the systematic grammar work that his pupils have done under his direction. This work will naturally be deductive, viz. the application of general ideas to special cases in order to bring about a better understanding of them. The steps to be followed will be (1) an analysis of the sentence, (2) a paraphrase of it, which by presenting the parts of the sentence, subject and predicate (verb and object if any), in their normal order, will make the meaning more apparent.

To sum up, the systematic grammar work may be looked upon as progressing when the pupils can make for themselves clear distinctions between the various parts of speech, their common usages, and can analyse the simple sentence ; and the grammatical paraphrase be regarded as satisfactory when the pupils are able, after analysing a sentence, to piece it together in such a way as to show by their paraphrase that they understand it.

(f) RECITATION

Just as the grammar work described in the last section leads us towards the scientific aspect of language, so recitation, like reading in some respects, draws us towards the literary or aesthetic aspect of language, and in consequence to a consideration of what it is that attracts us in masterpieces of literature.

If we ask the ordinary person what he likes, say, about a poem that has taken his fancy, he will probably reply that he likes the 'swing' of it, or the way the 'idea is expressed', or that it sounds 'genuine' or 'rings true'. In other words, he is attracted by the rhythm, the imaginative force, or the sincerity of the verses. It is to one or other or to a combination of all three of these elements that our nature responds as to something harmonious to it, fitting and beautiful.

In childhood we love the jingling of the old nursery rhymes such as :—

Jack and Jill went up a hill  
To fetch a pail of water ;  
Jack fell down and broke his crown,  
And Jill came tumbling after.

or, 'Little Bo-Peep has lost her sheep.' There is something about their simple, vivid narrative, and the

plain, quick recurring rhymes which has always found a ready welcome in the hearts of English-speaking children.

It is a short step from these nursery rhymes, say, to R. L. Stevenson's :—

We built a ship upon the stairs,  
All made of the back-bedroom chairs,  
And filled it full of sofa pillows  
To go a-sailing on the billows, etc.

A teacher is not likely to err in his choice of subject matter for these lessons if he can recognize these qualities and distinguish them from what is false in rhythm (viz. which moves in harmony neither with the sound nor the sense of the verse), commonplace or vulgar, artificial or insincere. A true rhythm is one which moves with the sense and determines the proper phrasing of the verse. It takes precedence over the more formal instruments of poetry, namely, metre (i.e. the fixed number of stressed syllables) and of rhyme, and determines their value for any given verse ; viz. whether the line is to be read in accordance with the mere succession of stressed and unstressed syllables or relieved of this monotony by proper phrasing ; and if the verse is rhymed whether the rhymes are to be strongly sounded or softly sounded. An interesting article on this subject of reading and reciting poetry that appeared in *The Times* newspaper is quoted by Mr. Welton in his *Psychology of Education* (pp. 446 et seq.). The subject is there treated very fully and clearly.

As regards the method of conducting a recitation lesson, our aim must be to discover some more vital method of learning by heart or of becoming ' word-perfect ' than the dreary process of mere mechanical

repetition. Here, as in all learning processes, interest is the dominant factor. Interest may be deepened by the cultivation (1) of a better understanding of the sense, (2) of a keener vision of the imagery, of the word pictures, (3) of the close analogy so often existing in good poetry between the sense and the sound. Each of these factors contributes to deepen our interest in poetry and requires special consideration. For if a given poem is studied in such a way as to give prominence to these three aspects, it will be found that a very slight further effort, if any, is required to commit it to memory. For it will have been genuinely learnt by heart, because the varied appeal that it makes will not only have been felt but also understood.

The method advocated for teaching a poem consists of adequate treatment of :—

(1) *The Meaning.*

This may be made more intelligible

- (a) by good and expressive reading aloud by the teacher,
- (b) by grammatical paraphrase, as described in the last section,
- (c) by picture paraphrase—the picture or diagram that a boy draws of a passage he has read is usually a good test of his grip of its meaning. For some interesting remarks on this subject the reader is referred to *The Teaching of English*, by Roberts and Barter, p. 199 (Blackie & Son, Ltd., 2s. 6d. net.).

(2) *The Imagery*

Unless the picture drawn in words is vividly realized, the emotional tone which the picture is intended to arouse is lost. Some caution is needed

that the feelings of the teacher are not imported into the interpretation at the expense of the pupils' own. But, nevertheless, it is from the quiet enthusiasm of the teacher that the pupils' enthusiasm is most likely to be kindled.

It should be noted that picture-paraphrase may still be the most effective method of invoking the right mood, but where the imagination can dispense with these material props or crutches so much the better. For example, we can hardly imagine that a class of boys of twelve years of age would require pictorial aid to help them to visualize a landscape picture so vividly word-drawn as that contained in Wordsworth's 'Written in March' :—

The cock is crowing,  
The stream is flowing,  
The small birds twitter,  
The lake doth glitter,  
The green field sleeps in the sun.

All that is really necessary is the suggestion that the picture is there if they will only try to see it, and, perhaps, a word or two of comment on the stronger metaphors or similes employed ; cf. a few lines farther on in the same poem :—

Like an army defeated  
The snow hath retreated.

- (3) The analogy between the sounds used in the make-up of the line and the sense and general emotional atmosphere of the verse, if carefully brought to the learner's notice, will add greatly to the zest with which some poems will be read and

render their committal to memory much easier.  
In the following lines :—

The *fair* breeze blew, the white *foam* flew,  
The *furrow* followed *free* ;  
We were the *first* that ever *burst*  
Into that *silent* sea.

from ‘ The Ancient Mariner ’, we have some good examples of this kind of analogy. The onward sweep of the favouring breeze is admirably suggested by the rapid succession of spirants (f’s) forming quite a miniature blast in themselves. In the two following lines the deep-toned vowel sounds in ‘ first ’ and ‘ burst ’ combined with consonants -rst produce a note of triumph which sinks to a lower key of satisfaction and achievement in the softer sibilants in ‘ silent ’ and in ‘ sea ’. Interesting details in regard to this kind of analogy will be found in Mr. Welton’s book (pp. 446 et seq.) already referred to, and also in *The Teaching of English*, by Roberts and Barter (pp. 187 and following) likewise referred to above.

It is, then, by a careful study of the poem that we prepare for the learning and reciting of it. If this preliminary work is done successfully, the interest of the pupils will have been sufficiently aroused to make the mere learning of the piece by heart a very simple matter ; for the greater part will have been learnt already without any conscious effort.

It remains only for the teacher to repress any tendency towards affectation, and the sing-song rendering of the metre, to which children badly taught are very prone.

PART III

SENIOR STAGE    15-18 YEARS

‘ DIRECT STUDIES ’

The most distinctive features of this stage of language study may best be realized by contrasting them with those of the earlier stages. The first stage was one of ‘composite lessons’ in which various activities led to the growth and accumulation of the simpler usages of the language and a resultant confident—if limited—use of speech and of writing. The second stage was essentially one in which the first linguistic and literary acquisitions were developed in various ways by carefully graded ‘separate exercises’, and the result was the formation of good habits of speech, of reading, and of writing. In contrast with them the third stage is essentially one of individual effort, of self-education, in which growth and development come from the pursuit of ‘direct studies’.

The interests of an adult personality are steadily evolving in the child and at the same time the limitations of his powers as an individual are becoming more defined. Tastes are more definite ; affectations and, also, likes and dislikes are more pronounced. The most important of these features of the adolescent, from a language teacher’s point of view, is the appearance of (1) a definite leaning towards either the linguistic as distinct from literary studies, or (2) towards prose rather than poetry.

The practical teacher’s concern with these phases of growth is not to check them, except when there are

signs of rank growth or unwholesome exuberance (which youth seldom escapes wholly), but to secure that a wide field of opportunity in all the essential directions of both literary and linguistic studies shall exist, even if all his pupils cannot benefit equally from them. And, further, he must secure that in the literary studies an even balance is kept between the claims of poetry and of prose.

The studies belonging to this stage have a definite tradition behind them, and can conveniently be collected under the following general headings :—

- (i) The Study of Prose.
- (ii) The Study of Poetry.
- (iii) Linguistic Study.

#### (i) THE STUDY OF PROSE

The outstanding feature of the closer study of prose which belongs to this stage is the attention paid to its style and technique as distinct from bare meaning. A growing sense of craftsmanship enables the pupil to enjoy not only a writer's ideas, but his manner of conveying them. In the recognition of this lies the secret of much valuable teaching at this stage. The teacher has to deal with a young craftsman whose interest rests no longer in merely doing, but rather in how things are done well.

If this principle is adopted, the sequence best suited for the study of prose writings can be laid down, viz. :—

- (a) Critical Reading,
- (b) Critical Exercises in Composition.

#### (a) *Critical Reading*

The masterpieces of English literature, as Ruskin has pointed out, represent a royal court whose nobility will

be realized only gradually and at a cost of much pains by the way. Realization will have come in some considerable measure when, for example, 'Gibbon' stands for something definite in a boy's understanding of the writing of history in the English tongue, something 'finished, elegant, splendid, rounded, massive, sonorous, copious, elaborate, ornate, exhaustive,' or when 'Macaulay' in the same sense stands for a startling clarity, vigour and incisiveness of language which in some way reflect the activity, vigour, enthusiasm and integrity of Macaulay the writer and, to some extent no doubt, of Macaulay the man.

The traditional method of studying the great classical authors of Latin and Greek was wonderfully successful with boys who possessed the necessary aptitude for this sort of learning. 'Cicero' to them was a reality and a force in a very real, work-a-day Roman world, an astute man, polished, and, despite obvious failings, a memorable figure in all his words and works. The schoolboy reared in this tradition knew something, also, of his 'Caesar', his 'Pliny' and his 'Tacitus' in the same intimate manner. To this achievement he was impelled by a certain sense of scholarship and by the necessity of such close reading of the text of their writings, word by word, phrase by phrase, sentence by sentence, that neither sense nor sound nor the least nuance of meaning should escape him.

It should be a first aim of the teacher of English to boys and girls of fifteen to eighteen years of age to set up this ideal of exact scholarship and win for his pupils a sense both of the task and of the achievement of the great English writers. His pupils will be trained to exercise such critical acumen in their study of the

classical English writers as will enable them to differentiate between the older, somewhat pompous, and dressy styles of expression of eighteenth and early nineteenth century writers and the restraint and simplicity of the best writer of the modern English idiom. The acquisition of a certain definite standard of taste and style in well-written English gained in this manner should be largely unconscious and, if possible, devoid of priggishness. Of the lack of finality of such standards the older pupils, at any rate, should be under no illusions.

The succeeding paragraphs will give some idea of how the hearts and minds of boys and girls of the above ages can be set towards the attainment of this essentially humanistic ideal.

Suppose that in their history syllabus the class has been studying recently the Roman occupation of Britain, and it is desired to develop their understanding of contemporary Imperial Rome by a close study of the considerable extracts from Gibbon, the following procedure might be adopted.

Chapter III of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* will be selected for close study, and the pupil instructed to note :—

- (1) The subject discussed,
- (2) The sequence of the points dealt with,
- (3) The language used e.g.
  - (a) picturesque or striking adjectives,
  - (b) balanced or antithetical phrases.

This preliminary work should be done privately and individually. In the class-room the pupils must bring their collective intelligence to bear in committee fashion on the more fundamental questions concerning the

writer's opinions and judgements, and on his modes of expressing them. The work will proceed by way of questions so framed as to bring out the essentials of the topics discussed in the successive paragraphs of the chapter. The following questions are amongst the more obvious ones that would be put during the early part of the lesson :—‘What is the subject discussed by Gibbon in this chapter?’ ‘The constitution of the Roman Empire.’ ‘Under the Empire what form of Government has been set up?’ ‘Monarchy.’ ‘Does Gibbon appear to view the adoption of monarchical government by Rome with misgiving?’ ‘Yes, he evidently fears that such rule may degenerate into despotism.’ ‘Does he express himself calmly and judicially or with strong feeling?’ ‘Which sentence in the first paragraph sounds to you most cold and judicial?’ and conversely, ‘Which sentence in the same paragraph reveals the warmth of his feelings and the bias of his opinions?’ The first sentence of all, beginning ‘The obvious definition of a monarchy’ would probably be given in answer to the first of these questions, and the sentence beginning ‘The influence of the clergy, in an age of superstition . . .’ and ending with the words, ‘but the banner of the church has very seldom been seen on the side of the people’ is the answer to the second.

Before passing to the consideration of the next paragraph the teacher would ascertain whether his pupils had noted any of the more striking phrases, e.g. ‘the throne and the altar’, ‘the banner of the church’, and the touch of feeling which they carry with them.

In dealing with the second paragraph, after an enumeration has been made of the circumstances which conspired to establish the position of Augustus as

Emperor, care should be taken to single out for passing comment some of the phrases and sentences, e.g. ‘ The people of Rome, viewing with secret pleasure the humiliation of the autocracy, demanded only bread and public shows,’ ‘ or a mixed multitude of persons who reflected disgrace upon their rank, instead of deriving honour from it’, all of which declare the writer’s revulsion of feeling against Empire and leanings towards the old republic with pleasing malevolence.

If this critical reading and discussion of *The Decline and Fall* is sustained for some two or three chapters, the pupils will begin to form some conception of Gibbon’s task and achievement. By noting duly such phrases as ‘ the sharp eye of discontent ’, or to ‘ arraign the hasty choice of the army ’ they will learn to recognize a phraseology which is more ornate than the restraint imposed by modern taste in such matters would allow. For the older boys translations from Gibbon into strictly contemporary English should form an occasional exercise.

Another illustration is required to show how this form of close and critical reading of good classical English can be used in developing a sense of the substance and savour of well-written English prose.

Imagine that your class have to read Macaulay’s essay on ‘ Samuel Johnson ’. This title and the incisive opening, ‘ The work has greatly disappointed us .’ are the best possible introduction to the study of the essay, if one may assume that they know anything about Boswell and Johnson at all. The iconoclastic instincts of those who already know something of the subject will have been aroused when they learn that the work in question is none other than the venerated Boswell’s *Life of Samuel Johnson*, as edited by John

Wilson Croker. The discovery that it is not Boswell who is at fault, but the unhappy Croker, will relieve the minds of the more conservative pupils for a while until they come presently upon Macaulay's attack upon him: the teacher who wishes to give the work a bias towards literary criticism will find to his purpose an extract from a review of a recent publication, *James Boswell*, by C. E. Vulliamy, published by Geoffrey Bles, 10s. 6d. This is quoted in Appendix B, pages 138-9.

One or two points about the procedure in lessons devoted to this essay in which Macaulay allows his powers of biting criticism and caustic wit free rein will quickly indicate how a class can harvest a goodly store of ideas about 'Macaulay'.

Apprised of the subject, it is only necessary to tell the class that in reading the essay they should note carefully the charges on which Mr. Croker is indicted and some of the striking phrases in which this censure is conveyed; e.g. the passage beginning 'There is something at once diverting and provoking in the cool authoritative manner in which Mr. Croker makes these random assertions. .'

In the class discussion of this essay, its theme—viz. censure of Croker's edition, followed and relieved by admirable pen sketches of Johnson and of Boswell, both as men and writers, a review of the position of men of letters in their day, ending appositely with a striking criticism of Johnson's style of writing English—will call for due consideration and serve admirably as an introduction to a few observations about Macaulay's own style. Boys of sixteen years and over will not fail to realize the greater simplicity, ease and undress of Macaulay's style as compared with 'Gibbon', whom they have recently read.

No better passage to bring out these points could be put before young students of English than the well-known one at the end of this essay which describes Johnson's style of writing. It begins with, ‘ All his books are written in a learned language, in a language which nobody ever hears from his mother or his nurse, in a language in which nobody ever quarrels, or drives bargains, or makes love, in a language in which nobody ever thinks. It is clear that Johnson did not think in the dialect in which he wrote. The expressions which came first to his tongue were simple, energetic, picturesque. When he wrote for publication he did his sentences out of English into Johnsonese. His letters from the Hebrides to Mrs. Thrale are the original of that work of which ‘ The Journey to the Hebrides ’ is the translation ; and it is amusing to compare the two versions. ‘ When we were taken upstairs,’ says he in one of his letters, ‘ a dirty fellow bounced out of one of the beds in which one of us was to lie.’ This incident is recorded in the ‘ Journey ’ as follows :—‘ Out of one of the beds on which we were to repose started up, at our entrance, a man black as Cyclops from the forge.’ Sometimes Johnson translated aloud. ‘ The Rehearsal,’ he said (very unjustly), ‘ has not enough wit to keep it sweet,’ then after a pause, ‘ it has not enough vitality to preserve it from putrefaction.’

The atmosphere created by reading the good racy English of the above passage should be favourable to a safe passage to a still more modern idiom, and the study of a peculiarly delightful essay by E. V. Lucas, ‘ A Philosopher that failed ’ (to be found in the collection of his essays, *A Little of Everything*) is recommended as a continuation of the above exercises.

In this essay Mr. Lucas makes close running between Boswell, his Dr. Johnson, and a certain Oliver Edwards, who owes his escape from oblivion to a chance encounter with these celebrities. The opening lines of the essay form the best and only introduction needed to it 'Of Oliver Edwards, nothing, I believe, is known beyond the fact that he had been at Pembroke College with Dr. Johnson ; that he was a Solicitor in Barnard's Inn ; that he married twice ; that he wore grey clothes and had a wig with many curls, and went to church on Good Fridays. We know of Edwards' life only this, and of his speech we have only some dozen sentences : and yet he will live for ever, by virtue of having crossed the stage of literature on one fine morning one hundred and twenty-nine years ago.'

In giving directions to a class concerning their preparation for the reading and discussion of this essay in class the teacher should simply require them to note (1) in what respect Dr. Johnson is accounted as having failed, and (2) what was the 'one deathless remark' made by Edwards. In the subsequent class discussion, after Boswell's flight of rhetoric and the dash of cold water administered to it have been duly noted, the string of topics raised in conversation by the good Edwards as forming the structure of the essay should be carefully examined and the unobtrusive remarks by which Mr. Lucas has connected them up not less carefully noted. For it is suggested that the teacher's objective will have been reached, if he succeeds in arriving with his pupils at some such generalization as this : E. V. Lucas has the same lucidity of style as Macaulay, but the reader is singularly undisturbed in his grasp of the situations set before him by this author whose quiet, unobtrusive presence is hardly observed ; whilst in

reading Macaulay, he is conscious that his author has his victim at the bar, and that the echo of his voice resounds through one denunciatory paragraph after another in which he addresses him in slightly varied formula, ‘ Mr. Croker tells us,’ ‘ Mr. Croker informs us ’ or simply ‘ Mr. Croker says.’

Enough has probably been said now by way of illustration of the general method of procedure in lessons devoted to close critical reading of good English prose literature. The range from which the illustrations have been drawn is necessarily limited, and in consequence, before parting with this section of the scheme for ‘ direct studies ’, it may be helpful to suggest one or two rally calls in the study of other forms of English literature, e.g. the novel, drama, biography, and travel which the writer has found useful at times both in discovering the substance and structure of the work and in planning a ‘ procedure ’ for lessons in these spheres of literature.

In dealing with the novel it is well to remember that the features which made it a ‘ new ’ form were ‘ plot ’ and its reference to contemporary life. Its claims to dignity, so long contested by a Puritanized England, rest on the truth of its portrayal of life and character. The aim, then, of any close and careful study of a good English novel should be to reach a good understanding of just these things (1) its portrayal of life and character and (2) its enmeshment of the lives of individuals in the events which make up the story in some form of plot. The range of selection is very wide, but it is still true that Englishmen are incorrigibly ‘ romantic ’, and in consequence there will always be a response to good novels of the type of R. D. Blackmore’s *Lorna Doone*, and also of Scott’s *Ivanhoe*. To those, if

there are any, who are still doubtful of the value of the novel as an educational instrument, it is only necessary to say that novel reading supplies experience of life in a very vivid form, at secondhand it is true, but often under climes and conditions which only the most favoured mortals can bring together in their own actual lives, and such reading does sensibly influence our thoughts, feelings and actions—in short, does shape character. The young teacher should distinguish two types at least in the English novel (1) the romantic type with its thrills of heroic adventure in remote times or places which make the reading of it 'a complete change of air', and (2) the novel of contemporary life with its problems, trials, success or failure under conditions which are closely akin to those of our own lives. It is reading of this latter type which becomes a veritable extension of our own lives and is valuable in proportion to the zest with which we enter into the lives of the people whose doings and destiny are portrayed in it.

Obviously, from what has been said, the reading of a good novel has something personal and intimate about it, and in consequence class discussion must observe the same canons of good taste and avoidance of gossip and scandal as it would in discussing actual events and people. There will always be the safe topics, 'characterization' and 'plot' in which Quiller-Couch has distinguished 'conflict' in almost infinitely varied forms as the essential element, and lastly 'structure' which calls for an eye able to measure the architectural merits of a literary production.

The foregoing remarks apply to the use of the novel in English or English-speaking schools ; the case for which has been set out persuasively by the late Mr. J. H. Fowler

in *The Art of Teaching English*, Macmillan & Co., 1932, but the matter cannot be laid aside in this book without the addition of a few remarks about the use of the novel in the teaching of English to foreign pupils.

In Egypt it is the practice in the Government Secondary Schools for pupils of the highest classes to study two or three set books in English, one of which is usually either a novel or a play. Experience has proved that for the abler pupils at any rate the humanistic value of these studies is something really substantial. These abler boys (and indeed, girls), in the three to four hours weekly that are available for this form of study, do become vitally interested in the actions and lives of the people thus presented to them. Of novels *King Solomon's Mines* and *Treasure Island*, and of plays *Milestones* and *The Admirable Crichton* have recently been used in Egypt with undoubted success.

No great divergence of opinion appears to exist as to how such material can best be used amongst foreign pupils who are sufficiently advanced in their general study of English. The procedure generally used is based on the time-honoured plan of three readings (i) a first reading—an extensive study with the object of gaining a general, or comprehensive view of the novel or play ; (ii) a second reading—an intensive study with the object of realizing the finer details of the work ; (iii) a third reading—for the purpose of contemplation and appreciation.

The first reading consists of as rapid a preliminary survey of the novel or play as possible, in which the teacher himself reading aloud—throughout in the case of a play and wherever necessary in the case of a novel—takes the leading part. Some preliminary work, before the reading commences, must be carefully

carried out. The principle underlying this phase of the proceedings is that the pupil should be encouraged to anticipate, to think, to question, as well as to absorb. The name or title of the novel or play, for example, should give rise to surmise and brief discussion as to the general contents, the time, the setting or the place, e.g. the nineteenth century or the twentieth century—England, or Africa, or elsewhere. Good guessing is always worth while. In addition to this guess-work a certain mental *apparatus critici* must be supplied. For it must be remembered that these listeners are handicapped and inexperienced. Certain values inherent in the novel and the play, must be suggested to them. They need some warning to note such matters as (1) the opening words for the keynote they strike, or the atmosphere they create ; (2) the first appearances of people or entrances of actors, and (3) the grades into which the characters quickly fall as being of much or little importance for the plot.

When these preliminaries have been duly performed it is possible to proceed with the reading aloud of the novel or play. The reading will naturally be interrupted at suitable intervals for comment, explanations, and for discussion. This discussion is of high value as affording genuine occasions for conversation between the teacher and the class. His questions should guide the discussion and direct it towards a brief recapitulation of all the important happenings in the passage read and to some assessment of the 'values' referred to above. The transitions from scene to scene in a play, or from situation to situation in a novel are also suitable occasions for intelligent anticipation of future action and behaviour on the part of the chief characters and of the effect of such action or behaviour upon the plot

and likewise afford genuine occasions for conversation between the teacher and the class.

The success of this first reading with foreign students will depend a good deal upon the skill with which the teacher can dispose rapidly of the meanings of difficult words and phrases. At times the pace of the reading will on this account become exasperatingly slow, but the tempo rises as the interest in the people and the events begins to grip the class more firmly. The pupils must at intervals be given time to take down a glossary and work it up from their dictionaries out of class.

The second reading is the ‘ committee stage ’ of the proceedings. The share of the class in this re-reading is more active both individually and corporately. They have grasped the outline and must now realize the detail. Every resource the teacher possesses as artist or critic, as actor or producer, may conceivably be called in if the best work of which boys of eighteen years are capable of doing at this stage is to be achieved. The teacher must be able (1) to raise all the really vital points in the action or behaviour of the chief characters at important junctures ; (2) to note the presence or absence of certain circumstances and determine whether they are favourable or unfavourable to the ambitions of a given individual ; (3) to anticipate the next move in a situation which involves intrigue, overweening pride—the hybris of Greek tragedy and so on.<sup>1</sup> The clearer the pupil’s grasp of such points is, the better will his discussion of them be and the better, too, will be his reading aloud when he is called upon to give chapter and verse from the novel or play in

<sup>1</sup> The ‘ so on ’ includes a *flair* for the *finer movements* of the writer’s language, but to deal with that here would be to anticipate what is dealt with in Section (iii) of this Part III.

defence of an opinion he may have advanced or even accepted, if he has accepted it overtly.

It is at this second stage that the deeper educational influence of the play or novel is made or marred. Few teachers are so experienced or resourceful that they can neglect the aid and inspiration which can be derived from the work of the professed critics of the novel and the play such as the late Sir Walter Raleigh,<sup>1</sup> E. M. Forster,<sup>2</sup> Arnold Bennett,<sup>3</sup> or J. B. Priestley,<sup>4</sup> and more recently Mr. Percy Lubbock,<sup>5</sup> John Carruthers<sup>6</sup> (a pseudonym), Mr. Edwin Muir<sup>7</sup> and Mr. Herbert Read.<sup>8</sup> For the young teacher undertaking this sort of work for the first time their writings would seem to be truly a great occasion, in which to clarify his ideas concerning the relations between art and life. For he must be able to defend the artistic work he is expounding to sharp adolescent minds, and at the same time know its limitations. Actual life is incomplete, an unsolved riddle, something still fraught with emergent possibilities but a work of art, novel, play, or whatever it may be, is artistically complete. From the artist's first conception of it, it is something final, something judged. And this very completeness, finality, and adjudgedness is restful and satisfying to our growing, evolving, but still (and perhaps for ever) inchoate selves.

<sup>1</sup> *The English Novel*, by Sir Walter Raleigh (University Extension Manuals).

<sup>2</sup> *Aspects of the Novel*, by E. M. Forster, 7s. 6d. E. Arnold, London.

<sup>3</sup> *The Writer's Craft*, by Arnold Bennett. Hodder & Stoughton.

<sup>4</sup> *The English Novel*, by J. B. Priestley. Benn's Sixpenny Series.

<sup>5</sup> *The Craft of Fiction*, by Percy Lubbock. Jonathan Cape.

<sup>6</sup> *Scheherazade*, by John Carruthers. Kegan Paul, Trubner & Co.

<sup>7</sup> *The Structure of the Novel*, by Edwin Muir. Hogarth Press.

<sup>8</sup> *The Sense of Glory*, by Herbert Read. Cambridge University Press.

The third reading is not so much a reading, or even re-reading, as a contemplation of the novel or play in its entirety and completeness. It is largely an effort at appreciation, and will become most profitable when the novel or play is seen against its successive backgrounds, economic, social, political, and also artistic. The whole work must be reviewed, and situation after situation or scene after scene projected before the minds of the class by some objectifying process in which they can actively co-operate. The present writer and a colleague (Mr. Max Goodman) in taking *Milestones* with Egyptian boys, independently evolved the following scheme for conducting a final review of the play. A series of rough plans of the stage were sketched on the blackboard. These corresponded in number and in setting with the scenes into which the play was divided, although actually it is structurally printed in three acts only. By the use of these plans the scenes can be reconstructed quickly, and then projected against the typical background (or backgrounds) which the situation raised in them demands. Contemplation of the scene thus conjured up follows, and the class work proceeds by setting down underneath each scene a brief statement (in mere skeleton form) of the action involved in it, and above it a title or heading which, after due discussion, has been agreed upon by the class, and which actually gauges and sums up the emotional tension of the scene ; as for example ‘ Misunderstanding ’ for one scene, ‘ Rising Dissension ’ for another and, say, ‘ Open Quarrel ’ for a third. Valuable suggestions in the matter of detail proper to these backgrounds will be found in a compact form in *English Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, by Somervell, published

by Methuen & Co. These backgrounds, as already stated, may be economic, social, political and, also, artistic.

Experienced teachers will not fail to recognize the opportunities which these 'third readings' offer for practice in genuine conversations between a teacher and the members of his class, and also for good reading aloud whenever the scent fails in their hunt and reference has to be made to the text.

The study of biography needs only a word or two to distinguish it from that of essays, reviews, novels and plays. Shakespeare's

There is a tide in the affairs of men

Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune ;

supplies a master-key with which may be unlocked most of the problems connected with profitable studies in the classroom of a great biography. Studies in biography must be directed to a full understanding of the opportunity which, seized, led on to fortune. The structure of a biography gains clearness and cohesion when it is viewed in this light.

The qualities of detailed portraiture in which Boswell excelled and which have made Dr. Samuel Johnson better known to us than any other man in history are rare to quote Macaulay again, 'Boswell is the first of Biographers. He has no second. He has outdistanced all his competitors so decidedly that it is not worth while to place them. Eclipse is first, and the rest nowhere.' A point of practical significance to remember is that physical features, characteristic facial expressions, no less than mental power, or moral strength, are noteworthy for a careful reader of biography, who would learn to value at their true

worth the pose and the mask, no less than the genuine outward signs of spiritual grace and simplicity.

Since the above paragraphs were written, the writer has read Emil Ludwig’s *Genius and Character* (Life and Letters Series, Jonathan Cape) with intense interest, and cannot refrain from drawing the reader’s attention to its highly illuminating Introduction, which should certainly be read as a whole. The following extracts are highly suggestive to a teacher on the look-out for ways and means by which he can improve his own technique in guiding his pupil’s explorations of this section of literature.

The most modern of all portraitists has been dead now for no less than eighteen hundred years. I refer to Plutarch, who was paradoxically enough a Boeotian. But actually, he was an Athenian in culture, a Frenchman in psychological acumen, an Englishman in puritanism, and in thoroughness a German. At the time of Trajan he explicitly formulated, and exemplified in his own work, those principles of procedure which we, to-day, are attempting to apply.

These few opening sentences are more than epigram. They light up the whole subject with a sudden intensity which amounts to nothing short of revelation. Again, could anything be more suggestive and convincing for a young teacher who is doubtful about the possibilities of biographical studies than the following?

After a period which attempted to define man in terms of descent and breeding, we enter upon an era totally alien to the Darwinian mentality ; once again we turn our attention to the personality

*per se*, the personality almost devoid of temporal co-ordinates, considering the volume, intensity, and resistance of its vital forces, the restless fluid of its emotional configurations, and the balance between its impulse towards action and its repression through precept. Questions of success and of responsibility have been shifted from the environment back to the individual, so that the analysis which was formerly expended upon the *milieu* now seeks to penetrate within. Further, the renewed interest in memoirs is biological: and perhaps the portraitist of to-day, who is first of all a psychologist, is much nearer to the biologist than to the historian.

Just as the preceding paragraph serves to adjust our former estimates of the functions of biography as a humanistic form of study, so the succeeding paragraph will greatly assist in lighting the way to new methods of approach to its study. The student, no less than the professed biographer, can try his hand at the various media of portraiture therein suggested.

And he (the portraitist) has correspondingly greater freedom in his method of treatment. He can exploit the dramatic form, or the short essay, the detailed exhaustive life history, or the editorial. He should be at home in all these methods of approach, and should select them in accordance with the subject and purpose of his work—just as his speechless colleague the portrait painter makes use of oil, crayon or charcoal, etching needle or water-colour.

His problem remains constant: it is the discovery of a human soul.

The nature of a man is summarized in his picture—and the great portrait painters, with pen or brush, have all been great physiognomists. Pictures, those silent betrayals, provide the biographer with material as valuable as letters, memoirs, speeches, conversations—when the scientific investigator has found them authentic—or as handwriting. For this reason a biography without a picture of its subject is impossible.

Here, indeed, is encouragement for those who feel that biographies, characters and portraits have not received the attention that they deserve. The portraits of great writers hang on the walls of many school libraries and invite more use and employment than the passing glance commonly bestowed on them.

A fair sample of the early ‘ *Character* ’ is that by John Aubrey (1626-97) of Thomas Hobbes—given in Messrs. Herbert Read’s and Bonamy Dobree’s anthology—*The London Book of English Prose*, Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1931—of which the following is typical :—

*Reading* he had much, if one considers his long life ; but his contemplation was much more than his reading. He was wont to say that if he had read as much as other men, he should have known no more than other men.

The literature of travel contains some great books. For a youth or a young man the carry-over value of studying them will be best understood when it is realized that travel necessarily fosters a spirit of detachment ; ‘ *Out of my country and myself I go.* ’ Detachment from one’s native prejudices, a more sympathetic view of other people’s ways, and a real broadening of outlook on many vital aspects of political,

social and religious matters are amongst the benefits of travel. But we can catch some of this 'detachment' from reading really good books of travel.

Asiatic or Central African travels even to-day require a considerable endowment of the adventurous spirit to carry it through, and a generous curiosity to gain the view from the next peak, or explore the back of beyond.

No book of travel breathes more of this eager spirit of curiosity than does Kinglake's *Eothen*. Nowhere does a young man's zest for the enterprise he has planned, and is running with good sense and good humour, show up better in overcoming difficulties and in meeting or circumventing novel conventions.

Probably the ideal equipment for the study of his book would be the good breeding, social advantages, and an education such as Kinglake himself possessed. However that may be, for ordinary mortals the obvious procedure is to make the journey on the map, and a good itinerary would be the best form of connecting links between the scattered episodes which make up the account of his journeyings.

It is well to hear another voice speaking of a neighbouring region, and it is suggested that some time should be given to Sir Richard Burton's *Pilgrimage to Al-Medinah and Meccah*. The fatalism and fanaticism of the Arab and his fellow Mohammadan pilgrims to Mecca are told with such picturesque circumstance and realism that hardly a single characteristic sight, sound or smell of the motley crowd on board the little *Asthmatic*, or rhythmic swayings of the desert caravans escape the reader.

Procedure in directing the study of such a book should aim at stimulating a clear imaginative grasp

of the situations in the fullest possible detail. In this way only can something of the jolt to many pre-conceptions which the actual events, if they could be experienced, would give, be received, and some of the influences of a truly Eastern atmosphere be conjured up.

If the plan of realizing the writer from his writings should be persisted in, it is felt that two very intriguing personalities will be found to emerge in both ‘ Kinglake ’ and ‘ Burton ’.

For other suggestions relating to this class of English literature, teachers are referred to such books as Charles Doughty’s *Arabia Deserta* and to the delightful extracts contained in the series *The World Revealed—Asia*, published by Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd., London and Edinburgh, at 1s. 9d., and also to *Tales of the South Sea* by Louis Becke in the same series.

The study of Doughty is strong meat. Of his style the late T. E. Lawrence in the Introduction to the edition of *Arabia Deserta* published by P. Lee Warner and J. Cape, 1921, writes, ‘ It is a book which begins powerfully, written in a style which has neither father, nor son, so closely wrought, so tense, so just in its words and phrases, that it demands a hard reader.’

As a conclusion to this sub-section dealing with critical reading of books of travel, and in view of the prominence given in it to the idea that the young critical reader of literature should learn to *discover the writer in his writings*, a further passage from T. E. Lawrence’s Introduction to Doughty’s great work will not be amiss, if only because it sets a limit, perhaps, in the case of really great writing to that pursuit :—

For his own strength of character his book stands unconscious witness. He has revealed himself to us in his pages indirectly (the book is

never morbid, never introspective) almost unwillingly, for the way of telling is detached, making no parade of good or evil. He refuses to be the hero of his own story. Yet he was very really the hero of his journey, and the Arabs knew how great he was. I spent nine months in Western Arabia, much of it in the districts through which he had passed, and I found that he had become history in the desert.

Before leaving the topic of the choice and treatment of material suitable for critical reading, the use of English translations of great foreign classical works deserves a few words in passing. It may seem strange to choose a translation of a great classic as an example of English literature, but the compelling power of a great novel and satire such as *Don Quixote*<sup>1</sup> to reveal human foibles, and the infectious lunacy of its hero, the would-be restorer of knight errantry, and the strange mixture of peasant shrewdness and simplicity which was Sancho Panza, would seem to justify it. And this, too, may be said for it : a great work of art, such as *Don Quixote*, rises above the mere circumstance of the language in which it chances to be written. The delicacy, wistfulness, and pathos of the weak-witted knight carry him safely through situations which miss burlesque by the margin allowed only to genius. Cervantes, like Shakespeare and Dante, has conceived of Earth, Heaven, and Hell in a manner which all the older civilizations of the world can understand. Of

<sup>1</sup> Since the above passage was written the writer has come across The English Association Pamphlet No. 48 by H. J. C. Grierson on 'Don Quixote, some Wartime Reflexions on its Character and Influence', and ventures to commend it.

the further excellencies of English translations, it is only necessary to mention the Authorized Version of the Bible.

It will be observed that in these notes no attempt has been made to differentiate between the work appropriate to the different ages, say fifteen years and eighteen years, because it is felt that if the work is approached in the spirit here suggested, it will not be difficult to adjust the intensity and the amount of the study expected from pupils of the various ages. It should be made clear, however, that in the foregoing remarks the needs of the older pupils, sixteen to eighteen years of age, have been uppermost.

#### ADDENDUM

##### *Critical Reading for Foreign Students*

Recent experience with students in their first year at the Faculty of Science in the Egyptian University has led me to adopt a plan which I should not hesitate to adapt to the needs of English pupils of sixteen years and upwards if I were trying to train them to habits of quick apprehension of whatever they may have read in the close and critical manner that I have been discussing. The plan makes the paragraph the unit of study, and emphasizes the importance, first of grasping the central thought, and then the structure of each paragraph as it is read. A quick grasp of the central thought follows necessarily upon a quick and confident recognition of the key-sentence,<sup>1</sup> namely that sentence which most clearly introduces the new idea

<sup>1</sup> I owe this term to Mr. E. J. Lay whose text-books published by Macmillan & Co. are so well known as to need no more exact reference.

which the paragraph is designed to develop. Similarly a quick and confident recognition of the writer's plan and the consequent structure of paragraph strengthens his grasp of the meaning of the paragraph as a whole.

It usually takes all but the best foreign students some considerable time to acquire the knack of recognizing quickly these key-sentences and the words which are most significant in them, but, when this is achieved and the writer's argument or plan is vividly realized also, then the pace at which they can read intelligently and retentively improves rapidly. There is a possible psychological explanation for this improvement. With the discovery of the key-sentence, the mind of the reader relaxes its concentration and then gathers its energy together, so to speak, for an attack on the next problem, viz. how exactly is the writer presenting this idea? If this is a fair representation of the mental process involved in the close reading of a paragraph by a trained reader, there can be little doubt as to the usefulness of the procedure recommended in the preceding paragraph. It is a temporary expedient somewhat in the nature of a drill, having as its aim to quicken apprehension of meaning, but an expedient to be dropped as soon as direct apprehension comes with confidence and accuracy.

The following illustration of the application of this form of exercise to reading matter suitable for English pupils of seventeen to eighteen years should serve to make the general procedure clear enough. In Walter Raleigh's *Shakespeare*, Men of Letters Series, Macmillan & Co., Ltd., page 27, the reader will find a paragraph dealing with the necessity, in trying to understand Shakespeare, of studying 'the subtlest of his instruments—the language that he wielded'. The

key-sentence is the opening sentence, and the group of words quoted above are the significant words in it. The writer's plan in developing the central thought reveals itself with due deliberation and circumstance as a zigzagged series of antitheses of the pattern: what his language is not, and what it is. Not the language known to the masters of the science of Language, 'who know all that can be known about language except the uses to which it can be put but rather a language of amazing wealth of vocabulary and idiom', 'of coinages and violent distortions of meaning', a language 'comparable only to the freedoms that are habitual in the little language of a family of children'. Again, not language upon which 'dogmatic grammarians' have 'imposed their chill models', but a 'language hot from the mind'—and one to be judged only by 'those whose ease of apprehension goes some way to meet his ease of expression'.

Antitheses such as these are, of course, only one of the various moulds into which the writer may cast his thoughts in shaping them into a paragraph around a central topic or theme. Every conceivable device of good exposition and illustration may appear in the paragraphs that we have in mind, and it is the business of a close and critical reader to apprehend them quickly and confidently. The drill designed to quicken the faculty of reading in this way, may be amplified by causing the pupil to note, too, in his reading, the varying ways in which paragraphs are interlinked. Two benefits in addition to those of quick and clear apprehension of the thought should result, namely more lasting memory, and a sense of how the rhythm carries accents which ring true, and how these rhythms

overflow and so recur in paragraph after paragraph so long as the same mood and intention in the writer persist. The problem of speech rhythms is now engaging much thought, and Dr. P. B. Ballard has interesting references to it in his *Thought and Language*, page 180 and page 212.

The first few paragraphs of the opening chapter of Raleigh's *Shakespeare* could be used effectively in studying this linking up of paragraphs. The first paragraph deals with the valuation placed upon Shakespeare's writings (1) in his own day, (2) after the publication of the Folio Edition in 1623, and ends with the words, 'until in our own day, the plays have become the very standard and measure of poetry among all English-speaking peoples'. The next paragraph catches the echo of the thought and begins, 'So Shakespeare came to his own, as an English man of letters .'. It ends, 'and has been for three centuries, a source of delight and understanding of wisdom and consolation'. Its theme is the high appreciation which Shakespeare's works have won from all sorts and conditions of men.

The next paragraph deals with English Criticism of Shakespeare, and at once makes it felt that the rigours of the change from appreciation to criticism are tempered by an admission which must be given in Sir Walter Raleigh's own words. 'The mistakes which beset our modern criticism are not likely to be mistakes of carelessness and undervaluation.' In comparison with the immediately preceding paragraph it is long and contains a series of statements of the general English attitude towards Shakespeare's work which we immediately admit to be true. The quality of these statements may be judged from the following

selection. ‘ We can hardly even join in Ben Jonson’s confession, and say that we honour his memory “ on this side idolatry ”. We are idolators of Shakespeare born and bred. Our sin is not indifference, but superstition which is another kind of ignorance ’, and then a little further on the penetrating piece of literary criticism contained in the sentence, ‘ The indispensable preliminary for judging and enjoying Shakespeare is not knowledge of his history, not even knowledge of his works, but knowledge of his theme, a wide acquaintancé with human life and human passion as they are reflected in a sensitive and independent mind.’ One is tempted to quote more from such a garner of choice thought, but the reader who got thus far would more profitably turn to the original. For myself with due regrets I resume my pedestrian task of showing how such splendid passages might be used in quickening a pupil’s grasp of the thought and the transitions of thought as he moves from one fine passage to another. There is perhaps one danger in using such splendid writings for such purposes, that their sheer beauty should so absorb the mind of the reader as to distract his attention from its temporary focal concentration on their anatomical form.

So far, in actual practice I have used this method with science students only in reading modern scientific literature where the rivalry of form and matter arises but infrequently.

*(b) Critical Exercises in Composition*

It is one of the paradoxes of learning a language that the learning of it is always most effective when it is not so much the learning of the language, but the learning of something else by its means, that is primarily

at stake. As we have seen, critical reading is most beneficial as a training in the use of language when it is devoted rather to the understanding, say, of some social, ethical, or political belief, and always, by the way, of the discovery of the writer through his writings, than turned in, so to speak, upon itself in conscious search for style. Practice in the use of language, whether in reading, writing, or speaking, is formal ; and except in the early stages of learning a foreign language is barren when it is thus centred upon itself. It is not surprising, therefore, that students sent to a foreign country to study some branch of science, for example, often attain a higher degree of proficiency in the language of that country than their fellow-countrymen who are sent there solely to study the language itself. Nor, to revert to a more general instance, is it surprising, therefore, that the old classical training produced proportionately as many capable speakers, readers and writers as the more direct studies of English and English literature have done.

If anything is to be learned by the teacher of modern languages at this stage from the older classical tradition, it is clearly not its technique of grammar, prose- and verse-writing—for all its virtues of accuracy and scholarship—but rather its quest of a true and lively picture of the Greek and Roman worlds as portrayed in the writings of their great men. It was the pursuit of vivid experiences of this kind which justified a classical training for those admittedly few minds whose special aptitude and perseverance enabled them to reach this goal, from which others were excluded, because of their inability to master sufficiently the Greek and Latin languages. Such experiences are the assured rewards of a far larger proportion of

English boys, if they apply themselves perseveringly to the task of knowing something of their own great writers. Into such experiences the teacher of English prose composition must lead his pupils.

The critical reading to which the pupils of this stage have been accustomed will prepare them for the new task of clothing their own thought in a fitting way. But a transition has to be staged from critical reading which has for its end and aim the realization of a theme and its writer by methods which are largely co-operative and imbued with the team spirit (e.g. in reading a play) to critical composition in which independent thought and feeling (e.g. in writing a play) have to find expression in an essentially personal and individual way. This transition can best be made by continuing to work upon great writers, such as Gibbon, Macaulay, Hazlitt, Ruskin, or Newman. For these writers range over a vast field of interests and, although none of them except perhaps Newman have the final touch of contemporaneity<sup>1</sup> which is the hall-mark in some way of good English prose, yet they all have the qualities, clearness, coherence and rhythm which belong to great monumental prose writing.

As an example of the kind of work that can be carried out at this preliminary stage, the following written exercises on Essays IV and V of Hazlitt’s *Table Talk: On Genius and Common Sense*<sup>2</sup> are suggested. The aim of the work is to arouse in the pupil a critical attitude towards both the thought and the language of the writer whom he is studying. The work must be as far as possible individual, and this is possible so soon

<sup>1</sup> A term used by Mr. Herbert Read in his *English Prose Style* (G. Bell & Sons).

<sup>2</sup> In the World’s Classics Edition these essays appear as one essay only (No. IV).

as the teacher has made the way clear by working out one or two specimen answers to the questions which it is his special function to provide. The plan of procedure, then, is simplicity itself, and it remains only to indicate sufficiently the kind of question or instruction which the teacher will be called upon to frame.

*Written Exercise.* Topic: Hazlitt's *Table Talk* Essay, IV.

1. How would a writer to-day refer to the people who Hazlitt describes as 'of more gravity than understanding'? In describing these people, the words 'heavy, dull, serious, solemn' might crop up in reference to the first part of the phrase, and words like 'penetration', 'discernment', and perhaps 'acumen' (or their corresponding adjectives) in reference to the last part.
2. Suggest another phrase for 'the finest breath of fancy'. Give reasons for your alternative.
3. What exactly does Hazlitt mean when he defines 'the plainest common sense' as a *mixed mode*, subject to a particular sort of acquired and indefinable tact.
4. Make an independent statement about some form of activity in which 'knowing the rule' is important. (Football.)
5. Re-write the sentence 'In art particular', placing the word 'reason' in a position of priority to that of 'feeling', but preserving the same thought. Say what you think is the effect of the change.
6. To what extent is the sentence beginning with the words 'In a gesture' loose or periodic?

How would you describe its structure? Suggest a variant for 'the eye of taste', and discuss the hybrid nature of the phrase itself.

7. Re-write the sentence beginning 'He must be a poor creature', using in it the word 'intuitions' to convey one of its ideas.

8. What definition of a sophist is given implicitly in the sentence beginning: 'A man may be dextrous'?

9. Sum up in one sentence in what respects genius and common sense may be regarded as having a common origin.

10. Write a short paragraph elaborating the thought that actions indicative of both genius and common sense are not attributable to rules.

A right understanding of the limitations of book learning, even that temperately acquired, must necessarily be a form of wisdom which a properly educated boy of eighteen should possess. He must be enabled to realize that only the best books represent the accumulated experience of actively lived lives, or, at any rate, of lives somehow spent in close touch with reality. These two essays of Hazlitt are an eloquent plea on behalf of this belief. If the pupil works up the central themes of these two essays with proper thoroughness—a sufficiently stiff undertaking—he will probably form a good conceit of Hazlitt's strong horse-sense, of all close experience of reality, and, in particular, if he has succeeded well, a good conceit, also, of the value of that truest of all forms of knowing, intuition.

It is no exaggeration to say that Hazlitt's *Table Talk* is a veritable mine of good sayings about life, and such aspects of it as boys and girls of eighteen years old or thereabout are curious, viz. art, literature, political integrity, genius, affectation and so forth. Where, except in Macaulay, will you find anything more racy than his remarks about Dr. Johnson's style? 'The reason why I object to Dr. Johnson's style is that there is no discrimination, no selection, no variety in it. He uses none but "tall opaque words" taken from the "first row of the rubric",—words with the greatest number of syllables, or Latin phrases with merely English terminations.' In comparing painting with writing, he says, 'There is a pleasure in painting which none but painters know. In writing you have to contend with the world; in painting, you have only to carry on a friendly strife with Nature.' Or, once again in the matter of style,—'There is no rule for expression. It is got at solely by feeling, etc. . .'

In continuing these written exercises based on these two essays, it will be found possible to ask more and more comprehensive questions, such, for example, as What view of art does Sir Joshua Reynolds put forward which substantiates Hazlitt's contention concerning the nature of genius and common sense? Or again Contrast Hazlitt's epigrammatic version of what common sense is with his reasoned definition of it. Finally, a more extended effort on the part of the pupil may be evoked by asking for a brief description of the structure of the first essay. Genius is the main theme of the next essay, but it need not detain us, for the same sort of procedure could be applied to it.

If a change of topic be desired, it will not be without profit to turn to a political subject. Hazlitt's *On*

*Corporate Bodies* has something of the directness of youth, but it is possibly only older men who can fully endorse his scathing indictment of the puffed-upness and soulless meanness of the members of corporate bodies. And few but those who have experienced their callous indifference to fair-dealing could possibly realize the full truth even in these days of his concluding words : ‘ Nothing but a job, or some knavery can keep them serious for ten minutes together.’ Hazlitt’s own apology for this unsavoury topic in his essay *On Corporate Bodies*, in which he exposes much of the meanness which often takes shelter under the name of *esprit de corps* may well serve to dismiss the matter. ‘ It is certainly not a very delectable source of contemplation, or subject to treat of.’ However, it is well that youth should realize betimes wherein lies the battle, and arm themselves beforehand against all forms of affectation, vapourings, insincerity, and sham.

So far, then, as the choice of topics for this critical form of composition is concerned, there can be no lack of suitable material where English is concerned. The range of classical writers is very wide, and of contemporary writers even wider. The anthologies of good modern prose are not so numerous as their sister anthologies of poetry, but the English Association in *Prose of To-day* has supplied all that a young teacher should need as a guide.

In regard to procedure, it has already been noted that the transition from critical reading to critical composition must be contrived in part by making the latter exercises a more personal and individual affair, an effort subject to ‘ no rule ’ of how to write well, but rather of all rules of good taste, good sense, and good breeding. This is probably only a cumbrous way

of saying that the style is the man,<sup>1</sup> and that the rules for the man, 'Be sensible' 'Be sincere' are the only rules for the writer.

An intermediate stage in these exercises may be outlined from the hints contained in the section on biography, Part III (i) (a), viz. 'He (the portraitist-biographer) can exploit the dramatic form, or [the short essay],<sup>2</sup> the detailed life-history, and the editorial.' For those of a less imaginative turn of mind, the critical note, the minute, or *précis* must take the place of the exercises suggested above.

In conformity with my general plan, I propose to suggest in brief outline the procedures which might be adopted in carrying out some of these exercises. Take, for example, an exercise involving the conversion of a situation taken from an essay into the dramatic form. A suitable passage for such an exercise will be found in *Prose of To-day*<sup>3</sup> in an extract from *Two Visits to Denmark* by Sir Edmund Gosse entitled *A Pastoral Scene*. The instructions to the pupil will be :—

(1) Separate out the scenery, the situation with its series of events, and the characters.

(2) Realize the situation, and invent for it a plot, meaning by plot a clash of some kind between the characters. The clash in such a peaceful scene, among such innocent folk, could only be some subtle rift, say of subconscious racial antipathy or jar to the sensibilities.

<sup>1</sup> By far the best account of style generally and of this cliché in particular known to the writer will be found in Dr. P. B. Ballard's *Thought and Language* (University of London Press, 1934, 6s.).

<sup>2</sup> The brackets are inserted by me to indicate that I do not regard the essay as an intermediate form, but would reserve it expressly for the final stage.

<sup>3</sup> Published by Longmans, Green & Co.

(3) Arrange or, rather, re-arrange the events, and make the chief events occur near Lake Esrom so as to minimize the change of place involved by the stroll of the two chief characters. For example, the scene on the garden terrace might become a reminiscence voiced by one of the chief characters which would help to show the smooth intimacy between the two friends. Almost at once the little jars and jolts of the succeeding events begin to undermine the absolute integrity of their goodwill. The jarring events are :—

(a) the mouldy church,

(b) the nun-like mother of the incredibly fat and inexhaustibly curious child—'exorcised' by the Dean with a loud line from Hamlet,

(c) the terrible old maid and her militant parasol,

and finally,

(d) the Dean's departure with its repeated 'Farvels'.

Evidently a sense of relief ends for both parties the increasing strain of this slight international situation.

Passing over for the moment the short essay, we come next to the 'detailed life-history'. The term is evidently borrowed by the biographer from biology, and, strictly speaking, implies a brief account of the complete life-cycle of some living organism from birth to reproduction. It is clearly a form of writing in which emphasis will fall upon the more important biological events of the person studied. Ancestry, birth, education (in its biological form, play), marriage,

physiological decay and death, and, of course, environment at all those stages, will be the significant subject-matter of this exercise. The teacher who has no specialized knowledge of biology or zoology will find Thomson's *Outlines of Zoology*, Humphrey Milford, Oxford, 1929, or *A Short History of Biology* by Charles Singer, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1931, full of suggestive reading. This biographical mould would serve well to hold the life of the mother of a great man rather than that of a great man himself. Even if its application to biographical writing is limited, some acquaintance with biological ideas will be of great general educational value.

The last type of exercise expressly suggested by the paragraph quoted from Emil Ludwig's *Genius and Character* is the 'Editorial'. The attractive element about this type of exercise is the demand that it will make upon the pupil for something in the nature of original research which is not beyond the scope of top form boys. The evergreen topic of Dr. Johnson's style would lend itself readily enough to this species of editorial manipulation. Macaulay, Hazlitt, and Mrs. Gaskell (in *Cranford*) have been referred to in earlier parts of this book, and such references could easily be brought together in editorial manner by the adoption of, say, the historical point of view, or that of literary *causerie*.

Of the remaining more conventional kinds of written exercise, the critical note, the minute, and précis, so much has already been written by acknowledged experts that it would be superfluous to add anything here. If it is not out of place to mention personal preference, I would refer the young teacher to the late J. H. Fowler's *The Art of Teaching English*, and to

the late G. Y. Elton's *Teaching English* (Macmillan & Co., 1929, 3s.).

As a final stage in the graduation of written exercises there comes ‘ the Short Essay ’. There is no occasion in a book of this kind to give any detailed treatment of the short essay used as an exercise in composition. Dean Inge, in a short address published under the title of *English in Education*,<sup>1</sup> has succeeded in saying some of the best things about this particular educational instrument. He quotes the following admirable effort of a young child at this form of writing :—

#### ON CATS

The cat is a quadruped, the legs, as usual being at the corners. Do not tease cats, because firstly it is wrong to do so, and secondly, because his clawses, which is longer than some people think. Cats have nine lives, but it is seldom required in this country because of Christianity.

In commending the essay in general as an educational instrument, he seized the opportunity to broach the whole matter by pointing out that whereas it is a mistake to begin essay writing too early, it is an even greater mistake to delay the exercise too long. His instances of the danger of putting off the evil hour until too late range from the inconvenience and embarrassment of University Science students suddenly called upon to produce an essay as an examination test, to the blunderings of aspirants for a College Fellowship at one of the older Universities. All are amusing and instructive as ‘ awful examples ’. The latter instance confirming perhaps the recent stock

<sup>1</sup> *English in Education*, by W. R. Inge. 1924. Foundation oration, Birkbeck College. Printed by J. W. Ruddock, 3 Old Jewry, E.C.2.

epigram at the expense of the advanced research worker, viz. that he is a man who knows more and more about less and less. The conclusion of the matter would seem to be that essay work administered at due intervals to the right sort of pupil is a great stimulant to good reading and to independent thoughtful writing, but as an overworked weekly routine is almost certain to do more harm than good.

The correction and valuation of this written work is an important side of it, and one upon which much of its completeness and consequent value to the pupil will depend. He must be led to realize the honour and tradition of the pen, and acknowledge the obligations laid upon him in the old saying *litera scripta manet*. And in some way, too, he must be brought to observe the good manners of a writer, which evince themselves in such matters as the clear and quiet openings of his paragraphs no less than in their clear but emphatic endings. The general atmosphere in which the correction and amendment of the pupil's work can best be carried out is suggested by the above ideas, but it would not be a bracing atmosphere if it failed to stimulate recognition of the ever-present need for the recension of any passages which appear to give the youthful writer a specious satisfaction as fine writing. Such passages should be suspect, and the advice of Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch somewhere in his *On the Art of Writing*, I fancy, 'murder your darlings', vigorously applied to them. But some correction and amendment of written exercises must be made in a more definite way. A carefully worked up model, or set of model answers, according to the exact nature of the exercise, should in most cases be provided. By comparing his own work with the teacher's model, the pupil can

assess well enough the value of his own work, and remodel it where necessary.

The writing of the model may fall sometimes as an exacting task upon the teacher, but there can hardly be any more thorough preparation for his brief discussion with the pupil than to have thus come to close grips with the thought and argument involved in the exercise. If the model is not too far beyond the pupil's powers, it will be a better stimulus to future effort than a laboured reconstruction of the pupil's own work. The presence of the model will greatly aid the discussional phase of the exercise by giving objectivity at any rate to comments upon such matters as arrangement, clearness, and vigour.

#### ADDENDUM

##### *Critical Exercises in Prose Composition for Foreign Students*

The writing of prose composition in English by foreigners at this advanced stage presents a problem which differs in certain essential ways from that confronting English-speaking boys and girls. The foreigner's object in perfecting his knowledge of English is usually a subsidiary one : he is going to use such mastery of it as he can attain, not to develop himself by increasing his powers of self-expression, but purely as an instrument which will assist him indirectly, or in a secondary way, to gain a mastery of something else—medicine, pure science, law, or whatsoever it may be that he desires to study. Reading, skilled close reading in the foreign tongue, will be proportionately of greater importance to him than skilled writing in it.

The realization of the superior relative importance of reading to writing lies at the foundation of all sound schemes of advanced teaching of English to foreigners. It is comparable in some degree to the provision of artificial environments of correct speech and everyday usage devised by Dr. Michael West<sup>1</sup>, Mr. H. E. Palmer<sup>2</sup> and Dr. L. Faucett<sup>3</sup> for the earlier stages of language learning by foreigners in their own countries.

The scheme of work in the English language for students of science in their first and second years at the Faculty of Science in the Egyptian University has paid due regard to this point, and therefore exercises in reading are given first place. The general method employed in these exercises has already been outlined in section (a). Exercises in writing are given second place because it is assumed that the only writing of a serious nature that the student will be called upon to undertake in English during the course of his science studies are of three chief kinds :—

- (A) Notes of lectures.
- (B) Notes on books of reference.
- (C) Answers to test and examination papers.

(A) NOTE-TAKING AT LECTURES given in English is a difficult undertaking for the average Egyptian student, and in consequence some few hours of the English course are devoted to exercises in listening and in note-taking. Little can be done in this direction beyond accustoming the pupils to the clichés and conventions of such discourses, and to the pauses

<sup>1</sup> Dr. West's publications are issued by Longmans, Green & Co.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Palmer's publications are issued by W. Heffer & Sons, Cambridge.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Faucett's publications are issued by the Oxford University Press.

imposed on the speaker by his rhetorical rather than grammatical needs.

(B) It is with NOTE-MAKING UPON BOOKS READ that the real business of critical composition begins. Competence in this form of composition should be the natural complement of competence in critical reading. Full benefit from what a student reads can only be realized if and when a good note has been made upon it. In some reformed examination system of students seeking University degrees, the examiners might do worse than examine the evidence of ability as well as industry which such notes would reveal. On this account a special set of exercises have been framed to assist him in becoming efficient in this truly educative part of his studies.

These exercises in note-making are based on the assumption that the interests of a science student in the book that he reads are frequently separate interests and concerned with three main points :—

- (i) the facts,
- (ii) the reasoning,
- (iii) the skilled treatment of some whole theme.

Where the facts by virtue of their novelty or completeness form the centre of his interest, the note that he makes will take the form of a *list* or *summary*. Where the writer’s reasoning attracts him, his note will take an analytic form. And again, where the skilled treatment of a whole theme caught his fancy the student may wish to commit certain passages to memory if they are not too long, or he may decide to condense them in *précis* form to such dimensions as will render them easy to recall.

Out of the above three fundamental and fairly distinctive needs of the student who seeks to supplement his knowledge obtained from lectures and practical work in the laboratories by 'outside' reading, the above-mentioned exercises in note-making arise. For convenience they may be referred to as :—

- (1) 'The Summary,'
- (2) 'The Analysis,'
- (3) 'The Précis.'

(1) '*The Summary*' affords practice in labelling facts with names, headings, or brief descriptions, and also of grouping them in any way that gives them increased coherence, suggestiveness, and meaning. Some of the skill developed in this way will show itself in the appeal to the eye through the neatness of the arrangement of the facts into groups and lists.

(2) '*The Analysis*' is an exercise based upon the dissection of the paragraph. A good analytical note will display the central thought of paragraph and the plan underlying its development in a manner appropriate both to the thought and the plan. In point of variety the analytical note will equal the paragraph itself, and will range from the brief setting out of a single principle and some one example to illustrate it, down to the most elaborate tabular presentation of some far-reaching theory of which the periodic table of Mendeleef may be regarded as an extreme case.

(3) '*The Précis*' needs no special illustration as a form of writing. The student is making notes for his own use and, therefore, knows the headings, sub-headings and degree of condensation that he requires.

(C) THE WRITTEN TEST OR EXAMINATION is the third chief motive the Egyptian undergraduate has for writing English carefully. In one important respect his written work in an examination will differ from either his note-taking or his note-making. In the examination he has to satisfy not merely himself, but his examiners. He has a new audience for his pen, if one may be allowed a hibernicism in one's effort to refer briefly to Sir Philip Hartog's well known dictum concerning the writing of composition. In consequence of this, the requirements of good sense and courtesy, which have been specified for English pupils writing their own language, begin to apply to the Egyptian undergraduate who is putting his ideas together on paper during an examination. Due allowance for the fact that the language he is using is not his own must be freely made.

It would carry us rather too far in detail to do more than suggest how such exercises as these outlined above can be made progressive. But it may be pointed out that for students in their first year the material, i.e. the scientific literature which they are called upon to read, deals with a range of scientific facts and theories which constitutes for them a new world of more or less up-to-date systematic science. Psychologically they are being trained to apprehend facts and comprehend theories. In their second year something more is expected of them. And if they are to fulfil this expectation, they must first of all be led to view the world of science from an historical standpoint and then be encouraged to examine the logical principle underlying the methods. So far, then, as these exercises in language are concerned, their progressive character arises directly out of the change

of material out of which they are built. In fact, and it is the note on which I must end, these exercises and the training resulting from the use of them can be made to move *pari passu* with the normal development of the youth of seventeen or eighteen years in one academic year. During that year there is a clearly marked growth of both his historic sense and of his ratiocinative powers. The historical and the logical points of view become his accepted outlook, and vantage points from which future problems will be attacked.

## (ii) THE STUDY OF POETRY

I deride neither songs nor minstrelsy,  
For they are given by God to lighten thought.

TALIESIN.

*Guest translation of the Mabinogion.*

In matter of bulk, poetry as compared with prose occupies but a small space in the modern world of literature. Historically this relation did not always hold: the exact reverse was true not so long since. Somewhere about 1750<sup>1</sup> is given as the date when the change took place. The change was one, and still is one, which affects the position of prose far more than that of poetry. English poetry has been, and still is, such from its very nature, that it will maintain its high and special place, so long as religion and spirituality continue to exist amongst English-speaking peoples. Great English dramatic poetry has always interpreted life through its representation of the inner conflict in

<sup>1</sup> Dr. P. B. Ballard treats the point fully, pp. 249 ff. *Thought and Language* (University of London Press, 1934).

the lives of great men and women who have given offence—through pride, ambition, self-sufficiency, or some other flaw of character—to the will of God. 'Of Man's first disobedience . . . ' is Milton's all-comprehending statement of the theme of all great English poetry. The claims of great poetry cannot be lightly set aside ; and the words with which this short section is prefaced are as true to-day as when they were first uttered by the greatest of the early Welsh singers, Taliesin, at the court of Maelgwn of Gwynedd.

The reader who smiles at the testimony of the ancient Welsh bard Taliesin will heed, perhaps more readily, the voice of John Masefield : ' The poets have said little about how poetry is made. They have declared that they think Poetry to be the gift of Goddesses or spiritual powers known as the Muses, the Muses who know all things while men know only rumours. This testimony is accepted as true by all good poets and intelligent men. Some poets, not denying the gift of the Muses, have added words of their own. There is the well-known phrase of Milton, " These abilities, wheresoever they be found, are the inspired gift of God rarely bestowed, yet to some (though most abuse) in every Nation." ' Later in the same address, Mr. Masefield recites a more personal creed :—' I believe that the best poetry has always been a radiant perception of the Universe, of its Persons, its Powers, and its Laws, as they exist eternally . ' To this main proposition he adds the significant rider, ' it (the best, truest and greatest poetry) will only appear in a race strongly believing in a spiritual order in that Universe. Great arts cannot and will not appear in generations or nations careless of the finer kinds of intellect. You cannot have supreme

thought save as the tall flowers rising from the great mass of thought.'

English poetry does not require to go outside its own bounds to prove its greatness. The names of Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Wordsworth, alone are titles manifest of its claims, but when the greatness of poetry as a whole is in question it is comforting to have proofs as convincing as those afforded by Mr. Masfield, once again, in the same address.<sup>1</sup> 'The Aeschylean man is in a net of eternity, the Past of himself and of his ancestors is about him as a snare, the deeds of the Present fling meshes into his Future. Only by keeping to a narrow, simple, and single way of righteous doing can Man avoid tangling his steps in Death. By simpleness and singleness Man may have joy on earth as well as safety.'

It is difficult to conceive of any preface to the study of poetry, even when that study is confined mainly to the language in which it is made, that could possibly be adequate. I shall feel satisfied if in any considerable degree I have made it clear why I think poetry is worth while. An answer there must be to those who, not merely in cheap cynicism, are content to say, 'I have no use for poetry.' The teacher of language, in any but the most vulgar utilitarian sense, will certainly think otherwise.

Conviction as to its personal, its social, and its national values is the first condition attaching to the privilege of using it for educational purposes. If that conviction is there, the right choice of poets and of their poems will be at once a deeply pleasurable and profitable task. Profitable alike to the teacher and

<sup>1</sup> *Poetry*, a Lecture given at Queen's Hall, London (William Heinemann, London, 1931).

to the pupil. To the pupil—who is our sole concern for the moment—great poetry, well chosen, will be a supreme occasion for self-development and self-expression. Strings will be struck and chords awakened which will set him for ever in some new attunement with his earth, his world of men and all living things, and with the spirits of the Universe to which great poetry will prove to him he belongs.

I have used the term ‘ great poetry ’ in the sense in which Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie<sup>1</sup> has used it, and aided our understanding of it with incomparable skill and persuasiveness. It is only such poetry which can withstand the rough wear of the classroom and penetrate the armour of safe convention with which we clothe our outer everyday selves. As regards the order of our choice, it would certainly be Shakespeare first, and the rest more or less in historical order.

As to procedure, that will surely follow what may be felt to be our natural reactions to poetry, as something to be read, to be studied, to be read aloud, something to be learnt by heart and recited again and again until they are part of ourselves, and our possession for all time. The categories will be reading for meaning ; study for form ; reading aloud for the music and emotional effect ; learning by heart for the joy of it ; and reciting for the communication of it to others as a message understood. The class-work which follows the above procedure must provide opportunity for all these essential phases in the study of poetry. If these phases are duly provided for, the purely language aspects will be fully met.

Each phase has a technique of its own.

<sup>1</sup> *The Idea of Great Poetry*, Martin Secker, 1925.

(1) Reading is an act of intelligence and quick apprehension of ideas. The discipline it gives is coherence and clearness. The test of these qualities is a ready faculty of simple and direct statement of its theme after a poem has been read once. This test should take the form of an informal written note. In point of difficulty, such notes will vary greatly with the nature of the poem studied, and, for this reason alone, can safely be established as a part of the classroom routine.

(2) The study of poetry naturally concerns itself with form, (i) lyric, (ii) dramatic, and (iii) epic. Each of these great divisions of poetry, if fully treated, would demand greater knowledge than I can bring to them. I have space for a few suggestions only, and some references to sources from which I have drawn inspiration, enjoyment, and ideas.

(i) Viewed historically, the three most consistent motives underlying lyrical poetry are religion, love, and death. Each must be understood to represent in some symbolic way a very wide group of emotions, sympathies, or moods. Special occasions, anniversaries, centenaries, national celebrations or mournings may serve to determine the exact choice of the poem for classroom study, but the sheer incontestable merit of certain poems should give them a place. Certain books will aid the choice. Of these, few will be remembered with more affectionate regard than Ward's *English Poets*, or Sir Henry Hadow's three compact volumes, by virtue of the exquisite precision of their choice. If something of this precision can be conveyed by one example, and that quite an early one, I would as willingly recall the opening lines of John Skelton's

(1460?-1529) address to Mistress Margaret Hussey, as any that quickly comes to mind :—

Merry Margaret  
As Midsummer flower,  
Gentle as falcon  
Or hawk of the tower

or, better still perhaps, the closing lines ending in just sweet sounds of a similar salutation addressed to Mistress Isabel Pennell :—

A Life for God himself  
To hear this nightingale  
Among the birdes small  
Warbling in the Vale—  
Dug, Dug,  
Jug, Jug,  
Good year and good luck,  
With chuk, chuk, chuk, chuk.

A writer whose insistence that poetry is music, and that its form is inviolable, is suggested by the choice of these lines, to wit Mr. E. A. Greening Lamborn. Although his persuasive advocacy of a new spirit in the treatment of poetry in the classroom is intended primarily for the benefit of the child, the teacher would be a dull fellow who could not find new applications for it with adolescents and with men. One final thought about the study of the lyric must be added the technicalities are an added joy to those whose ear is musical, and an unending mystery to those whose ear is not.

*The Metres of English Poetry* by Miss Enid Hamer (Methuen) is an adequate and charmingly lucid account of the subject as regards metrical form. For the subtleties of sense and sound, Mr. Henry Betts’

little book *Some Secrets of Style* (Allen & Unwin) should be consulted. He is apparently an advocate of the *mot juste*, as he quotes Flaubert's epigram :—' There is only one noun that can express your idea, only one verb that can put that idea in motion, and only one adjective that is the right epithet for that noun.' Both books certainly deserve a place in the active section of the shelves of the class library ; and each to the tune of more than one copy.

(ii) *Dramatic Poetry*. Nowhere to my knowledge are the broad principles underlying the study of dramatic poetry set out more impressively than in *The Idea of Great Poetry* by Lascelles Abercrombie. The great personal figures, Macbeth, Hamlet and Prometheus, for example, exercise a greater command over our imaginations than any abstract setting of the problems they encountered in their lives could possibly do. The interpretation of the meaning of great tragedy in the lives of these great creations is singularly complete and clear in his pages. For the special study of Shakespeare's work, two volumes, Raleigh's *Shakespeare*, Men of Letters Series, Macmillan & Co., 1907, and *The Essential Shakespeare*, J. Dover Wilson, Cambridge University Press, probably represent the views of the finest scholarship in that particular field. Both writers have helped to strip a mythological Shakespeare of his superhuman accretions and to restore to us Shakespeare, the wonderful man and playwright.

A sentence or so from Mr. Dover Wilson's little volume will serve to show very imperfectly, but still a little, the quality of his criticism. He refers to Shakespeare's stupendous task in writing *King Lear*. ' How did Shakespeare save his soul alive in this, one of the most perilous and arduous adventures ever

undertaken by the spirit of man ? and then, two paragraphs later, ‘ Finally ; his victory was a victory for the whole human race.’ ‘ *King Lear* is a piece of exploration, more dearly won and far more significant than that of a Shackleton or an Einstein, for they have enlarged the bounds of human knowledge, *Lear* has revealed the human spirit as of greater sublimity than we could otherwise have dreamed.’

(iii) *Epic Poetry*. Contrary to the usual plan, I have placed epic poetry last, because I feel that it requires greater maturity of mind and of scholarship on the part of the reader. The two earlier and the last of the lectures contained in the *Idea of Great Poetry* should suffice as guides for the purpose we have in mind. It is just the reservation of epic for last consideration that is important from the teacher’s standpoint.

(3) *Reading Aloud for the Music*. Mr. Bett, in *Some Secrets of Style*, reminds his readers of the value in good reading of clear enunciation and of consonantal end sounds clearly given. One example of end value of ‘ T ’ from a familiar source will suffice :—‘ that those evils, which the craft and subtlety of the devil or man worketh against us be brought to naught’, and ‘ to comfort and help the weak-hearted, and to raise up them that fall ; and finally to beat down Satan under our feet.’ It is possible to over-estimate to-day the importance of an impassive role on the part of the reader, but the late Mr. G. Y. Elton<sup>1</sup> was conscious of a real danger when he protested forcibly against its opposite as an evil. ‘ The great illusion is to imagine that the *emotion* in what you are reading is the important part. The *thought* is the important part, and will

*Teaching of English*, by G. Y. Elton (Macmillan & Co., 1929).

clothe itself in just the amount of emotion that it can carry, if you get it right.'

(4) *Learning by Heart*. Learning by heart has attracted the attention of psychologists as a process admitting of analysis, and some teachers have tried a synthesis of the results with a view to economizing the effort entailed in learning poems or actors' parts. The secrets they have discovered relate to the amount each individual is capable of learning at a sitting, the number of repetitions which are most effective for him, the duration of the rest pauses during which a consolidation of what has been learnt takes place and, finally, the period over which the whole learning process should extend in order to make the learner word-perfect in the shortest possible time.

(5) *Recitation* as a form of public entertainment does not stand high in public favour, but as a personal accomplishment with oneself as audience the power to recall choice passages from one's earlier reading and studies will often prove a valuable standby in days when occupational demands upon one's time preclude the possibility of reading and when the faculty of learning by heart has lost its vigour.

In conclusion of these few notes upon the study of poetry, I would emphasize that a relation akin to that outlined in the 'Dalton System' is supposed to subsist between the teacher and the pupil. The function of the teacher is that of guide, philosopher, and somewhat 'difficult' friend. Pictures, portraits and books forming a special classroom library will be all-important accessories to their work. These requisites are not in any way exceptional demands to-day. But the presence of all these things in the classroom without

a growing demand for more and more choice ones may indicate a low state of vitality in the study which goes on there. A nice balance must somehow be poised between the conflicting spirits of those who are mere lovers of new things and those whose reactionary conservatism confines them to the ranks of the *laudatores temporis acti*.

It is impossible to close these remarks on the study of poetry for English pupils without a passing reference to important recent changes in psychological opinion. Teachers who are disposed to look to psychological sources for inspiration for their plans in teaching, and feel that something of the nature of a Copernican revolution has taken place in our conception of mental life by virtue of which a dethronement of thought and reason and concurrent elevation of the emotions and interests, will find in *Science and Poetry*<sup>1</sup> by I. A. Richards a lucid exposition of the main implications for the study of literature resulting from this change.

#### ADDENDUM

##### *The Study of Poetry for Foreign Students*

So far as lyric poetry is concerned, there is a wide choice of Victorian and Georgian poetry which may be used for all the phases of poetry study which have been outlined above. The recognition of fine imagery, something of the word-magic, and something, too, though hardly all of the telling force of the rhythm, will not be missed by foreign pupils. The collection in *Poems of To-day* prepared by the English

<sup>1</sup> *Science and Poetry*, and *Principles of Literary Criticism*, both by I. A. Richards (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., London).

Association contain poems which can be used to reveal English life, English scenery and English aspirations in a thoroughly educational way. Learning by heart of the poetry of a foreign language lays up for its learner a possession for all time, second only in value to that belonging to the poetry of one's native tongue. As for dramatic poetry, the experience in Egypt seems to be that if the study of a play of Shakespeare can be carried to the length of complete or even partial representation of it, it is a most valuable exercise in use of English. The mere effort to translate from Shakespearean phraseology into the modern idiom is sufficiently valuable in itself to suggest that Shakespeare may find his way back into the Secondary Schools in Egypt.

Plays by Arnold Bennett, Barrie, and possibly Galsworthy, have occupied for some time a useful place in the more advanced classes in English. A way of handling these plays in the classroom has been described under the section dealing with reading.

### (iii) LINGUISTIC STUDY

Most teachers are fully convinced of the importance of the study of the words and the grammatical structure of the mother-tongue as an auxiliary means of deepening the pupil's knowledge of the language that he uses. The study of language has taken on a new importance of late as a result of the renewed interest that has been taken in its origin, nature, and function in our mental and social life. Three books in succession, *Human Speech*, 1930, *Babel*, 1930, and *This English*, have come from the pen of Sir Richard Paget with the professed object not merely of satisfying a scientific end by discovering the origin of speech in mouth

gesture, but also the more utilitarian purpose of rationalizing the culture of our speech with the object of preserving it from tendencies which will debase it. Dr. A. H. Gardiner has argued persuasively for a distinction between language and speech in his recently-published book, *The Theory of Speech and Language*.<sup>1</sup>

Some idea of the theories advanced in this book may be gathered from the following short sentences :— ‘ Speech has a social origin and implies a listener. It is the sole generator of language. Writing is a secondary form of speech and, also, implies a reader. The unity of a sentence is conferred upon it by the purpose of the speaker.’ One more author must be mentioned, Dr. P. B. Ballard,<sup>2</sup> who has discussed the bearings of the above-mentioned books on his own views of the nature of thought and language, and the allied questions concerning literature.

Even before this renewal of activity in the field of linguistic study and of the theory of language, a good case could be made out for giving a few special lessons to the older pupils in philology—especially the etymology and history of words.

With foreign students it is a convenient way of dwelling upon the meaning of the words in so far as their meanings are reflected in their derivation.

There remains one important section of the study of language over which the debate of long standing has settled down into a tacit agreement to differ. The subject of the debate is, of course, the nature and function of grammar in the study and use of a language.

<sup>1</sup> *The Theory of Speech and Language*, by Alan H. Gardiner (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1932).

<sup>2</sup> *Thought and Language*, by Dr. P. B. Ballard (University of London Press, 1934).

The generally favoured side appears to be that which regards grammar not as a prescriptive set of rules, but rather as a descriptive set of rules which point to actually existent usages in the language. Jespersen,<sup>1</sup> the chief exponent of this school of grammarians, further asserts that grammar should be explanatory and explain why one usage holds the field rather than another, and is of the opinion that grammar be appreciative, i.e. have a word to say on the validity of the rules, and also whether clearer and better rules than those in force might not be framed.

<sup>1</sup> *Essentials of English Grammar*, by Otto Jespersen (George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1933).

## APPENDIX A

With the permission of Dr. Lawrence Faucett and of the Oxford University Press, I am able to reprint here a specimen of the carefully systematized modern series of lessons contained in *The Oxford English Course*. Lesson Sixteen of Reading Book Two, 'A Forest Fire', has been selected as being, so to speak, in lineal descent from my own lessons which were regarded as being of a progressive type some twenty years ago. This continuity is some slight argument in support of *The Oxford English Course*, but the reader has only to look through any of the language books and their companion readers to realize the extent to which Dr. Faucett's series is an advance upon the earlier types, not only in completeness but also in detail, e.g. in such matters as 'memory work' and 'sound' practice.

*Lesson Sixteen***A FOREST FIRE**

1. We were asleep in our home, when a forest fire almost burned the house. We, too, might have been burned if I had not heard our horses making a great noise about four o'clock in the morning. I took my rifle and went to the door. I thought that some forest animal was making the horses afraid. As I went out, I saw fire among the trees at the back of my house. There was a smell of burning wood and a noise of great trees falling.

2. I ran back to the house, told my wife to dress herself and our child as quickly as she could, and to wait at the door for me. I took the little money we had, quickly put it in a bag, and then ran out to catch the two best horses. While we were doing these things, the fire was coming closer and closer. I thought that it would reach the house before we were able to leave. Just in time I put my wife and child on one horse, jumped on the other, and we rode away.

3. As we rode off, I looked back and saw that the fire had reached our house. Hoping to save our lives, I set out for a lake several miles away. My plan was

to find cover on the far side of the lake. The line of fire and smoke filled the sky behind us. Although it was difficult for our horses to move quickly through the forest, they soon brought us to the lake, because they were afraid of the fire. When we reached the lake, we let the horses go. I never saw them again.

4. The line of fire and smoke which had followed us began to come upon us round both sides of the lake. We walked out into the water as far as we could, and lay down. As we lay with our heads just above the water, for a time we were cool. Our little child, whose face had become red and hot on the ride, stopped crying as we lay in the cool water.

5. Then came the fire ! I hope I may never see another like it. The sky above us was red with burning wood ; clouds of smoke hid the sun from our eyes. I felt sure that one of us would be hurt by the falling trees. Although our bodies were cool enough, our heads were not covered, and so they became so hot that I thought we should die. Our little child began to cry again and did not stop until the fire had passed over us. Many forest animals ran into the water and stood still near us, afraid to move. For the whole of that day and through the night, we lay in the water.

6. As morning came it was less hot, but the smell of the smoke filled the air. After a time it became cool enough for us to stand. The deer followed us as we walked out of the water. They were more afraid of the fire than they were of us. Later in the day we were able to make our way slowly to a part of the forest which had not been burned by the fire. After walking many hours, we came to the house of a friend.

In the course of time I built a new house and began life again. But our minds will never forget the noise of falling trees, the feel of smoke in our eyes, and the smell of a great forest fire.

(*Freely adapted from Audubon.*)

### *Commands*

1. Tell me how far the lake was from the house.  
—— miles.
2. Draw a plan of the house, the forest, and the lake.
3. Stand up. Stand very still. Move your hands.  
Be still again.
4. Tell me how many halves there are in a whole.
5. Fill this glass full of water.

### *Questions*

1. Why did the animals stand *still* in the water?  
They were afraid to ——.
2. If I *follow* you, do I go in front of you or behind you?
3. How many feet are there in a *mile*? There are  
—— feet in a mile.
4. Are you *sure* that there are 5,280 feet in a mile?
5. Look *among* these books. Are any of them yours?
6. Has your reading book a paper *cover*?

### *Writing*

1. *If an angry elephant ran towards you, would you be afraid?*
2. *If a lion followed you, would you run?*

3. *If a forest fire came towards you, would you try to put it out ?*
4. *If a deer followed you, would you run away ?*
5. *If you were in a forest, would you start a forest fire ?*
6. *If you saw smoke in the sky, would you know there was a fire ?*
7. *If you saw a small wood beginning to burn, would you try to put the fire out ?*
8. *If you were able to get a book without any new words in it, would you like to read it ?*  
*Yes, I would. No, I would not.*

## APPENDIX B

Extract from *The Spectator*, dated 2 December 1932

*James Boswell.* By C. E. Vulliamy. (Geoffrey Bles.  
10s. 6d.)

‘Servile and impertinent, shallow and pedantic, a bigot and a sot, bloated with family pride a talebearer, an eavesdropper, a common butt in the taverns of London .’ But there is no need to quote the whole of Macaulay’s attack on Boswell. If it has been superseded as a character sketch, it maintains its place as a *locus classicus* of critical aberration. Everyone knows it, and most resent it. Rescue parties, it is true, were rather slow in taking the field. Dr. Birkbeck Hill, in 1878, was the first to question Macaulay’s right to pass final judgement on a character with which he was constitutionally incapable of sympathy. Others followed. The poor guy, sadly charred, was whisked out of the eternal bonfire of Macaulay’s wrath and shown to be human, venial, and even charming. To Gosse he appeared ‘at bottom as simple and honest as he was vivacious’ Raleigh said :—‘He had no ulterior motives.’ Professor Bailey lost his heart, if not his head, and called for three cheers. ‘Let us all, then, unashamedly and ungrudgingly, give the rein to our admiration and love of Boswell.’

Poor Boswell ! He has had his day—just such a day as he would have wished, basking at the fireside of tolerance, in the company of great men who

anatomized his follies with mercy and were duly grateful for the biography which they helped to produce. Now the world grows cold again for Boswell. After the apologists, the alienists. Mr. Vulliamy thinks Boswell was mad. Macaulay's verdict is qualified, not quashed—guilty, but insane. 'Macaulay has described certain aspects of Boswell with deadly accuracy' and 'if Macaulay could have read the mass of letters and journals now available (in Colonel Isham's collection) it is unlikely that he would have changed his opinion.' Poor Boswell

The evidence against sanity is strong indeed; Mr. Vulliamy fails to make the most of it only in one instance, of which more anon. Boswell's exaggerated sensibility and his curiously feminine responsiveness indicate, in Mr. Vulliamy's words, 'a purely infantile quality of make-believe, not extended to the level of conscious art, and a very precarious mental balance' The simplest experiences and the most fantastic ideas were equally certain to produce a violent emotional reaction. Boswell's blood would boil, his eyes would fill, at the slightest provocation. The beat of a drum, a mention of the Great Wall of China—anything would do the trick. He was always, in a popular phrase, 'going off the deep end'

ಶ್ರೀ ಮಂಗಳ