



DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION  
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# London County Council.

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

## REPORT

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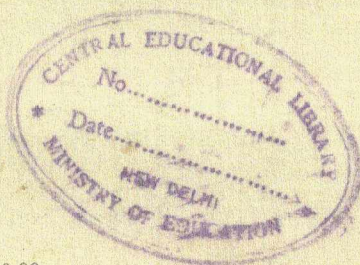
## CONFERENCE

ON THE

## TEACHING OF ENGLISH

IN

## LONDON ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.







## PREFACE.

THE present report is the first of a series which it is hoped to issue from time to time. Several Conferences of the kind which has produced this report on the teaching of English are now considering the various subjects of the primary curriculum. The importance of instruction in the mother-tongue is so great that it is specially appropriate that the first of these reports should deal with that subject.

It is to be borne in mind that the report in no way aims at an exact prescription of how and what to teach. The formulation of definite schemes of instruction is, subject to the general considerations laid down by the Local Education Authority, a matter for each head teacher. This freedom is valuable, for it permits and indeed gives a stimulus to independent deliberation; and it allows a pertinency to particular schemes of work, which was absent under former conditions. Every head teacher now has to consider in respect of his own school the special circumstances of the organisation, the type of child, the special qualifications of the assistants, and particularly the contribution which the home life of the pupils makes towards the stock of ideas. In this problem the head teacher must necessarily consider carefully the principles underlying the subjects of instruction and the aims which he is setting before himself. To assist him in this most important part of his duty this report should be of much value.

Although the report is published by the Council, it must be understood that responsibility for the views and conclusions therein expressed rests with the members of the Conference alone. At the same time the Council is assured that the opinions and suggestions of the Conference will give a valuable stimulus to the consideration of principles and to the practical business of teaching English in the London schools.

It may be added that the thanks of the Council have already been conveyed to each member of the Conference for his (or her) valuable assistance in the preparation of this report.

R. BLAIR,

*Education Officer.*

L.C.C. Education Office.

*October, 1909.*





## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE Conference, whose report is contained in the following pages, held its first session on 17th December, 1906, and met at short intervals during the school terms till 11th November, 1908.

The reference to the Conference stated that it "should consider the principles which underlie the teaching of English, including the teaching of Literature; the objects aimed at; how far the present text books, methods and training of teachers help to attain these objects; whether changes should be made in these respects; whether, in fact, greater attention should not be given at an early age to reading stories to children in the words of a masterpiece of English Literature, and whether a certain stage of advancement in the art of reading, writing and arithmetic should not be regarded as sufficiently satisfactory for school purposes, and whether formal drill in these subjects should not be abandoned in order to leave room for a more extensive teaching of English; especially as to a large extent detailed grammatical knowledge can be acquired incidentally while seeking the main objects of the instruction."

It was understood, however, that the reference was a very elastic one. Some of the subjects, it was found, required very detailed discussion before final recommendations could be made. In order, therefore, not to prolong unduly the sitting of the Conference, or to overweight its report, it was deemed expedient not to deal, except incidentally, with the teaching of writing, and to postpone for separate treatment the large and complex question of "the methods of improving the qualifications of teachers of English." As, however, a Conference is at present considering the curriculum of the Council's Colleges, this subject will fall naturally within its scope.

While the recommendations in the report deal specifically only with the teaching of English in elementary schools, it has been necessary to take account of the newer tendencies and movements in the teaching of English in all grades of education. The presence on the Conference, in addition to experts in elementary education, of members associated with the teaching or inspection of English in University Colleges, Training Colleges and Secondary Schools has been very valuable from this point of view. It is hoped, therefore, that the discussion in the report of many of the problems connected with English work may be helpful to teachers and others, apart from the definite recommendations made. Many of the recommendations can, indeed, be only fully appreciated in connection with the arguments which lead up to them. It has throughout been the aim of the Conference to deal with the principles that should underlie the teaching of English, and their general application to the curriculum of elementary schools, rather than to propose definite regulations or detailed schemes of study.

It should be mentioned that valuable assistance in various ways was kindly given by Mr. A. C. Benson, Mr. A. E. Twentyman, Mr. R. F. Winch, Mr. A. Allmann, Mrs. C. White, Mrs. J. Iles, and Miss G. E. Heaven. They are not, however, responsible for any of the recommendations made. Further help was derived from a report by Mr. A. E. Roberts, of the Islington Training College, on "The Teaching of English in American schools."

F. S. BOAS,  
*Chairman of the Conference.*



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CSL

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

## THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN LONDON ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

### CHAPTER I.

#### INTRODUCTION.

##### *Unique importance of the mother-tongue in the school curriculum.*

IN presenting the following report on the teaching of English in elementary schools we feel that it is impossible to overrate the importance and the difficulty of the problem with which we have attempted to deal. Every subject of instruction in the school curriculum has its special significance, and raises special issues. But the mother-tongue is more than a subject, even the most important subject, in the time-table. It is not too much to say that it is part of the personality of every pupil, and that unless full opportunity is given for its development, boys and girls will be prevented from making the best of themselves in later life, either as individuals or as members of the community. Speech is, from one point of view, the translation of character into external symbols as a medium of human intercourse. It must be the aim of all rightly directed instruction in the mother tongue to give the pupils the power of using these symbols as adequately as possible, while at the same time it seeks to elevate the character of which they are the outward expression. A child, therefore, who has not been taught English as well as is possible under the conditions of elementary school life starts upon his career with impaired capacities, whatever his particular sphere may be.

##### *Difficulties inherent in the subject.*

It is this organic relation of the mother tongue to the pupil's whole development that makes the issues connected with it so complex and far-reaching. Another difficulty lies in the nature of the subject itself. Language is no dead thing, but a growing organism, with the subtlety inherent in all forms of organic life. The English of Alfred is not that of Shakespeare, and Elizabethan English is vitally different from that of our own day. All methods of instruction which treat the national language as merely an inert and mechanical instrument are foredoomed to failure. This was at the root of much mistaken effort in the past.

Moreover all languages are affected not only by time but by place. This is specially true of English, which has developed historically from several dialects with clearly marked peculiarities, the traces of which exist to the present day. Thus the vernacular speech of Yorkshire, East Anglia and Devonshire has each its own characteristics which cannot be ignored in any adequate scheme of instruction in the mother-tongue. All regulations which overlook these differences will run counter to deep-seated traditions and tendencies. But in London, as we show later, the conditions are exceptional and need exceptional treatment.



*Opportune time for inquiry into the teaching of English in Elementary Schools.*

But while the subject of the teaching of English has its peculiar difficulties, we feel that the present is an opportune time for attempting to grapple with it, in its relation to the London elementary school and scholar. It is scarcely too much to say that since the passing of the Act of 1870 the teaching of English in elementary schools has been conducted for the most part on uniform and somewhat unprogressive lines. Owing to the enthusiasm and inspiring power of individual teachers, good results have been obtained here and there. But it is too often the case that the boy or girl leaving the elementary school has acquired neither a liking for English literature nor the power of using the mother-tongue effectively in writing or in speech. It is evident that reform is needed both in the spirit and the methods of the teaching, and that such reform must be based on careful investigation and must be in conformity with the new tendencies in the teaching of English in all spheres of education from the highest to the lowest.

*Development of English in all grades of educational work.*

For one of the most striking recent educational developments has been the movement for securing for the mother-tongue a place in the scholastic and academic curriculum which has hitherto been denied it. This is, from one point of view, the latest phase in a series of educational reforms which have taken place in this country at intervals since "the revival of learning." Greek and Latin, then the new studies, had first to win their way against the claims of mediæval scholasticism: the classics had afterwards to take into educational partnership in turn mathematics, the natural sciences, and modern languages. Now it is English in all its branches that claims its inheritance in the curriculum of English schools, colleges and universities. The recent creation of new Chairs and Lectureships in English Language and Literature in the various universities, the demand for more and better qualified teachers of English in secondary schools, the improvement in the English text-books which follow one another so rapidly from the press, are all both results and agencies of a far-reaching movement which cannot fail to affect profoundly the teaching and the curriculum of the elementary school.

*Increased knowledge of American and Continental methods of teaching the mother-tongue.*

Paradoxical though the statement may appear, this quickened interest in the mother-tongue, and the efforts to improve instruction in it, result in part from the ever closer contact that modern means of communication have brought about between this country, the Continent of Europe, and America. Of late years there has been a frequent interchange of visits between teachers and other educational experts of different nations. One of the features which has most impressed English visitors to France, Germany, and the United States is the much greater measure of attention given to the teaching of the mother-tongue and of its literature than





is the case in this country. The publications of the Special Inquiries and Reports Branch of the Board of Education have also done much to familiarise English teachers and administrators with the methods and aims of educational systems in other lands. Hence it has become recently possible to compare the traditional methods of teaching the mother-tongue in our elementary schools with those in vogue on the Continent and in the United States. In this report we have, as will appear later, attempted to make use of the experience thus gained, so far as it bears upon the subject with which we are immediately concerned.

*Influence of the Education Acts of 1902 and 1903.*

But while the English educational system has thus of late been brought into closer relation with those of other countries, the different parts of that system have, at the same time, through various causes been drawn into more intimate and vital contact than heretofore. This change has been due in large part, though not entirely, to the Acts of 1902 and 1903, which for the first time brought higher, secondary, technical and elementary education, as far as they are controlled by the state or the municipalities, into one organisation. One of the immediate effects of this silent revolution—as it is proving itself to be—was that the work of the elementary schools which had hitherto been detached and self-contained, became a component part of an organism inclusive of all forms of instruction from the primary to the university level. Thus the curriculum of the elementary school and the methods employed there, which had hitherto been mainly the concern of those who as administrators or teachers had specialised in this sphere, have now been recognised as of vital importance and interest to all engaged in educational work of whatever grade. In such publications as the Board of Education's "Suggestions for the consideration of Teachers" and the Scotch Education Department's "Memoranda" on the teaching of English, history, and other subjects in Scottish primary schools, there is ample evidence of the wider conception now entertained of the responsibilities and outlook of elementary school work.

*The scholarship system in its bearing on the teaching of English.*

In London, with which we are immediately concerned, this close connection between the elementary and higher grades of education has, of course, been emphasised and fostered by the extensive scholarship system. Year by year large numbers of the most promising elementary pupils are, by this method, drafted into the secondary schools, and from their ranks many of the teachers of the future will be drawn. It is important that these scholars should be able to make the best of the advantages offered to them, and that therefore they should have fuller opportunities for the cultivation of their powers of expression in speech or writing than has hitherto been the case. The mother-tongue must form their introduction, and in a sense, their key to all subsequent culture. If the teaching of English in the elementary schools be inefficient or on the wrong lines, the scholars will start upon their career in the secondary schools seriously handicapped, and will have to spend much valuable time in making up arrears.



### *Importance of English for pupils of every type.*

But the scholars, numerous though they are, form only a fraction of those affected by the methods and spirit of the teaching of the mother-tongue in the elementary schools. The bulk of the pupils will, from the nature of the case, not enter upon careers of an educational or literary type. Some will proceed to Higher Elementary schools, and some to distinctively trade or technical schools. Others will continue their education at evening schools and centres and other institutions. A large number, unfortunately, will confine themselves entirely to the occupation by which their livelihood is earned. But to all these various types the teaching of the mother-tongue in the elementary school is of the greatest moment. It is a widely recognised fact that the progress of many pupils in technical and scientific subjects is greatly retarded by their inadequate training in English: they are in want of the necessary instrument for the expression of their ideas either in speech or on paper. And even to boys and girls preparing for purely practical careers it is most important to have the power of writing a clear and well-expressed letter or précis for business purposes, and of reading in their leisure time with appreciation and intelligence some small portion at least of English literature.

### *Special responsibility of London for maintaining a correct standard of speech.*

And it must not be forgotten that London has a special responsibility for the maintenance of a satisfactory standard of English as a spoken or a literary medium. Many of the so-called "provincial" dialects are, as has been briefly stated above, survivals of older forms of the language and are thus historically and phonetically justified. When a boy or girl in Devonshire, Lincolnshire or Yorkshire is taught to acquire the constructions and accent of the "King's English" at the expense of his native forms of speech, there is a balance of loss and gain in the process. But with the pupil in the London elementary school this is not the case. There is no London dialect of reputable antecedents and origin which is a heritage for him to surrender in school. The Cockney mode of speech, with its unpleasant "twang" is a modern corruption without legitimate credentials, and is unworthy of being the speech of any person in the capital city of the Empire. There, if anywhere, the endeavour should be made to diffuse as widely as possible the standard English which, as the result of a long process of development, has become the normal national means of expression.

### *General spirit of our proposals.*

Such are some of the considerations which we have kept before us during the inquiry of which the results are embodied in this report. Our proposals are not of a revolutionary nature. There are certain obvious permanent factors that have to be taken into account which forbid very drastic changes. But we have considered very carefully the newer tendencies in the teaching of English, and have put forward in their light proposals for remodelling many of the methods now in



vogue, and for diffusing a more vital and alert spirit through the whole system of instruction in the mother-tongue and its literature. We do not think, as appears more fully later in this report, that the English lessons should be made the vehicle of direct moral instruction. But we are fully conscious that it is through them, for the most part, that the imagination must be fired, the emotions purified, the general ideal of life enriched for the boys and girls of the London elementary schools, and we have thus endeavoured to outline a scheme of English teaching which will be a component part of that "complete and generous education" which, in the words of Milton, himself a Londoner, "fits a man to perform justly, skilfully and magnanimously" all private and public offices.

## CHAPTER II.

### ENGLISH AND THE SCHOOL TIME TABLE.

#### *Necessity of estimating the time available for English.*

It seemed to us advisable, before entering on the consideration of changes in the teaching of English in the London schools, to form some estimate—at least approximate—of the amount of time available for instruction in the subject. Given the advantage of the best methods, and even the stimulus of enthusiasm, there always remains the drastic limitation of time, and there is little use in aiming at what it clearly forbids. We took into account the fact that with good teachers all lessons are, to a greater or less extent, lessons in English—in correct and just expression, in aptly chosen phrase, in clearly stated thought. In a well correlated scheme of education, skilfully carried out, not only English but all other subjects of instruction may and should benefit in this direct way, though English perhaps most of all. But it is none the less requisite to estimate, as nearly as may be, the amount of direct instruction which we may hope to have at our command. It is clear, of course, that this involves a survey of the whole curriculum, and may be thought beyond the scope of a conference on English. But looking at the problem, not from the point of view of specialists in a particular subject of instruction, but of practical educationists, we thought it not impossible to arrive at certain general conclusions on the allotment of school time.

It is, of course, true that this allotment must vary with circumstances. It will be affected by the character of the school and the neighbourhood, and by the acquirements or the preferences of the teachers. But we think that certain minima are ascertainable, below which the time for instruction in any subject becomes dangerously insufficient. Rigidity of system has, however, been far from our desire. We have therefore not restricted ourselves to minima, but have inquired what a liberal view of the importance of English, as a means of education, would show to be desirable for the majority of our schools.



### *The place of English in the curriculum.*

An attempt may be made to establish the grade of importance of instruction in the mother-tongue from theoretical considerations. Its relative position in the curriculum may be deduced by psychological and ethical reasoning in the manner of the Herbartians. The "balance" and "concentration" of studies recommended by these educationists were considered by us, and we gave special attention to the *Lehrplan* theory of Professor W. Rein, and to a projected scheme of studies recommended by him for an eight-class school. While, however, there is much of interest and suggestion in these views, and while they have directly influenced our deliberations, we felt that their foundation was not strictly scientific, and that their application was in part strained. The formation of the time-table must be as yet largely empirical. The school course may for practical purposes be divided into (a) humanistic subjects, (b) science and nature study and (c) physical and manual training. Such a rough division does not mean that a subject placed in any group may not have affinity with, or even from some points of view be placed in, another group. But if we assume for convenience that the subjects may be so classified, and if it be granted that the chief aim of the school is, in the widest sense, a moral one, the humanistic subjects must claim priority, and the mother-tongue will rank as the most important branch of the school curriculum. These considerations do not help us to determine more than vaguely the time required for our subject : but they at least put it in its proper place, and its proper point of view. For the instruction in English is seen to aim not at the mere acquisition of a certain facility in reading, composition, and oral expression, but to be of a deeper nature, to be ethical and character-forming.

### *Modern languages in the Elementary Schools.*

Intimately connected with the teaching of English is the question of the teaching of modern languages. This was discussed by the Conference with a sympathetic attitude towards those teachers who, from tastes and acquirements or from a conviction of their use in linguistic study, would wish to include French or German in the curriculum of elementary schools. It was, however, unanimously agreed that in the ordinary schools it is unadvisable to teach any language but the mother-tongue, though it was foreseen that exceptions might have to be made to this rule, such exceptions being considered individually on their merits.

### *Subjects of the curriculum.*

Assuming then that the secular part of the curriculum must, under present conditions, include history, English with literature, singing, drawing and modelling, physical training and organised games, geography, nature study, mathematics, domestic training and handicraft, we endeavoured to make an approximate assessment of the amount of time available for English.



*Actual time generally available for English.*

Specimen time-tables were furnished by members of the Conference, and were also obtained from various schools. As we are not building up a system *in vacuo*, it was thought necessary to have regard to anything that appeared general custom, and to anything in the nature of positive regulation by the Education Authority. But we did not feel ourselves precluded from advising, if necessary, in a different sense from any accepted canons whether authoritative or customary.

We accepted the normal length of the school week—27½ hours—as being well prescribed, and from the consideration of the amount of time given to other subjects, whether this amount arose from regulation or custom, we endeavoured by a process of exhaustion to find the time generally available, under present conditions, for English. To adopt the rough classification given above, we find these to be approximately as follows for elder scholars:—

<i>Humanistic subjects other than English.</i>		<i>Science and Nature Study.</i>		<i>Physical and Manual Training.</i>	
	hrs. min.		hrs. min.		hrs. min.
Biblical instruction	3 20	Geography ...	1 —	Physical Exercises	1 —
History...	1 20	Nature Study...	1 20	Recreation ...	2 5
Singing...	1 —	Mathematics ...	4 —	Handicraft, or	2 30
Drawing and Modelling	2 —			Domestic Training for Girls	
	<hr/> 7 40 <hr/>		<hr/> 6 20 <hr/>		<hr/> 5 35 <hr/>

The total thus obtained, 19 hours 35 minutes, when subtracted from the whole school time, 27½ hours weekly, leaves 7 hours 55 minutes, or roughly 8 hours, as the maximum time at present available for English. It will be seen that the girls' needlework has not been accounted for, and the residual time would, perhaps, have to undergo a further small reduction for registration. The time for needlework might, perhaps, be balanced partially against that allowed for drawing and modelling in the case of the boys, though we are by no means of opinion that these subjects should be lost to the girls.

We are aware that objections of various sorts may be raised to the classification we have adopted, to details of the amount of time stated for various subjects, to the fact that arrangements must vary from class to class, and so forth. A strict and exhaustive demonstration may perhaps be recognised as impossible, but our inquiries indicate that the amount of time generally available at present for all the subjects classified under English is probably somewhat under eight hours. That being so, we must express our conviction that, in spite of the help given in the course of other lessons, this amount is insufficient.

Various suggestions were made to meet the difficulty, and although it travels beyond our reference, the statement may not be altogether amiss that, in the opinion of a majority of us, the time usually allotted to handicraft and mathematics might, by a closer correlation of





geometry with woodwork or metalwork, be more economically used ; while, as regards girls, some hours might be gained by the restriction of the study of domestic economy to two years of the school course. Some support also was given to the opinion that needlework receives too much time.

#### *Amount of time desirable for English.*

What is strictly within our competence, however, is to state the amount of time which we think should be properly devoted to English out of the total amount available. Leaving infants out of question, we recommend the amounts in the following table :—

<i>Age of children.</i>	<i>Time to be devoted to English subjects.</i>	
	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>
7— 9 years.	10 hours.	11 hours.
9—11 „	10 „	11 „
11—14 „	9 „	10 „

As will be seen from this table, the prevailing opinion among us was in favour of giving somewhat more instruction in English to girls than to boys. It was generally allowed that girls do better than boys in this part of their work, and, if the aim were merely to secure equal advance, a conclusion contrary to that at which we arrived might have been reached. But it was thought by most of us, that this equality in attainments between the sexes need not be made an objective, and certainly need not be forced ; that training is better on natural lines where these are clear, and that in the case of girls it is preferably humanistic.

#### *Allocation of time to branches of English.*

We then proceeded to allocate the total time thus determined on among the various subjects included under the generic title “ English.”

#### *Formal reading.*

As generally used in the time-tables, the term “ reading ” presents some ambiguity. It represents on one side the merely formal process of learning to read, the mastery of mechanical power, the overcoming of difficulties of irregular notation, the management of voice, the rudimentary rhetoric included in the terms “ phrasing ” and “ expression.” We would denote these matters by the term “ formal reading.”

#### *Literature and recitation.*

But at present the term “ reading ” is made to include all that the scholars learn of literature with the exception of a modicum of poetry which it has been the practice to prescribe for learning by heart. Conscious as we are that literary training in elementary schools can only be rudimentary, we are so convinced of its importance that we would insist on the necessity of giving it in all cases the separate title of “ literature ” in our classification: “ recitation,” or the practice of committing certain chosen passages to heart, should be included under this title.



### *Composition.*

The importance of "composition" as a branch of the English instruction is ever more and more recognised, and has been rightly insisted on in the "Suggestions for the consideration of Teachers" issued by the Board of Education. It is now very generally introduced in the form of oral exercises even in the youngest classes. A portion of time, increasing in amount with the grade of the class, must therefore be allocated to this subject.

### *Phonetics.*

Increasing attention has been given lately to phonetics, and the subject is now generally included in the course for teachers. We think it of importance that this subject should take its position as a distinct part of the English teaching, and we have accordingly dealt with it in some detail in a later part of our report.

### *Spelling.*

With regard to spelling, we feel that too much stress is laid upon accuracy in the earlier stages, and that practical efficiency rather than skill in using irregular forms would be the more rational aim. We are, therefore, not disposed to give more time to this subject than seems necessary to secure such efficiency.

### *Formal grammar.*

Formal grammar presents a more difficult problem. We consider, for reasons given elsewhere, that it has a necessary place in the curriculum of the middle and upper standards. At the same time we recognise that grammatical analysis, for instance, may become a mere trick, and we do not think it desirable to sacrifice to this the time which could be better spent in mastering the meaning of a passage.

### *Suggested allotment of time.*

We present the following suggested allotment of time for guidance merely, and as indicating what may be generally desirable. Teachers will exercise a discretion in varying the balance between section and section. Classes change from year to year, progress varies from different causes, and sometimes more attention is necessary to the mechanical, sometimes to the intellectual or the æsthetic side of the subject.

### *Suggested allotment of time to various branches of English.*

#### *Boys' schools.*

<i>Subject.</i>	<i>Age.</i>		
	7—9.	9—11.	11—14.
1. Phonetics ... ..	50 min.	30 min.	—
2. Reading (formal) ... ..	4 hours	3 hours	1 hour 30 min.
3. Writing (mechanical) ... ..	1½ hours	1 hour	30 minutes
4. Spelling and Dictation ... ..	1 hour 10 min.	1 hour	1 hour
5. Grammar ... ..	—	30 minutes	1 hour
6. Composition (a. oral, b. written) ... ..	1½ hours (mainly oral)	2 hours	2 hours
7. Literature (including Recitation) ... ..	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours
	10 hours	10 hours	9 hours



In girls' schools it was thought that the extra hour, which we consider should be assigned in them to English, might be divided between grammar and literature, with some attention to the historical study of words, a subject which we discuss more fully in a later part of this report.

### CHAPTER III.

#### TRAINING IN SPEECH.

##### I.—INFANTS' SCHOOLS.

###### *Some difficulties.*

Language, though essentially practical in its scope, is probably the most difficult, and certainly the most important, of all the subjects of instruction; it is the chief medium for the expression of the child's inner life, which can be but imperfectly rendered, even under the most favourable conditions. The arbitrary symbolism of language and the practical impossibility of securing an exact correspondence between words and consciousness are formidable obstacles. Words and sentences give often but the crudest outlines of a mental picture, rich in detail, in colour, and associations. Fortunately, however, the child's natural love of self-expression lends itself, in an eminent degree, to the cultivation of language in its simple form. To many teachers also there is a special fascination in the teaching of language possibly because of its inherent charm, and possibly also because "in every enterprise," as Plato says, "the beginning is the main thing, especially in dealing with young and tender nature, for at that time it is most plastic, and into it the stamp which it is desired to impress sinks deepest"; and in this case the beginning transcends in importance that of any other subject of instruction.

In a subsequent chapter we recommend general instruction in phonetics. As this recommendation covers instruction in all the elements of correct speech regarded as sound, we do not propose to enter here into the details of this aspect of language, but merely to state some considerations which have a general bearing on instruction in speaking, especially in relation to the infant classroom.

The ordinary infant on admission to school has an extremely limited vocabulary, which is also often faulty in one or more respects. This limited range of language is, however, in one sense an advantage, since the range of necessary correction on the part of the teacher is correspondingly limited, and before the child's stock of vocables can be much increased, the beneficial influence of the school comes into play.

###### *First steps in speech training.*

The first step towards good articulation and correct enunciation is to secure good breathing. This will involve much individual attention at the beginning, but the time thus spent will be found most fruitful



in desirable results, and save the necessity for recurring labours on other points. The second step is the analysis and synthesis, on a phonic basis, of monosyllabic words used by the children, the teacher insisting upon the perfect individualisation of every letter. It is desirable in doing this for the teacher to articulate with greater intensity than in ordinary speech, and to use every possible means of encouraging each child to self-effort, even to the point of exaggerated precision. The exercises and vocal drills associated with all phonic systems should be included in this second step. It is a mistaken view to attempt to curtail such exercises. Every fresh element introduced by the teacher should be subjected to drill. The organs must have practice in this way if articulation is to be exact, and purity and fluency of sound are to be the result. A generalisation of these simple exercises is as follows :—

1. Sound in isolation each new letter introduced by the teacher until its functional value is fully appreciated and is expressed with ease, taking care that the child becomes as far as possible conscious of the organic movements involved in the operation.
2. Combine the letter-sound with a vowel until fluency is obtained, giving the vowel, in the first instances, the second place.
3. Add in turn a familiar terminal consonant.

Pains should be taken to secure simplicity and variety, and in the final stages the word thus formed should be placed in a sentence, in order that its use and meaning may be immediately realised and its true phonic power associated with other whole-word sounds. It would doubtless be well, as the "Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers" point out, "to begin by calling attention to the sounds which are produced by the visible organs of speech, that is, by the lips, and to proceed later to those produced by the organs only partially visible or wholly invisible. The teacher should, therefore, begin with the lip consonants and moreover those in which the vocal chords are at rest, taking those in which the vocal chords are vibrating at a later stage." This advice is largely supported by the law of physiological ease when applied to the consonantal elements of the alphabet.

It is mainly through phonic exercises of the kind indicated that imperfections in speech can be removed, provided they are not due to organic defects; and the removal of these imperfections will be greatly simplified if they are traced to their mechanical sources. It is needless, perhaps, to say that any peculiarity shown by an organ either in its constitution or mode of action is sure to result in defective speech.

It is important that children destined for the elementary school should be brought under the influence of this phonic training as early as possible, the language process being an imitative one and the children in question not being able as a rule to acquire their speech under favourable external conditions. The habit of imperfect utterance becomes sometimes so pronounced—if corrective forces are not applied early—that defects in articulation are exceedingly difficult to remove, and occasionally are never overcome. It appears, too, that the power of imitative speech is most operative in the earliest years. This is essentially the time, then, for good models.



### *Phonic principles.*

We feel sure, therefore, that phonic principles ought to be applied immediately the child is brought under school discipline. Children are extremely sensitive to the effects of muscular action. Early training in articulation would more easily produce that muscular consciousness in the speech organs, which, acting in concert with the ear, would prove such a valuable and permanent guide to correct speech. Thus the foundation would be laid for a possibly beautiful superstructure; it would give the child an insight into the mysteries of speech-sounds which are almost elusively endless in variety. It is this multitudinous variety in the sounds of English, as diversified and subtle as shades of colour, that makes early training in voice production so desirable. The speaking voice has a claim to be trained as well as the singing voice. The ear would then be attuned to new refinements, and the one operation would lead to a dual result of a beneficial and far-reaching character:

But this is only one of the necessary stages in the child's acquirement of English. Correct construction and facility in expression should also be part of the general aim. We do not, of course, suggest that formal instruction be given in grammar at this early stage. The wise teacher will devise simple and unobtrusive ways and means of giving attention to grammatical errors which can be incidentally checked, while her language, if sufficiently graphic and otherwise appropriate to the children's level, will operate in due course, as a purifying influence. Some of the earliest instruction in the mother-tongue should point the way to the "realms of gold" and give the child a foretaste of some of the riches therein. This can probably be best effected by impressionism rather than elaboration of detail, and the teacher should work for broad effects, remembering that a child's ability to understand language always transcends its powers of expression.

In the infant school systematic steps should be taken—

(1) To increase the child's vocabulary through the medium of objects. This of necessity involves an increase in its stock of ideas.

(2) To ensure, as far as possible, the adequacy of ideas already acquired, *i.e.*, exactness and completeness. This again would further extend the vocabulary and give fuller content to the words previously learnt under (1).

(3) To extend otherwise the child's mental horizon by talks about unfamiliar things, for "nature and life speak very early to men." Truths steal into the hearts of children, without taking definite content, long before the teacher attempts to put them into storied action.

(4) Generally to give suitable literary material and to aim at correspondence between the child's mental life and its power of expressing that life in childish language.

(5) To develop the power of continuous speech and exact expression.

These might be profitably approached through (1) conversation, (2) reproduction, and (3) repetition.



### *Conversation.*

In talks between pupils and the teacher, every child should be encouraged to take a part. Observation lessons, nature-study excursions, a tale that has been told, a familiar object, a game, a picture, a simple poem, besides drawing, modelling and other constructive work in plastic material, afford opportunities for free expression. Talks like these should be commenced in grade I., and the teacher should assist the children to express themselves clearly and correctly—without, however, being exacting—and should always endeavour to make them observant and to develop their general intelligence. The following verse illustrates the opportunity a simple poem affords for conversation and incidental language training:—

“ I will sing a song,  
I'm the lark.  
Sing! sing! throat-strong,  
Little kill-the-dark!  
What will you sing about,  
Day in and day out? ”

and again these lines by Christina Rossetti—

“ Who has seen the wind?  
Neither you nor I,  
But when the trees bow down their heads,  
The wind is passing by.”

### *Reproduction.*

Among suitable subjects for reproduction by individual children are (a) fairy and other tales told in class; (b) descriptions of pictures; (c) incidents of school life or other episodes narrated by the teacher. Nursery rhymes might be used for this purpose in the lowest grade.

### *Repetition.*

Repetition in grade I. should as a rule be confined to the simplest nursery rhymes.\* Simple poems of a more ambitious character should be introduced in the other grades. Examples of these are “Wynken, Blynken and Nod,” Tennyson's “Minnie and Winnie,” Hogg's “Where to Walk,” Kingsley's “Easter Week,” and selections from “Hiawatha.” Such verses awaken a love of beautiful speech and rhythmic sounds in the children, some of whom are at heart as fanciful as poets, and are thus almost invariably attracted by melodious and aptly chosen words.

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\* A list of rhymes recommended for this purpose will be found in Appendix C.



## CHAPTER IV.

### TRAINING IN SPEECH.

#### II.—FAULTS OF SPEECH IN GENERAL.

Faults of speech may be summed up under three heads—(1) mechanical, (2) mental, (3) accentual. If the vocal mechanism is defective, or one organ is habitually substituted for another in enunciating elemental sounds, the fault is mechanical. If, on the other hand, the brain is not ordinarily responsive to the calls of the will, or there is some flaw in mental association, then the fault is mainly mental. Accentual peculiarities are only considered faults in so far as they represent variations from standard speech.

Mechanical faults are many. It would be out of place to enumerate them here : they are indicated, with specific remedies, in all good books dealing with voice training or the science of speech. Some reference may, however, be made, by way of illustration, to a few sounds that are, as a rule, very imperfectly emitted. Vowel sounds are ill-moulded; *r*, *l* and *s* are misused, *r* especially being defectively articulated, or improperly voiced, and sometimes interpolated; the voice parts of *m*, *n*, *ng*, *d* and *g* are thinly rendered. There are also such organic substitutions as *f* for *th* and *n* for *ng*, which should be rectified as early as possible. The result of these and other mechanical imperfections is the absence of distinctness, of sufficient carrying power and of agreeable tone in speech.

In London, as has been suggested in the opening chapter, the circumstances are unique. We have to face an importation or a corruption in the form of Cockneyism which has been in use for several generations and which, notwithstanding the Education Acts, appears to be still flourishing. Most dialects have their own distinctive charm and historical interest ; but Cockneyism seems to have no redeeming features, and needs only to be heard to be condemned. Its chief faults lie in the wrong values given to the vowels, especially the long vowels *a*, *i*, *o* ; the addition of a final *r*, particularly after *aw* ; and the defective articulation of certain consonants.

#### *Means and methods of correcting faulty pronunciation.*

We believe that instruction on phonetic principles is the chief remedy. An important feature of such instruction is the training of the ear necessarily involved in it, without which some vowel subtleties would not be recognisable by the great majority of pupils. The education of the ear is also a factor in literary appreciation and attainment. Such training appears to us essential for English-speaking children. Our language tends in speech to become unduly weighted with consonantal sounds, some of which can only be articulated with the closed or partially closed mouth ; there is consequently a general tendency for the mouth to become "consonant clogged," whereas the proper direction of organic action, if speech is to be distinct and sonorous, is from closed



to open mouth and not from open to closed. It is absolutely necessary that children should be trained to open their mouths if the qualities of good speech are to be secured and maintained. The teaching of phonetics would, we believe, among other desiderata, secure this end. The vocal drills that it supplies would meet every possible case. The other suggested but subsidiary remedies are those named in Chapter III. under the heads of *conversation*, *reproduction* and *repetition*. These should afford the fullest opportunities for correction.

With regard to repetition, pieces may be selected for their permanent value or for their more immediate use in language training, especially in the correction of faults. A careful survey of literature will often enable the teacher to find a poem that will serve the double purpose. It is assumed that in learning it the utmost care will be taken with the pronunciation, the least significant of words receiving adequate attention in this respect.

As an example of the double purpose referred to above, supposing it is desired to illustrate the long vowels, a selection would be made from a hymn, song or simple poem, in which one or more of the long vowels are constantly recurring, *e.g.*—

“ Abide with me, fast falls the eventide . . .  
 Earth’s joys grow dim, its glories pass away; ”

or the opening lines of “ May Day in New England ”—

“ Can this be May, can this be May ?  
 We have not found a flower to-day, .  
 We’ve roamed the woods, we’ve climbed the hill,  
 We’ve rested by the rushing rill.”

The selection should be repeated slowly and distinctly by the teacher many times until the sounds have impressed the dullest ear. Then the children should try. This process should be repeated daily with the same selection, the teacher pointing out to the class how musical it is although it is only being spoken.

Vigilance, of course, is needed to discover those who have not caught the correct sound : they should repeat the selection alone at a suitable time. Where structural conditions are favourable, occasional opportunities might be given for classes to repeat such selections to the whole school. One vowel sound having been perfected, the way becomes easier for the other sounds since the ear has been trained to appreciate a new refinement.

For this purpose pieces should be chosen that are remarkable for simplicity and purity of diction. The rhyme and rhythm will be found to appeal to the children, who will incidentally commit to memory delightful little passages which they can express feelingly.

Again, if it is desired to illustrate the proper articulation of the consonants, the same plan might be followed. Selections could, be made in the first instance with articulation as a secondary aim—for example, the first line of “ The Beggar Maid ”—

“ Her arms across her breast she laid,”



and later the lines—

“ In robe and crown the King stepped down  
 To meet and greet her on her way ”,

or the two lines from “ May Day ” already quoted, beginning—

“ We’ve roamed the woods.”

In this way some valuable work can be pleasantly accomplished by both teachers and scholars, and not the less effectually because unconsciously on the children’s part.

Similarly selections of prose may be introduced containing *f*, *th*, *ng*, and other letters and their combinations that are usually stumbling-blocks to the young. Words commonly mis-pronounced might be usefully treated in much the same way. But it must not be forgotten that the rhythm and the picture—snatches of poetry when employed in this limited manner—are a greater attraction to children than prose.

### *Singing and Action as aids in the teaching of Speaking.*

*Singing.*—The teaching of singing is a valuable aid to instruction in the mother-tongue. Scale singing or a voice exercise, sung with well-opened mouth, may be practised with advantage before every lesson in speech. The earliest notes or cries of the infant are more suggestive of the singing than of the speaking voice. Instinct teaches the mother to clothe her words in music in order to strengthen their appealing power ; for sweet sounds act like a charm on the infant ear either to soothe the child to sleep or to awaken it to gladness. It would almost appear, therefore, that music is the proper medium for the introduction of language. It is indeed a beautifully organised language in itself, that acts like a running commentary and thereby lends its expressive powers to the fullest interpretation of words.

But music as an adjunct to language is useful in other ways. The voice-training that should always accompany the teaching of singing assists in attuning the ear to the subtle refinements of sound, and makes the vocal organs more sensitively responsive to the calls of the will. Many of the conditions of good singing are equally essential to good speech. A training, for example, in proper breathing and in the accurate rendering of speech sounds is as valuable to good speaking as to sweet singing. Phonetic syllabification, the poising of the voice on the vowel, the attacking of syllables, whenever possible, from consonant to vowel rather than from vowel to consonant—these are more easily acquired through the agency of singing than that of speaking. They certainly add to richness of tone and audibility of speech, and are also aids to fluency.

Again, good music—and nothing but what is of this character should be heard in the schools—apart from its own inherent beauty, is usually associated with elevating thought and noble emotions expressed in beautiful language ; and to this beautiful language it almost invariably brings an added light.



It seems clear to us, therefore, that there is a closer association between music and speech than is at first sight apparent. Purity and flexibility of the speaking voice may be attained by exercises parallel to those which cultivate these qualities in the singing voice. Indeed, it may be said that in the earlier stages of child training the singing lesson is the best of all speech exercises.

We are of opinion that in infant schools provision should be made for daily singing lessons of 15 to 20 minutes' duration, the time being apportioned thus :—

1. Handkerchief drill ... .. 2 or 3 minutes.
  2. Breathing Exercises ... .. 3 or 4 minutes.
  3. Voice training, modulator and chart exercises ... .. 5 minutes.
  4. Teaching a new song or singing one already known ... .. 5 to 8 minutes.
- Total, 15 to 20 minutes.

With regard to handkerchief drill a little less time could be given to it when the children have acquired some facility in the use of the handkerchief and a knowledge of the advantages to be derived therefrom. The handkerchief habit is extremely important in this connexion: its bearing upon health is perhaps more important still. If the lining of the nasal cavity is thickened, it appreciably affects resonance. It is imperative to have the nasal channel free for the passage of sound, both in speaking and singing: otherwise correct articulation and good tone are impossible. The occasional humming of a verse of a song or nursery rhyme will be found helpful in this direction. Humming stimulates the membrane of the nasal channel, tends to improve its resonant power, and to eliminate stuffy sounds arising from colds; it also assists the child in realising the importance and use of the nose. Humming is impossible when the nasal channel is closed. Deep breathing for three or four minutes while the windows are open, inhaling through the nostrils and exhaling slowly through the mouth will do much to facilitate the attainment of a good singing voice as well as clear and fluent speech.

*Action.*—Action and gesture are very important in the preparatory stages of speech training. Children, especially little ones, are naturally fond of movement. Hence hands and arms can advantageously be used in discovering and indicating the position of the elemental sounds in a monosyllabic word and in making air-tracings of letter and other forms. Syllables, too, are more easily realised if *step* movements are employed to denote them—one step for each vowel—e.g., *sing*—one step; *sing-ing*—2 steps; *as-ton-ish*—3 steps; *as-ton-ish-ment*—4 steps.

Little children take great pleasure in exercises like these, and are able to recall more easily and appreciate more fully the words so practised. The meanings of words, too, often difficult if not impossible to explain by other words, sometimes stand immediately revealed if they are dramatised or put into action, e.g., *lag*, *lunge*, *slink*, *saunter*, *sinuous*. Sentences may be similarly treated.



In song, however, it is unadvisable to have action other than that of a slow and gentle nature. Violent and jerky movements interfere with proper breathing, prevent the steady flow of breath and spoil the quality of the singing. Recitation, on the other hand, lends itself to action. Simple movements, such as the sense of a passage may suggest, help the children to modulate their voices, to realise the meaning more clearly, and to fix the text in the memory. Some passages imperatively demand action, as :—

“ . . . . . despising,  
 For you, the city, thus I turn my back.”

But even when the sense of a passage demands movement, the child should be encouraged to demonstrate the way in which the words should be spoken, and to indicate the fitting action. It is not adult gesture that is wanted, but childish gesture. Whatever can be done to give words the potency of life is a gain. There may be poetry in motion as well as in music and words. Each will be able to assist the other if wisely applied. The only condition apparently is that gesture should aid in interpretation, and harmonise with the feelings of the child using it.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE TEACHING OF READING.

#### I.—SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND CONSIDERATIONS.

##### *Two Schools of Thought.*

With regard to the teaching of reading there are two schools of thought, one claiming that the process of learning to read should follow the lines of general culture and disciplinary training, the specific aim of teaching reading being made subservient to these, and regarded only as an important means to the general end. The other school, practically reverses this principle, and directs its whole attention to the mastery of the mechanics of reading in the shortest possible time, ignoring general culture except so far as that may be incidentally attendant on the operation directed to the one definite and limited objective.

The question thus arises whether the process of learning to read, including as it does a grasp of arbitrary symbolism and equally arbitrary combinations of forms and phonic rules, submits itself, in the same degree as other educational processes, to the fundamental laws of mental development. To give a definite answer to this question would involve a dissertation beyond the limits of our reference. We consider, however, that the process of learning to read, in its broad sense, involving as it must, correct visual and auditory impressions, rapid association of ideas, ready interpretation and expressive motor activities is not so far removed, if at all, from other processes of learning as to justify, in its series of operations, the abandonment or almost complete suppression of the general aim of education. Indeed it is submitted that, as far as possible, the whole powers of the child should be brought into play, so that they may co-operate in the attainment of the one result.



We are led to think that both schools of thought in their endeavours after consistency, have not in every stage of their course found the right path. Speaking metaphorically, the first school in order to reach its goal, follows a circuitous route over an apparently level country through open fields, enchanted gardens and blossoming lanes, halting occasionally by the way to gather fruit and flowers, to tell stories and record events—at last ascending a fairly steep acclivity, on the other side of which is the place of pilgrimage. The second school makes a straight line for the same place over gradually rising ground, strewn here and there with surmountable boulders, and mostly destitute of the charm that characterises the other route. The race, however, is not necessarily to the swift, though the pupils belonging to the latter school must reach the goal long before the others.

We believe there is another undiscovered route to it, less circuitous than the one, and more attractive than the other. It would be found in a system which would reduce the difficulties of learning to read to a minimum, without sacrificing an abiding interest and a healthy stimulation of the faculties during the process.

#### *Some Suggested Principles.*

We consider that every system designed to teach reading should conform to the order of procedure and the principles involved in the statement below :—

(1) Language teaching by means of objects, stories and pictures, should precede all formal instruction in reading. Thus intelligent speaking should be the preliminary to intelligent reading. This is in accordance with the formula “things before words,” or “words through things.”

\* (2) Systematic lessons should follow, in which the children should be trained to distinguish the elemental sounds heard in spoken words, without at first any reference to the symbols. Experiments would show if these sounds are voiced or voiceless, and what is their mode of production.

\* (3) Analysis and synthesis of words, on the basis of their elemental sounds only, should be the next step.

\* (4) When the elemental sounds are familiar, the symbols should be taught by various processes. Analysis and synthesis of words should be continued. The sounds of the letters should precede their names.

(5) The first steps in formal reading should be taught from the blackboard.

(6) The books used for teaching reading should be arranged on a phonic basis. Supplementary readers not necessarily phonic in character might accompany them, the choice being left to the head masters and mistresses.

(7) As soon as children have gained a fair power in dealing with mechanical difficulties, only such books should be selected as would tend to foster a love for the reading of good literature.

\* During these three stages especially, the idea of the dominance of law and uniformity should be the basis of the method.



*Additional recommendations, mainly on the relation of reading to other forms of expression.*

Some general recommendations and considerations may be added—

(1) Phonetics should form part of the daily instruction in every school.

(2) It is not advisable to teach formal reading to children below six years of age.

(3) Reading should be correlated with Drawing and Writing: they are all forms of expression and are organically connected.

(4) Gesture is natural to the child, and should be encouraged, but never forced or allowed to be purely imitative. Hands and arms can sometimes speak more eloquently than the tongue.

(5) The proper line of approach to reading is through the spoken language expressed in terms both of the child's physical environment, and of the world of wonder—indicated as far as possible in bold outline and splashes of colour. Vivid impressions are essential.

(6) The spoken language should be largely the outcome of observation on the part of the children. The activities of the school should be a reflexion of the life external to it, and language in the infant department should be the centre of those activities.

(7) Sonorous vocalisation and clear articulation should, as far as possible, be insisted on at every step. There should, therefore, be no slurring of syllables—distinctness, not loudness of speech, should be the aim: and, in order to secure this, every vowel must have its full sound and every letter must be functionally individualised. Phonetic syllabification is essential to distinct speech. In these early stages, most words in a sentence should stand out with well-nigh staccato distinctness.

(8) Children should be taught to realise that every word is of value in a sentence; that a sentence, as a rule, starts a picture, and that this picture ought to be visualised before they proceed to the next.

(9) The keyword or keywords in every sentence should be stressed—this will assist in giving rhythm. Pitch, too, another mode of accentuation, ought to be insisted on. Thus it is possible to have musical phrases and musical sentences, even in the earlier stages of reading. To neglect the voice as a musical instrument for reading purposes, especially at a period when its tone is so sweet, is to disregard a great natural force in education.

(10) Every reading lesson should begin with exercises involving—

Duration (1) Chest and lung exercises.

5 (2) Mouth gymnastics.

minutes (3) Deep breathing exercises.

(4) Drills in vowels, consonants and easy words.

(These are, however, practically included under our recommendation concerning the teaching of phonetics.)

(11) The simplest literary training that a child has received—in the form of rhymes, rhythmic movement and the word-music of nursery lyrics—is capable of being utilised, and should be utilised, in the process of learning to read.



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE TEACHING OF READING.

#### II.—METHODS.

From these general considerations we now proceed to a short survey of some definite methods.

Every system of teaching to read must be mainly synthetic or analytic in character. Most systems combine the two processes. Judged by salient characteristics there are apparently only three methods by which reading can be taught, the basis being either the *letter*, the *syllable*, or the *word*. These methods are named :—

(1) *The Alphabetic*—in which names of letters are used without their functional sounds.

(2) *The Phonic*—in which either the *letter* or *syllable* is regarded as the ultimate sound in the language. Hence we have :—

(a) *The literal* method (in which the letters are at first distinguished by their functional values only).

(b) *The syllabic* method.

(3) *The Verbal* or “*Look and Say*.”

#### *The Alphabetic Method.*

*The Alphabetic Method*, once so universal, is now happily falling into disuse. Everyone is so familiar with this system, that it is unnecessary to discuss it here. Historical interest will save it from oblivion, even if its utility as an instrument in spelling is overlooked.

#### *The Phonic Method.*

*The Phonic Method*, which we next considered, is probably the most scientific of all systems devised to make the art of reading easy. It is, however, variously applied. In its early stages this system deals with pure elemental sounds, and the decomposition and construction of simple normal words. The analytic stage in which words are arrested in the process of enunciation, and the component sounds individualised by assigning to each its phonic value, is practically the first step in this method. Thus the scholar has the wholesome exercise of dissecting and constructing for himself the words that come within the range of his daily experience. By a system of vocal drills and manual exercises, in which air-writing, printing and cursive characters play their part, the teacher aims at developing “mouth and hand consciousness.” At a later stage the *forms* of the letters are introduced, when the process of learning to read, for which the earlier stages are but a preparation, actually begins.

In this system, reading and writing are correlated. It lays a sure foundation for spelling, ensures clear enunciation, excites the child’s interest, and gratifies its love of power, of discovery, and of self-expression. Progress is generally rapid after the initial stages are over ; but the value of the system, both for intellectual and disciplinary training, is very considerable when broadly applied ; it appeals to hand, eye, ear and the whole vocal mechanism at a period in a child’s



life when the organs are growing rapidly and are increasingly responsive to training. The importance of securing appropriate or proportionate balance in this four-fold appeal cannot be over-estimated.

The irregularities of English as a disturbing factor in the application of phonic rules have been urged against this system ; but considering that such a large percentage of English words conform to general phonic principles, the objection cannot be regarded as a serious one. Another objection urged is that the elemental sounds as expressed do not strictly make the whole-word sound ; the answer is that they do so approximately and that this method shows a closer approach to reality in this respect than any other.

The use of diacritics is also deemed a drawback, but these need only be used as warning signals in the earlier word-building stages, and need not, and should not, appear in the "readers." In all phonic systems, biliteral sounds must be learnt independently of the functional value of the individual letters concerned.

### *The "Look and Say" Method.*

The "*Look and Say*" Method is based on initial interest, words only being introduced at first, with whose sound and signification the child is familiar. Sentences and words have meanings, while letters and syllables have none. The familiar word, therefore, in its simple form is adopted as the unit of the system until a certain power in reading has been acquired, when the analysis of sounds is introduced. The words are regarded as totalities, as pictorial symbols of which the child is expected to take a sort of photographic mental impression without reference, as yet, to component parts. Hence the scholar, instead of committing to memory about 30 elemental signs and learning their permutations and combinations to form simple English, has to memorise a few hundred compound symbols known as words. In its earlier stages this method mainly depends on eye-memory of a non-suggestive picture. It is the process through which it is asserted every Chinese child must go who is taught to read his native language.

There is no doubt that children, after the lapse of some time, learn inferentially, as they do in the Alphabetic system, the phonic power of each letter, and then the true constructive and analytic processes in word building and word analysis begin. There appears, however, to be no real justification for delaying the disciplinary benefits of decomposition and re-composition of words. It is a mistake to suppose that young children are not interested in simple forms ; they delight in letters when properly presented, as they delight in overcoming mere physical difficulties. For them there is witchery in transforming audible into visible signs ; it is another step in the splendours of experience. On the other hand it must be admitted that children generally prefer wholes to parts and sentences to words ; but this aptitude for appreciation of unities scarcely applies to the reading process which is fundamentally synthetic in character.

The "*Look and Say*" method appears to be ultimately slower and educationally less effective than the phonic, of which it is up to a point,



an inversion. Its tendency is in the direction, except in strongly visually-minded children, of slovenly enunciation, careless reading and defective spelling. The habit of jumping at conclusions once formed is difficult to eradicate.

We are far, however, from condemning the "Look and Say" principle when grafted on a sound phonic system. Indeed it must be, within limitations already defined, an essential part of every method designed to teach effectively the art of reading.

### *Letter-names.*

There was some divergence of view among us concerning the time when the letter-names, as distinguished from their functional values, should be introduced. The point, however, is not an important one.

The usual practice, in phonic systems, of reserving the letter-names until the initial stages of reading have been covered, is, we believe, a wise one. But sometimes the names are withheld too long. When the name of an object is known, it appears to strengthen our sense of intimacy with it; it is a kind of substratum in which the qualities of the object are located and defined. There is no necessary connexion between the name, sound and form of a letter. Neither suggests the other in the remotest way except by arbitrary association. It seems desirable, therefore, that as early as possible, so far as this may be done without confusing the minds of the children, the sound, form and name should be so closely allied or associated that one should inevitably and immediately suggest the other; and this, perhaps is the more desirable because the name of the letter is constant, while its functional sound may, and often does, vary. Indeed, many of the letters may be regarded as actors—one in its time playing many parts. Besides, there is this glaring fact to be reckoned with, that the child, with few exceptions, learns the letter-names outside the school premises, long before the teacher introduces them; and, further, the sounds of the consonants, in isolation—if they can be sounded in isolation—unlike those of the vowels, are only rough approximations to their real acoustic values when heard in combination with other letters.

### *Importance of variety of methods.*

Perhaps it is unnecessary for us to state that each of the methods of teaching to read previously referred to, is not always adopted in its entirety. It is not uncommon to find, for example, parts of the phonic system interwoven with those of other recognised methods. Indeed, in some schools a carefully planned scheme of instruction is found in which the best features of all the systems are made more or less operative. A combination of the phonic and alphabetic methods seems to be a favourite one. The possibility of adaptation of the various methods, taken separately or collectively, to every variety of condition is so great that it may be said there are or should be as many good methods as there are intelligent teachers with adaptive minds. The claims of individuality must be recognised whether in reference to teacher or scholar. Variations in procedure are, therefore, necessary indeed so



necessary that they are found in different classes of the same efficient school, and even in the same class at different periods of the educational year. Re-adjustments must come in as the class moves as a whole, and reaches new planes of thought or higher levels of attainment. Freedom for the teacher is so desirable in these matters that it would be better to have liberty and a cumbersome system in the classroom, rather than fetters and all the refinements of method which the science of pedagogy could devise. In other words, faith in the efficacy of the means employed is essential. Conviction is a great motive power. Method should spring from assimilated knowledge, should come from the teacher as a part of himself. The point of contact between teacher and scholar can only be sensitively complete in this way. The teacher must learn to be all things in turn in order to see eye to eye with the whole class and every unit in it.

But if there is one reason stronger than another for variety of method on the part of the teacher, it is to be found in the relative powers of the brain centres in different persons. One child, for instance, is in a predominant degree visually minded, another auditorily, and another manually. It is, of course, the dominant centre that plays the chief part in the educative process. One system, no matter how wide its appeal, can hardly be expected to provide for this range of variation in individuals, unless the harmony of its parts is disturbed by stress being laid on this feature at one time, and on that feature at another.

#### *Need for basal uniformity.*

But, notwithstanding the force of the claims of liberty and the need of adjusting method to suit many mental types and other various conditions, we are strongly of opinion that basal uniformity would materially assist general education, and tend to make the process of learning to read comparatively easy and pleasant, assuming, of course that the uniformity in question sprang from the foundations of a scientific system that has passed through the refiner's fire, and received the sanction of expert authority. We believe this basal uniformity is to be found in the earlier stages of the phonic method.

The adoption and application of this view, in combination with the general instruction in phonetics already recommended, would, *inter alia*, help the thousands of migratory children to fit in their previous training with a fresh school environment, and still leave ample play for the exercise of the teacher's powers and for the influence of local conditions.

## CHAPTER VII.

### SPELLING.

English orthography presents many formidable obstacles to the child. One letter may have several phonic values, and different sounds may be represented by the same letter. In considering the phenomena of the language, the aggregate difficulties of spelling become obtrusively mani-





test, as there is an abundance of anomalous words and many rules, perplexing by reason of the numerous exceptions to them. Indeed, to recommend the learning of those rules as a guide to spelling would prove a fruitful source of error : they are best acquired in the process of mastering the language, the pupils being expected to deduce them from certain uniformities presented by the teacher. This class of exercise probably represents the only opportunities, apart from the interest of research, that spelling offers for work of a truly intellectual character. So far as spelling considered in its mechanical aspects is concerned, it excites chiefly the lowest form of memory activity, and the brain is consequently little more than a mere memorising machine that takes a sort of photographic impress of words.

Spelling, however, is extremely important on account of its relation to reading and writing, and must therefore be regarded as an essential part of a general education. While we recognise the need of giving attention to the subject throughout a child's school life, we have failed to discover any justification for laying as much stress on it as has been customary in the junior classes of elementary schools. The only way to excite a lasting interest in the subject, after the novelty of the early stages is over, is to treat it etymologically, and that kind of treatment is not suitable for young children.

Simultaneous oral spelling, still apparently largely practised, though it serves some of the purposes for which it is intended, is, we believe, calculated to destroy rather than cultivate any liking that a child might have for the beauties of the mother-tongue. It must be admitted that this ponderous practice proves an aid to pupils in mastering the complexities of English orthography. The advantage is, however, in our opinion, too dearly gained. We believe that under an enlightened system of instruction, spelling could be acquired, with certain aids, almost incidentally. It could be learnt for the most part through the medium of reading and writing to which it is so closely allied, and without the drudgery that is usually associated with orthography in the elementary schools.

In other words, we submit that spelling should be mainly acquired through the eye and the hand, after the mouth and the ear have played their fundamental parts in early speech and reading training : and the phonic method in its first stages is the best device known to us for training mouth and ear, both before and after the actual reading stages have begun.

#### *Foundation of Spelling.*

Correct articulation and good pronunciation are more readily attained by this method than any other, and these form the surest foundation upon which the eye and hand can build. A knowledge of the functional values of letters and of the means of harmonising them in a syllable or speaking chord, gives security for good spelling in the future. The foundations thus laid, the dominant part in getting the ordered series of images that constitute words should be allowed to the eye and hand. Of these two, the eye plays the greater part, though the hand is a most valuable ally. Spelling, as already stated, is mainly a matter of memory



—chiefly of eye-memory. It will be found that strongly visually-minded children, who have reasonable opportunities of reading, surmount the difficulties of English orthography with comparative ease.

The kind of memory that is needed for spelling appears to be most active from the sixth to the tenth year. The love of routine, the desire to reproduce, an appetite for almost every form of knowledge that can be acquired with the minimum of mental effort, are characteristic of this period of child life. This then appears to be the time when spelling, mechanically considered, should be mastered. This seems the more practicable because the chief difficulties of spelling are to be found in syllables and monosyllabic words, and also because the phenomena of the language have been classified on a phonetic basis for purposes of both reading and spelling by one or more of the phonic systems in use in the schools.

In Chapter V. we directed attention to the need of impressing on the minds of the children the idea of the dominance of law and uniformity, while analysis and synthesis of words were being studied by the class. Too much stress cannot be laid upon this in the earliest stages of spelling. The anomalies will be the more easily recognised and appreciated by the children when once the prevalence of law and order has been established in their minds. A child taught by the phonic method will be able to spell words of regular notation that he has never seen.

The early stages of training in speech being over, and the foundations of orthography thus laid, we believe that the spelling process could be efficiently completed by reading, individual oral spelling, transcription, dictation and word-building. Some remarks under each of these heads seem to us desirable.

### *Reading.*

In reading, the ordered forms of letters that make a word suggest the sound. In spelling, the sound suggests the ordered forms. There is, therefore, no doubt concerning the mutual helpfulness of these two. The frequency of the repetition of words in reading causes them to be the more easily recognised. Such recognition implies a coincidence of the details of the word-picture with previous visualised impressions and their acoûstic associations, and suggests the sound of the word. Reading, therefore, appears to us the most favourable of all methods for acquiring facility in spelling. This conclusion is, we believe, supported by experience. Children who are fond of reading are generally good at spelling.

### *Individual Oral Spelling.*

Five minutes should be spent at the close of each reading lesson for this purpose. This practice will encourage a closer observation of the details of the more difficult words whilst the reading is in progress, and has the advantage of not divorcing spelling from the mastery of the meaning of words. The word to be spelled, however, should be placed in an independent sentence if (1) there are other words of the same





sound or nearly so, but spelled differently, e.g., there, their; write, right; (2) it is one of those words commonly mispronounced; (3) the meaning of the word has not been fully grasped by the class.

### *Transcription from the blackboard or book.*

In this exercise, the hand co-operates with the eye in fixing the order and form of the letters that constitute a word. It therefore cultivates accuracy. The process is slow, perhaps, but valuable. Transcription should further give materials for thought and language. It is extremely important that mistakes made in this exercise should be rectified immediately the transcribing is completed.

### *Dictation.*

Exercises of this kind should not be selected for their special difficulty, but should be representative of the book as a whole from which the passages are taken. The dictation of difficult passages often does more harm than good, for the child becomes discouraged by the rapid succession of comparatively unfamiliar words and thereby makes mistakes in the spelling of ordinary words which he would otherwise write correctly. Assuming that the piece for dictation has been wisely chosen, we believe that this class of exercise is a valuable one. Apart from its value as a training, it is a measuring rod in the hands of the teacher for each child's progress in spelling, while it is a fairly sure indication to the pupils themselves of their relative powers in the same subject.

A pupil ought not to be called upon to write a mis-spelt word more than three or four times, unless the circumstances are very exceptional. While it is, of course, both desirable and necessary that the children should be able to write correctly the language of every-day life, yet opportunities should be seized in both dictation and transcription of putting before the class some of the many simple examples of the richer diction in which our literature abounds, and which may possibly have previously been introduced by way of repetition or general speech training.

### *Word-building.*

This instructive process is one of the most valuable of all the means of acquiring a knowledge of orthography. Two methods are usually adopted which cultivate logical rather than mechanical memory :—

- (1) Word building by applying the rules of orthography.
- (2) „ „ derivation.

Concerning the application of the rules under (1), there is no need to enter into particulars. The course to be pursued is obvious to those who have an elementary knowledge of teaching. Besides, the line of procedure can always be obtained from any good text-book on the subject. It is enough to say that this exercise, properly handled, will be found both interesting and useful. Words of similar structure should be grouped on the blackboard, and those of an exceptional character should be isolated.





Word-building by derivation opens up a fascinating field for study. Prefixes and affixes must, of course, in this connexion, be introduced, and their offices explained. The more prolific the root-word, the more interesting and instructive will it prove as a rule. Though a false analogy may sometimes be misleading, yet generally the impress of the root-word on every member of its numerous offspring will be found to be recognisable. This impress is not only a guide to the spelling and meaning of the words, but a tie that binds the whole family together; it calls to our aid by association, as occasion may require, those members which otherwise might perhaps be forgotten.

Children who have reached Standard VI. before leaving school, should have some knowledge of the root elements of words. Such pupils will be found readily responsive in suggesting derivations when once the instruction has been started on the right lines. Opportunities will present themselves for getting hold of the accurate meanings of words, and for dwelling upon the changes which certain of the more interesting words have undergone, both in form and meaning, in the course of their history.

We do not recommend, however, that lessons of this type should be of a formal character. In the course of a reading or other lesson presenting a fitting opportunity, attention may be incidentally directed to the derivative aspects of a word. Interest will be sure to flag if instruction is divorced from application, or separated from the elements with which the subject-matter is associated. Words that are richest in association are, as a rule, strongest in appeal.

We believe that no branch of language teaching is better calculated to foster a liking for literature than this kind of incidental instruction; and the more familiar the derivatives are to the children, the greater will be the interest excited in them.

### *Composition.*

*Written* composition incidentally renders some assistance to spelling. *Oral* composition, on the other hand, should not be accepted, even as an occasional medium, for this purpose. The immediate object of this kind of speech training should be steadily kept in view, and no element foreign to that object should be permitted to intervene. Faulty pronunciation must of course be corrected, but spelling ought not to be allowed to intrude. If the teacher makes a note of the words mis-pronounced during oral composition, attention could be drawn to the spelling on a more fitting occasion.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### COMPOSITION.

#### *Increased importance of Composition in the Curriculum.*

No circumstance connected with the modern development of the elementary school is more noteworthy than the increased attention which is being given to the practice and teaching of English Composition. For a considerable period this subject received altogether inadequate attention, and was allowed to occupy a distinctly subordinate position.





It was begun far too late in the school life of the child, and few pupils acquired anything like the accuracy, facility or range that are now considered desirable. In particular, great stress is to-day rightly being laid upon oral exercises, to be practised quite from the beginning and by the very youngest children. We are convinced of the efficiency of this method, and regard it as being pre-eminently the best means of laying a good foundation for the more advanced exercises of senior pupils.

### *The First Lessons.*

We consider that the ordered beginnings of the teaching in this subject should utilise the stock of words and powers of expression of which the child stands possessed on his entrance into school. The oral recital of some actual experience in his active little life would probably be his first adventure on the road which should lead to reasonably accurate and fluent writing in later years.

### *Oral exercises : their value.*

We would place copious oral exercises at the beginning, and continue them even after the time when tolerable facility in the written work has been acquired. It is constantly found that a pupil in the senior classes who can pronounce his words with marked accuracy when reading, and who can write a page of lucid English without any very serious blunders in syntax, will employ in the streets and playing fields a mode of speech which is mutilated, ill-pronounced and ungrammatical. It may be plausibly contended that this employment of a second and debased vocabulary results in some measure from our neglect of those supplies of verbal material which he has acquired—and indolently acquired—right at the beginning. And although the teaching of correct pronunciation and enunciation is more clearly the work of the lessons in phonetics and reading, the regular employment of spoken exercises in Composition should assist to a very great extent.

### *A Practical Illustration.*

A class of little children, for example, may co-operate in framing simple narratives upon subjects so diverse as the postman, the tramcar, the public garden, the grocer's shop, a game of ball, or a rainy day. Each child thus begins at once to utilise in school both the experiences he has undergone, and the words he has already learnt out of school, and there is a co-ordination established between these previous acquisitions and the word stock being built up by his school lessons ; with the further result that a training in free expression accompanies his mastery of the additional material provided for him by the teacher.

### *Initial weaknesses of expression.*

We are aware that educational investigators unite in deploring the initial poverty of vocabulary and the absence of facility in its employment among our children, and emphasise their almost universal resort





to monosyllabic responses and broken phrases in framing answers even to the simplest questions. But a little child has a by no means meagre store of elementary ideas and he certainly possesses a vivid imagination and active powers of invention. Moreover his inability to express himself fluently and promptly is no proof of absence of word material, or of a stock of sense experiences—confined of course to his own little universe of street and home, church and shop, park and river. It would appear the more effective method to utilise—rather than ignore—the potentialities of this already existing stock of material, by training him to narrate in his own words some of the most interesting experiences of his own active life.

To begin in this fashion is in conflict with what is apparently the American method—which inclines to start with the setting of purely reproductive exercises of story and song, read or told. But this is likely to lead too early to a formal use of words, and to become too much of a merely academical exercise of no very great value. Moreover it does not utilise the living speech, while one great advantage of the plan here suggested would be the early employment of the powers of imagination, by moulding these ideas into fresh combinations, and by giving scope for powers of native invention.

#### *The true meaning of Composition.*

This method regards Composition less as a definitely separate school subject than as an activity which finds the matter for its exercise in all the successive additions which the child makes to his original home-acquired stock of ideas, whether they are gained by his own observation of external things, learnt from the books he reads and the tales he is told, or acquired by direct instruction in school lessons.

#### *Manuals of Composition condemned.*

It suggests, too, that the employment of a “method” which places before the learner certain facts and ideas merely in order that he may translate them into words is fundamentally wrong. Manuals are issued (and we regret to say, widely approved in some parts of the country) which take as their leading principle the garnering of notions, not for their intrinsic worth in relation to the child’s environment, nor for their importance in an organised scheme of instruction, but simply that they may afford material for subsequent essays in reproduction. It seems a poor economy to give information to-day about buttercups, and next week about salt, with the professed intention of practising composition on them a day or two later. Surely the true position is that the gaining of ideas on which to base such exercises is a continuous and unbroken process, which goes on in every lesson, every day, whether the scholar listens to a fairy tale, reads a story about old London, acquires elementary facts about leaves and trees, or visits the seaside with his father and mother. The teacher of composition is concerned with all these means of acquisition, and employs them to secure for the pupil a competent power of expressing to others as fully, as accurately, and as clearly as the circumstances allow, something of what he has thus learnt.





Composition finds its material in every variety of school activity, and every form of living experience. It may be considered as systematic practice in self-expression.

*A comparison with Drawing.*

As such it is closely akin to drawing and the views in regard to the best methods of teaching both subjects have undergone almost the same evolutionary changes. For drawing, too, finds scope for its exercise in the almost endless variety of school work—from the rude picturing of the forms of leaf and toy in the Kindergarten, to the elaborated original design in which the advanced pupil gives form and colour to his conceptions of the beautiful. The models for imitation in both the subjects should be part of the environment of the scholar, and reliance should not be placed merely upon artificial “schemes” and irrelevant “copies.” Like drawing, Composition begins with the simplest exercises in reproduction, and should conclude (under the most favourable circumstances) with efforts of pure imagination. But there is much to be said for the opinion of some authorities that the power of faithful reproduction is as much as can be expected from the ordinary scholar in the elementary school.

*Means of enlarging the child's stock of words : Books and the Teacher.*

Like drawing, Composition should work only upon thoroughly good examples, from which it follows that the speech of the teacher should be irreproachable in its quality and that the poems the child learns, the stories he is told, the books he reads should possess real merit. The two most potent influences on his development as a speaker and writer will be his teachers, and his books. And for the teacher the problem remains the same throughout the whole of the child's school life—so to utilise the constantly increasing mass of knowledge which the organised school instruction builds upon the fundamental ideas gained during the earliest years, as to secure for him the power of communicating to others that which he has thus acquired. To do this the word-stock must be constantly illuminated and extended.

*The use of Stories in simple reproductive exercises.*

In the beginning this result is best secured by the telling of simple stories and fairy tales and the acting of nursery rhymes, seconded by the learning of poems and songs, of which both subject and style are strictly suited to the child's stage of development. Our enquiries have revealed an unexpected wealth of poetry for children, some of really classical rank, with much other pleasing verse which, if not inspired, is at any rate the work of writers in keen sympathy with child life and of cultured literary tastes. In the case of songs, the problem of supplying thoroughly suitable material is less near solution, but there has been much recent improvement, and there is no reason to suppose that capable musicians will find the task too difficult either in the provision of new works or in the utilisation of old ones.





Reproduction of the story, at first co-operative, then individual, much practice in repetition of what has been learnt by heart, the acting of simple rhymes and dialogues, and the playing of Old English games will give the confidence without which there can be little effective progress, and will lay the foundation of a vocabulary at once correct and useful.

*Books as means of enlarging vocabulary.*

But books bring in a much wider range of words than speech, and also assist in the process of retention by bringing them repeatedly under the notice of the reader, thereby impressing and re-impressing them on his mind, continually recalling the ideas which they represent, and making of them an abiding possession, a part of his "mental furniture" available for use whenever the demand arises. It is this second function which is supremely valuable, and which emphasises the need for increasing the meagre total of readers hitherto deemed sufficient, of inducing the habit of independent reading, and of giving opportunities for systematic home reading both during term and in the holidays. The larger number of library books now granted to a department, the marked improvement in the literary style of the newer reading books, the greatly increased variety of continuous readers now available, and the valuable work of the National Home Reading Union are powerful helps in this direction. We deal more fully with the subject in another part of this report.

*The Dictionary.*

In thus increasing the word-stock, early, but not too early, recourse should be had to the dictionary. We suggest the age of ten as the dividing line. Previously to that time each new word should be explained; afterwards every child should possess and use a small dictionary.

*The Blackboard.*

The question when and to what extent a teacher should employ the blackboard to explain words, and, if necessary, to illustrate them somewhat fully, is very difficult to answer. The children themselves will indicate to a sensitive and alert teacher that the interest and continuity of the lesson are being broken by some awkward word or phrase, and will thus lead him to give just enough explanation to restore that interest. Usually a very brief exposition will suffice, but occasionally a blackboard demonstration for a minute or two amply repays the time spent. Some would allow such words to accumulate until the end of the lesson, and then devote a few minutes to their discussion. Care is needed to avoid anything like irrelevancy and in senior classes there may be lessons especially devoted to words which have occurred during (say) the past week, and brief accounts given of those which are etymologically or historically interesting. Some teachers rule a margin on the blackboard and reserve it for the insertion of such new words as are of exceptional importance or difficulty, and these are allowed to remain thereon for reference and revision. Some keep a separate blackboard for this purpose. Others



provide each scholar with a small note book. Our opinion is unanimous that the blackboard should be freely used for the explanation of words: the precise method may be left to the teacher, who alone knows all the circumstances of his particular case.

### *The Non-Literary Lessons.*

The non-literary lessons of the curriculum have a smaller influence on the acquirement of vocabulary. Here the teacher's efforts are directed towards the giving of clear and definite ideas, and his language must be well within the comprehension of his listeners. But as these ideas gradually unfold and new forms of knowledge become opened out, there is a corresponding demand for new words, and these must be written down as well as spoken. Children often make ludicrous mistakes in using words of which they know the sound but not the form, and early opportunity should be afforded them to use these new words for themselves.

### *Debates.*

We hear much in some quarters of school debates. In some American schools they are largely employed. But we do not consider that they are of any great utility as aids to the acquisition of vocabulary. They will not call for the employment of new words to any great extent, though they may serve to call into use some less common forms of expression than those the speaker would need in colloquial intercourse. In addition, if they are employed with a view to attaining accuracy of vocal expression, there is a danger of over-correction by the listeners. This would interfere with the progress of the discussion and partly destroy the interest of the exercise, and it may be accepted that to make a debate really effective requires a teacher who is exceptionally skilled and alert, with possibly a good deal of antecedent preparation of the class.

### *Newspapers.*

A short lesson from time to time on the contents of the daily newspaper is much advocated by some teachers. Its chief use appears to be the deepening of the connexion between the experiences gained outside and inside the school walls, and the enlarging of the child's area of observation and interest. But there seems no great value in a school newspaper of which the articles are miscellaneous in character and unconnected either with the scholar's work in school or his environment outside. It is too often scrappy and largely devoid of literary merit. We may have some day a London school newspaper, and for such a publication we can foresee all kinds of possibilities. Apart from such a general publication, a school magazine composed exclusively of contributions by staff and scholars would be very valuable, but it could scarcely be attempted with much profit except in a large school and under very favourable surroundings. We return to this question in Chapter XII.



### *Pictures.*

Pictures are becoming very popular as aids to composition, and some teachers employ them largely. The American schools make a great feature of their use for this purpose. To be fully effective, they need to be carefully chosen and when they belong to a series they should be carefully grouped. Without these precautions, they are not of much use to the teacher of composition. A well-chosen set, say in illustration of Shakespeare, his birthplace, the social life of England in his time, the chief characters in his plays, great impersonators of these characters, and the like, has been found to be of very great assistance. One of Scott's poems, *e.g.*, "The Lady of the Lake," could be thus illustrated very effectively. We see much less value in the mere collection of pictures and picture-postcards, when there is no clear basis of choice.

### *Lessons on Words.*

We have dealt in the previous chapter with the use of lessons on words as an aid to spelling. To what extent words *per se* should be critically examined, and lessons given upon variations in the meanings of closely allied words and so called synonyms is a matter of dispute. But the meaning and practice of Composition, as outlined in this report, suggest that the sentence rather than the word is to be regarded as the unit, and that the feeling for the finer shades of meaning in words will come better from extended reading and systematic practice in original composition than from examination of words as they occur in phrases or sentences selected merely to illustrate one or other of many possible meanings.

At the same time we feel that in the hands of a skilful teacher the study of words may be used most effectively. It is impossible not to be struck by the impression often made on a class by the discovery that words are not dead tokens, but have a life and history of their own, experiencing varieties of fortune, undergoing strange transformation, sometimes exercising wonderful power on mankind. That "virtue" meant to the Roman "manliness" and primarily "courage" or "fortitude" will be keenly appreciated by a class of boys, and make them all the more willing to consider its other cardinal varieties. Or again—not to multiply instances—such facts as that "street" is of Latin, and "church" of Greek origin, are in themselves not of much pedagogical value; but, coupled deftly with the history of the words, they may and do become of considerable importance and interest. It is rather in an illustrative and incidental way than in definite etymological studies that the teacher will treat this part of the school course; and its value, which in spite of incompleteness may be very considerable, will naturally depend entirely on his knowledge and resource.

### *Paraphrase.*

In respect to this exercise, widely divergent views were held by members of the Conference, and writers on the teaching of English appear to be no less strongly divided in opinion. Some consider it of



great utility. A few would give it a place of paramount importance. Others would exclude it altogether. The majority perhaps would employ it, but sparingly. There is no unanimity as to the precise meaning of the term in its application to a school exercise. Such rules as have been devised for its efficient employment are unsatisfactory and even at times contradictory.

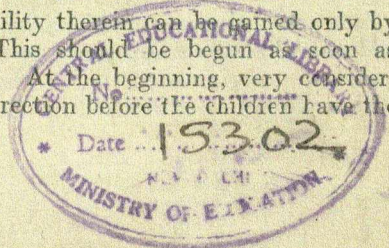
But it seems difficult not to agree with those of its advocates who urge that from its practice, under skilled direction, the pupils cannot fail to secure a clearer conception of the meaning of a difficult passage; that by the selection and employment of the words and phrases which appear to convey most suitably the thoughts and images of the original, their ideas gain in accuracy and power, and their vocabulary in range and flexibility; and that the teacher who employs it intelligently is afforded a convenient and sufficiently accurate measure of the efficiency of his instruction. There seems some reason for believing that paraphrase, more or less unconscious, accompanies the intensive study of any literary passage. To the critic who points out how ridiculously poor the pupil's efforts must be in comparison with the perfection of the original, the reply may be made that a paraphrase is not intended to be literature, and that this very weakness serves to the learner as a means of comparison, a stimulus to closer effort and a help to keener apprehension.

On the other hand it must be admitted that a really satisfactory paraphrase is often an impossibility; that in an especial degree the highest and most abiding monuments of literary art resist all efforts to change their form without hopelessly destroying their charm and beauty, and that there is a danger of the student's serious discouragement when he realises the inadequacy of his best efforts to give at all a faithful rendering of the thoughts evoked by his study of a great writer's words.

But when we came to discuss the actual possibilities of paraphrase in an elementary school, there appeared a closer agreement than might have been expected. The exercise seems to be but a natural extension of the early "reproductive" lessons in a course of instruction on Composition; and those most opposed to it appear less to condemn paraphrase than the use made of it. We deprecate the attempt on the part of either teacher or pupil to rival in their versions the beauty of the original, and suggest that the main uses of paraphrase are to develop the power of reproducing a thought accurately and of expressing it appropriately. We object to its employment mainly as a test of comprehension, rather than as a means of acquiring additional skill in appreciating and using words; we condemn the needless difficulties of the isolated passages common in examination papers; we suggest that it is of most value when employed orally, and we consider that it has quite a special use when Shakespearian English is set to be rendered into modern prose.

### *The Cultivation of Facility—Oral Composition.*

Composition being an art, facility therein can be gained only by regular and systematic practice. This should be begun as soon as possible, and persistently continued. At the beginning, very considerable progress may be made in this direction before the children have the







power to express their thoughts in writing, or indeed can make any letters. The exercises may be either reproductive or original. We do not see that there will ever come a time when the reproductive exercises will be completely withdrawn. It is certain that in the initial stage they help to secure accuracy in word and phrase; they teach arrangement, the importance of order and of logical sequence; they afford useful material for exercising the memory, and give practice, first, in translating the words of the original into approximately accurate mental images, and secondly in communicating these mental impressions by a process of re-translation.

*Connected Composition should be begun early.*

It has already been stated that we regard the sentence as the unit. We now go further and state that connected composition, which is really no more than the employment of a number of consecutive sentences, should be begun as early as possible. This will bear a close relation to the "outlines" or "skeletons" which the pupil will draw up for himself later when he is sufficiently advanced to attempt extended exercises.

Literary subjects, in story form, need not be exclusively used though we would give prominence to them. At the very beginning, the object lessons and nature study lessons may be retold; pupils may be encouraged to ask questions about a given subject which other pupils will answer: some interesting object may be placed before the class about which they may be invited to converse: they may be asked to describe their pets, their favourite games, and so forth.

*The beginnings of Written Work.*

But while the child has been learning to speak, he has also been learning to write. As soon as possible, certainly not later than the eighth or ninth year, the oral exercises, in which it may be presumed considerable confidence has now been gained, should be supplemented by written work. We say supplemented, not superseded, because oral exercises should never be wholly discontinued. The scholar should be encouraged to speak freely on various subjects as long as he remains in school. Under the most favourable circumstances he will be led to take part in set debates, or formal discussions based, for example, upon a scene in a play, or upon his studies in history and geography.

*The use of the Blackboard.*

We suggest that, in the beginning, written exercises should be constructed upon the co-operative principle. A subject is given. Statements are invited from the class. The teacher criticises and corrects errors in fact or in expression, suggests improvements, or rejects altogether. The statement, when accepted, is written upon the blackboard. This is continued until a fairly complete exercise has been written down, which is then copied into the books, thereby affording a most useful form of transcription, or is dictated by the teacher, and entered into the books.



We would draw special attention to the value of this exercise in affording a change from the customary routine of the dictation lesson. Gradually the blackboard help will be withdrawn until finally it is used only to demonstrate errors. We are of opinion that much more profitable use of the blackboard may be made than is the custom in some schools, although we recognise that the most successful teachers of composition have always regarded it as an almost indispensable adjunct. It is to be regretted that there appears a tendency to minimise the great value of the blackboard as a help to vivid teaching.

#### *Auxiliary exercises.*

It is true that the comparatively flexionless character of English renders less necessary than in some other countries early lessons upon what we may call the mechanism of written speech, but some work must be done in this connexion. These lessons would include exercises in the supply of missing words, in substitution of pronouns for substantives, in changes of person or tense in verbs; in the avoidance of common errors, and of long words when simpler ones will do the work better; in devices for securing directness and smoothness of speech; in selecting the correct preposition; in distinguishing between synonyms and in discriminating between the relative aptness of kindred adjectives.

#### *Some Teaching Devices.*

We are unanimous in thinking that these early lessons should be upon—rather than about—the subject matter of the literature book. But when classes are large, and the teacher is comparatively inexperienced, there is much danger of the brighter children doing nearly all the work, while the slower children, who more especially need the training, are glad to sit still, little more than spectators. We suggest the following method of dealing with the problem. A story, let it be supposed, has already been studied. There is prepared on the blackboard a series of questions relating to it (somewhat like those which used to appear at the end of each chapter in the old-fashioned reading books). These are placed before the class. The children are called upon, at the teacher's discretion, to answer one or more of these questions in their sequence. It is claimed that by a proper use of this method, the slower children are helped largely, that as a result they begin to take an interest in their work, and no longer regard the composition exercise as an impossibility. At the beginning, the answers may even be written down briefly on another blackboard and made headings for the written exercise.

#### *The Method Illustrated.*

We append a list of questions, which have actually been used, on the "Story of Arachne"—

- Who was Arachne?
- What could she do especially well?
- Who had first taught the people to spin?
- What did Arachne think of her own weaving?
- What happened when she was with the Goddess?
- How did Athene punish Arachne?





*An intermediate step between the Reproductive and the Inventive type of exercise.*

A narrative (in prose or verse) may be made the foundation of a whole group of exercises, each of which will employ as a groundwork the original story. As a concrete illustration, we may take Whittier's story of Barbara Frietchie. One child may assume the part of the old lady herself writing to a Northern sympathiser; another may personate a soldier who saw the incident; another, Stonewall Jackson; another a little girl who witnessed the occurrence from a window opposite. We may describe this as an interesting "bridge" between the simply "reproductive and the wholly "inventive" type of exercise. The original poem becomes in this way the basis for quite a considerable group of variant exercises, and yet remains a standard by which may be judged the pupils' accuracy and intelligence and their powers of expression.

*The Blackboard summary.*

The blackboard summary of an important lesson is not only worth preserving, but may be used as a means of practice in Composition. The class may be divided up into sections, each of which shall be required to give a short written amplification of *one* of the headings on the blackboard. We would limit the headings to those which are the outcome of some previous lesson, and would not use them simply as props for composition exercises.

*Outlines of Essays.*

Ready-made outlines—still to be found even in recently published manuals—we are unanimous in condemning. But we think the drawing up of some preparatory scheme by the children themselves to be a most valuable method.

*Connexion with Literature.*

In the senior classes a close connexion should be kept between literature and composition. A series of excellent exercises, for example, may be arranged on such a poem as Scott's "Lady of the Lake," and the correlated lessons which have been given in connexion with its study. The following is a list which has actually been used:—

1. Life of Scott.
2. The poem : its divisions : its action.
3. Portraits of the chief characters.
4. The Trossachs district.
5. A stag hunt.
6. The Clans. The influence of physical features of the country on its inhabitants.
7. The Clans in time of peace. Occupations of clansmen and clanswomen ; rôle of chieftain ; laws of hospitality ; superstitions.
8. The Clans in time of war. The Fiery Cross. Methods of Warfare. Outlawry.
9. Bards. Their place in the literature of the country.
10. Stirling Castle. The barrier of the North.
11. Games described in the poem.



This list is intended merely as indicative of a plan which has been found suitable, and is not suggested as an exhaustive scheme of work, or as a method to be invariably followed.

Such works as Longfellow's "Miles Standish," Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner;" or the play read during the term, are capable of being handled in similar fashion. Plenty of variety must be introduced. There will be a sustained bond of continuity throughout the series; and the familiarity gained with the poet's style of language (especially in the portions committed to memory) will be of value in affording a standard of comparison and securing some elementary appreciation of what is meant by freedom and mastery of expression.

### *Passage Preparation.*

The better children should be trained in individual preparation (with a dictionary, and notes where needed) of carefully selected passages or chapters, and their knowledge should be tested by their writing out—unaided—a summary of the work so prepared.

This might be done, in a less ambitious way, after every silent reading lesson in the lower classes. The use of the blackboard to set out a series of questions is recommended here also; and it is a good exercise to encourage the children collectively to frame such series.

There is much to be said for the rule that (if time would permit) every important oral lesson should have its corresponding lesson in composition.

### *Original Composition.*

This should begin with the relation of that which is clearly (and even frequently) within the child's experience. It should take the forms of, *e.g.*,

(a) Simple letters to friends.

(b) Narratives of domestic or school events, or stories couched in an autobiographical form (the history of a doll, a plant which has been grown in school, a pet animal, and the like.)

(c) Stories about pictures. This form is much employed in America, where certain firms make a special feature of such pictures for school use.

These exercises should advance in difficulty as the child progresses; but they should be consistently set on such subjects as lie fairly within the pupil's grasp, and there must be no memorising of arbitrarily chosen outlines merely that they may be developed into themes. The following list is taken from a manual written by a very distinguished teacher of the last generation. Each subject has its own outline of about 20 lines to be got up and then expanded—Railways, Robin Hood, Robinson Crusoe, Switzerland, Seven Wonders of the World, Steamships, Sumptuary Laws, Telegraphs, Temple Bar, etc. This is, in our opinion, a thoroughly bad method, and we consider that care should be taken to prevent the use of such books by young teachers. There is an ample range in choice if they look no further than the subjects growing out of school or home life. The latter, of course, varies very much in different districts, and this must have a determining influence on the extent to which purely original exercises may be attempted.





Abstract subjects and even proverbs and familiar sayings—once very popular—should be introduced with caution. It seems too much to expect the ordinary child to write with any success upon “toleration,” or even “courage” or “patriotism.” But it is not beyond his powers to treat these subjects through concrete instances.

## CHAPTER IX.

### GRAMMAR.

#### *The Older View of Grammatical Teaching.*

“English” as understood in the days of “Codes” meant little more than “English Grammar.” Its extension to include Literature is quite recent. Children commenced the study of word classification and even of inflexion almost as soon as they had mastered the difficulties of the reading primer. A passage was often valued less for the content of its thought or its beauty of expression than for its fitness to illustrate a lesson in grammar. A sentence which boldly defied the concords of syntax at once assumed a fictitious importance, and became a text for much elaborate commentary. The whole subject was merely a study in mechanism begun, as we all now admit, out of due season. Instruction therein was almost wholly an appeal to authority, and a series of deductions from principles which were postulated instead of being formulated after carefully guided observation. And from this sterile method there was no escape, for the very sequence of the lessons was prescribed by schedule, and little children in the second standard were to be found wrestling with the vexatious profundities of the abstract noun.

In extreme cases, the examination of language was given priority over its acquisition, and memory was relied upon almost wholly. The system made the formation of judgments well nigh impossible. Such were the methods of yesterday.

#### *The extreme position of to-day.*

The tendency of to-day is one of extreme reaction. Some authorities hold and act on the principle that there should be no teaching of grammar apart from the other English lessons. We have devoted considerable attention to this remarkable revolution in opinion and practice, and endeavoured to discover a middle course between such markedly contradictory positions as those we have here indicated.

#### *The effects of the older methods.*

A few truths stand out very clearly. In the days of rigid departmental examinations, grammar was probably the most unpopular subject in the curriculum. And it does not seem difficult to suggest a reason. It was taught almost entirely for its own sake, and thereby divorced from the pleasanter and more humanizing phases of English study. Seldom was



it correlated with practical efforts in English Composition. This very isolation of the subject made it uninteresting to teach, difficult of retention, largely ineffectual as a mental discipline, and valueless as a means of securing the "propriety" which the standard definitions asserted as its principal virtue.

In many schools grammatical instruction was reduced to a minimum as soon as it became an optional subject. In some districts it was considered a sign of enlightened progress to give it up altogether. Many pupils left school who had received no instruction whatever in the subject. They did not know a noun from a verb.

### *The return to grammar.*

This most regrettable omission was regarded quite complacently until the influence of the new movement in English began to make itself felt. Then the necessity and importance of original composition in the mother-tongue came to be appreciated on all sides, and the needs of the case compelled a renewed attention to the value of definite grammatical instruction, though it was no longer the "useless routine of nomenclature learning," but, instead, that form of grammar which requires, as its correlative, the writing and speaking of correct, clear, and forcible English.

And this kind of instruction would appear to be especially necessary in the poorer districts, because there the habitual carelessness and inaccuracy of colloquial speech add so greatly to the difficulty of the task, and the home and streets exert such a potent influence against the teacher.

It must be admitted here that not a few teachers in their whole-hearted enthusiasm for heuristic methods have taken up the position that repeated practice, careful correction and much imitation of good models are of themselves sufficient to ensure accuracy of expression, precision of structure, and even elegance of style. The study of formal grammar they would leave to the advanced pupil and the professed student of language. We recognise that this attitude is a not unnatural reaction from the mistaken methods which regulated the study of English on the same lines as that of Latin, and from the influence of text books compiled by persons who were unacquainted with modern methods and in some cases with the results of modern scholarship. But we feel assured that the newer method is not always sufficient, even if we admit that in very skilled hands it may be the best.

Such difficulties as a crowded curriculum and a restricted school life have to be taken into account. And while the path of discovery must be traced by slow and careful inductions, the methods of acquisition may usefully employ deduction as well, with the result of a notable shortening of the way.

### *The need for grammar.*

Our conclusion is unanimous that some amount of definite grammatical instruction, varying with circumstances and aptitudes, must be imparted to our scholars, chiefly for the following reasons.

An acquaintance with the leading principles of elementary grammar serves to give emphasis and point to the teacher's correction of the errors





his pupils make in speaking and writing. The simple concords, for example, are reducible to rule, and these rules are made most conveniently available for reference by their being stated in technical terms—the language of grammar.

As the pupils progress, it is found as a rule impossible, except in a very cumbrous and unsatisfactory way, to discuss such important matters as the structure of sentences, the phenomena of growth, change and decay which make up the life history of a language, or the characteristics which distinguish one writer or one period from another, unless we are able to assume some knowledge of grammatical facts, and some familiarity with grammatical terminology; while their absolute necessity, if the child is to attempt the study of a foreign language, will be generally admitted.

But not only does a knowledge of grammar facilitate and systematise the labours of the teacher; it is of real advantage to the pupil as well. We wish him to pass over the period of tutorial correction and arrive at the time when he can intelligently criticise his own efforts, and amend his own blunders. This can surely best be done when he has learnt to examine and register the standard usages of our speech; to refer to them as criteria of accuracy, to employ them as a means of avoiding errors and of resolving doubts, and as an antidote against the uncertainty and degeneracy to which one who has learnt merely by the influence of good examples is especially liable when these models are for any reason no longer available. † He thus becomes his own examiner. His imitations become more rapid, more intelligent and less liable to error. He gains by their help a certainty and facility which the study of mere corrections could never secure.

We regard grammar, therefore, as a most valuable adjunct to the effective and intelligent teaching of composition and, if for no other reason, would retain it in our programmes of instruction.

While we thus emphasise its value as a form of knowledge which can be immediately utilised, we do not overlook the fact that it affords training in the processes of reflexion and serves as an introduction to the principles of abstract reasoning. But we do not think this of much importance in estimating its position and utility in the elementary schools; for them the important matter is that the pupils should acquire a knowledge of the concrete phenomena of language.

### *Analysis.*

We attach considerable importance to methodical and intelligent instruction in grammatical analysis. We are, however, in agreement with some of the criticisms which have been passed upon the ineffective methods employed in teaching this subject. It has degenerated too often into a lifeless and mechanical system of labelling parts of sentences, instead of being regarded as a training in the processes of thought. Analysis is undoubtedly of great assistance to the interpretation of involved or obscure statements, and must help the pupils to avoid those ambiguities of construction to which a flexionless language is so liable. It also secures an increased fulness and clearness of appreciation of what is read. Its value is evident in the examination of inversions,



redundancies and ellipses; and it helps to demonstrate their practical importance as devices for securing variety, emphasis and correctness of expression. It is a means of establishing the principles which govern the clear and accurate construction of sentences, of illustrating the principal variations of form, and of elucidating the more common difficulties. It seems necessary to add that we do not regard difficulties as being removed simply by performing upon them the operation of analysis, and we emphatically deprecate its use as a field for the mere display of a pretentious dexterity. One reason for the temporary disrepute of analysis is that it was practised simply as a gymnastic. We admit that there are clear limits to its value. We think that some examining bodies are not free from blame for the persistence with which they select extracts mainly noteworthy for their extreme difficulty, and for their insistence on needlessly complicated "schemes."

*Right and wrong methods of teaching grammar.*

We now pass to some practical considerations. Grammar is an instrument. It is subordinate to language and must, therefore, not be begun too early. The most obvious fault of the old system was that it began the examination of words and usages before anything like an adequate word stock had been accumulated. In truth, a word often became known, not because it was of real importance, or of great frequency in use, but because it was anomalous in some way, and so found a prominent place in the text-book.

This is a plain inversion of the logical method, for the teacher's first duty is to build up vocabulary. An enquiry into forms and usages will come later. We think that systematic instruction in grammar should not be given before the tenth year. It should begin by making enquiry into the functions of words, not into their forms. The method should be at first entirely oral, and as far as possible inductive. Great simplicity of language and an absence of technical terms should mark these initial lessons.

*Grammatical instruction to begin with the division of the sentence into its two sections.*

As we made the sentence the unit in the teaching of composition, we should begin grammar with an examination of the sentence. At first, we would divide it into its two constituent parts of subject and predicate; and the subject should be recognised before the predicate. This view of analysis puts it in its correct position as the converse of synthesis, that is of composition. In synthesis the child expresses his ideas about something. It may be—"The river flows gently towards the sea." The subject, the idea of "river," comes into consciousness first. The affirmation follows it. Therefore the familiar, and far from obsolete instruction, "Find the verb and ask yourselves 'who' or 'what'?" should be discarded as placing classification before the examination of function. The pupils should be directed first to enquire what engaged the attention of the mind (i.e., the river) before the sentence under examination was framed. The subject then emerges in its true position. We have made a number of enquiries, and find that this, which we consider



the better method, is gaining ground. It seems clear that unless analysis is regarded in this way it becomes a mere trick in filling up spaces in a so-called "scheme," and can be of no service in the writing of composition. The second step follows naturally, and enquires what statement has been made concerning that which has occupied the mind. The answer given supplies us with the second great division of the sentence, the predicate. And right through the instruction the primary fact should never be overlooked that each sentence has two parts, and two parts only, the subject and predicate. It must be shown to be true, even in complex sentences, as for example :—

The meanest herb that scents the gale ... Subject.

Renews its odours and its hues at Spring's sweet call. Predicate.

From this to the notion of noun, the "name-word," and the verb, the "statement word," is but an easy step. Such a scheme of instruction was worked out by the late Sir Joshua Fitch, nearly thirty years ago, in his Cambridge Lectures. He went so far as to declare, that the main principles could be taught in three lessons, and taught intelligently.

*The examination of Function to be the leading principle.*

The basis of the method should be an examination of function followed by the employment of a term which shall correctly indicate the function which is performed. It is too often forgotten that practical grammar applies a comparatively small number of general ideas. These have become overloaded with distinctions, exceptions, and such "small deer" which are worse than useless to children. For example, the neglect of the fundamental principle that a sentence has only two parts, and that other "columns" which are found necessary are not additional to them but sub-divisions only, is the great fault of much of our teaching in analysis. Small wonder if the learner thinks the "connecting word" as important as the main divisions, and feels dissatisfied if he has any of the rectangular spaces left unfilled when his exercise is finished.

We think that the terminology of analysis may be very much simplified. The term "adjunct" is all that is needed to indicate all kinds of modifying words, phrases, and clauses. There would be an advantage in the employment of such a self-explanatory term as "completion" instead of "object." It would be more easily remembered and applied. Connectives might be allowed to include the perplexing conjunctive adverbs, about which there is no unanimity among the makers of grammar books. The old fiction that a sentence is subordinate to another sentence when it is truly an adjunct to some word, or else a substitute for a word should be abandoned. We believe that analysis logically presented, pruned of unnecessary and often contradictory details and regarded as the converse of composition, is worth teaching as a training in the mechanism of language and the laws of thought.

*Parsing.*

In this view of the subject, parsing, that is the examination of the function of individual words, must follow, not precede, analysis. It should be treated very broadly and simply. Full recognition must be made of the fact that the predominantly flexionless character of modern



English, renders a terminology based upon those of synthetic languages useless for a working knowledge of its forms, and at times actually misleading. For example, "case" and "gender" require a peculiarly "English" treatment, and the latter may be best developed from a consideration of the personal pronoun. Such forms of speech as the relative pronouns, the auxiliaries and the infinitive forms must be treated in considerable detail in the senior classes, if the scholars are ever to write really good idiomatic English.

We may note as suitable for such detailed treatment, the distinction between "can" and "may," and the varying significance of "shall" and "will"; the use of the imperfect or present participle in denoting a second action contemporaneous with that denoted by the finite verb; or again, the fulness of our verbal compounds which enables us to bring out such shades of meaning as are indicated by "I walk;" "I am walking;" "I have walked;" "I have been walking."

It may be remarked in this connection, that the use of the terms "present," "past" and "future" without qualification, has obscured the beautifully complete and logical system of English tenses. The English, so slovenly in speech and in expression generally, are singularly alive to differences of tense, and there is no fault by which a foreigner is more readily detected than by his incorrect use of the present perfect, as if it were a past tense.

We suggest that the following scheme of tenses might be adopted in the upper standards of schools the circumstances of which permit of a somewhat greater attention being given to Grammar than might be possible in the average school:—

*Verb.—To call.*

*Imperfect Participle—Calling.*

*Perfect Participle—Called.*

Tense.		Indefinite.	Continuous.	Perfect.	Perfect Continuous.
Present.	<i>Active.</i>	I call.	I am calling.	I have called.	I have been calling.
	<i>Passive.</i>	I am called.	I am being called.	I have been called.	
Past.	<i>Active.</i>	I called.	I was calling	I had called.	I had been calling.
	<i>Passive.</i>	I was called.	I was being called.	I had been called.	
Future.	<i>Active.</i>	I shall call.	I shall be calling.	I shall have called.	I shall have been calling.
	<i>Passive.</i>	I shall be called.		I shall have been called.	



The existence of distinctions such as these, is a sufficient answer to those critics who assert that "English has no grammar." Of the grammar of inflected forms there may be comparatively little, but of those locutions which have made themselves the substitutes for inflections, there is a good deal, and that of a particularly subtle and elusive kind. Long ago Dr. Abbott pointed out that the genius of the English language lies in its power to employ any part of speech as any other part of speech. The only way to teach its grammar effectively, therefore, is to base all instruction on the examination of function, and of function in its broadest application, omitting as much as may be of its subtleties and intricacies, and correlating its results with practical exercises in original composition. The teaching will be of the highest efficiency when it has guided the pupil to the stage of "unconscious correctness." Then accuracy in speech and writing becomes almost a reflex operation, and we believe it is most easily and surely reached by systematic instruction in grammar on the most approved modern lines.

*Some more advanced subjects of study.*

We are of opinion that in the upper classes, some attention should be paid to the force of the more common prefixes and suffixes ; to groups of words connected by their origin in a common root form ; possibly to the more commonly used synonyms, and, if the teacher be himself a lover of language, to the interesting stories which so many words can tell to those who know their origin and history. And some of us would give a little guidance in such matters as the chief figures of rhetoric, and the elementary facts connected with rhyme and rhythm.

Finally, we feel convinced that such a syllabus of work would be found interesting in itself, stimulating to the intelligence of the pupils and productive of the most fruitful results.

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## CHAPTER X.

### ENGLISH LITERATURE.

#### I. READING BOOKS.

*The reading book in the school.*

While advocating that a larger proportion of the school time should be devoted to the study of the mother-tongue than has hitherto been the case, we felt it to be all-important that this time should be put to the most profitable use. In no department of English work have we realised that this is more imperative than in that to which we now turn—the place and function of the literary reading book in the school curriculum. In the prevailing unrest in the sphere of elementary education, the problem of the literary reading book is one of the chief storm-centres round which discussion has raged.



*Miscellaneous and continuous readers.*

Till within a comparatively recent period, the reading books used in elementary schools were, as a rule, members of series of graduated difficulty, and consisted of miscellaneous extracts of prose and verse. One series differed considerably from another in price and *format*, and in the choice and arrangement of its literary materials, but all alike were compiled on an empirical basis. As far as they were the product of any theoretical principle, it was that of making as varied an appeal as possible to the pupil's interest, and conveying the maximum amount of general information in the minimum time. Against this conception of the literary reader there has been of late in various quarters a strong reaction. Volumes of miscellaneous extracts have been censured as scrappy and superficial. Indeed it has not been thought enough to say with Bacon that "distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things," but they have been denounced as actively pernicious, in that they encourage the habit of reading "snippets," and sap the faculty of concentrated mental attention. Thus, it is urged, the taste for desultory magazine reading is sown during the school lessons, which should give the first stimulus to sound and fruitful study of the treasures of English literature. A cry has therefore gone up for the replacement of the graded miscellaneous reader by the continuous reader which, whether it includes the whole of a given work or only a section, is in itself a complete and organic whole. And so sensitive is the educational publishing world to movements and tendencies of this kind, that within the last few years the supply of new graded readers has practically ceased, while continuous readers of every type and quality are pouring from the press.

We have given the whole subject very careful consideration, and we are of opinion that, in the main, the new policy is the right one, and that it springs from a wider and juster conception than heretofore of the possibilities of the literature lesson in elementary schools. But we feel at the same time that much harm may be done if, in deference to abstract conceptions, changes are introduced in a hurried and indiscriminate fashion, and insufficient heed given to the varied needs and capabilities of children in different stages of intellectual development.

*Literature in American schools.*

In framing our specific recommendations, we have taken into account the existing practice in the United States of America, Germany, and France. In the United States, literature in the schools has occupied a relatively much more important position than in England, and is made an essential part of the curriculum in every grade. Literature is taught thus widely, not merely as a means of appealing to the child's imagination and sensibilities, but as an ethical and patriotic force. From the first grade, good poetry of a suitable type is studied and committed to memory. Selections both of poetry and prose are often chosen with some such central theme as "The Love of Home, and the Duties of Children therein." From such a basis, an organised scheme of literature study is developed through the various grades, culminating in a syllabus like that of the





eighth grade in the Pierce School, Brookline, where round the ethical centre of "Patriotism," the following course of study is grouped :—

1. Bible readings, illustrating love of country and service through citizenship.
2. Readings to the children of poems and prose pieces from English and American authors, bearing on the subject of Patriotism.
3. Study by the children of literary selections (including translations from the Classics) illustrating the following periods :—Mythic, Homeric, Periclean, Vergilian, Shakespearian, Goethean, Modern.
4. Memorising of selections from poems by Scott and American authors, such as Whittier and Lowell. \*

Among the methods for fostering a love of literature in American schools are the compilation of calendars of quotations from the poems or plays that are being read in class ; the formation of "poets' corners" and "poets' books"† and the use of portraits and pictures on an extensive scale to illustrate the reading and composition lessons.

#### *Literature in German schools.*

In Germany, the time allotted in elementary schools to reading is shorter than in the United States, and less ground is covered. But the spirit and aim of the work in the two countries are closely akin. As Mr. Dale points out ("Teaching of the Mother Tongue in Germany." Special Reports on Educational Subjects) no German school book fails to contain a large proportion of the best patriotic songs. The reading books admirably support the instruction in other subjects. Home and its surroundings, for instance, form both the "starting point and centre of instruction" in geography and history. The reading books are issued only with the sanction of the various States, and have, in general, many admirable features, selections from classical writers entering largely into the composition of those used in the higher classes. They are perhaps too encyclopædic in character, but they are intended to furnish a

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\* Report on The teaching of English in the United States of America by Mr. A. E. Roberts, of the Islington Training College.

† Mr. Roberts writes concerning these :—

"In the Everett School, Boston, each class room has its poet's corner or shrine with his poems, bust, pictures, flowers he loved ; every room has its class motto drawn from the poet the children of the various years are studying ; Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, Lowell, Bryant or Tennyson. Every girl in each class has her own *poet's book*, carefully illustrated, with the cover designed (perhaps painted) by the child herself.

A typical Tennyson book contains :—

- A. Dedication to father.
- B. Class motto.
- C. Portrait of Tennyson.
- D. Class song (from the poet) : 'Sweet and Low.'
- E. Life of Tennyson illustrated with Perry Pictures.
- F. Selections and poems illustrated. Pieces learnt by heart are included.
- G. One piece set to music.
- H. The child's compositions connected with the literature.

Similar poets' books were to be seen most frequently in Brookline, Boston, Chicago and Indianapolis."



body of reading matter, rather than necessarily to be read from cover to cover. Poetry appears in a proportion of about one-sixth to prose, but in practice seems to be read quite as frequently.

In the *Lehrplan* for an eight class elementary school in Thuringia, projected by Professor Rein, the course for the first four years centres round the ideas of home and neighbourhood (*Heimat-kunde*); literature and history are closely correlated, the syllabus including selections from Grimm's Tales, "Robinson," stories from Thuringian folk-lore, and the Nibelungen legend (Gudrun). In the last four years of the school course, the "humanistic" subjects continue to give the lead, other branches of instruction being made to contribute to, or run parallel with, the development of the child on literary and historical lines (*Kulturhistorischer Aufbau*). The reading is proposed to be taken from (1) a concentric reader, arranged for the successive years; (2) a Biblical reader; (3) a reading book of historical sources; (4) a collection of historical poems.

In the *Lehrplan* of the Hamburg *Volkschulen*, poems as well as prose passages are set down to be learnt in all the classes, which range from VII. (the lowest) to I. (the highest), except in better neighbourhoods, where there is an additional more advanced class called "Selekta." From Class III. upwards, the memory pieces are to be so chosen as to include masterpieces of the greatest German-writers, and in Classes II. and I. biographies of the greatest writers are to be given, and, where practicable, suitable continuous works are to be read. In the Selekta these include such classical works as Lessing's *Minna Von Barnhelm*, Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*, and Goethe's *Hermann und Dorothea*. Different styles of writing have to be exemplified, and the most important rules of versification explained.

The *Oberschulbehörde* have, however, appointed a Committee for the revision of the course, the report of which will probably appear shortly.

#### *Literature in French schools.*

In France the classes in the Elementary Schools are divided into *Classe Enfantine* (5 to 7 years of age), *Cours Élémentaire* (7 to 9), *Cours Moyen* (9 to 11), *Cours Supérieur* (11 to 13). Throughout these various divisions and more particularly of course in the *Cours Moyen* and the *Cours Supérieur*, the reading lessons, even more directly than in the American and German schools, are made to subserve a moral end, the training of the child to fulfil his future civic and ethical obligations. In the *Classe Enfantine* short poems are recited by the children, and they listen to short readings which they afterwards re-tell in their own words. This is continued in a more advanced way in the *Cours Élémentaire*. In the *Cours Moyen*, prose extracts are recited as well as poems, and the passages read by the teachers to the pupils consist of extracts from classical authors. In the *Cours Supérieur* dialogues and scenes from the masterpieces of the French poetry and drama are recited by the class. But literature is not given the same importance in the curriculum as in America and Germany. What is read is taken, indeed, in the main



from classical writers, but extracts are studied rather than continuous works, and moral rather than purely literary considerations govern the choice of the material.

*Reasons why English methods must differ considerably from those of the countries named above.*

We have thought it well to set forth in this brief manner the general lines of literary instruction in the elementary schools of the three countries with which, in different ways, we are in the closest intellectual and social relationship. We are of opinion that from the comparison of their methods and our own useful suggestions can be drawn. But, at the same time, we fully recognise that the educational systems of one country cannot be successfully transplanted to another with different conditions, and a different social and political organisation. The unique industrial expansion in America, and the absence of the subtle but pervasive influences inherited from a historic past; the predominance in France of ideals and principles derived from Latin culture and polity, side by side with the religious and social cleavage produced by the Revolution; the peculiar evolution of the German Empire into its present form, and the special geographical conditions which have made the question of self-defence of supreme national importance—these are some of the factors which help to differentiate the needs and aims of the countries in question from those of England, and which re-act upon their respective educational methods. To take a cardinal illustration, we have found that in the United States, in Germany and in France, for different reasons and in different degrees, the reading lessons in elementary schools have throughout a consciously and definitely moral and patriotic objective. In our opinion, it would be undesirable to frame the syllabus of English in elementary schools upon these principles. It is not, of course, our intention in making this statement to pronounce upon any controversial question, or to discuss matters lying outside our reference. But taking into account permanent features of English character, and of English social and religious life, we feel that the reading lessons will be much more likely to have a beneficial effect upon the pupils, both at the time and in their after-life, as individuals and as citizens, if they impart moral lessons indirectly and by suggestion, rather than directly and with deliberate aim.

*Points in which approximation to the practice of other countries is recommended.*

On the other hand, we consider that there are points of importance where we should profit by approximating to the practice of other countries. We feel that in America and Germany particularly, the children are introduced to a wider range of literature, especially poetic literature, during their elementary school life; that more use is made of suitable works by standard writers, and less of compilations; that in the production of reading books more weight is given to intellectual, and less to commercial considerations; and that the reading lessons are brought into closer and more organic relation with the rest of the syllabus. We have sought, in framing our recommendations, to take these points into account.





*Three types of reading books recommended.*

After considering the question very fully, we came to the unanimous conclusion that there should be three types of reading-books :—

1. The Miscellaneous Reader.
2. The "Connected" Reader.
3. The Continuous Reader.

Each of these has, in our opinion, a necessary place in the English curriculum of elementary schools.

*Reading books in the Lower Standards.*

Taking the lower standards first, containing pupils from 7 to 9 years of age, we consider it advisable, to avoid the risk of monotony, and to familiarise the children with a varied vocabulary, that miscellaneous readers should remain in use. But these should, as far as possible, consist of extracts, however simple they may be, from verse or prose of accepted value, and suitable to young boys or girls. The contents should not, as a rule, be written for school purposes only, or aim primarily at imparting information or teaching moral lessons. The verse selections, which are at this stage more important than the prose, should include some of the Nursery Rhymes and short poems mentioned in Appendix C, which have been chosen because of their special appeal to the experience and the imagination of very youthful pupils. And it is of great importance that the books should be made as attractive as possible in *format* and illustration.

In addition to the miscellaneous readers, there should also be in use at this stage, what we have named a "connected" reader. By this, we mean a collection of short extracts or stories, whether in verse or prose, which naturally group themselves round a common theme, *e.g.*, the home, or are of an essentially kindred type, *e.g.*, groups of related fairy tales. The use of such a reader will, we believe, lead the children to concentrate their attention on different aspects of one theme, without putting an undue strain upon them, or limiting the interest of their work.

But we do not think it advisable to introduce at this stage anything in the shape of a continuous reader. We were not unanimous on this question, a minority being of opinion that a short continuous reader might be read with advantage. It is not desirable to lay down a hard and fast rule on the subject, but we consider that such a continuous reader might be read aloud, as opportunity offers, by the teacher, or occasionally by a selected pupil, the class following the reading without books. This will gradually strengthen the listening power of the pupils, and prepare them for severer tests at a later stage. We would also recommend that, from time to time, one or more of the longer pieces of poetry mentioned in Appendix C be read aloud in a similar way.

*Reading Books in the Middle Standards.*

In the case of boys and girls from 9 to 11, we consider that the three types of readers should be in use, and that the "connected" type should now come into prominence. The first of the connected readers at this



stage should have London as its central theme, though we regret that there is at present no satisfactory book of the kind available. For the continuous readers which we consider specially suitable at this stage, reference should be made to Appendix A. We recommend also that at this period some preparation be made, on one or other of the lines suggested in the following chapter, for the study of some of Shakespeare's plays which will follow during the next period of school life. The practice of reading aloud to the class, by the teacher or a selected pupil, should be continued, and the work chosen for this purpose should be of a more advanced character than that read in the ordinary way.

### *Reading Books in the Highest Standards.*

In the highest standards, including pupils from 11 to 14, continuous readers should occupy the principal place in the English syllabus. But we are unanimously of opinion that, even at this stage, a really good miscellaneous reader containing extracts from standard works, can be used with advantage. Connected readers should also still be used, and they should include one dealing with various aspects of national life and character. The nature of the continuous readers suitable at this stage, and some methods which we recommend for their use, are indicated in the following chapters of this report and in Appendix A.

### *Methods of distributing and using Reading Books.*

Scarcely less important than the character and classification of reading books, is the question of their most effective distribution and use. In discussing the latter problems, we considered carefully a circular issued from the L.C.C. Education Office in January, 1906, and the replies thereto of the Council's District Inspectors, and of a number of Head Teachers. The circular suggested that "in order to secure a greater variety and a better quality of reading books, a change might be made in the quantity supplied, and further that such change would have large educational value." The gist of the proposals was that, instead of the teacher's requisitioning copies of a literary reader for all the members of his class, "the class should be supplied with but one, or at most two, copies of any one literary book; that the teacher should have one copy, and that one should be passed round the class. The pupil should read from that book, not by sentences but by paragraphs, and in such a way as to make his reading understood both by his teacher and by his colleagues in the class."

The advantages of the proposed change were indicated in the circular mainly as follows:—(1) The ear would be considerably more used as a means of education than it is at present, without the training of the eye being seriously diminished; (2) the teacher would be enabled to get five or six more varieties of books that are of standard literary value; (3) pupils, after studying certain chapters of a book in this way, would be induced to get it from a public library and to read it entirely, and reading of this character would develop a desire to read other classics; (4) the teacher would have the means of bringing before the pupil representatives of a period of literature or history with which he might be dealing in another way.



*Recommendations in general agreement with the above Proposals.*

We are fully in sympathy with the spirit of the above proposals, and agree that considerable advantages are likely to result from their adoption. But we endorse the opinion of both the head teachers and the inspectors, that in the lower and middle standards there should, as a rule, be no diminution of the number of reading books in a set, and that the method should be confined for the present almost entirely to the highest standards (V. to Ex VII). We do not, however, think that it is necessary to restrict the system to small classes, as has been recommended by the head teachers, and we consider that their suggestion that "only the good readers should be called upon to read" should be interpreted in a liberal way. To obviate, however, the disadvantages arising from unprepared reading, we are of opinion that a modification of the original proposal is desirable, and we accordingly make the following recommendations with regard to reading books in the highest standards :—

(1) That instead of one or two copies of a continuous reading book, sets of half-a-dozen should be supplied; that pupils should, as a rule, before reading aloud from these have time for looking over the passages which they are to read; that such preparation might often advantageously be done in the form of home-work, which we are anxious to encourage where possible; and that for this purpose the pupils should be allowed to take the books home with them.

(2) That this method, though it should be much more than "an occasional exercise" as suggested by the head teachers, and though it should admit of a representative portion of a work being read, should supplement, and not be substituted for, the present system under which every member of a class has a copy of the book in use.

(3) That, in addition, as we have already recommended in the case of the lower and middle standards, the teacher should from time to time read aloud to the class, and that such reading be made a more prominent factor in class instruction than is at present, as a rule, the case.

*Silent reading.*

In connexion with the above recommendations the subject of silent reading was also considered by us. The view that reading must be a class exercise is fast giving way, and in most schools time is now set apart for independent reading, silent reading, or private study. Some enthusiastic teachers take most reading lessons in the upper classes in the silent way. But this is going too far. Good oral reading is well worth assiduous cultivation; it provides for training in speech, in good pronunciation, and in clearness of utterance—in a manner not easy to replace. And again the music of poetry and of fine prose is best perceived when read aloud, and its effect in the training of taste and feeling is strengthened in the hands of a skilful teacher by class treatment.

But the object of including "silent" reading in the curriculum is





to give opportunity for independence of effort, self-sustained study, and wider acquaintance with English literature on the part of the pupils. It is therefore when properly directed of the highest value, and deserves the commendation which has been bestowed on it of late; especially when supported by home reading it produces very beneficial results. The objections therefore which are sometimes raised to its introduction into a school, or at any rate to its extensive use, although they touch real difficulties, are not to be regarded as deterrent. They simply point to problems—chiefly of discipline—which have to be solved. The less serious pupils must be prevented from wasting their time, the less intelligent must not be left to struggle vainly with difficulties which they may encounter. Arrangements for securing industry, for providing supervision, and for giving help when needed, will not be beyond the ingenuity of the skilful teacher. And it will be found that though the reading is “free,” yet the teacher’s responsibility is not lessened, nor his sustaining and directive force less needed. In the simpler form of silent reading, when the whole class prepares the same lesson it is easy to maintain control; but in the higher and more beneficial form of free study, it may be taken as a mark of special competence in the teacher when great success is obtained. But for such success it is eminently worth while to strive.

*Recommendation of additional opportunities for teaching English in the case of specially qualified teachers.*

We believe that, if the proposals made in this chapter were carried out, the materials for the literature lessons would be much more varied and abundant than hitherto, and better graduated to the use of pupils at different stages of their school life. Teachers would have the facilities that they need for inspiring their classes with a lasting love of reading for its own sake. But when all facilities have been provided, the success of literature lessons must depend, in the last resort, upon the personality of the teacher. We, therefore, recommend that in schools where there are masters or mistresses with a special gift and enthusiasm for English work, they should be relieved of part of their other duties and given additional opportunities for devoting themselves to this branch of the curriculum.

## CHAPTER XI.

### ENGLISH LITERATURE.

#### II. SHAKESPEARE.

##### *Importance of the Subject.*

We gave a special place in our deliberations to the teaching of Shakespeare in elementary schools. We feel that the plays of Shakespeare should be regarded as a national heritage, to which every child in the British dominions ought to be introduced during his school life. But





We recognise that the best methods of effecting this are far from easy to determine, and on certain points we found ourselves divided in opinion. We have not, therefore, found it possible to lay down definite rules on the matter. Indeed, the most beneficial effects arise from the teacher's own enthusiasm and love for the subject, rather than from external regulations. But there are certain guiding principles and methods which we would propose for general adoption, especially in the senior classes.

*Age at which plays should be read as a whole.*

In discussing these principles, we found it convenient to begin by considering whether the whole of a play (with, of course, the omissions necessary in any school edition) could profitably be read by scholars in elementary schools, and, if so, at what age. We fully recognised the difficulties of matter, style, vocabulary, and so forth, which the boy or girl will have to encounter; yet we are agreed that if the play chosen is of the right kind, and is studied in such a manner as is appropriate to the age of the child, it should be introduced, as a rule, in Standard VI., when the pupils are about 12 years of age. It has been argued that much of Shakespeare's work is beyond the comprehension of children, and that the plays are, therefore, unsuitable for reading in class. It must be remembered, however, that the understanding of Shakespeare is with all students a matter of degree. The full comprehension of his writings depends largely upon the reader's experience of life. It is the most signal testimony to his genius that as the student grows older he finds in him greater depths of meaning, and it is probably the adult view of the significance of his language that gives rise to the idea that the plays are beyond the capacity of young pupils. But it is characteristic of many of the greatest productions of genius that they have in them an element which makes an eternal appeal to children, and this is true of Shakespeare's plays in a pre-eminent degree.

*Shakespeare's work in junior classes : divergent views.*

We felt, moreover, that some distinct attempt should be made in the classes below Standard VI. to prepare the way for the Shakespeare teaching to be given in the upper part of the school. Divergent views, however, were expressed as to the best method to be employed. Some of us thought that a direct approach to Shakespeare should be made in the preparatory stage, and by the advocates of this method stress was laid on the following points.

Stories from Shakespeare told in an attractive manner and the singing of songs from the plays have a great charm for young children. The reading of some of the great scenes at frequent intervals, by both teacher and pupils, stirs the imagination, and arouses a warm interest. In the later stages, the interweaving of actual passages from the text with the story of the play further widens the child's knowledge. Lamb's tales, too, form a useful introduction, though they are occasionally too difficult. By a simplification of the more difficult parts, which are often



those in which Lamb has used Shakespeare's words and phrases in his own prose, these stories would be rendered much more valuable than at present for elementary school purposes.

On the other hand, it was maintained by some of us that no Shakespearian work should be done in this lower division, and that better preparation for it would be made if the comparatively short time allotted to literature were devoted to work in which the difficulties were neither so numerous nor so great. It was urged that the telling of Shakespearian stories, derived as they are from earlier sources, was of no distinctive benefit to young pupils, and that at a later stage interest in the plays themselves might be diminished rather than quickened by this process.

Each view has its elements of truth, and, after long consideration, we agreed that preparatory to the study of a complete play, as much time as possible should be devoted in the junior classes to the reading of standard English literature of an easier and more modern type, but this preparatory work might well ultimately include parts of the better known Shakespearian plays connected by simple prose narrative.

*Suitable plays for reading in the senior classes.*

In this way a useful foundation will have been laid for the reading of a whole play in the senior classes. It is of the greatest importance, however, that the plays chosen should be those most likely to attract young scholars. The selection has in the past frequently been determined by the requirements of examinations, or has been of an entirely arbitrary kind. We have, therefore, drawn up a list of those which seem to us most suitable. From this list the play or plays might be selected according to the circumstances of the school. We have further arranged them in three divisions, in what appears to us to be an ascending scale of difficulty.

The arrangement is as follows :—

Group I.—The Merchant of Venice, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Julius Cæsar, Henry V.

Group II.—Richard II., Twelfth Night, As You Like it,

Group III.—King John, Henry VIII., The Tempest, Richard III., Macbeth.

On the question of including "Hamlet" in Group III. we were almost equally divided.

*General remarks on the reading of Shakespeare in the upper standards.*

Before the actual reading of a play, a short stimulating lesson might be given on the times in which Shakespeare lived. Some elementary information might also be given as to the conditions of the Elizabethan stage. As far as practicable, the Elizabethan period in history should be taken concurrently with the reading of the play.

In many elementary schools, it would appear that when a play is read long passages, and even whole scenes, are committed to memory. Where this method is supplemented by dramatic representations given by the pupils, it is not without beneficial results: interest is stimulated by the appeal to the dramatic instinct of the children, and much of the text



remains in their memory as a permanent possession. We think, however, that for the majority of children the learning of copious extracts is apt to be wearisome, and we recommend that in studying a play interest should be concentrated, as far as possible, on the dramatic movement of the story, on the principal characters, and on the appreciation of certain choice passages of the poetry.

We are agreed that in the past too much attention has been given to the meanings of individual words and phrases, to derivation, to metre, to grammatical construction, and generally to form rather than to matter. That instruction such as this is often unsuitable to children is undoubtedly true, yet we are of opinion that in the later stages of the study of a play, the wrestling with some of the linguistic difficulties and the analysis of some of the trains of thought are valuable exercises, and tend, if kept in due subordination, to promote interest in the work as a whole rather than to destroy it.

### *Shakespearian Work in Standard VI.*

In application of the above remarks, we suggest the following scheme of study in the upper standards :—

In Standard VI. one of the plays from Group I. should be taken. The reading should, in the first instance, be done by the teacher, who should use voice and manner, rather than verbal explanation, to bring out the meaning. Then the children might be called upon to take part, and, to increase their interest in the play, prominence should be given to the scenes which appeal to them. In “Julius Cæsar,” for example, the scene in Brutus’ orchard, the assassination of Cæsar, the speeches in the Forum, the quarrel between Brutus and Cassius, are parts of the drama to which the child-nature delights to return again and again. As a result of this method, it will be found that many passages are remembered without any learning by rote. In addition, a number of short stirring passages should be formally committed to memory by every child. We give below specimens of such passages :—

“Our course will seem too bloody, Caius Cassius . . .

And after seem to chide them.”

“Cowards die many times before their deaths . . .

Will come when it will come.”

“If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Cæsar . . .

If any, speak : for him I have offended.”

“If you have tears, prepare to shed them now . . .

Here he is himself, marred, as you see, with traitors.”

“I am no orator as Brutus is . . .

The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.”

“This was the noblest Roman of them all . . .

And say to all the world, ‘This was a man.’”

### *Shakespearian Work in Standard VII.*

In Standard VII. the play read in Standard VI should be re-studied, but more closely, with explanations of allusions and difficult passages, other than those the meaning of which is still a matter of dispute, or





is beyond the range of the pupils' experience. Additional passages similar to those quoted above should be committed to memory, and, as a result of this second year's training, the children should have a fair command of the text. Some boys and girls will be found who are anxious to render scenes before their schoolfellows. Their efforts should be encouraged but we do not think that anything in the nature of drill to bring the children to a high level of dramatic effect should be generally practised.

In addition to re-studying the play already taken in Standard VI., the pupils should deal with another play in its general features. This second play should, as a rule, be taken from Group II. or III., and should be also of a different type from that which is being re-studied.

In schools situated in better districts, two plays might be taken in Standard VI., and in Standard VII. one of these could be re-studied in full detail as described above, and a third play might be read in outline. On the other hand, in schools where Standards VI. and VII. work together, the play should be studied fairly fully in the first year, and a new play should be taken each year.

#### *Annotated Editions.*

In carrying out this work, it is very important that the plays should be put into the hands of children in a suitable and attractive form. Our remarks in Chapter X., on reading books generally apply, of course, here. But we have further considered the vexed question of notes. While recognising that some annotated editions that are extensively used in schools contain philological and other learned matter quite unsuited to children, we are unanimously of opinion that a minimum of notes, interpreting difficulties of language or explaining allusions, is necessary. In the arrangement of these notes we strongly recommend that those dealing with verbal difficulties should appear at the foot of the page in which the word or words needing explanation occur, while other notes should be placed at the end of the volume.

We suggest that the introduction might contain a short account of Shakespeare, and such prefatory matter as would help young students to realise the general drift and atmosphere of the play. We think that in such an introduction formal criticism and character sketches are out of place.

#### *Shakespearian performances and recitals.*

Finally, we are of opinion that children should be encouraged to attend performances of suitable Shakespearian plays and to hear Shakespearian recitals. We are aware that to represent one of the great characters requires a gifted imagination and powers of expression of the highest order, and that after witnessing such representations the adult spectator often has the feeling that they do not fully realise all that he had imagined the particular character to be. Consequently, it may be objected that the child who is strongly impressed by such performances may think of the character as the actor represents it rather than as





Shakespeare created it, with a corresponding loss to the child's own imagination. Yet it cannot be denied that a person gifted with intuition, and versed in all that constitutes dramatic art, will be able to bring out a wealth of beauty and of meaning that would otherwise remain hidden to the young student. The best results will, of course, be obtained if attendance at performances or recitals takes place after the play has already been studied in school.

## CHAPTER XII.

### ENGLISH LITERATURE.

#### III. ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS ON READING IN AND OUT OF SCHOOL.

While we thought that for obvious reasons the teaching of Shakespeare required our special attention, we have no desire to give undue prominence to this subject in the English syllabus, and we considered carefully whether the field of literature covered, as a rule, at present in the elementary schools could not be widened, especially in the upper classes. In our general recommendations concerning reading books, and in our lists of text books, we have partly indicated our views on the subject, but there are several points which we think it desirable to discuss in fuller detail.

#### *Chaucer and other Middle-English Writers.*

In view of the greatly extended interest during recent years in earlier English literature, we considered how far it would be possible to make fuller use in the elementary schools of prose or poetry written before the time of Shakespeare. We found that in some schools prose adaptations of some of Chaucer's Tales are read, and that in others selections from Chaucer and from Malory's "Morte d' Arthur" are used in modernised form.

We recognise, of course, that linguistic difficulties, though less formidable than sometimes represented, must prevent any extensive use of Middle-English writers for elementary school purposes. Nevertheless, we are of opinion that these writers, especially Chaucer, should be made more of in the syllabus than is at present the case. There are elements of humour, wonder, and simplicity in the literature of the Middle Ages, which make a special appeal to the minds of children. And for the senior pupils we think that some slight study of Chaucer's English is a valuable and interesting exercise, and gives them an insight into the growth of their mother-tongue.

We therefore suggest that in some of the most advanced classes short selections from Chaucer in the original text might occasionally be read, and that in other classes books dealing with Chaucer and other early writers, containing short extracts from them in a slightly modernised form, should be employed. We also consider that there is room for a new anthology of easy extracts from Middle-English literature for elementary school use. In addition to the more obvious sources, it would,





we believe, be found that suitable passages might be selected from some of the Miracle and Morality Plays. We may add that in our opinion the compilation of such an anthology, and indeed of anthologies for school purposes generally, should not be entrusted to anonymous editors.

### *Modernised Romances and Sagas.*

Apart from the reading of selections from our earlier literature on the lines indicated above, we should wish to encourage the use of good modernised versions of the mediæval romances, sagas, and of the kindred classical epics. Much has been done of late by writers and by publishers to make the great tales of the ancient and mediæval world accessible in suitable and attractive form to young pupils, and it is important that teachers should make the most of the opportunities thus placed within their reach. We need scarcely add that the best modern renderings of these old-world stories are made by scholars who are familiar with them in their original form, and who are thus able to interpret their true spirit. Such versions should, wherever possible, be used.

### *Elizabethan Writers.*

While we thus desire to encourage, as far as is possible under the special conditions, the reading of those old-world and mediæval stories and legends which have eternal charm for children, we think that teachers might draw more upon Elizabethan and Stuart literature (apart from Shakespeare) than they have usually done. It is not easy to determine how far the poetry of Spenser or of Milton can be made of interest and value to young boys and girls. Much depends on the class and on the teacher. But we should be glad if masters and mistresses would make experiments from time to time in these matters, and be on the alert generally to widen the area of school-reading.

### *Novels.*

In the sphere of modern literature, we gave considerable attention to the place of the novel, especially the historical novel, in the school syllabus. We have included in our list of texts in Appendix A some novels, not of historical character, that seemed particularly suitable for school use, and we have given in Appendix B a list of historical novels illustrating the successive periods of the national annals and many episodes in general history.

### *Question of using abridgments of Scott, Dickens and other Novelists.*

In this connexion, we discussed whether it was legitimate and advisable to use abridged editions of the works of the great classical novelists, especially Scott and Dickens. In the recent reaction against the excessive use of short extracts to which we have referred more fully in a previous chapter, there has been a tendency to condemn indiscriminately abridgments of every kind, and to insist that, where a novel or story is read in class, it should be read in full.



We are, of course, anxious to stimulate sustained reading and study, and, where time and other conditions permit, we approve of standard novels being read in school from cover to cover. But taking into account the inevitable limitations of school instruction in English literature, we are unanimously of opinion that properly abridged editions of the great novelists may be used with advantage. It should not be forgotten that Scott and Dickens, for instance, perpetuate of set purpose the leisurely narrative art of their eighteenth century predecessors. Hence the breadth and elaboration of their work involve the introduction of episodic matter, and if one of their longer novels is read in the slow and piecemeal fashion necessitated by a school time-table, there is a risk of the pupil's attention becoming entangled in the mass of details and of their not being able to see the wood for the trees. Thus the primary object of using a continuous reading book may be sacrificed.

We are, therefore, of opinion that abridged editions of classical novels may be advantageously used, provided that any connecting matter introduced by the editor be carefully distinguished from the original text by the use of different type or in some other unmistakable manner.

#### *Home Study and the National Home Reading Union.*

A capable teacher will, of course, take suitable opportunities of encouraging his pupils to study the complete work, if he considers this desirable, either in periods set aside for silent reading or out of school hours.

For we have realised clearly throughout our discussions that it is not in the class room alone that the training in English of the boys and girls of London takes place. The reading done outside the school is of great importance. One important agency for influencing this in the right direction is the National Home Reading Union. The Union, in addition to its more advanced work, has a "Young People's Course," which is suitable to the older pupils in elementary schools. It issues in connexion with this course, selected lists of books in different departments of literature, and a monthly magazine containing articles on the books and their authors, with notes and questions. The unit in the Union's organisation is a "circle," or class varying in size from five to a dozen members. By special arrangement one membership fee paid by the leader of the circle, or by the Local Education Authority, covers the membership of all the pupils in the circle.

The London County Council has encouraged the formation of circles for home reading in elementary schools by undertaking (a) to pay the subscription of membership for any teacher of a class above Standard V. who desires to join the Union with his or her class, (b) to supply each year a copy of not more than two books in the Union's list for the Young People's Section to each child in the class.

We are informed that there are at present about 500 reading circles in London, associated for the most part with elementary schools, and that in these circles valuable work has been done, supplementary to the class instruction in school. We recommend, therefore, that the special facilities given to the Union by the Council should be continued. But





The initiative in forming circles should be left, as heretofore, to the teachers who have the best means of judging to what extent their pupils are fitted to take part in the Union's work.

#### *School Lending Libraries.*

School lending libraries are also most valuable in stimulating the tastes of the pupils for healthy and attractive literature. We feel confident that the new requisition list for these libraries recently issued by the Council, on the recommendation of a Conference including both teachers and librarians, will do much to encourage their more effective and habitual use. So long as these libraries contain books of the right type, we do not think it desirable that any uniform regulations should be laid down as to the manner in which they should be conducted. Different methods are suited to different schools, and considerable discretion must be allowed, in our opinion, to the head teachers.

#### *Public Libraries.*

While the younger pupils will, as a rule, make use only of their school lending library, those in the upper standards should be encouraged to take advantage also of the public libraries in their neighbourhood. In many of these libraries special facilities are provided for boys and girls.

But it was brought prominently to our notice that the provision of public libraries varies greatly in different districts of London. Marylebone, for instance, was cited as a neighbourhood which is particularly deficient in this respect. We would suggest that the Council might use its influence in seeking to secure greater equality of library facilities throughout the county than is at present the case. Meanwhile we would recommend that special assistance should be given to the lending libraries of those schools which have no public library within reasonable access.

#### *A London School Magazine.*

It is not sufficient, however, to see that the children are introduced to good books either in schools or in libraries. They need, too, literature of current interest, that refers to the events and activities of everyday life, to the home, the neighbourhood, and the great city in which they live.

We believe that a monthly magazine suitable for circulation among the older pupils of elementary schools is likely to meet this want. The magazine would be designed to suit the common needs of the schools, but one or two pages could be reserved for local purposes, the record of news in connexion with any one school or group of schools.

#### *Some desirable features of the Magazine.*

We did not think it possible to indicate precisely what the contents of such a magazine should be, as it would have at first to be of a somewhat experimental character. But the following are suggested as desirable features:—

1. A short chronicle of the events of the month told in such a fashion as to interest children.
2. Original stories, serial or otherwise, suitable for boys and girls.



3. Biographical sketches of great personalities.
4. Extracts from English literature in prose or poetry connected with current events or anniversaries.
5. Articles on London history in its association with buildings, streets or districts.
6. A reproduction in each number of some noted picture or portrait, or a representation of some building of historic or architectural interest, with simple descriptive details.
7. Essays, or other school work, of exceptional merit.
8. Problems for solution in such subjects as literature, history, geography and arithmetic.
9. Accounts of pupils' visits to places of interest in town or country.
10. Records of special achievements by pupils or ex-pupils in any field of distinction.
11. A correspondence column.
12. A page for parents.

Of these features several, especially 7 to 10, would, according to circumstances, be more suitable to the general or the local part of the Magazine.

*Other possible uses of the Magazine.*

There are other uses to which, as it developed, the Magazine might perhaps be put. It might, for example, be made a medium for the correction of faults of speech: examples could be given of these defects, whether phonetic or constructive, and the recognised pronunciation and construction pointed out. It might also become a link between the Day and Evening Schools, and attention might be drawn in it to the advantages which the latter offer to pupils for continuing their education.

How the Magazine should be edited and produced, and whether or not it should be distributed gratis are questions which scarcely come within our province. But we believe that a Magazine planned on the lines sketched above would be welcomed both by teachers and pupils, and would help to extend healthy and attractive literary influences, beyond the sphere of schools or libraries, to thousands of London homes.





## APPENDICES.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

In amplification of our suggestions on Reading Books in Chapters X. and XII. we append some lists which may be of help to teachers in drawing up their English syllabuses. The lists are in no way intended to be exhaustive, but they include typical materials suitable for school use at various stages. We give first a list of continuous readers, and of poetical works or selections, with an indication of the stage at which, in our opinion, they may most profitably be used. We also give a list of Historical Novels for reading either at school or at home, grouped according to the period of history to which they relate. This is followed by a list of nursery rhymes and simple pieces of poetry suitable for children under eight years of age.

## APPENDIX A.

## CONTINUOUS READERS (PROSE)

*Junior.*

Ali Baba.  
Cinderella.  
Dick Whittington.  
Enchanted Pearl.  
Jack the Giant Killer.  
Puss in Boots.  
Red Riding Hood.  
Sinbad the Sailor.  
Sleeping Beauty.  
The House that Jack built.  
The History of the Robins (S.P.C.K.)  
Tommy Smith's Animals.  
Tommy Smith's Other Animals.  
Æsop's Fables.  
Grimm's Tales.  
Stories from Robin Hood (Jack).  
Tales from Andersen (Jack).  
Tales from Bunyan (Jack).  
Tales from Chaucer (Jack).  
Alice in Wonderland.  
Alice through the Looking Glass.

Stories from Dickens (Harrap).  
Days before History (Harrap)  
Greek Myths (Harrap).  
The Adventures of Odysseus (Dent).  
Beowulf (Marshall).  
Kingsley's Heroes.  
Kingsley's Water Babies.  
The King of the Golden River.  
Hawthorne's Wonder Book.  
Hawthorne's Tanglewood Tales.  
Children of the Empire.  
Feats on the Fiord.  
Settlers in Canada.  
Little Savage.  
Coral Island.  
Nat the Naturalist.  
Gulliver's Travels (Blackie).  
Rab and his Friends.

*Senior.*

Blue Story Reader (Longman).  
Red Story Reader (Longman).  
Animal Story Reader.  
Legends of Greece and Rome (Harrap).  
Stories of Old Greece.  
Lamb's Ulysses (Blackie).  
Northern Sagas (Marshall).  
Stories from Wagner (Harrap).  
Stories from Chaucer (Marshall).  
Tales from the Faerie Queene (Marshall).  
Rip Van Winkle.  
Don Quixote (Philip).  
Hakluyt's Voyages (Marshall).  
Cook's Voyages.  
The Last of the Mohicans.  
Robinson Crusoe.  
Tom Brown's School Days.  
Little Women.  
The Lamplighter.

*Middle.*

Black Beauty.  
Prince Darling.  
The Ice Maiden.  
Dick Whittington.  
Andersen's Fairy Tales.  
Grimm's Tales.  
Tales of Fairies (Longman).  
Tales of Romance (Longman).  
Robin Hood (Harrap).  
King Arthur (Harrap).  
Tales of the Table Round (Longman).  
Stories from King Arthur (Jack).  
Stories from Chaucer (Marshall).  
Stories from the Faerie Queene (Jack).  
Stories from Shakespeare (Jack).





Uncle Tom's Cabin.  
John Halifax, Gentleman.  
Cranford.  
Silas Marner.  
The Mill on the Floss.  
Guy Mannering (For other Novels  
by Scott, see Appendix B).  
Great Expectations.  
The Old Curiosity Shop.  
David Copperfield.  
Nicholas Nickleby.  
Christmas Books.  
The Pickwick Papers (For other  
Novels by Dickens, see Appendix B).  
Southey's Nelson.  
Tales of a Grandfather.  
Macaulay's Third Chapter.  
Macaulay's Essays (selected).  
Addison's De Coverley Papers.  
De Quincey's Mail Coach.  
Sesame and Lilies.  
The Pilgrim's Progress.

#### POETRY.

*Junior.* See list of single poems in  
Appendix C. The following collections  
may also be mentioned:—

A Child's Garden of Verse.  
A Cycle of Song (Nelson), 1 and 2.  
A Treasury of Verse for School and  
Home, 1.  
Junior Globe Poetry.  
Little English Poems (Marshall).  
Old Fashioned Rhymes and Poems.  
The Royal Treasury of Story and Song  
(1 and 2).  
The Golden Staircase (1 and 2).

#### *Middle.*

Campbell's Songs and Ballads, Selec-  
tions (Blackie).  
Lays of Ancient Rome.  
Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers.  
Longfellow (Selections).  
Tennyson (Selections).  
Tennyson for the Young, edited by  
Ainger.

Wordsworth (Selections).  
The Ancient Mariner.  
The Pied Piper of Hamelin.  
The Traveller and The Deserted  
Village.  
Gibson's First Book of English  
Poetry.  
A Treasury of Verse for School and  
Home, 2.  
Book of Ballads (Marshall).  
The Children's Garland.  
Intermediate Globe Poetry.  
The Royal Treasury of Story and Song  
(3 and 4).  
The Golden Staircase (3-6).  
Woodward's Book of English Poetry  
for the Young (1 and 2).

#### *Senior.*

Arnold, Matthew (Selections).  
Byron (Selections).  
Byron, Childe Harold (Selections).  
Cowper (Selections).  
Gray's Elegy.  
Longfellow (Selections).  
Milton's earlier poems and sonnets  
(Selections).  
Rossetti, Christina (Selections).  
Tennyson (Selections).  
Wordsworth (Selections).  
Marmion (Selections).  
The Lady of the Lake.  
The Lay of the Last Minstrel.  
The Faerie Queene (Selections).  
The Traveller and The Deserted  
Village.  
A Cycle of Song (Nelson).  
A Treasury of Verse for School and  
Home.  
Ballads of British History (Book II.).  
Book of Ballads (Marshall).  
The Children's Garland.  
Lyra Heroica.  
Palgrave's Golden Treasury.  
Senior Globe Poetry.  
The Call of the Homeland.  
The Golden Staircase (7-9).



APPENDIX B.

LIST OF HISTORICAL NOVELS.

Roman Invasion of Britain	Beric the Briton...	...	G. A. Henty.
Roman Empire	Last Days of Pompeii (Selections)	...	Lord Lytton.
Early Centuries of Christianity	Hypatia (Selections)	...	C. Kingsley.
End of Roman Occupation of Britain	Count of the Saxon Shore	...	A. J. Church.
The Northmen	Eric Brighteyes (mythological)	...	Rider Haggard.
"	Grettir the Outlaw	...	S. B. Baring-Gould.
"	Erling the Bold	...	R. M. Ballantyne.
" (France)	The Little Duke	...	C. M. Yonge.
Norman Conquest	Harold	...	Lord Lytton.
"	Wulf the Saxon	...	G. A. Henty.
"	Hereward the Wake	...	C. Kingsley.
The Period of the Crusades	The Talisman	...	Sir W. Scott.
"	Ivanhoe	...	"
"	The Betrothed	...	"
"	The Crusaders	...	A. J. Church.
"	For Cross or Crescent	...	Gordon Stables.
The Barons' Wars	The Constable's Tower	...	C. M. Yonge.
"	Runnymede and Lincoln Fair	...	J. G. Edgar.
"	Boy's Adventures in Baron's Wars.	...	"
"	The Lord of Dynevor	...	E. Everett-Green.
The Hundred Years' War	Cressy and Poitiers	...	J. G. Edgar.
"	The White Company	...	C. Doyle.
"	In the Days of Chivalry	...	E. Everett-Green.
"	St. George for England	...	G. A. Henty.
"	Lances of Lynwood	...	C. M. Yonge.
"	At Agincourt	...	G. A. Henty.
Wars of the Roses	Last of the Barons	...	Lord Lytton.
"	Warwick the King Maker	...	A. J. Church.
"	Black Arrow	...	R. L. Stevenson.
"	Grisly Grissell	...	C. M. Yonge.
Pre-Reformation Period			
" (France)	Quentin Durward	...	Sir W. Scott.
"	The Cloister and the Hearth (Abridged)	...	C. Reade.
Discovery of America	Westward with Columbus	...	Gordon Stables.
Henry VIII.	Household of Sir Thomas More	...	Miss Manning.
Mary	Francis Cludde	...	S. Weyman.
Mary, Queen of Scots	The Abbot	...	Sir W. Scott.
Age of Elizabeth	Westward Ho!	...	C. Kingsley.
"	Loyal Hearts and True	...	E. Everett-Green.
"	Under Drake's Flag	...	G. A. Henty.
"	Royal Merchant	...	W. H. Kingston.
" (Dutch Republic)	By Pike and Dike	...	G. A. Henty.
" (Huguenots)	House of the Wolf	...	S. Weyman.
Richelieu	Under the Red Robe	...	"
Charles I. and the Civil War.	The Diary of Mary Powell	...	Miss Manning.
"	Cavaliers and Roundheads	...	J. E. Edgar.
"	Children of the New Forest	...	Marryat.
"	With the King at Oxford	...	A. J. Church.
The Restoration	Cherry and Violet	...	Miss Manning.
"	When London Burned	...	G. A. Henty.
Monmouth's Rebellion	For Faith and Freedom	...	Sir W. Besant.
"	Micah Clarke	...	C. Doyle.
"	In Taunton Town	...	E. Everett-Green.

*Sama Stone*

*Blackman K.D.*



# Revocation of the Edict of

Nantes ... ..	The Refugees ... ..	C. Doyle.
Peter the Great ... ..	Boris the Bear Hunter ... ..	F. Wishaw.
William III. ... ..	Shrewsbury ... ..	S. Weyman.
" ... ..	Roger Willoughby ... ..	W. H. Kingston.
Anne ... ..	Esmond ... ..	W. M. Thackeray.
The Georgian Period ... ..	The Virginians ... ..	"
The Georgian Period (Colonial Expansion)	With Clive in India ... ..	G. A. Henty.
"	With Wolfe in Canada ... ..	"
The Georgian Period (The Jacobites) ... ..	Dorothy Forster ... ..	Sir W. Besant.
"	Waverley ... ..	Sir W. Scott.
"	Rob Roy ... ..	"
"	Kidnapped ... ..	R. L. Stevenson.
"	Catrina ... ..	"
The Gordon Riots ... ..	Barnaby Rudge ... ..	C. Dickens.
The French Revolution ... ..	As we sweep through the Deep	Gordon Stables.
"	The Last Hope ... ..	H. Seton Merriman.
"	A Tale of Two Cities ... ..	C. Dickens.
"	The Red Cockade ... ..	S. Weyman.
The Napoleonic Wars ... ..	Brigadier Gerard ... ..	C. Doyle.
"	Barlasch of the Guard ... ..	H. Seton Merriman.
"	One of the 28th ... ..	G. A. Henty.
"	Under Wellington's Command ... ..	"
"	Through Russian Snows ... ..	"
"	Hearts of Oak ... ..	Gordon Stables.
"	Romance of War ... ..	James Grant.
Early 19th Century ... ..	Rodney Stone ... ..	C. Doyle.
Mid-Victorian Era ... ..	Never too late to Mend ... ..	C. Reade
	(The Colonial Chapters)	
"	Two Years Ago ... ..	C. Kingsley
"	Hero of Lucknow ... ..	Captain Brereton.



# APPENDIX C.

## LIST OF NURSERY RHYMES AND POEMS FOR CHILDREN UNDER EIGHT YEARS OF AGE.

1. Nursery rhymes.
2. Short pieces, some of which could be "learned by heart."
3. Longer pieces for reading to children, either for rhyme, rhythm, narrative, or prettiness of expression.

### 1.—Nursery Rhymes.

Sing a Song of Sixpence.  
 Simple Simon.  
 Old King Cole.  
 The Queen of Hearts.  
 Little Bo-Peep.  
 Ding-dong-bell.  
 Hey diddle-diddle.  
 Little Miss Muffit.  
 Little Polly Flinders.  
 Pat-a-cake.  
 Jack and Jill.  
 Little Jack Horner.  
 The Lion and the Unicorn.  
 Good King Arthur.  
 Gay go up and gay go down.  
 Old Mother Hubbard.  
 The Little Woman and her Pig.  
 Betty Pringle had a little Pig.  
 The Frog who would a-wooing go.  
 Where are you going to, my pretty Maid?  
 The Story of Cock Robin.  
 The North Wind doth blow.  
 This is the House that Jack built.  
 The Tree in the Wood (Continuous Gathering).  
 Oranges and Lemons.  
 Rock-a-by Baby.  
 Wee Willie Winkie.  
 Baa Baa Black Sheep.  
 The Fairy Ship.  
 Dapple Gray.  
 Girls and Boys come out to Play.  
 A Merry Heart.  
 Green Gravel.

### 2.—Short pieces, some of which could be learned by heart.

Robin Redbreast ... W. Allingham.  
 The Lamb ... Blake.  
 Infant Joy ... "  
 Laughing Song ... "  
 Spring ... "  
 Little White Lily ... G. Macdonald.  
 Baby ... "  
 Up and Down ... "  
 A Song of Willow ... Shakespeare.  
 Spring ... "

Violets ... Herrick.  
 Bed in Summer ... R. L. Stevenson  
 The Lamplighter ... "  
 The Land of Counterpane ... "  
 The Cow ... "  
 My Shadow ... "  
 Singing ... "  
 Where go the Boats? ... "  
 The Wind ... "  
 The Swing ... "  
 Summer Time ... "  
 The Flowers ... "  
 Marching Song ... "  
 The Sun's Travels ... "  
 Minnie and Mattie ... C. Rossetti.  
 The Ferryman ... "  
 The Robins ... L. A. Tadema.  
 Frost ... "  
 Snowdrops ... "  
 Little Girls ... "  
 Little Ducks ... R. Mack.  
 Baby's Big World ... G. Setoun.  
 What the Leaves Say ... "  
 Jack Frost ... "  
 How the Flowers Grow ... "  
 Spring Time ... "  
 A Mystery ... "  
 City Sparrows ... "  
 Birdie and Baby ... Tennyson.  
 Sweet and Low—Lullaby ... "  
 Minnie and Winnie ... "  
 The Snowdrop ... "  
 The Oak ... "  
 The Song of the Wood ... F. E. Weatherley.  
 The Gray Dove's Answer ... "  
 A Winter's Tale ... "  
 My Baby ... "  
 The Cat's Tea Party ... "  
 The Lost Doll ... C. Kingsley.  
 My Dove ... Keats.  
 A Fair Little Girl ... Lord Houghton  
 Lady Moon ... "  
 Seven Times One ... J. Ingelow.  
 The Trees ... S. Coleridge.  
 Away from Home ... "  
 The Months ... "  
 Do you ask what the Birds say? ... S. T. Coleridge.  
 Baby Seed Song ... E. Nesbit.  
 Daisies ... F. D. Sherman.  
 Bartholomew ... N. Gale  
 Sympathy (Child and Bird) ... M. Johnson.  
 Dolly and Dick ... E. Coxhead.





- |                         |                      |                         |                     |
|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| The Rainbow Fairies     | L. M. Hadley.        | The Little Land         | ... R. L. Stevenson |
| The New Moon            | ... E. L. C. Follen. | Picture Books           | in                  |
| The Elf and Dormouse    | Olive Herford        | Winter                  | ... ..              |
| Water Jewels            | ... M. F. Butts.     | Nest Eggs               | ... ..              |
| My Garden               | ... Eric Parker.     | Puss in the Corner      | ... R. Mack.        |
| The Lost Playtime       | ... A. F. Brown.     | London River            | ... F. E. Weatherly |
| Spring                  | ... T. Nash.         | Sailing                 | ... G. Setoun.      |
| Snow Song               | ... A. P. Graves.    | Fairy Land              | ... ..              |
| Waking Up               | ... (From Nature     | The World's Music       | ... ..              |
|                         | Study and the        | The Walrus and the      |                     |
|                         | Child).              | Carpenter               | ... L. Carroll.     |
| Wynken, Blyken and      | E. Field.            | The Yellow Fly (A tale  |                     |
| Nod                     | ... ..               | with a sting in it)     | Mrs. Ewing.         |
| To the Celandine        | ... Wordsworth       | The Willow Man          | ... ..              |
| Written in March        | ... ..               | A Friend in the Garden  | ... ..              |
| The Little Wren         | ... Scott.           | Going-a-Maying          | ... ..              |
| Little Swallows         | ... (From the        | The Broom Flowers       | M. Howitt.          |
|                         | French).             | September               | ... ..              |
| The Little Grey Mouse   | C. L. Thomson.       | The Coming of Spring    | ... ..              |
| Underneath the Sea      | M. Thomson.          | Mabel on Midsummer      |                     |
| The Rabbits             | ... ..               | Day                     | ... ..              |
| Wishes                  | ... L. Thomson.      | The Fairies of Caldou   |                     |
| The Wind                | ... ..               | Low                     | ... ..              |
| The Brook               | ... J. B. Tabb.      | Rocking and Talking     | A. Keary.           |
| Nature's Teaching       | ... Longfellow.      | The Last Day of Flowers | ... ..              |
| What became of them ?   |                      | Fairy Men               | ... ..              |
| (Two Rats)              | ... Anon.            | A Hunting Song          | ... Scott.          |
| Mr. Nobody              | ... ..               | The Fountain...         | ... Lowell.         |
| Jemima                  | ... ..               | Nose and Eyes           | ... Cowper.         |
| A Christmas Visitor     | ... ..               | The Grey Squirrels      | ... W. Howitt.      |
| Lady Bird               | ... ..               | The Wind in a Frolic    | ... ..              |
| Jack in the Pulpit      | ... ..               | Primroses and Violets   | ... ..              |
| Old Gaelic Lullaby      | ... ..               | A Boy's Aspirations     | M. B. Smedley.      |
| The Little Tin Soldier  | ... ..               | The Camel's Hump        | ... R. Kipling.     |
| Sparkle, Sparkle Little |                      | What does it matter ?   | G. C. Boase         |
| River                   | ... ..               | The Child's wish in     |                     |
|                         |                      | June                    | ... Gilman.         |
|                         |                      | A Slumber Song          | ... E. O. Cooke.    |
|                         |                      | Robert of Lincoln       | ... W. C. Bryant.   |
|                         |                      | A Lesson for Mamma      | Sydney Dayre.       |
|                         |                      | One, Two, Three         | ... H. E. Bunner.   |
|                         |                      | A Lake and a Fairy      |                     |
|                         |                      | Boat                    | ... Hood.           |
|                         |                      | Queen Mab               | ... ..              |
|                         |                      | Daffy-Down-Dilly        | ... A. B. Warner.   |
|                         |                      | How the Leaves came     |                     |
|                         |                      | Down                    | ... S. Coolidge.    |
|                         |                      | The Four Winds          | ... F. D. Sherman.  |
|                         |                      | Sea Song from the       |                     |
|                         |                      | Shore                   | ... J. W. Riley.    |
|                         |                      | A Child's Song in       |                     |
|                         |                      | Spring                  | ... E. Nesbit.      |
|                         |                      | Dame Duck's First       |                     |
|                         |                      | Lecture on Educa-       |                     |
|                         |                      | tion                    | ... "Aunt Effie."   |
|                         |                      | Marjorie's Almanac      | ... T. B. Aldrich.  |
|                         |                      | The Jumbies             | ... Edward Lear.    |
|                         |                      | The Pedlar's Caravan    | W. B. Rands.        |
|                         |                      | The Fairy Queen         | ... Old Song        |
|                         |                      | The Water Song          | ... Anon.           |
- 3.—*Longer Pieces.*
- |                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| The Lepracaun or Fairy |                     |
| Shoemaker              | ... W. Allingham.   |
| The Fairies            | ... ..              |
| Wishing                | ... ..              |
| The Bird               | ... ..              |
| A Child's Wishes       | ... ..              |
| The Echoing Green      | ... Blake.          |
| A Cradle Song          | ... ..              |
| Nurse's Song           | ... ..              |
| The Chimney Sweeper    | ... ..              |
| The Little Boy Lost    | ... ..              |
| The Little Boy Found   | ... ..              |
| The Tiger              | ... ..              |
| A Dream                | ... ..              |
| The Wind and the       |                     |
| Moon                   | ... G. Macdonald.   |
| The Owl                | ... Tennyson.       |
| The Sea Fairies        | ... ..              |
| The Brook              | ... ..              |
| The City Child         | ... ..              |
| My Kingdom             | ... R. L. Stevenson |
| Travel                 | ... ..              |





The North Wind	... Anon.
O tell me, Little River	"
The Babes in the Wood	Old Ballad
The First Swallow	... C. Smith.
The Children's Voyage	C. L. Thomson.
Little Sorrow	... W. Douglas.
The Blackbird	... E. H. Miller.

The Little Red Lark K. Tynan  
Hinkson.  
May ... .. Wordsworth  
The Child and the Wind D. Wordsworth  
Flower Chorus ... Emerson  
The Blind Boy ... Colley Cibber  
Song from Pippa Passes Browning.