

cannot do it as long as we are hampered by Latin traditions. The teaching of English must be regulated according to English ideas, and English ideas are not the same as Latin ideas. The object in learning English and in learning Latin is not the same; the genius of the two languages is widely different; on every side are reasons why we should teach the two languages differently. Let us take three great points of difference between English and Latin; and after briefly mentioning them, let us discuss in detail the corresponding differences which we ought to find between the teaching of the two languages.

First, then, English is a spoken language, to be used as the ordinary vehicle for thought, and as a means for deriving enjoyment from literature. Latin is for none of us a spoken language; and for few, for very few, a literary pleasure. In the second place, English is a known language; the youngest children have copious materials for the study of it at their command. They can experimentalize in it at will, and can therefore be taught by induction. They speak correctly of themselves, and do not want rules (except in a very few instances) to teach them how to speak correctly, but rather explanations to show them why what they actually speak is correct. It is the first language that they are taught, and is the introduction to the laws of language. The ease with which they use it adapts it specially for teaching the use of language and the connection between language and thought. In Latin, boys know nothing that they do not learn, they have no power of experimentalizing. Induction, therefore, finds no place in Latin—at all events, in the earlier stage of instruction. Again, there is so much elbow work in turning dictionaries, and memory work in learning words and terminations, that little time is left for making Latin a lesson of thought. In the third place, Latin is an inflected language, while English may comparatively be called uninflected. In English there are no real inflections of gender; scarcely any of mood or voice; and only one (as a general rule) of case. The same words are sometimes used as verbs and nouns, as prepositions and adverbs, as prepositions and participles, as adverbs and conjunctions. Words have to be distinguished by their context and their function in the sentence. In Latin, on the contrary, the inflections settle these questions, and there is little necessity to do more than examine the inflection with sufficient care in order to ascertain the function of each word. Hence, in Latin, definitions of parts of speech, which are defective, or even false, might pass current, because they would never be appealed to. The inflections take the strain off the definitions; and so the definitions do not break down. In English, the definition has to bear the strain, and it breaks down accordingly; or, if it does not break down, it is because it is too high for the boyish understanding, which cannot attain unto it. Hence either better definitions, or else tests and not definitions, are wanted in English teaching. One more important point of difference results from the absence of inflections in English, and the substitution of words in their place. The inflections in Latin are treated, at all events for younger pupils, as ultimate, and not as masters for explanation. But the English equivalents, for instance, *to*, as the sign of the infinitive, the auxiliary verbs *shall* and *will*, the prepositions of and *by*, and the like, can easily be explained. If the schoolmaster looks round to seek what there is to be taught in English grammar, he will find here a great store of instructive material that can be made, even for young children, intelligible, interesting, and stimulating. This new instruction will not be less attractive than the process of committing to memory the Latin genders. The knowledge of the difference between *shall* and *will* will be no less valuable than the knowledge that *collis* is

masculine and *wallis* feminine; and surely far more both valuable and rational than the impotent and servile mimicry of Latin imperfections, which would oblige us to teach our children that *buck* and *doe*, *bull* and *cow*, *man* and *woman*, represent respectively the males and females of the animals which these pairs of words severally denote.

Now let us consider, somewhat more in detail, the best way to teach English grammar, bearing in mind the three abovementioned considerations, that we are teaching a language that is spoken and known by our pupils, and also uninflected. Since it is spoken, I suppose we ought to teach our pupils how to speak it and read it well. And on this part of the school training I should lay very great stress. Few of us perhaps can say that it is part of our scholastic duty to teach children to read; but a good many of us may say, I think, that it is a part of our painful experience to admit into our schools children who read very badly. In order to give hints for the training of such children, I have found it useful to study the very elementary question, how to teach children to read. And I may add that many of us may have at home a small junior class of familiar pupils, in whose instruction we feel the liveliest interest. I will therefore make no further apology for beginning at the very beginning, and asking you to consider briefly with me the best way to teach a child to read.

If any of you have often or ever had the pain of learning a child try to read, and fail after three or four years' learning, I think you must have been struck with the fact that the spelling is the great stumbling-block. Silently sometimes, but very often in an audible murmur, the child is spelling over each syllable at which he stumbles. Even where he does not spell, the habit of spelling, or thinking about the spelling, has supplanted, or rather prevented, the habit of meaning anything, or of thinking about what one means. If it were not for such instances of bad teaching as these, I should say that all teachers are now agreed that spelling is not to be encouraged or allowed till a child can read pretty well; the monosyllables are to be learned as symbols, just like letters, and afterwards the combinations of monosyllables. It may be convenient to teach a child the letters first, but a distinct line of time should be drawn between the teaching of letters and the teaching of words. Otherwise, when we point to a word, the child naturally repeats that letter of the word which he thinks we are pointing to. He ought to be told distinctly that he is now to be taught not letters but words; and the teacher ought to explain what he means by pointing to and repeating the words sharply and distinctly, just as he wishes the pupil to repeat them. The amount of drill in monosyllables requisite will vary with the quickness of the child. A dull child may require the whole of the systematic drill which is to be found in Nesbitt and Sonnenschein's books; a quicker child will find quite enough in Stevens and Hole's Primary Reader; while perhaps the best book for a child of average ability, who is being taught at home by some one who understands teaching, is Mamma's Lessons, published by Griffith and Farran, a book which has deservedly passed through fifteen editions.

All will notice how naturally a child, when repeating poetry, falls into that kind of speaking which in antique bards is called a measured cadence, and in our cathedrals a monotone, but in children a monotonous drawl. It is all very well to tell the child to speak naturally, but the child's instinct tells him that when he speaks naturally he does not speak in rhyme; and he practically infers that when he is speaking in rhyme he ought not to speak as in prose. For this reason it is desirable not to make poetry the staple of a child's earliest reading; and whether poetry or prose be read, we ought to prevent the child's