

hand in receives a high mark. It deserves a high mark. We spent a good deal of time on that essay. We did not know before hand what theme would be set by the examiner, but we knew that our essay would fit almost any theme that might be set. The examination over, we are now ready to prepare others to pass examinations. In our own training the critical side of the subject has been prominent, and the practice has been neglected. The chances are that the peculiarities of our course will be repeated in our pupils, and continued in our own after experience.

We do not seem to think it necessary to possess or to acquire skill in the art of composition. It is indeed thought necessary for the teacher of geography, history and classics assiduously to cultivate these branches. Or to take examples from fields more closely allied, we may refer to the teachers of music, of drawing, and of painting. None of these would be content with a mere knowledge of theory. But our equipment is thought to be sufficient when it consists of a more or less vague set of principles of rhetoric, clinched in a few type examples, a few maxims ready to be applied for purposes of criticism, and the recollection of our past achievements in writing school essays.

The result of all this will be what might reasonably be expected. Our pupils will do as we have done. They too, will memorize rhetorical maxims and principles, and verify them in the stock examples. They will pass examinations. And when they have left school, they will be living monuments of the truth that theory is so much easier than practice. They may be able to criticise after a fashion, but they will hardly attempt to write.

Even if it were thought desirable to continue the present state of things, and to lay stress upon the importance of knowledge of the science rather than skill in the art, we are at present hardly going the right way to accomplish that end. In order that the best results shall be attained, we must clearly realize

the nature of the science of rhetoric and deal with it accordingly. If the science consists of a series of truths reached as the result of a process of inference from one or two original axiomatic truths or postulates, it will not be necessary for the prospective student to do much by way of preparation. Sufficient advancement having been made to enable him to understand the terms used in stating each proposition, his progress in the science will be easy and rapid. If, on the other hand, the truths which it teaches have been discovered by the examination and comparison of a large number of facts, it is evident that a long and careful course of preparation is necessary before the student is ready for the scientific study of the subject. It is evident that many years of preparatory work must be spent, under direction, in becoming acquainted with what has proved effective in the domain of literature, before the work of classification and explanation can be undertaken.

One cannot define with accuracy how far we are away from the kind of literary study which this method demands. A very great deal has been done in recent years by way of encouraging young children to study great literary masterpieces. All that beautiful binding, excellent paper, clear type, and moderate cost can do, is being done by the publishers, and if parents and teachers would only do their share of the great work, thousands of young people would not only undergo the necessary preparation for critical study of the laws of literary harmony and expression in their high school and college career, but would in the meantime also experience the keen delights of "that great kingdom of the Ideal, where the greatest of all ages sit benignly on their thrones judging the tribes of men." We are gradually getting to believe that young children can, and do enjoy literature, which we used to think far beyond them. We thought so in the face of our own early experiences. We thought so because the study of literature in our school days was intimately associated with parsing