

But, I think, before English and modern languages in general can take their place beside the classical languages as an effective means of discipline and culture, there is still some work for us to do. And that work is the thorough organization of methods of teaching and study in those subjects.

It is true that on the philological side of English, which presents no special difficulty in this respect, much has already been done; but on the literary side where we find the practical and ethical value of the study, the development of methods has been slow in proportion to the subtle nature of the subject and the infinite variety of materials; so much so that an eminent authority, Professor Freeman, of Oxford, calls upon us to give up all effort in this region, as a region of mere taste and opinion, in which no methods can be invented. Every teacher of English who prepares pupils for an outside examination must be conscious of a painful uncertainty as to the scope and lines which the examination may take; and on the other hand every outside examiner in English has, particularly in the higher stages of the subject, a similar uncertainty as to the lines on which the pupil has been taught.

But here, too, I find that in Ontario you have been fully awake to the difficulties of the situation. I find that not only has the University of Toronto defined, as far as could be done by general terms, the scope and character of the examinations for matriculants in English; but that two of its graduates have published a book containing annotated editions of the subjects prescribed for matriculation (*The Lay of the Last Minstrel* and *Goldsmith's Citizen of the World*), and also a critical introduction intended to serve as a practical guide for teachers of English.

Now I wish to speak quite respectfully of this book, as a very creditable example of the energetic and enterprising spirit in which Toronto University has attempted to supply a great educational want. And it is all the more meritorious that, so far as I know, it is one of the first efforts that have been made to establish a clear understanding as to methods of teaching in English between the examining body in the university and the teaching body in the schools. If I have some criticism to make on its methods and its points of view, it is the criticism of one who is well aware of the difficulties which the authors, those pioneers in a rough path, had to encounter.

The critical introduction is divided into twenty-eight heads, such as vocabulary, metrical emphasis, the period and the loose sentence, contrasts, contiguities, simplicity and clearness, strength, the redemption of pain, concreteness and combination, ideality, etc. These heads form, as it were, so many categories under which the teacher is to present the subject to his pupils. The general style of classification and the points of view are mainly, I think, derived from the well-known works of Dr. Bain, some time Professor of Logic and Rhetoric in Aberdeen University. That definition, for instance, under the head of ideality, of a poem as a sustained hyperbole, as being founded everywhere on exaggeration and unreality, we can hardly fail to discern in that definition the point of view of the narrow and materialistic school of philosophy which Bain represents, a point of view utterly discredited by all great literary men, Ruskin, Arnold, Carlyle, Emerson. And those are our genuine leaders in critical literature; our work, as teachers, is but to reduce to system the methods and points of view which they developed. As an example of the application of