

their uses. Aside from food, the greatest use is in the manufacture of starch. Let the children grate a potato, stir the pulp in water, strain, evaporate the liquid, and see what is left.

Have them draw potato tubers now, and draw the whole plant next summer. Discuss the geography and the history of the potato. Do we export or import them? Where do we sell them? This is a big subject for the right kind of teacher.

HIGH SCHOOL LITERATURE.

THE PRINCESS.

ELEANOR ROBINSON.

I have had requests for some suggestions for teaching Tennyson's "Princess." I should be very glad if teachers would make such requests more definite and detailed. Methods of presenting and studying a piece of literature must vary so much with the experience, attainments and tastes of both teacher and student, that it would be a great help towards making these suggestions more useful if I knew, for instance, whether the pupils were at all familiar with Tennyson or if this poem was to be the introduction to him; whether they had read any poetry other than that prescribed in the course of instruction; if they liked poetry; if they could easily master a story told in verse; if they had a fairly good vocabulary; if they had access to books of reference, and to a complete edition of Tennyson, or were dependent upon their text books; if they could read aloud decently; if they could be depended upon to read the poem, for the story, out of school, so that the lesson time might be given to detailed study and appreciation; or if they needed constant help in their reading; how much time could be given to the literature lessons. As to the teacher — has he had much experience, or little, or none? Does he read poetry, and especially Tennyson's poetry, for his own pleasure? What difficulties does he foresee in teaching this poem? Has he a definite aim, other than that of getting ready for examinations, in teaching literature? Does he want general suggestions, or detailed ones? Has he found any of the notes in the REVIEW particularly useful, and if so, which ones? Information, on any or all of

these points would be of use. Meanwhile, I will give what advice I can.

And my first bit of advice is — get the prescribed edition (Professor Woodbury's, Longmans' English Classics), and study very carefully both the Introduction and the General Suggestions. I am assuming, and I hope it is not too large an assumption, that you have made yourself familiar with the poem by repeated readings, and that you can follow and apply the editor's appreciative comments, and see the value of his wise advice about how to help your pupils to enjoy it. Lay to heart especially the following passages: "It is the peculiar aim of poetry to give pleasure of a particular kind; whatever lessens that pleasure or destroys it, attacks the life of poetry at its source." "Unless the student is pleased, and pleased in the way which belongs to poetry, he will neither understand, love, nor value it."

After reading and thinking over these two chapters, go over them pencil in hand, and mark such passages as need illustration from the poem. For instance, on page xxvii, we find, "the metrical effect of the hurried or checked lines." Number in the margin, or write in full in your note book, I. 166,

"Many a long league back to the North. At last."

And as many more hurried or checked lines as you can find. Illustrate as fully as possible in this way the paragraph on page xxvi, beginning, "From the start," especially, "the constant use of image," and, "where it does not use images." Compare in this respect, Florian's account of Melissa's trial.

"With hooded brows I crept into the hall,"

iv. 206, with the description of the girls coming across the Park,

"Some cowered and some bare-headed, on they came."

vi. 61, and decide which passage differs most from prose, and how. Another passage to be fully worked out is on page xxvii. "the little pictures, the more melodious and perfect lines, etc." It will be surprising if such a study, faithfully carried out, does not greatly increase your own pleasure in the poem and make you eager to bring it before your students.

But you have to consider not only your reading, but your readers. So go through these chapters again, this time marking and making notes on what you think best suited to the needs