

reject the word "unquestionably" in prose? Who would not prefer "questionless" in poetry?

Now, applying these principles of poetic diction even to the very simple passage from Richard II., we may find, at least, one question that we may fairly expect to be answered—Why is "ire" used for anger? The answer will be, because it is (1) less lengthy, and (2) more out of the common, and therefore better fitted for the elevated style of poetic diction. We might also ask our pupil to refer to this and other passages to one of the three classes of style above enumerated. This particular passage might be called both forcible and somewhat elevated; while some lines in the same page—such as,

"With a foul traitor's name stuff I thy throat,"

and

"First, the fair reverence of your highness curbs me  
From giving reins and spurs to my free speech,  
Which else would post until it had returned  
These terms of treason doubled down his throat,"—

can scarcely claim to be called elevated, though we may freely admit that they are forcible.

Questions like these might, I think, easily be made to form part of a school lesson, when some classification of the different kinds of direction had been set before the pupil. Still more obvious and natural are questions about the fitness of epithets. The value of such questions can scarcely be exaggerated. The density of boys on this point,—their incapacity for seeing, until it is clearly pointed out to them, that each epithet ought to be able to give a reason for itself, and that if you change the epithet, or take it away, you make a change for the worse,—is a phenomenon that is really curious. Let me give an instance. Pope is satirizing the old Duchess of Marlborough, under the name of Atossa—

"Full sixty years the world has been her trade,  
The wisest fool much time has ever made,  
From loveless youth to unrespected age,  
No passions gratified except her age."

If you ask a boy why Pope calls Atossa's youth *loveless*, instead of choosing some other bad name, as *thoughtless*, *selfish*, why her old age is called *unrespected* instead of *avaricious*, *morose*, or some more obvious epithet, I think you will find that there will be at least one or two pupils in a class of twenty who have not seen that the epithets express that Atossa's life, from first to last, was destitute of the most natural virtues; *even* in her youth she was not lovable; *even* in her old age she was not respected. Few passages of English poetry will fail to suggest some such questions at these. Even our Shakespearian extract above suggests the question, Why does King Richard say, "deaf as the sea"? why not "deaf as a stone," or any other inanimate object? And, why "hasty as fire"? why not "hasty as lightning"? And I think it would be a good exercise for boys to point out the special fitness of the boisterous sea, which renders all sounds but its own roar inaudible, to represent the self-willed deafness of the combatants, and the appropriateness of the devouring fire to represent their hasty greed for vengeance.

I scarcely like to mention, as an argument in favour of the study of English diction, that it would probably diminish by a half the time at present requisite for learning to write tolerable Latin verses. As soon as boys see the force of epithets, and the necessity that they should be at once appropriate and picturesque, they cease to think that *magnus* and *malus* are epithets that can be applied indiscriminately to any person, place or thing. With this bad habit disappears much of the difficulty of writing a tolerable elegiac couplet. I do not lay much stress upon this argument, because I am not convinced of the importance

of teaching Latin verses. At the same time, I believe much that has been said against them applies, not to the teaching of versification, but to the bad teaching. Latin verses can be made a very fair lesson of taste and diction; and my only objection to them is, that all, and more than all the benefit of them can be derived in less than half the time from the study of English.

I have left till the last what seems to me the most important and interesting part of the study of diction. I mean the analysis of the metaphor and the simile. To this I have for some time given especial attention; and if I only dwell lightly upon it now, it is because I do not wish to repeat what I have written elsewhere on this subject. The simile is "a sentence expressing a similarity of relations." I don't suppose a boy would understand that definition, and I should certainly not give it to him till I had prepared the way for it. We want to describe to a man some phenomenon that he has never seen; for example, to a landsman, who has never seen the sea, we wish to describe the action of a ship upon the water. He has a difficulty in comprehending what we tell him, that the ship forces its way through the water, thrusting it aside, and at the same time turning the water up in fragments called spray. How can we put this clearly before his eyes? It will be a long business. But it occurs to us, though our friend has not seen a ship, he has seen a plough. Well, then, "very much as the plough acts on the land, so the ship acts on the sea." This is a sentence declaring that the relation between a ship and the sea is somewhat similar to the relation between a plough and the land, and it is called a simile. But a simile is long, and somewhat cumbersome, rarely fitted even for dramatic poetry, and still more rarely for prose. We compress it therefore into an audacious falsehood—true with certain allowances, but literally false. We say "the ship," not, "is like," but, "is the plough of the sea." Instead of saying, the relation between the ship and the sea is *like* ploughing, say it is ploughing; *i. e.*, we transfer to the ship and the sea the relation between the plough and the land. Such a compressed simile is called a *transference*, or, which is the same thing, only that the word is derived from Greek, a *metaphor*. The next stage is to show boys how the metaphor may assume different forms, and is constantly implied in single verbs and adjectives, as, "the thought struck me," or "this is a striking thought." We may also point out that all language is founded on metaphor. We cannot describe anything that is not the immediate object of our senses without having recourse to it. Thus "purity," "spotlessness" are metaphors, transferred from the visible to the invisible world; in the sameway, "integrity" conveyed once the meaning "untouched," "eminent" meant "projecting out from or above others."

Having taught them how to detect an implied and latent metaphor, we must now teach them to analyse it. We have shown them how to compress the simile into the metaphor; we must now teach them how to reverse the process, and expand the metaphor into the simile. Thus, "the ship is the plough of the sea," can be expanded back again into:—As the plough is to the land, so the ship is to the sea. So we can analyse "a striking thought":—As a blow is to the body, so the thought is to the mind.

In these two proportions the unknown quantity to be determined is the relation between the third and fourth term, and the datum for determining it is the relation between the first and second term. Sometimes we have no one word to express this unknown relation. Thus, in the first case, we can only say:—As the plough turns up the land, so the ship turns up the sea. This is generally the case when visible things and their relations are illustrated by orders that are invisible. But in the second