

they left a lesson in humility and a warning against falling again into the blindness or arrogance or cowardice that caused them?

In the history of our second war with Great Britain there are chapters that many Americans find it unpleasant to read. Shall we therefore ignore them? On the sea we were better prepared than Great Britain, and there, for us, the war was in the main a succession of glorious victories. On land it was quite otherwise. The attempted invasion of Canada failed miserably.

These things are a part of the history of the war. No good American should forget them, any more than he should forget the victories on the sea and the defence of New Orleans by Jackson and his men. The best kind of Americanism is not that which boasts all the time, or any of the time, but that which soberly recognizes the great truths of history—the warnings of past failure and defeat no less than the obligations that past victories have imposed.

## NOTES ON NEW BRUNSWICK HIGH SCHOOL LITERATURE.

### I.—The Diverting History of John Gilpin.

#### PRESENTATION OF THE POEM.

This is of great importance, and the method should be determined by the ability of the class. The first aim must be to get the story clear.

With a class who are just beginning to study literature, read the poem to them, in as interesting a manner as you can. Of course you will study it carefully first, and get into the spirit of it yourself. Make clear the division into parts—the introduction of the hero, the conversation between him and his wife, the setting off of the chaise, etc.

Call upon the children to show that they have the incidents of the story clear and in order. Have each incident stated in a sentence, thus: John Gilpin and his wife planned to celebrate the anniversary of their wedding by dining at an inn at Edmonton; the wife and children set off in a chaise; John was going to ride after them on a borrowed horse; just as he mounted he was detained by customers; and so on. Go round the class, getting one statement from each child. Have the next one take up the story briskly, and everyone ready to see when a point has been omitted. Do not be too particular about the wording; you don't want attention diverted from the story. Keep your aim in view.

This may seem childish work; but remember, we are teaching the children how to read, that is, how to get the author's full meaning, and if he tells us a story, we must be sure that we follow it.

With a more capable class, set them to read the

poem through at home, and write out their own summaries, allowing not more than one hundred and fifty words. Have several of these read, and criticized by the class. This is quite a hard composition exercise, and you may find it better to have the summaries made orally in class.

Whichever plan is followed, the whole poem should be read, and the outline of the story grasped in the first lesson.

Draw attention to the title. Is it a "diverting history?" Turn to the notes, page 234, and read what Cowper thought about it. Did John Gilpin think it funny? Did Mrs. Gilpin? Did it ever happen to you, or to anyone you know to miss a picnic, for instance, by a succession of mishaps? Did you think it was funny at the time? Afterwards?

#### HOME WORK.

Home work may be set on a study of words and phrases.

Make a list of the words you do not understand well enough to use in sentences of your own, and look them up in a dictionary. Come prepared to ask questions about any phrases, references, or words that you do not understand. What is the difference between *credit* and *renown*? Between *renowned* and *famous*? Between a city and a town, (a) in Canada, (b) in England? Is London usually spoken of as a town? What is meant by the City of London? [The "City" is only a small portion of London, extending, roughly speaking, only about a mile along the north side of the Thames. It is the commercial centre of London.] *Trainband*—Company of Militia. See lines 63, 64. What does *exercise* mean in line 64? *Eke*. Compare "to eke out." *Twice ten* tedious years. Why not simply *twenty years*? Can you give other examples of poets' ways of expressing time? *Linen-drafter*. What do we call this? *For that* = ? "The Bell"—name of an inn. What good reason for inns having painted pictures instead of printed signs? In the times when many people could not read, all could be guided by the pictures. What remains of this custom have we? e. g., a pestle and mortar at a drug store.

1, Bent on pleasure; 2, full well; 3, all agog; 4, through thick and thin; 5, neck or nought; 6 not a whit; 7, in such trim; 8, hue and cry. Which of these phrases, or variations of which of them are now in use? Explain them. In (4) what is the thick and what is the thin? "Neck or nought," a racing phrase; to win by a neck, or be nowhere. "Turn-pike men," the men who kept the gates set across roads to keep travellers from passing until they paid toll for keeping the roads in order. Within our recollection there was such a gate across the end of the St. John Suspension bridge, and the toll-man lived in the little house close by. How do you pronounce (a) balcony, line 142; (b) comely, line 184. Where did Cowper get the phrase "said or sung?" What have you to say about the wording of line 12?

How many things can you find out from the poem about the characters of Mr. and Mrs. Gilpin? Can you illustrate