

that it is quite possible to translate in the same way the French or German texts set for examinations, the teacher reading a line or a sentence and the pupil then giving it in English.

Another expedient of hardly less practical value, and which serves to complement the above, is exercise in writing to dictation. The prominence which is given to dictation in French schools is well known, and its usefulness primarily as a means of cultivating the ear is recognized at least by all who have tried it. It is also of great value as an exercise in the rules of grammar, but this is aside from our inquiry at present. A dictation exercise is interesting to the pupil and easily corrected by the teacher, and may be given from some part of the text which is being read, and corrected afterwards by the pupils themselves. The dictation has the further advantage of enabling the teacher to give the pupil an idea of the intonation of the language in connected discourse, which naturally it is impossible to do in teaching individual sounds. Other exercises, which will at once suggest themselves—reading aloud, committing portions of verse to memory and reciting them in the class, etc.—need not be detailed. Any or all are useful.

Whatever plan be adopted, the importance of frequent—even constant—exercise of the ear and voice should not be left out of sight. There are muscles and sets of muscles to be trained to act with the greatest promptness and precision in obedience to the will in realizing the conception of the sound formed by the ear, nor can this exactitude of perception on the part of the ear be acquired at once. All this requires time and patience, and the circumstances of our educational system indicate rather frequent and brief practice than prolonged exercise of more seldom occurrence. I

do not think I am wrong in holding that every recitation of the class should bear some direct reference to this important object. The teacher may be sure that if he is persistent in these methods that his pupils are not on this account going to fail of passing in the ordinary subjects required at examination. He will find, on the contrary, that proficiency will be more quickly attained, even in those subjects, and that the language has become of living interest to his pupils. I may be sanguine, yet I consider it quite possible for pupils with two or three years' training on the plan sketched out to understand fairly well what is said to them in French or German, and to have acquired an exact pronunciation together with some facility in the use of the language, and even to write to dictation unfamiliar extracts of difficulty similar to what they have been reading. Teachers of language will bear me out in saying that this is no inconsiderable achievement.

I have attempted then in the course of my paper to show that there is such a thing as the training of the ear in modern language teaching, and that it may be unnaturally separated from training of the eye. I have tried to show also how much there is of language, which is not and cannot be reproduced on the printed page. I have assigned some reasons for the neglect of the ear hitherto. I have touched briefly on the desirability of a cultivation of the ear and the organs of speech, and, finally, I have offered some suggestions of a practical nature. I am aware that my treatment of none of these topics has been exhaustive. This of course was impossible in the limited time at my disposal, even if desirable on other grounds. My paper will not have failed of its object if it proves suggestive in a practical way to the teachers of modern languages.