

special interest lies with the course in literature. The entrance curriculum for '97, includes twenty short poems, nine of which are set apart for memorizing, while of the remainder the pupil is instructed to commit to memory any of the finer passages. These, with six fragmentary prose selections, constitute the prescribed texts with which the pupil is expected to familiarize himself, and which he is to strive to intelligently comprehend. The young student is also, so we are told, expected to have some knowledge of each of the twenty-four authors whose work is here represented. For the boy or girl about to enter upon a commercial or industrial pursuit the course certainly is broad enough; whether it is thorough enough or practical enough is not quite so apparent.

There is no prose literature for P. S. Leaving; the course in poetical literature comprises one poem each from Herrick, Gray, Wordsworth, Southey, Shelley, Hood, Macaulay, Longfellow, and two poems each from Moore and Tennyson.

Besides the minute analysis of the prescribed texts the teacher always endeavors to interest the pupils in the various authors read,— in the ten for P. S. Leaving, or the twenty-four for H. S. Entrance. He incidentally refers to other poems or sketches by the same writers. Indeed in his enthusiasm he oftentimes snatches odd moments to read some of these to his class. And he strives to awaken an interest in the writers themselves by vivid biographical sketches enlivened by numerous anecdotes. It is true only the barest outline of all this is obligatory for examination; but somehow he feels that it is in the highest degree necessary if he is to foster in his pupils anything at all approaching a love of literature. But he finds that he can do very little of this supplementary

work without seriously encroaching on the time of the actual work for examination. And in foregoing indulgence in these outside studies he is always sensible that he is missing the highest aim in the teaching of literature. For let us not forget that there are two aims to be kept in view in the teaching of literature in public schools: the child must be so trained that he may (1) acquire a taste for reading, and (2) learn to bend his energies to the understanding of an author. These two aims are not mutually exclusive; and if the educator seek to attain the second in such fashion that the first be lost sight of, he is ignoring the best interests of the pupil. For indeed the ultimate criterion of all literary study, in public schools at any rate, is whether the pupil is interested in reading. But it is patent to everyone that if the first aim be held steadily in view and honestly pursued, that the second shall be accomplished as a matter of course.

Does the present course tend to cultivate a taste for reading? That is the question with which we are primarily concerned. Will minute analysis of "Flow Gently, Sweet Afton" awaken a love of the poetry of Burns? Is it possible that critical study of "The Lord of Burleigh" should arouse lasting interest in Tennyson? For it is in just this arousing of an interest in special authors that the cultivation of a love of reading consists. And it is precisely this interest in special authors that the present course notoriously fails to arouse. However commendable in itself the incidental training may be, and we do not question that it is so, one cannot but think that the same training should be, and very easily might be perfectly consonant with the transcendently important aim—the awakening of an interest in reading.