

as the poet of the Reformation and the master of the most sublime rhythms in the language; *Dryden* as the herald of the new and 'popular' style perfected by *Pope*; *Swift* as the most powerful intellect of his time; *Johnson* as the representative of the massive common-sense of his country, ponderously expressed; *Goldsmith* as the most charming writer of his generation; *Burke* as the most brilliant rhetorician that the modern world has ever seen; *Cowper* as the transition and the link between the age of *Pope* and the nineteenth century; *Wordsworth* as the dawn and bright shining of the noon-day of English literature; while *Byron*, *Scott*, *Tennyson* and *Longfellow* should be studied as representative poets of this century; and *Thackeray*, *Scott*, *Hans Andersen*, and *Charles Kingsley*, as its most enchanting story-tellers.

It is of course quite plain that all the works of these writers cannot be read during any ordinary school and college course. A selection must be made; but here again common repute comes to our aid and maps out the course. I shall not attempt any enumeration of the works which I think should be read, nor of the order in which they should be taken up. These are mere matters of detail and could easily be disposed of. On the latter point, however, I might remark that while the order should, as a general rule, be from the simple story to the more complex forms of literature, age and previous education would be considerations which would largely determine the course as a whole. The actual study might well be begun at ten or eleven years of age, and be carried on systematically throughout the whole of the school and university course. I have no patience with the policy which has supplied the higher forms of our public schools and the lower forms of our secondary schools with literature of the scrap-book char-

acter. A finished whole should be studied, not an extract. As well seek to train a sculptor by making him view only the nose or great toe of the *Venus de Milo*, as try to make a lover of literature by compelling a student to read nothing but scraps. For beginners the wholes may well be very simple ones, such as some of *Hans Andersen's* fairy-tales, or *Scott's* or *Kingsley's* historical novels; but they should be literary units, and studied as such.

HOW SHOULD THE WORKS BE READ?—This brings us to another topic of my paper, viz.: how should the works of the various authors be read and studied? The first thing to be done is to place ourselves in possession of the author's thoughts. We must try to understand and appreciate his meaning. We must strive to see the subject as he sees it. We must view it as a whole, and in all its parts from the author's point of view. This involves, of course, the careful study of the form in which he has expressed himself, and implies a knowledge of the meaning and uses of words, synonyms, proper names, historical points, figurative language, sentence and paragraph structure, and metrical form; but all these should be touched on in literature only in so far as they affect or have a bearing on a comprehension of the author's meaning.

The second thing to be done is to connect the appearance and work of a writer with the social condition and political events of the age in which he lived, and to show—as far as this can be done to young or advanced students—how these influenced the character and feelings of the writer and were reflected in his works. This should not be done by formal instruction, but should be assigned to the student as problems which he would be expected to solve, just as a mathematician or scientist would assign analogous problems in their departments.