

paper. Their knives are dull and they lack the skill to make a neat job of it. The opportunity for self-correction is an important feature of such an exercise. Close scrutiny of one's own work is as good as more writing. In fact, the best thing to do with a faulty paper is to hand it back for the writer to correct. Sometimes he cannot find the error at first, and hints that you are mistaken. Then it grows interesting, and other youthful eyes join in the search. A good laugh makes that particular blunder memorable to a whole class. For attaining the most rudimentary correctness in writing English, short exercises are not only as good as long ones, they are better. What is wanted is close attention confined to a small field of operations. Pupils often have too much fluency in writing—that is, in writing with disregard of form. In this, as in so many matters of pedagogy, the Hesiodic ‘the half is more than the whole’ is applicable.

The composition teacher has natural enemies enough in the other teachers without making enemies of his pupils. These at least must co-operate with him, and absolutely must be kept out of the slough of apathy. The other teachers will be seen examining in all departments by means of written papers. They will be seen arranging for extra time, that their pupils may write as much as possible, and will give provocation for hurry by setting questions that require for their answering all the writing that can be done at a rapid rate of work. These conditions are unfavourable to the formation of good habits in English. The English teacher can only look on. *Qu'y faire?* What would the Latin teacher say if all other teachers required answers in Latin, and took no note, or but small note, of the kind of Latin in which they came? The simple fact is that pupils write Eng-

lish for all their teachers. The great bulk of what is thus written cannot be read by the English teacher at all. The teachers for whom it is written rarely read it with an eye to English. If through any dreadful haze of language the correct chemistry or history can be discerned dimly shining through, the teacher of chemistry or history is content. “What recks it then? What need they? They are sped.”

These considerations suggest that either all teachers should co-operate with the teacher of English by noting and bringing within the school discipline the faults of their pupils in writing on their respective subjects, or that the functions of the English teacher should be merged in all the other departments. In the latter case each teacher would be a teacher of his department *and* a teacher of English. It is well perhaps to have some one peculiarly and specially interested in pupils' writing; yet a great gain would be secured for the schools if all the teachers should be expected to feel a pride, not only in answers technically correct as to matter, but also correct and beautiful as to expression. This contention of this paper has been, that indifference in the pupil as to his English must be overcome by the visible earnestness and unceasing vigilance of the teacher; that written compositions, in the case especially of the younger high school pupils, should be short, intense in quality, and immediately read and commented on; that the pupils should always know to a certainty that their work is to be read with close scrutiny; that pupils should be habituated to refer to dictionaries for information, to become sure that they are right, and never trust to luck; that ignorance of the fundamentals of good writing is in a high school pupil intolerable.—*The Academy*.