

position would be based on these books. This plan, though not without strong arguments in its favor, was found to have in practice one very serious drawback. The sub-examiners reported, we understand, that it had evidently become the practice in a number of schools to coach the candidates carefully on certain probable subjects (based on the prose selections), and in consequence the candidates in very many cases merely reproduced from memory as faithfully as they could the results of this coaching. Whether for this reason or for others the Senate has reverted to the old time custom of leaving the selection of subjects wholly to the examiner, merely requiring that candidates shall be allowed a choice of several, so that the teacher will be left to himself in his choice as well as his treatment of subjects.

Under these altered conditions, English masters will, naturally, be on the lookout for, and ready to welcome, any new work on the art of teaching composition which seems likely in any way to lighten their labor and to increase the interest of their pupils on the subject.

Such a work undoubtedly is that* prepared by Professor Alexander of University College and Mr. M. F. Libby, one of our best known and most successful English Masters, and issued some months ago by the Copp, Clark Co., to whom we here tender our apologies for not having sooner spoken of it at length. No doubt, many masters have already made more or less use of it in their teaching, and do not need to be told of its merits; but for the information of others of

our readers a few words regarding its plan and contents may not be amiss.

The book is based on the theory that (as stated in the Introduction) "imitation is the natural method in every art," and "all literary skill is based on imitation." To write a composition, therefore, a student must, consciously or unconsciously, have before him a model. Since, then, he must imitate something, it is the teacher's business to supply him with suitable models of different styles of composition graded to suit the different stages of his progress, and to help him to analyse these models and see the characteristics and merits of each.

The basal theory has determined the plan of the book, which by the way is an attractive looking volume of about five hundred pages. First come models carefully selected, graded more or less in length and difficulty and arranged in three parts—Narration, Description and Exposition. Then follows an examination of the models, with criticisms and suggestive questions, the object being to train the student to examine passages for himself; and last of all comes a list of practice subjects to be treated after the manner of the models.

Following the three parts above mentioned is a very useful Appendix of nearly fifty pages, containing important practical rules, cautions and examples in regard to punctuation, grammar, arrangement and paragraphing.

While the book is primarily intended to assist in teaching composition, yet from the number, variety and excellence of the models and from the useful hints, criticisms and questions following these, it will serve the purpose of the rhetoric classes also, and will thus save teachers much labor. Whether it would be practicable or advisable to use it as a class book in the lower forms of High Schools and Collegiate Institutes is perhaps open

* *Composition from Models*: For use in Schools and Colleges, by W. J. Alexander, Ph.D., Professor of English in University College, Toronto, and M. F. Libby, B.A., English Master in Parkdale Collegiate Institute, Toronto. The Copp, Clark Co., Ltd.