

1. Practice should be incessant, the student writing during his whole preparatory course at least one essay a week.

2. Errors or defects should never be specifically pointed out by the teacher. The criticisms should be strictly impersonal, though based on defects observed in the essays, and each student should be permitted to detect his own errors.

3. Criticism of defects should always be made part of the public class work, only a few being selected for discussion at any one lesson, and these the most objectionable.

4. No correction should be made without such a reason being given as will preclude all further questioning on the point.

5. After criticism, and in the light of it, the essays should be re-written, the second writing being far more valuable for training than the first.

6. All essays should be carefully preserved, partly as a basis for the comparative method of dealing with formal defects, partly as a means of enabling both teacher and student to determine the latter's rate of progress.

If I am told that there is no time for such a course of discipline, my answer is that if this is the only way to secure habitual correctness of expression, then time must be found for it. It has another recommendation, namely, that a student trained in this way is placed in possession of a method of self-discipline what he can practice with profit all his life. The exercise of composition is to be his regular professional work, and his rate of development will depend on his ability to criticise on sound principles his own imperfect attempts. He will never learn to write well by trying to write according to rules. The work of composition would be intolerable if one had his attention constantly directed to the form, and away from the matter of his discourse; and the reading or hearing of discourses so prepared would be equally intolerable. Until correctness becomes habitual, anything like perfection can be reached only by making in work already produced such emendations as critical judgment dictates. This has been in all ages the method of great authors. It was the method of Demosthenes, of Gibbon, of Macaulay. It has been practiced by writers of verse as well as by writers of prose. Milton's manuscript is so overloaded with interlineations and corrections as to be almost illegible, and Prof. Dowden, speaking of