

the value of literature for Intellectual Development ; and, as connected with all these, the idea of Unity in Literature. Without considering at present the application of this idea in the study of poetry,* let us see how it works in prose literature as the basis of the principle, from *whole to part and vice versa*—a principle which is essential in *all* rational method.

In every piece of prose composition worthy to be called literature, there is a logical sequence, an orderly movement of ideas towards a definite end.

In the case of a strong and cultured mind working under a clear and ever present conception of its purpose, this movement of ideas seems to be spontaneous—a self-movement of constantly increasing clearness and force. This logical sequence of ideas is determined by the discriminating and unifying action of the intellect upon the material presented by association. Grasping clearly and firmly the central thought of his purpose, the author proceeds from whole to part, from the leading thought to the main divisions, the sub-divisions, and so on, to the primary unity, the single thought as expressed in the sentence ; and completes his thinking by *explicitly* relating thoughts and groups of thoughts, finally welding all the parts into a more perfect whole. This fact suggests at once the rational method to be followed in the study of a piece of *literature*. The genesis of thought and expression in the student's mind will follow the genesis of thought and expression in the author's mind. Just as the author proceeds from a whole through related unities to the ultimate unity, and returns through all the related parts to the perfect whole, so the learner thinks the author's thoughts after the manner of the author—

passes from larger unity to smaller, and consciously returns through the series of parts with increased unifying power to a rich and well defined whole.

To exemplify the idea thus briefly set forth, let us take what all our readers are familiar with, Huxley's famous exposition of a "Liberal Education"—p. 412, High School Reader—a unity well chosen from a larger whole, and worth the student's attention alike for its matter and its style. If we were to follow the plan which used to prevail, and which, judging from some recent books and articles on method, is not yet altogether obsolete, we should first have the student read the extract, and then immediately charge upon him with a mob of questions beginning with "suppose" and ending with "interpreter." But the idea of unity in literature and the law of unity of attention suggest what at least bears some resemblance to a more rational method.

Upon attentively reading the extract, there will be found little difficulty in grouping the thoughts into four main divisions—or three, if one of these is considered to include two parts. The *first* division, the introduction, paragraphs 1-4, treats of the nature and necessity of natural education ; the *second*, paragraphs 5-8, develops chiefly by two suppositions and an application, the principal thought of the introduction ; the *third*, paragraphs 9-10, briefly shows the nature and necessity of artificial education ; the *fourth*, paragraphs 11-12, gives the grand conclusion, the famous definition of a liberal education. Treating the first part in a somewhat similar way, we find that it includes as already intimated, four paragraphs, the first and second constituting a startling metaphor, the third a mitigation of this, and the fourth a partial definition of education, *i.e.* a definition of *natural* education.

*See M. F. Libby's *Studies in Poetry*—A book abounding in good suggestions.