

to confess, what they have been doing. This gives occasion for censuring bad choices; and such occasions are indispensable to furnish reaction points and grounds for reproof. Or let pupils in turn open the recitation by reading choice bits of prose or verse, and then either let the reader tell, or require the class to tell, what writer each passage is from. Such exercises furnish opportunity for correcting the crudities of juvenile taste. This correction is best administered by the mere act of dwelling solely on the good selections. Condemnatory language may awaken ill will. Your preferences had better be seen and surmised than heard uttered in censorious terms.

By mingling judiciously the cursory and the stataric methods is possible to get over large areas of literature. Plays of Shakespeare reserved for stataric treatment should be chosen from the following:—Hamlet, Macbeth, Julius Cæsar, The Merchant, The Tempest, As You Like It, The Midsummer Night's Dream, Henry VIII. For the oldest pupils this list may be extended to include Lear and Othello, and any other of the greater plays. Whatever plays are not read in the slow way may be studied in the cursory method, exception being made, of course, of such plays as, by the nature of their plots, dwell throughout on themes repugnant to modern tastes. However rapidly we go through a play, some passages must be read aloud in the class, with all care for the elocution, for the dramatic expression, for the due observance of the verse. Some passages must be committed to memory. Some scenes must be distributed to pupils for acting. But much must be left unpronounced, and had better be. The course of the plot can easily be told. The Henry Irving Shakespeare suggests what large excisions can be made without mutilating the story.

In Milton, after the minor poems and two books of *Paradise Lost* have been read statarically, the rest of the poetical works can be read cursorily, at the rate of a book per lesson. It is easy to make sure that the work is done, and that the main difficulties are cleared away. Every passage specially noteworthy for any literary quality can be taken in hand for special consideration. I would certainly leave no part of Milton's verse unread, and on certain parts I would linger long.

We can get a good many Spectators read if we do not insist on having them all read aloud. The Rape of the Lock is worth one lesson: the Essay on Criticism is worth several if we can get the time. Wordsworth's Sonnet, "Scorn Not the Sonnet" is enough for a lesson. The rest of Wordsworth must be taken generously and left for the absorptive powers of nature to dispose of. It cannot profitably be much talked about. In literature as in religion there are the duties and the rites of the closet. To understand Wordsworth requires a certain habit of self communion which youth cannot possibly have acquired. The Deserted Village and the Traveller must be read at once; the Task, a book at least at a time; and Rasselas cannot be dwelt on. The Idylls of the King must be treated by mixed stataric and cursory methods. Such a morsel of perfection as the Lady of Shalott it were wicked to treat as if it were commonplace. To lecture on the meaning of such a poem is futile. A piece of verse whose distinction is its supreme beauty is not to be racked for its meaning, but rather to be enjoyed as a work of art: it is not to be mastered, like a lesson, but to be surrendered to as a commanding influence. In such case the teacher's concern is to further and encourage the unskeptical attitude of admiration. Hence a beautiful poem had better be