

difficult, but none the less indispensable, to make such an ancient idiom as Greek or Latin alive to the student as far as possible in the same way and to the same extent as may be done with, say, French and German. The teacher of any sort of language must soon realize in his experience how dull and unprofitable is all that falls short of Prof. Goodwin's ideal.

The average pupil will succeed in divorcing to a degree which is almost incredible the language proper from the elements of it which he is studying in his grammar and delectus. Confront the pupil reared on a diet of formal grammar and translation with some simple expression like, "*Vidistine librum meum?*" or "*Avez-vous vu mon livre?*" even after he is sound on each word as to theory, even after he has translated dozens of similar expressions into English, and you may be not a little taken aback at the blank look which will overspread his features. Yet to be able to understand such expressions, and to be able to use them to express thought is really to *know* the language to that extent. It is not denied that a great deal of what the natural scientists call "dead work" must be done, hard and uninteresting in its way. I do not advocate the teaching of language in schools by any unconscious or parrot-like method; principles must be mastered, and details of inflection and grammar must be committed to memory, but that is only part of the work.

It is neither a new nor a brilliant observation that any literary study of a language which aims at less than expressing the thought of the student in it, or which achieves less than an ability to do so proportionate to the effort expended, is study misdirected just in so much as these objects are not attained. It might be objected that such a system would

leave out of account a study of the masterpieces of literature. By no means. It includes them, insisting only on the fact that to comprehend and appreciate them fully the reader must first know a great deal of the language. You cannot appreciate Shakespeare without first knowing English, nor can you appreciate Molière without knowing French. Both these authors may be made a means of inculcating English and French, but this is a subordinate use. If you are to enjoy their literature as such, you must first have thought and uttered and heard a great deal of English and of French.

The object of this paper is, however, not a full discussion of the general principle, but rather to suggest in a brief manner, and without any attempt at an exhaustive treatment, the place and value of some of the various class-room exercises as contributing to the definite aim of acquiring French as a language, and not as an exercise in analysis or a means of deciphering into English the thoughts of French literature.

There is no doubt that the prospects of success of many a promising pupil have been blighted by the method of arrangement of the ordinary French grammar, and by the conscientious belief of the teacher that it is a matter of duty to go through with it straight from cover to cover. When a year has been passed in the minute details of article, noun and adjective, and the pupil finally arrives at the verb, without which he cannot express consecutive thought, his ardour is apt to be somewhat cooled. This is wrong. The verb is of great difficulty in any language, but it is of corresponding importance. It is, so to speak, the bone and sinew of the language, its framework and strength. With the verb and pronoun mastered, the other parts of the sentence will fall into line very much