

even as a school study, composition is, in its essence, not correctional and not analytic. Composition is a creative art. Even in the most rudimentary stages, it is a creative process, seeking after the form and expression of thought. And it is a developing art, passing through many stages, from the making of the simple sentence to the creation of the finest oration or poem.

The study of composition must aim to develop in the pupil the power to express his thought freely and fully in speaking and in writing. This power comes from the perfecting of many processes, each of which must receive attention if facility in expression is to be attained. Composition involves thought ; it is conditioned by the intellectual life and power of the pupil ; its practice involves the development of the intellectual powers by observation and reflection. Composition involves the acquiring of vocabulary, which is really the acquiring of new concepts. Composition involves some mastery of the phrasing and of the construction and articulation of the sentence peculiar to our language. Thought has found peculiar forms of expression according to its nature, and our literature and daily speech have stored up these forms in phrase and sentence and paragraph, which must be made the possession of anyone who would write or speak well. In its higher stages composition involves a high sense for form, feeling, proportion, beauty, by which it becomes a fine art. These considerations determine any true method of teaching the art.

In teaching composition we first deal with **thought**—what we think determines what we say and how we say it. The material of composition must fall therefore