

may easily happen, especially with the young, that just the opposite effect may be produced,—a distaste for poetry and artistic prose.

Let us make our assertions more definite; Rhetoric is an excellent study in as far as it deals with purely intellectual matters,—in as far as it carries out for the paragraph, the chapter, the whole discourse what analysis does for the sentence—shows that there ought to be in these too, unity, logical structure and method. But beyond this, for the Primary Examination at least, Rhetoric ought not to be carried. When it deals with the æsthetic qualities of style, it treats of matters wherein the students experience provides him with very meagre material. For more advanced students, it is advantageous to learn some rhetorical terms, and to have the sources of palpable literary effects brought to their attention. But the dragging of paragraph after paragraph through the rhetorical mill in order to extract their æsthetic qualities is not a fruitful exercise at any stage. My own experience of students so trained is that extremely little effect is thus produced in the power of discerning literary excellence, and in awakening the sense of style. But such training does have an outcome in giving a false sense of knowledge, and in blinding the student as to his obtuseness to literary effects. The sense of style is developed by comparative study, by the perception of the differences between individual writers—a sort of work which belongs to the maturest years of student life.

Again in regard to Poetical Literature, it is quite proper that the class should be shown that there is some general conception at the basis of a poem, that by judicious questioning they should be led to this conception and to the preception of the relation of the parts to the whole, and that they should be made to feel by every

means at the command of the teacher how much there is in poetry. A judicious teacher will recognize, however, that there may be too much of this analysis. Our present system seems to encourage the teacher to go through the process of minute literary investigation in the case of every poem presented, and to encourage the student to commit to memory the results of these investigations—while the aim of all this, the love for reading, is neglected, or even defeated.

What I should propose is, that for matriculation, prose and poetical selections which naturally have some attraction for normal boys and girls should be prescribed, and that the students encouraged to read these by what methods the teacher deems fitting, but that only a limited time should be spent in putting these selections through rhetorical and other mills. At the Departmental Examinations, the questions in as far as they bear on the prescribed selections should test mainly whether the student is familiar with the work,—whether he has read it with diligence and intelligence. The object is to ensure his having made use of the means prescribed for the development of literary taste. To test whether the means have been successful is in literature, a very different and always a very difficult matter, especially at this early stage of the study. I doubt, whether the application of such tests and the conscious preparation for them, are very wholesome or beneficial for the beginner. Further questions may properly be set to discern the student's power of comprehending a passage as a whole, of seeing the general drift, the relation of the parts and so forth. But such questions ought to be based, not on the prescribed selections, but only on "Sight Work"—and care should be taken that these "Sight" passages should