

The English Language.

"Our Work in English—Of What Should It Consist?"

Paper Read at Provincial Teachers' Institute by Agnes Deans Cameron.

In the old Norse myth, Thor, in his fight with the giants, finds himself confronted by a cat, which he is told to lift. He bends over, grasps the animal by the back and begins to raise her. She firmly holds on by the ground; the higher Thor lifts, the more the cat stretches. Thor standing erect, she is still firmly rooted. "Marvel not," said Utgard's giant, "that you are unable to lift the cat—it is Jormungandth herself, the great serpent that binds the world."

This story came very forcibly to my mind when, having in a weak moment yielded to the voice of the charmer, the president of the Institute, that I should prepare a paper on English. I took home to read carefully the subject as he placed it in my hands. "Our Work in English. Of what should it consist? How can it be made educative and interesting?"

De Quincy divided all literature into two classes, that which treats of the great sciences; and the literature of power, that which makes and develops character.

When you buy a ticket at a railroad station, you do not say to the clerk that you want to travel in a certain direction; you specify a place. It is fitting that at the outset, we should have a clear idea of the goal we would reach. Why do we teach English in our schools? What is our ultimate aim? That a child may use his mother-tongue fluently and with grace? That he may make a fortune out of his living? That he may derive intellectual and aesthetic enjoyment from the rich stores of English thought? These at best are way-stations. The goals set before us are beyond all these. We teach English that by it: (1) The student is made acquainted with duty. (2) At the same time the emotional side of his mind is developed; that duty shall be made attractive. In a word, that he may know truth and desire it. The study of English strikes at the roots of things. We start out gaily pursuing man's ideas to find ourselves at last with God.

Johnson, in a preface to his dictionary, says: "I am not so lost in lexicography as to forget that words are the daughters of earth and that byrons are the sons of heaven. But Byron contends, 'Words are things and a small drop of ink, falling like dew upon a thought produces that which makes thousands perhaps millions, think.'"

This paper may be attacked on the ground that it is not practical enough. It can at best be only suggestive. I can't presume to lay down hard and fast rules for the classroom teaching of reading, grammar, spelling and composition. I am only suggesting the wisdom of getting a clear idea of the goal sought; the folly of teaching these as separate subjects, as loose ends.

I would ask you to consider with me: (1) The relative importance of language study—failure here means a most fatal shortcoming in education. (2) The development under English, with the definite aims to be reached in each, and the methods of realizing these aims.

The subjects of study in our common schools naturally arrange themselves into three divisions: (1) Arithmetic, a preparation for mathematics or the exact sciences. (2) What the Germans call "real studies," that is, physiology, geography, nature lessons—these teach the individual and his surroundings. (3) English, including reading, grammar, composition, literature, and with these last, yet foremost, the connecting link between "real studies" and English—proper—history, which has been aptly defined as "the message which all mankind delivers to every man." In old days the tendency was to make classics the one thing needful—if a boy's Latin and Greek were respectable, the rest of his education might look after itself.

"All the other graces would follow in their proper places." Then classical studies began to drop out of the public school course, and the great backbone of class-work, and the test of every grading examination was arithmetic. I use the past tense advisedly, for I feel that there is in the air, without knowing why it is so, a strong feeling which says: "Arithmetic has truly a two-fold value; it trains to definite and logical methods of thought, it prepares for practical business life—but necessary and useful as the study of arithmetic is, it makes but a small factor in true education." The object of life is not to get a living. We must listen to the still small voice which cries from the deep heart of humanity itself, "Teach us how to live."

Not in the mathematics, not in the "real studies," do we find the humanities. These we seek in the rich literature of our mother-tongue—it is to this inheritance that the study of English should lead the pupil. He must realize that, born into an English-speaking nation, he is the heir to all the ages of written English thought. It is no dry bones of the valley that we have to offer him. English literature is the amplest, most various and most splendid literature which the world has seen; and it is enough to say of the English language that it is the language of the literature. English is the native tongue of nations which are pre-eminent by force of character, enterprise and wealth, a people whose political and social institutions have a higher moral interest and greater promise than any which mankind has hitherto evolved. And to the original creations of English genius we add translations into English of every masterpiece of other literatures, sacred and profane.

Has English the foremost place on our school programmes? By no means; at best only a place subordinate to mathematics. And yet, without degrading the value of other school subjects, all will admit that one man may have an excellent knowledge of mathematics, geography and physiology, and yet, without a mastery of language he will and must rank as illiterate; another, with doubtful ability to add correctly, will be known as widely cultivated and scholarly. Shakespeare's geography was limited, and more than shaky. No amount of other knowledge will excuse incorrect spelling, grammatical slips, mispronunciation, false accent, vulgarities of expression; in the man who would rank as educated, these are unpardonable sins. I contend that a knowledge of the English language (and by this I mean a familiar understanding, knowledge and not a nodding acquaintance) must form the base of an English education. This, rather than arithmetic or geography or physiology, should receive our main efforts. This must be well done, whatever else is omitted or partially done.

As we come to the second head: The subjects include under "English" with the definite aims to be reached in each, and the methods of realizing these aims. The simple classification here would be: (1) Words; (2) Sentences. But the names by common consent used are spelling, reading, grammar, composition.

(1) Spelling. The definite aim here is to be able to spell readily all words in common use and to have gained the habit of looking attentively at all new ones. How are we to escape the Scylla of mispronunciation and the Charybdis of mis-spelling? How often one hears the plaint, "I am naturally a poor speller." The cure? The eyes and the ears must both be trained. Let the young pupil copy every day from the printed page. Insist upon a transcript, that is an exact copy in every word and letter—let it not vary from the original by a misplaced comma. There is no better exercise for those careless pupils that we meet in every grade, than to have them when you have succeeded in teaching these to tell the exact truth in their copy—it is a training equally moral and literary. This habit of verbatim transcribing should be supplemented by daily class and individual exercise in clear enunciation. The poor speller is the slow reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

Reading. By reading I mean the obtaining of thought from the printed page. The aim is to make the child a thoughtful reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

best only a place subordinate to mathematics. And yet, without degrading the value of other school subjects, all will admit that one man may have an excellent knowledge of mathematics, geography and physiology, and yet, without a mastery of language he will and must rank as illiterate; another, with doubtful ability to add correctly, will be known as widely cultivated and scholarly. Shakespeare's geography was limited, and more than shaky. No amount of other knowledge will excuse incorrect spelling, grammatical slips, mispronunciation, false accent, vulgarities of expression; in the man who would rank as educated, these are unpardonable sins. I contend that a knowledge of the English language (and by this I mean a familiar understanding, knowledge and not a nodding acquaintance) must form the base of an English education. This, rather than arithmetic or geography or physiology, should receive our main efforts. This must be well done, whatever else is omitted or partially done.

As we come to the second head: The subjects include under "English" with the definite aims to be reached in each, and the methods of realizing these aims. The simple classification here would be: (1) Words; (2) Sentences. But the names by common consent used are spelling, reading, grammar, composition.

(1) Spelling. The definite aim here is to be able to spell readily all words in common use and to have gained the habit of looking attentively at all new ones. How are we to escape the Scylla of mispronunciation and the Charybdis of mis-spelling? How often one hears the plaint, "I am naturally a poor speller." The cure? The eyes and the ears must both be trained. Let the young pupil copy every day from the printed page. Insist upon a transcript, that is an exact copy in every word and letter—let it not vary from the original by a misplaced comma. There is no better exercise for those careless pupils that we meet in every grade, than to have them when you have succeeded in teaching these to tell the exact truth in their copy—it is a training equally moral and literary. This habit of verbatim transcribing should be supplemented by daily class and individual exercise in clear enunciation. The poor speller is the slow reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

Reading. By reading I mean the obtaining of thought from the printed page. The aim is to make the child a thoughtful reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

Reading. By reading I mean the obtaining of thought from the printed page. The aim is to make the child a thoughtful reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

Reading. By reading I mean the obtaining of thought from the printed page. The aim is to make the child a thoughtful reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

Reading. By reading I mean the obtaining of thought from the printed page. The aim is to make the child a thoughtful reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

Reading. By reading I mean the obtaining of thought from the printed page. The aim is to make the child a thoughtful reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

Reading. By reading I mean the obtaining of thought from the printed page. The aim is to make the child a thoughtful reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

Reading. By reading I mean the obtaining of thought from the printed page. The aim is to make the child a thoughtful reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

Reading. By reading I mean the obtaining of thought from the printed page. The aim is to make the child a thoughtful reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

Reading. By reading I mean the obtaining of thought from the printed page. The aim is to make the child a thoughtful reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

Reading. By reading I mean the obtaining of thought from the printed page. The aim is to make the child a thoughtful reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

Reading. By reading I mean the obtaining of thought from the printed page. The aim is to make the child a thoughtful reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

Reading. By reading I mean the obtaining of thought from the printed page. The aim is to make the child a thoughtful reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

Reading. By reading I mean the obtaining of thought from the printed page. The aim is to make the child a thoughtful reader. To one whose whole life has been spent in the school room it is appalling to think of the accumulated time given to certain subjects. By a rough calculation I should think that if all the hours I have given to the teaching of spelling in my days were to be strung together they would make four whole years of three hundred and sixty-five days of twenty-four hours each, a penitentiary hard-labor sentence of respectable length! But, I have never yet encountered a case of bad spelling that would not yield to the transcribing and enunciation exercises—and the speller who learned how to spell, learned something else, too, of deeper benefit; and so did I, for it was not a rapid cure and patience had to have her part.

duty, but to guide the erring pupil." We can never hope to remove all blemishes from a child's English—what we obtained would be splendidly null, a purely negative result. We want the student of English as soon as possible to get a view of the landscape from the mountain top, not to dissipate his energies altogether in clearing away the brambles on the road up the hill. In my own school-days grammar was presented to us as a queer study. From the pages of Lennie and Morel, Smith and Swinton we got a store of excellent definitions, we corrected page upon page of false syntax, which Lennie, with questionable taste granted to our mothers' strong disapproval, drew largely from the Scottish dialect and from the Bible, we learned long alphabetical lists of prepositions and we waded knee-deep in "thou mightest, couldst, wouldst, and shouldst have loved." But in spite of the imperative "Love or love thou or be thou loved," grammar, somehow, did not get the deserved stronghold in our affections. After much thought, I am convinced that the great fault in the teaching of grammar is the needless list-making. Grammar teaches the correct form of expression, but this form is a tool, and like all other tools, valueless until put into use. How many children who can gibberish give you set rule and full declension are unable to hold their own when put into use what they have learned. We teach forms instead of thoughts, words instead of ideas. Here, as elsewhere in our course, we attempt too much; we need less ambition and more thoroughness; less of the "what" and more of the "why." We must not be misled to do away with all formal parsing and analysis? No, but I would not teach parsing and analysis by sentences culled from current literature chiefly for their crookedness. It is a question, though, of the utility of this. What is the real use of analysis? Of parsing? Ask the average class of ten or twelve years who they learn these subjects, and not one in fifty honestly has the faintest idea. They have been taught so-called grammar lessons by itself, a separate limb torn off from the body corporate of English. All this is wrong. In the form of isolated members, dead and mutilated, formal parsing and analysis have no excuse for their existence; they are simple questions of parsing of help, and as such we welcome them. Let us cry a halt, take time and let the reasoning faculties draw the breath of life. In the early reading and composition exercises, bearing in mind our two-fold object, let us make the child's own analysis a help. The questions: "What is the subject of the sentence?" "What is said about the subject?" are inevitable. They naturally suggest themselves and are their own excuse for being asked, and just as simple a limited extent of analysis is a help. The questions: "What is the subject of the sentence?" "What is said about the subject?" are inevitable. They naturally suggest themselves and are their own excuse for being asked, and just as simple a limited extent of analysis is a help.

duty, but to guide the erring pupil." We can never hope to remove all blemishes from a child's English—what we obtained would be splendidly null, a purely negative result. We want the student of English as soon as possible to get a view of the landscape from the mountain top, not to dissipate his energies altogether in clearing away the brambles on the road up the hill. In my own school-days grammar was presented to us as a queer study. From the pages of Lennie and Morel, Smith and Swinton we got a store of excellent definitions, we corrected page upon page of false syntax, which Lennie, with questionable taste granted to our mothers' strong disapproval, drew largely from the Scottish dialect and from the Bible, we learned long alphabetical lists of prepositions and we waded knee-deep in "thou mightest, couldst, wouldst, and shouldst have loved." But in spite of the imperative "Love or love thou or be thou loved," grammar, somehow, did not get the deserved stronghold in our affections. After much thought, I am convinced that the great fault in the teaching of grammar is the needless list-making. Grammar teaches the correct form of expression, but this form is a tool, and like all other tools, valueless until put into use. How many children who can gibberish give you set rule and full declension are unable to hold their own when put into use what they have learned. We teach forms instead of thoughts, words instead of ideas. Here, as elsewhere in our course, we attempt too much; we need less ambition and more thoroughness; less of the "what" and more of the "why." We must not be misled to do away with all formal parsing and analysis? No, but I would not teach parsing and analysis by sentences culled from current literature chiefly for their crookedness. It is a question, though, of the utility of this. What is the real use of analysis? Of parsing? Ask the average class of ten or twelve years who they learn these subjects, and not one in fifty honestly has the faintest idea. They have been taught so-called grammar lessons by itself, a separate limb torn off from the body corporate of English. All this is wrong. In the form of isolated members, dead and mutilated, formal parsing and analysis have no excuse for their existence; they are simple questions of parsing of help, and as such we welcome them. Let us cry a halt, take time and let the reasoning faculties draw the breath of life. In the early reading and composition exercises, bearing in mind our two-fold object, let us make the child's own analysis a help. The questions: "What is the subject of the sentence?" "What is said about the subject?" are inevitable. They naturally suggest themselves and are their own excuse for being asked, and just as simple a limited extent of analysis is a help.

duty, but to guide the erring pupil." We can never hope to remove all blemishes from a child's English—what we obtained would be splendidly null, a purely negative result. We want the student of English as soon as possible to get a view of the landscape from the mountain top, not to dissipate his energies altogether in clearing away the brambles on the road up the hill. In my own school-days grammar was presented to us as a queer study. From the pages of Lennie and Morel, Smith and Swinton we got a store of excellent definitions, we corrected page upon page of false syntax, which Lennie, with questionable taste granted to our mothers' strong disapproval, drew largely from the Scottish dialect and from the Bible, we learned long alphabetical lists of prepositions and we waded knee-deep in "thou mightest, couldst, wouldst, and shouldst have loved." But in spite of the imperative "Love or love thou or be thou loved," grammar, somehow, did not get the deserved stronghold in our affections. After much thought, I am convinced that the great fault in the teaching of grammar is the needless list-making. Grammar teaches the correct form of expression, but this form is a tool, and like all other tools, valueless until put into use. How many children who can gibberish give you set rule and full declension are unable to hold their own when put into use what they have learned. We teach forms instead of thoughts, words instead of ideas. Here, as elsewhere in our course, we attempt too much; we need less ambition and more thoroughness; less of the "what" and more of the "why." We must not be misled to do away with all formal parsing and analysis? No, but I would not teach parsing and analysis by sentences culled from current literature chiefly for their crookedness. It is a question, though, of the utility of this. What is the real use of analysis? Of parsing? Ask the average class of ten or twelve years who they learn these subjects, and not one in fifty honestly has the faintest idea. They have been taught so-called grammar lessons by itself, a separate limb torn off from the body corporate of English. All this is wrong. In the form of isolated members, dead and mutilated, formal parsing and analysis have no excuse for their existence; they are simple questions of parsing of help, and as such we welcome them. Let us cry a halt, take time and let the reasoning faculties draw the breath of life. In the early reading and composition exercises, bearing in mind our two-fold object, let us make the child's own analysis a help. The questions: "What is the subject of the sentence?" "What is said about the subject?" are inevitable. They naturally suggest themselves and are their own excuse for being asked, and just as simple a limited extent of analysis is a help.

duty, but to guide the erring pupil." We can never hope to remove all blemishes from a child's English—what we obtained would be splendidly null, a purely negative result. We want the student of English as soon as possible to get a view of the landscape from the mountain top, not to dissipate his energies altogether in clearing away the brambles on the road up the hill. In my own school-days grammar was presented to us as a queer study. From the pages of Lennie and Morel, Smith and Swinton we got a store of excellent definitions, we corrected page upon page of false syntax, which Lennie, with questionable taste granted to our mothers' strong disapproval, drew largely from the Scottish dialect and from the Bible, we learned long alphabetical lists of prepositions and we waded knee-deep in "thou mightest, couldst, wouldst, and shouldst have loved." But in spite of the imperative "Love or love thou or be thou loved," grammar, somehow, did not get the deserved stronghold in our affections. After much thought, I am convinced that the great fault in the teaching of grammar is the needless list-making. Grammar teaches the correct form of expression, but this form is a tool, and like all other tools, valueless until put into use. How many children who can gibberish give you set rule and full declension are unable to hold their own when put into use what they have learned. We teach forms instead of thoughts, words instead of ideas. Here, as elsewhere in our course, we attempt too much; we need less ambition and more thoroughness; less of the "what" and more of the "why." We must not be misled to do away with all formal parsing and analysis? No, but I would not teach parsing and analysis by sentences culled from current literature chiefly for their crookedness. It is a question, though, of the utility of this. What is the real use of analysis? Of parsing? Ask the average class of ten or twelve years who they learn these subjects, and not one in fifty honestly has the faintest idea. They have been taught so-called grammar lessons by itself, a separate limb torn off from the body corporate of English. All this is wrong. In the form of isolated members, dead and mutilated, formal parsing and analysis have no excuse for their existence; they are simple questions of parsing of help, and as such we welcome them. Let us cry a halt, take time and let the reasoning faculties draw the breath of life. In the early reading and composition exercises, bearing in mind our two-fold object, let us make the child's own analysis a help. The questions: "What is the subject of the sentence?" "What is said about the subject?" are inevitable. They naturally suggest themselves and are their own excuse for being asked, and just as simple a limited extent of analysis is a help.

duty, but to guide the erring pupil." We can never hope to remove all blemishes from a child's English—what we obtained would be splendidly null, a purely negative result. We want the student of English as soon as possible to get a view of the landscape from the mountain top, not to dissipate his energies altogether in clearing away the brambles on the road up the hill. In my own school-days grammar was presented to us as a queer study. From the pages of Lennie and Morel, Smith and Swinton we got a store of excellent definitions, we corrected page upon page of false syntax, which Lennie, with questionable taste granted to our mothers' strong disapproval, drew largely from the Scottish dialect and from the Bible, we learned long alphabetical lists of prepositions and we waded knee-deep in "thou mightest, couldst, wouldst, and shouldst have loved." But in spite of the imperative "Love or love thou or be thou loved," grammar, somehow, did not get the deserved stronghold in our affections. After much thought, I am convinced that the great fault in the teaching of grammar is the needless list-making. Grammar teaches the correct form of expression, but this form is a tool, and like all other tools, valueless until put into use. How many children who can gibberish give you set rule and full declension are unable to hold their own when put into use what they have learned. We teach forms instead of thoughts, words instead of ideas. Here, as elsewhere in our course, we attempt too much; we need less ambition and more thoroughness; less of the "what" and more of the "why." We must not be misled to do away with all formal parsing and analysis? No, but I would not teach parsing and analysis by sentences culled from current literature chiefly for their crookedness. It is a question, though, of the utility of this. What is the real use of analysis? Of parsing? Ask the average class of ten or twelve years who they learn these subjects, and not one in fifty honestly has the faintest idea. They have been taught so-called grammar lessons by itself, a separate limb torn off from the body corporate of English. All this is wrong. In the form of isolated members, dead and mutilated, formal parsing and analysis have no excuse for their existence; they are simple questions of parsing of help, and as such we welcome them. Let us cry a halt, take time and let the reasoning faculties draw the breath of life. In the early reading and composition exercises, bearing in mind our two-fold object, let us make the child's own analysis a help. The questions: "What is the subject of the sentence?" "What is said about the subject?" are inevitable. They naturally suggest themselves and are their own excuse for being asked, and just as simple a limited extent of analysis is a help.

duty, but to guide the erring pupil." We can never hope to remove all blemishes from a child's English—what we obtained would be splendidly null, a purely negative result. We want the student of English as soon as possible to get a view of the landscape from the mountain top, not to dissipate his energies altogether in clearing away the brambles on the road up the hill. In my own school-days grammar was presented to us as a queer study. From the pages of Lennie and Morel, Smith and Swinton we got a store of excellent definitions, we corrected page upon page of false syntax, which Lennie, with questionable taste granted to our mothers' strong disapproval, drew largely from the Scottish dialect and from the Bible, we learned long alphabetical lists of prepositions and we waded knee-deep in "thou mightest, couldst, wouldst, and shouldst have loved." But in spite of the imperative "Love or love thou or be thou loved," grammar, somehow, did not get the deserved stronghold in our affections. After much thought, I am convinced that the great fault in the teaching of grammar is the needless list-making. Grammar teaches the correct form of expression, but this form is a tool, and like all other tools, valueless until put into use. How many children who can gibberish give you set rule and full declension are unable to hold their own when put into use what they have learned. We teach forms instead of thoughts, words instead of ideas. Here, as elsewhere in our course, we attempt too much; we need less ambition and more thoroughness; less of the "what" and more of the "why." We must not be misled to do away with all formal parsing and analysis? No, but I would not teach parsing and analysis by sentences culled from current literature chiefly for their crookedness. It is a question, though, of the utility of this. What is the real use of analysis? Of parsing? Ask the average class of ten or twelve years who they learn these subjects, and not one in fifty honestly has the faintest idea. They have been taught so-called grammar lessons by itself, a separate limb torn off from the body corporate of English. All this is wrong. In the form of isolated members, dead and mutilated, formal parsing and analysis have no excuse for their existence; they are simple questions of parsing of help, and as such we welcome them. Let us cry a halt, take time and let the reasoning faculties draw the breath of life. In the early reading and composition exercises, bearing in mind our two-fold object, let us make the child's own analysis a help. The questions: "What is the subject of the sentence?" "What is said about the subject?" are inevitable. They naturally suggest themselves and are their own excuse for being asked, and just as simple a limited extent of analysis is a help.

duty, but to guide the erring pupil." We can never hope to remove all blemishes from a child's English—what we obtained would be splendidly null, a purely negative result. We want the student of English as soon as possible to get a view of the landscape from the mountain top, not to dissipate his energies altogether in clearing away the brambles on the road up the hill. In my own school-days grammar was presented to us as a queer study. From the pages of Lennie and Morel, Smith and Swinton we got a store of excellent definitions, we corrected page upon page of false syntax, which Lennie, with questionable taste granted to our mothers' strong disapproval, drew largely from the Scottish dialect and from the Bible, we learned long alphabetical lists of prepositions and we waded knee-deep in "thou mightest, couldst, wouldst, and shouldst have loved." But in spite of the imperative "Love or love thou or be thou loved," grammar, somehow, did not get the deserved stronghold in our affections. After much thought, I am convinced that the great fault in the teaching of grammar is the needless list-making. Grammar teaches the correct form of expression, but this form is a tool, and like all other tools, valueless until put into use. How many children who can gibberish give you set rule and full declension are unable to hold their own when put into use what they have learned. We teach forms instead of thoughts, words instead of ideas. Here, as elsewhere in our course, we attempt too much; we need less ambition and more thoroughness; less of the "what" and more of the "why." We must not be misled to do away with all formal parsing and analysis? No, but I would not teach parsing and analysis by sentences culled from current literature chiefly for their crookedness. It is a question, though, of the utility of this. What is the real use of analysis? Of parsing? Ask the average class of ten or twelve years who they learn these subjects, and not one in fifty honestly has the faintest idea. They have been taught so-called grammar lessons by itself, a separate limb torn off from the body corporate of English. All this is wrong. In the form of isolated members, dead and mutilated, formal parsing and analysis have no excuse for their existence; they are simple questions of parsing of help, and as such we welcome them. Let us cry a halt, take time and let the reasoning faculties draw the breath of life. In the early reading and composition exercises, bearing in mind our two-fold object, let us make the child's own analysis a help. The questions: "What is the subject of the sentence?" "What is said about the subject?" are inevitable. They naturally suggest themselves and are their own excuse for being asked, and just as simple a limited extent of analysis is a help.

duty, but to guide the erring pupil." We can never hope to remove all blemishes from a child's English—what we obtained would be splendidly null, a purely negative result. We want the student of English as soon as possible to get a view of the landscape from the mountain top, not to dissipate his energies altogether in clearing away the brambles on the road up the hill. In my own school-days grammar was presented to us as a queer study. From the pages of Lennie and Morel, Smith and Swinton we got a store of excellent definitions, we corrected page upon page of false syntax, which Lennie, with questionable taste granted to our mothers' strong disapproval, drew largely from the Scottish dialect and from the Bible, we learned long alphabetical lists of prepositions and we waded knee-deep in "thou mightest, couldst, wouldst, and shouldst have loved." But in spite of the imperative "Love or love thou or be thou loved," grammar, somehow, did not get the deserved stronghold in our affections. After much thought, I am convinced that the great fault in the teaching of grammar is the needless list-making. Grammar teaches the correct form of expression, but this form is a tool, and like all other tools, valueless until put into use. How many children who can gibberish give you set rule and full declension are unable to hold their own when put into use what they have learned. We teach forms instead of thoughts, words instead of ideas. Here, as elsewhere in our course, we attempt too much; we need less ambition and more thoroughness; less of the "what" and more of the "why." We must not be misled to do away with all formal parsing and analysis? No, but I would not teach parsing and analysis by sentences culled from current literature chiefly for their crookedness. It is a question, though, of the utility of this. What is the real use of analysis? Of parsing? Ask the average class of ten or twelve years who they learn these subjects, and not one in fifty honestly has the faintest idea. They have been taught so-called grammar lessons by itself, a separate limb torn off from the body corporate of English. All this is wrong. In the form of isolated members, dead and mutilated, formal parsing and analysis have no excuse for their existence; they are simple questions of parsing of help, and as such we welcome them. Let us cry a halt, take time and let the reasoning faculties draw the breath of life. In the early reading and composition exercises, bearing in mind our two-fold object, let us make the child's own analysis a help. The questions: "What is the subject of the sentence?" "What is said about the subject?" are inevitable. They naturally suggest themselves and are their own excuse for being asked, and just as simple a limited extent of analysis is a help.

duty, but to guide the erring pupil." We can never hope to remove all blemishes from a child's English—what we obtained would be splendidly null, a purely negative result. We want the student of English as soon as possible to get a view of the landscape from the mountain top, not to dissipate his energies altogether in clearing away the brambles on the road up the hill. In my own school-days grammar was presented to us as a queer study. From the pages of Lennie and Morel, Smith and Swinton we got a store of excellent definitions, we corrected page upon page of false syntax, which Lennie, with questionable taste granted to our mothers' strong disapproval, drew largely from the Scottish dialect and from the Bible, we learned long alphabetical lists of prepositions and we waded knee-deep in "thou mightest, couldst, wouldst, and shouldst have loved." But in spite of the imperative "Love or love thou or be thou loved," grammar, somehow, did not get the deserved stronghold in our affections. After much thought, I am convinced that the great fault in the teaching of grammar is the needless list-making. Grammar teaches the correct form of expression, but this form is a tool, and like all other tools, valueless until put into use. How many children who can gibberish give you set rule and full declension are unable to hold their own when put into use what they have learned. We teach forms instead of thoughts, words instead of ideas. Here, as elsewhere in our course, we attempt too much; we need less ambition and more thoroughness; less of the "what" and more of the "why." We must not be misled to do away with all formal parsing and analysis? No, but I would not teach parsing and analysis by sentences culled from current literature chiefly for their crookedness. It is a question, though, of the utility of this. What is the real use of analysis? Of parsing? Ask the average class of ten or twelve years who they learn these subjects, and not one in fifty honestly has the faintest idea. They have been taught so-called grammar lessons by itself, a separate limb torn off from the body corporate of English. All this is wrong. In the form of isolated members, dead and mutilated, formal parsing and analysis have no excuse for their existence; they are simple questions of parsing of help, and as such we welcome them. Let us cry a halt, take time and let the reasoning faculties draw the breath of life. In the early reading and composition exercises, bearing in mind our two-fold object, let us make the child's own analysis a help. The questions: "What is the subject of the sentence?" "What is said about the subject?" are inevitable. They naturally suggest themselves and are their own excuse for being asked, and just as simple a limited extent of analysis is a help.

duty, but to guide the erring pupil." We can never hope to remove all blemishes from a child's English—what we obtained would be splendidly null, a purely negative result. We want the student of English as soon as possible to get a view of the landscape from the mountain top, not to dissipate his energies altogether in clearing away the brambles on the road up the hill. In my own school-days grammar was presented to us as a queer study. From the pages of Lennie and Morel, Smith and Swinton we got a store of excellent definitions, we corrected page upon page of false syntax, which Lennie, with questionable taste granted to our mothers' strong disapproval, drew largely from the Scottish dialect and from the Bible, we learned long alphabetical lists of prepositions and we waded knee-deep in "thou mightest, couldst, wouldst, and shouldst have loved." But in spite of the imperative "Love or love thou or be thou loved," grammar, somehow, did not get the deserved stronghold in our affections. After much thought, I am convinced that the great fault in the teaching of grammar is the needless list-making. Grammar teaches the correct form of expression, but this form is a tool, and like all other tools, valueless until put into use. How many children who can gibberish give you set rule and full declension are unable to hold their own when put into use what they have learned. We teach forms instead of thoughts, words instead of ideas. Here, as elsewhere in our course, we attempt too much; we need less ambition and more thoroughness; less of the "what" and more of the "why." We must not be misled to do away with all formal parsing and analysis? No, but I would not teach parsing and analysis by sentences culled from current literature chiefly for their crookedness. It is a question, though, of the utility of this. What is the real use of analysis? Of parsing? Ask the average class of ten or twelve years who they learn these subjects, and not one in fifty honestly has the faintest idea. They have been taught so-called grammar lessons by itself, a separate limb torn off from the body corporate of English. All this is wrong. In the form of isolated members, dead and mutilated, formal parsing and analysis have no excuse for their existence; they are simple questions of parsing of help, and as such we welcome them. Let us cry a halt, take time and let the reasoning faculties draw the breath of life. In the early reading and composition exercises,