

study them in reference to rhetorical force or beauty, nor would such an attempt be in the least degree desirable. It would, in the majority of instances, as far as the pupil's attempt to reproduce such information is concerned, be only effort thrown away, and would be much better devoted to something else.

Speaking from experience, it would be pleasing to know that the time-honoured custom of learning by heart, and the recitation of passages from the Readers, is still flourishing in the Public Schools. It is in them that the foundation of real success in the study of literature must be laid, and I am persuaded that we in the High Schools can never build upon the foundations laid in them a noble edifice of imperishable thought, unless our pupils come to us with their young minds stored with the treasures of their Readers. Let, by all means, the good old custom of having readings, recitations, and declamations on Friday afternoons be kept up in full vigour. Let our boys and girls be encouraged to learn the "winged words" of the poet, or of the orator, and I feel certain that whether he understands them or not, whether he fails to feel one throb of emotion, or to be charmed with one touch of fancy, as he recites them *now*, the time will come in his life when as teacher himself, as preacher in the pulpit, as counsel at the bar, as farmer at the plough, as parent with the child, he will, "reaping at last in his mind the produce of the deep furrow," be able to point the moral, flash forth his own thoughts clothed with beauty and power, add fresh pleasure to the life of children, or draw solace or inspiration for his own heart from memory's perennial spring.

In proceeding to investigate the Commentator's idea of English literature for school purposes, one cannot fail to be surprised at the rapid multiplication of manuals designed to illus-

trate the meaning of standard authors, and we must be gratified to know, that in this province and from our own ranks have been found those able and willing to meet the requirements of the occasion. It would be tedious in this paper to roam over the whole field of school-editions of the English classics, and to dwell on their individual merits, nor indeed is this necessary. They all resolve themselves into two classes, the one leaving something for both student and teacher to do in the way of original investigation, and the other, nothing to do but quietly and thankfully to appropriate the results of the editor's labours.

To the former class belongs the famous edition of Shakespeare now in progress of issue from the Clarendon Press, of which portions have been, and are, much used in the High Schools. It is an edition that has received the warmest encomiums of the highest authorities and as such claims from teachers and students an investigation into the characteristics which have brought to it so much praise.

The aim of the editors seems to be to give help to the reader only where help is needed, carefully to avoid loading the commentary with anything that is not strictly relevant to the meaning of the text, and scrupulously to refrain from interfering with the reader's own judgment as to the style, power, and beauty of the play. The principle of resolving textual difficulties by collating parallel passages from the author's other works, is clearly developed. To each play there is an introduction, giving all that is known as to the sources from which Shakespeare derived his materials. The original documents are given, so that the student may have his materials for criticism at first-hand. Passages supposed to be interpolated are indicated, and the editor's reasons for suspecting the text are given in such a way that the student cannot fail to apprehend the