

A Liberal Education for All
The Parents' Review, volume 27, pages 641-680
September, 1916

A LIBERAL EDUCATION
NO. I. THEORY¹
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An Important Experiment

I NEED not waste time in attempting to convince the reader of what we all know, that a liberal education, like justice, religion, liberty, fresh air, is the natural birthright of every child. Neither need we discuss the scope of such an education. We all "pray," with Dean Colet's schoolmaster, "for the children to prosper in good life and good literature." Also we are aware that the two are interdependent, that good life implies cultivated intelligence, that, according to the Platonic axiom: "knowledge is virtue," even though there are exceptions to the rule. Educated teachers are not slow to perceive the part the humanities play in a worthy scheme of education, but they are faced by the enormous difficulties which are admirably summed up in a recent work. "The tragedy of modern education," the author says, "has been the prolonged failure of Humanism to secure conditions under which its purpose might be realised for the people at large."² It is because we of the Parents' Union School have succeeded in offering Humanism under such conditions that we believe the great problem of education is at last solved. We are able to offer the humanities (in the mother tongue) to large classes of children, from illiterate homes, in such a way that the teaching is received with delight and freely assimilated.

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Here I must pause to acknowledge our indebtedness to a School in the West Riding and to the singularly liberal-minded educational authorities under which it works. To have discovered certain principles, to have seen them act successfully upon thousands of children during a quarter of a century, was not a fully satisfactory achievement, because "the people at large" were not touched, and these are the objective of the educator, as of the patriot. But the difficulties seemed insuperable. What could be done with large classes, few books, a lamentably short period of school life, and children from illiterate homes? A lady, who is known for her educational zeal, succeeded in interesting certain heads of schools in the West Riding in the organisation through which we work, the Parents' Union School. One of these Heads adopted our syllabus and methods, and her success was extraordinary; the teachers said it was new life to them, and certainly the children appeared to be remarkably vitalised. The educational authorities were impressed, and it is the success of that school, which no longer stands alone, that encourages us to bring the matter before other teachers.

One swallow does not make a summer, we all know, but the experience of this one school shows that it is possible to carry out a pretty full literary programme joyously and without effort while including all the usual school activities. Wireless telegraphy was, so to speak, in the air before the first Marconi message was sent, but that first telegram made it possible for any passenger on board a Channel steamer to send a wireless message. Just so, the experiment in the Drighlington school places the conditions for a humanistic education at the service of any teacher. I am much impressed by the amount of work of this kind which is

already being done in our schools. I heard the other day of a man whose whole life had been elevated by a single inspiring poetical sentence which he heard as a schoolboy; we have been told that "the man in the street" cannot resist a row of books; we are told too that the war has made us a nation of readers, both at home and in the trenches, readers largely of the best books in poetry and history; is there no credit due to the schools for these things? But teachers are not satisfied, their reach is greater than their grasp, and they are more aware of the barren and sordid lives about them, of the "dull, unfeeling barren ignorance" which prevails, than of any success they have yet attained. Therefore they fret under the time limitations which seem to make it impossible to do anything worth while in such vast subjects as History and Literature, for example.

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The Requirements of the Mind

I wonder does this uneasiness point to a fact which we are slow to realise, that the requirements of the mind are very much like those of the body. Both require, as conditions of health, activity, rest, variety, and, above all, food. There has been some tendency among us to offer gymnastics, whether intellectual or physical, by way of a square meal of knowledge, which is as if one were to invite a boy to Swedish Drill by way of his dinner; and that wretched misnomer, 'education,' is partly to blame! Now, potency, not property, is the characteristic of mind. A child is able to deal with much knowledge, but he possesses none worth speaking of, yet we set to work to give him that potency which he already possesses, rather than the knowledge which he lacks; we train his reason, cultivate his judgment, exercise this and the other faculty, which we have no more to do with than with the digestive processes of a healthy child, and we all know that the more we meddle with these the worse for the child; but what if the devitalisation we notice in so many of our young people, keen about games but dead to things of the mind, is due to the processes carried on in our schools, to our plausible and pleasant ways of picturing, eliciting, demonstrating, illustrating, summarizing, in fact, doing all those things for children which they are born with the potency to do for themselves?

No doubt we do give intellectual food, but so little of it, so diluted, so made into pap-meat, that a child gets up as hungry as he sat down, or, worse still, in the state of inanition in which he is no longer consciously hungry. Let us have courage and we shall be surprised, as we are now and then, at the amount of intellectual strong meat almost any child will take at a meal and digest at his leisure.

Perhaps the first thing for us to do is to get a just conception of what I may call the relativity of knowledge and the mind. We must realise that knowledge is to the mind as food is to the body; that the mind receives knowledge, not in order that it may know, but in order that it may grow, in breadth and depth, in sound judgment and magnanimity; but in order to grow it must know.

The fact is that we are handicapped not so much by the three or four difficulties I have already indicated, as by certain errors of judgment, forms of depreciation, which none of us escape, because they are universal. We as teachers depreciate ourselves and our office; we do not realise that in the nature of things

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the teacher has a prophetic power of appeal and inspiration, that his part is not the weariful task of spoon-feeding, but the delightful commerce of equal minds where his is the part of guide, philosopher and friend. The friction of wills which makes school work harassing ceases to a surprising degree when we deal with the children mind to mind, through the medium of knowledge.

We Depreciate Children

Next, we depreciate children, even though most teachers lay down their lives for their charges with amazing devotion. We have been so long taught to regard children as products of education and environment, that we fail to realise that from the first they are persons; and, as Carlyle has well said: "The mystery of a person, indeed, is ever divine, to him that has a sense for the godlike." We must either reverence or despise children; and while we regard them as incomplete and undeveloped beings who will one day arrive at the completeness of man, rather than as weak and ignorant *persons*, whose ignorance we must inform and whose weakness we must support, but whose potentialities are as great as our own, we cannot do otherwise than despise children, however kindly and even tenderly we commit the offence.

As soon as he gets words with which to communicate with us, a child lets us know that he thinks with surprising clearness and directness, that he sees with a closeness of observation that we have long ago lost, that he enjoys and that he sorrows with an intensity we have long ceased to experience, that he loves with an *abandon* and a confidence which, alas, we do not share, that he imagines with a fecundity no artist among us can approach, that he acquires intellectual knowledge and mechanical skill at a rate so amazing that, could the infant's rate of progress be kept up to manhood, he would surely appropriate the whole field of knowledge in a single lifetime. (It is worth while in this connection to re-read the early chapters of *David Copperfield*).

Do we ask for confirmation of what may seem to some of us an absurdly exaggerated statement of a child's powers and progress? Consider, in two or three years, he learns to speak a language—perhaps two—idiomatically and correctly, and often with a surprising literary fitness in the use of words. He accustoms himself to an unexplored region, and learns to distinguish between far and near, flat and round, hot and cold, hard and soft, and fifty other properties belonging to matter new

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to his experience. He learns to recognise innumerable objects by their colour, form, consistency, by what signs, indeed, we know not. As for the mechanical skill he acquires, what is the most cultivated singing as compared with articulation and the management of the speaking voice? What are skating and ski-ing compared with the monstrously difficult art of balancing one's body, planting one's feet and directing one's legs in the art of walking? But how soon it is acquired and the unsteady walk becomes an easy run! As for his power of loving, any mother can tell us how her baby loves her long before he is able to say her name, how he hangs upon her eye, basks in her smile, dances in the joy of her presence. These are things everybody knows, and for that very reason, nobody realises the wonder of this rapid progress in the art of living, nor augurs from it that a child, even an infant child, is no contemptible person judged by any of the standards we apply to his elders. He can accomplish more than any of us could in a

given time, and, supposing we could start fair with him in the arts he practises, he would be a long way ahead of us by the end of his second year. I am considering a child as he is, and am not tracing him either with Wordsworth, to the heights above, or, with the evolutionist, to the depths below, because a person is a mystery; that is, we cannot explain him or account for him, but must accept him as he is.

This wonder of personality does not cease, does not disappear, when a child goes to school; he is still "all there" in quite another sense from that of the vulgar catchword. But we begin to lose the way to his mind from the day he comes to school. The fact is, we have embraced what Plato calls "that lie of the soul," the belief that "knowledge is sensation," that a child knows what he sees and handles rather than what he conceives in his mind and figures in his thoughts. I labour this point because our faith in a child's spiritual, i.e., intellectual, educability is one of our chief assets.

Contempt for Knowledge

Having brought ourselves face to face with the wonder of mind in children, we begin to see that knowledge is the aliment of mind as food is that of the body. In the days before the war, a life-time ago it seems, our insular contempt for knowledge was a by-word; except for a schoolmaster or other thinker here and there nobody took knowledge seriously; we announced boldly that it did not matter what a child learned, but only how he

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learned it. As for mere "book-learning," for that we had a fine contempt. But we have changed all that. As Germany and the Northern States learned during the Napoleonic wars that not Napoleon but Ignorance was the true enemy of the peoples, we, too, are beginning to suspect that ignorance is our national stumbling block, a chief cause of those difficulties at home which hinder our efforts abroad. For ignorance there is only one cure, and that is knowledge; his school is the seat of knowledge for a child, and whatever else his teachers do for him, first of all they must sustain him with knowledge, not in homœopathic doses, but in regular generous servings. If we ask what is knowledge?—there is no neat and ready answer at hand. Matthew Arnold classifies all knowledge under three heads,—the knowledge of God, Divinity, the knowledge of man, the 'Humanities' and the knowledge of the physical world—Science, and that is enough to go on with. But I should like to question this division and to class all three parts of knowledge under the head of humanism, which should include all knowledge that makes a direct appeal to the mind through the channel of literary form; now, the substance of Divinity is contained in one of the three great literatures of the world, and science, in France, if not usually in England, is embodied in a beautiful and poetic literature of great clarity, precision and grace. Is it not allowable then to include all knowledge of which literature is the proper medium under the heading "Humanism?"

One thing at any rate we know with certainty, that no teaching, no information becomes *knowledge* to any of us until the individual mind has acted upon it, translated, transformed, absorbed it, to reappear like our bodily food in forms of vitality. Teaching and tale, however lucid, or fascinating, effect nothing until self-activity be set up, that is, *self-education* is the only possible education; the rest is the mere veneer laid on the surface of a child's nature.

I have endeavoured to call your attention to a certain under-valuing of children and under-valuing of knowledge which seem to me to mar our twentieth century ideal of education, fine as that is. If we realise that the mind and knowledge are like the two members of a ball and socket joint, the two limbs of a pair of scissors, fitted to each other, necessary to each other and acting only in concert, we shall understand that our function as teachers is to supply children with the rations of knowledge which they require; for the rest—character and conduct, efficiency and

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ability, and that finest quality of the citizen, magnanimity, take care of themselves. “But how?” cries the teacher, whose life is spent in rolling a boulder up a slope and seeing it plunge to the bottom again. I think we have chanced on a way that, at any rate, works to admiration, the principles and practice of which I am anxious to bring before you. Certainly, we have found that GOLDEN RULE of which Comenius was in search “WHEREBY TEACHERS SHALL TEACH LESS AND SCHOLARS SHALL LEARN MORE.”

Some Results of a Better Method

Let me first state a few of the results that have been made good by thousands of children, and, as I have said, within the last two years by at least one Council School in the West Riding:—

The children, not the teachers, are the responsible persons, they do the work by *self-effort*.

The teachers give the uplift of their sympathy in the work, and where necessary elucidate, sum up or enlarge, but the actual work is done by the scholars.

These read in a term from one thousand to between two and three thousand pages according to age and class in a large number of set books; the quantity set for each lesson allows of only a single reading.

The reading is tested by narration, or by writing on a test passage. No revision is attempted when the terminal examination is at hand because too much ground has been covered to allow of any “looking-up.” What the children have read they know and write on any part of it with ease and fluency in vigorous English. They usually spell well.

During the examinations, which last a week, the children cover say from 20 to 60 sheets of Cambridge paper according to age and class; but if ten times as many questions were set on the work studied most likely they would cover ten times as many pages.

It rarely happens that all the children in a class are not able to answer all the questions set in such subjects as history, literature, citizenship, geography, science. But here, differences manifest themselves; some children do better in science, some in history, some in mathematics or literature; some, again, write copious answers, and a few write sparsely, but practically all know the answers to the set questions.

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In the course of an examination they deal freely with a great number of substantives, including many proper names; (I once had the names used by a child of ten in an examination paper counted; there were well over a hundred, of which these are the “a’s”:—Africa, Alsace-Lorraine, Antigonous, Abdomen, Antennae, Aphis, Antwerp, Alder, America, Amsterdam,

Austria-Hungary, Ann Boleyn, Antarctic, Atlantic; and these are the “m’s”.—Megalopolis, Maximilian, Milan, Martin Luther, Mary of the Netherlands, Messina, Macedonia, Magna Charta, Magnet, Malta, Metz, Mediterranean, Mary Queen of Scots, Treaty of Madrid: upon all these subjects the children wrote as freely and fully as if they were writing to an absent sister about a new family of kittens! They write with perfect understanding as far as they go, and there is rarely a ‘howler’ in hundreds of sets of papers.

They have an enviable power of getting at the gist of a book or a subject. Sometimes they are asked to write verses about a personage or an event; the result is not much in the way of poetry, but sums up a good deal of thoughtful reading in a delightful way.

Much use according to this method is made of the years from 6 to 8, during which children must learn to read and write, but they get at the same time a good deal of consecutive knowledge of history and geography, tale and fable, some of which at the end of the term they dictate in answer to questions, and their answers form well-expressed little essays on the subjects they deal with. The time appropriated (in the time table) to the teaching of some half-dozen more or less literary subjects, such as Scripture, and the subjects I have indicated, is largely spent by the teachers in reading, say, two or three paragraphs at a time from some one of the set books, which children, here and there, in the class narrate. The teacher reads with the intention that the children shall know, and therefore, with distinctness, force, and careful enunciation; it is a mere matter of sympathy, though of course it is the author, and not himself, whom the teacher is careful to produce. As a result of this kind of reading the children in Drighlington school are said to narrate long passages in remarkably good English with correct pronunciation and good enunciation. They rather revel in long words! This practice, of the teacher reading aloud and the class narrating, is necessarily continued through all the classes of an elementary school, because some of the books used are rather costly and only [p 649]

one copy is furnished. I wonder does this habit of listening with close attention to what is read aloud tend to equalise the children of the “uneducated” with those of the educated classes? Certainly, the work of the two is surprisingly equal.

By the way, there is no selection of subjects or passages, or episodes, on the ground of interest. The best available book is chosen and read through in the course, it may be, of two or three years. Working in this way, the pupils find that, in Bacon’s phrase, “Studies are for Delight,” this delight being in their “lovely books,” “glorious books”; the books are literary in style.

No marks, prizes, places, rewards, punishments, praise, blame nor other inducements are necessary to secure attention, which is usually voluntary, immediate and surprisingly perfect.

The success of the scholars in what may be called disciplinary subjects, such as Mathematics, Grammar and experimental Science, must always depend on the power of the teacher, but the pupils’ habits of attention count in these too.

Let me add, the appeal of these principles and this method is not to the clever child only, but to the average and even to the backward child; indeed, we have had several marked successes with backward children. Just as we all partake of that banquet which is “Shakespeare” according to our needs and desires, so do children behave at the ample board

set before them; there is enough to satisfy the keenest intelligence, while the dullest child is sustained by his own willing efforts.

This scheme of pretty wide and successful intellectual work is carried out in the same, or less, time, than is occupied in the usual efforts in the same directions; there are no revisions, no evening preparations or reports, because far more work is done by the children in school than under ordinary school methods, when the child is too often a mere listener; as no cramming or working-up of subjects is necessary, there is much time to spare for vocational and other work of the kind.

An Educational Discovery

It is not that “we” (including the co-adjutors who labour with me in what we believe to be a great cause, hundreds of teachers, parents and more immediate helpers), it is not that we are persons of peculiar genius and insight, it is that we have chanced on a good thing and,—

“No gain

That I experience must remain unshared”;

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we feel that every one should have the benefit of educational discoveries which act powerfully as a moral lever, for we are experiencing a new life with the joy of the Renaissance, without its pagan lawlessness. Such an education as I am urging should act as a social lever also; everyone is occupied with problems concerning the amelioration of life for our “poorer classes,” but do we sufficiently consider that, given a better education, the problems of decent living will for the most part be solved by the people themselves.

Like all the great ventures of life, this that I propose to you is a venture of faith, faith in the saving power of knowledge and in the assimilative power of children. Its efficacy depends upon the fact that it is in the nature of things, in the nature of knowledge and in the nature of children. Bring the two together in ways that are sanctioned by the laws of mind and, to use a figure, a chemical change takes place and a new product appears, a person of character and intelligence, an admirable citizen whose own life is too full and rich for him to be an uneasy member of society. We all feel the debt we owe to psychology, but probably most of us are aware that we come across problems which psychology does not touch, we are conscious of the action of mind, spirit, within us, a force which, could we turn it on in education as a regular thing and not by occasional spurts, would, we believe, have the power of a Niagara to raise the world.

Such a force, as we all know, is religion; but education is part and parcel of religion, and every enthusiastic teacher knows that he is obeying the precept “feed my lambs,”—feed with all those things which are good and wholesome for the spirit of a man, and before all and including all, the knowledge of God.

I have ventured to speak of the laws of mind, or spirit, but indeed we can only make guesses here and there and follow with diffidence such light as we get from the teachings of the wise and from general experience; *general* experience because peculiar experience is apt to be misleading; therefore, when I learned that long tried principles and methods were capable of application to the whole of a class of forty children in the school of a mining village, I felt assured that we were following laws whose observance results in education of a satisfying kind.

The mind requires sustenance, as does the body, that it may increase and be strong; so much everybody knows. A long time ago we found out that the

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pabulum given in schools was of the wrong sort: grammar rules, lists of names and dates and places, the whole stock in trade of the earlier schoolmaster, were seen to be matter which the minds of children rejected; and, because we were wise enough to see that the mind functions for its own nourishment whether rejecting or receiving, we changed our tactics, following, so we thought, the lead of the children. We did well, and therefore are prepared, if necessary, to do better. What, then, if our whole educational equipment, our illustrations, elucidations, questionings, our illimitable patience in getting a point *into* the children, were all based on the false assumption of the immature, which we take to connote the imperfect, incomplete minds of children? "I think I could understand, Mummy, if you did not explain *quite* so much," is it the inarticulate cry of the school child to-day? He really is capable of much more than he gets credit for, but we go the wrong way about getting his capable mind into action.

Because the mind is not to be measured or weighed, but is spiritual, so its sustenance must be spiritual too; must, in fact, be ideas in the Platonic sense of images. Children are well-equipped to deal with ideas, while explanations, questionings, amplifications, are unnecessary and wearisome. They have a natural appetite for knowledge which is informed with thought and they bring imagination, reason, the various so-called "faculties" to bear upon new knowledge much as the gastric juices act upon a food ration. We therefore err when we allow our admirable teaching to intervene between children and the knowledge their minds demand. The desire for knowledge (curiosity), is the chief agent in education; but this desire may be made powerless like an unused limb by encouraging other desires to intervene, such as the desire for place (emulation), for prizes (avarice), for power (ambition), for praise (vanity). But I am told that marks, places and prizes (except for attendance) do not figure largely in Elementary Schools; therefore the love of knowledge for its own sake is likely to have a freer course in these schools than in any others.

"All Knowledge for all Men"

Is it possible that teachers have unwittingly elaborated a system which secures the discipline of the schools and the eagerness of the scholars by means of marks, places, prizes, and yet eliminates that knowledge-hunger, itself the quite sufficient

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incentive to education? Children's aptitude for knowledge and their eagerness for it indicate that the field of a child's knowledge may not be artificially restricted, that he has a right to and a necessity for as much and as varied knowledge as he is able to receive and that the limitations of his curriculum should depend only upon the age at which he must leave school; that is, a common curriculum appears to be due to all children up to the age of, say, 14 or 15, framed upon that saying of Comenius: "All knowledge for all men." Education is of the spirit and is not to be taken in by the eye or effected by the hand. Mind appeals to mind and thought begets thought, and that is how we become educated. For this reason we owe it to every child to put him into direct communication with great minds, that he may get at great thoughts; with the minds, that is, of those who have left us great works; and here let me emphasise the

importance of using *first-hand* books; all compendiums, digests, compilations, selections, all books at *second-hand* should be eschewed. The method of vital education appears to be that children should read worthy books, many books, should read and hear and see. (We give much attention, by the way, to cultivating the power to appreciate pictures, music, etc. Miss Drury, in a paper which is to follow, will indicate our methods.)

It will be said on the one hand that many schools have their own libraries, or, the scholars have the free use of a public library, and that the children do read; and, on the other, that the literary language of first-rate books offers an impassable barrier to working-men's children. In the first place we all know that desultory reading is delightful; but it is not education, whose concern is knowledge. That is, the mind of the desultory reader only rarely makes the act of appropriation which is necessary before the matter we read becomes personal knowledge. We must read in order to know or we do not know by reading. As for the question of literary form, many circumstances and considerations which it would take too long to describe here brought me to perceive that delight in literary form is native to us all until we are "educated" out of it.

Children are born, persons,—is the first article of the educational *credo* which I am concerned to advance; this implies that they come to us with power of attention, avidity for knowledge, clearness of thought, nice discrimination in books even before they can read, and the power of dealing with many subjects. It is easy to apply a test. Read to a child of any age from 6 to 10

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an account of an incident graphically and tersely told, and the child will relate what he has heard point by point if not word for word and will add delightful original touches. What is more, he will relate the passage months later, because he has visualised the scene and appropriated that bit of knowledge. An older boy or girl will read one of Bacon's Essays, say, or a passage from De Quincey, and will write or tell what he has read very forcibly and with some style, either at the moment or months later. We know how Coleridge recited a whole pamphlet of Burke's at a college supper, though probably he had read it only once. Here, on the surface, is the key to that attention, interest, literary style, wide vocabulary, love of books and readiness in speaking, which we feel should be the outcome of an education that is only begun at school and is to be continued throughout life.

Practical teachers will say, guarantee to us the attention of our scholars and we will guarantee their progress in what Colet calls "good literature." May I explain how I came to a solution of this puzzling problem,—how to secure attention? Much observation of children, various incidents from one's general reading, the recollection of my own childhood and the consideration of my present habit of mind brought me to the recognition of certain laws of the mind, by working in accordance with which the steady attention of children of any age and in any class of society is insured, week in, week out; attention not affected by distracting circumstances. It is not a matter of "personal magnetism," for hundreds of teachers of very varying quality, working in home and other schoolrooms,³ secure it without effort; neither does it rest upon the "doctrine of interest"; no doubt the scholars are interested, sometimes delighted, but they are interested in a great variety of matters and their attention does not flag in the "dull parts."

Children are Persons

It is not easy to sum up in a few short sentences those principles upon which we may assume for practical purposes that the mind naturally acts, and which I have tried to bring to bear upon a school curriculum. The fundamental idea is, that children are persons and are therefore moved by the same springs of conduct as their elders. Among these is the desire of knowledge, knowledge-hunger being natural to everybody. History,

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geography, the thoughts of other people, roughly, the humanities, are proper for us all and are the objects of the natural desire of knowledge. So too, are science, for we all live in the world, and must “live by admiration,” and art, for we all require beauty and are eager to know how to discriminate; social science, ethics, for we are aware of the need to learn about the conduct of life; and religion, for, like our men at the front, we all “want God.”

In the nature of things, then, the unspoken demand of children is for a wide and very varied curriculum; it is necessary that they should have some knowledge of the wide range of interests proper to them as human beings, and for no reason of convenience or of time limitations may we curtail their proper curriculum. Perceiving the range of knowledge to which children as persons are entitled, the questions occur, how shall they be induced to take that knowledge, and, what can the children of the people learn in the short time they are at school? I venture to think that I have discovered a working answer to these two conundrums. I say discovered, and not invented, for there is only one way of learning; and the intelligent persons who can talk well on many subjects, and the expert in one, learn in the one way, that is, *they read to know*. What I think I have found out is,—that this method is available for every child, whether in the dilatory and desultory home schoolroom or in the large classes of elementary schools.

Children no more come into the world without provision for dealing with knowledge than with food. They bring with them not only the intellectual appetite, the desire of knowledge, but also an enormous, an unlimited, power of attention which the power of retention seems to follow in the same way as one digestive process succeeds another. “Yes,” it will be said, “they are capable of much curiosity and consequent attention, but they can only occasionally be beguiled into attending to their lessons.” Is not that the fault of the lessons, and must not these be regulated as carefully with regard to the behaviour of mind as they already are with regard to physical considerations?

Attention v. Memory

Let us consider this question of the behaviour of mind in a few aspects; the mind concerns itself only with thoughts, imaginations, reasoned arguments; it declines to assimilate facts unless in combination with its proper pabulum; it, being active,

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is as much bored in the case of a child by the discursive twaddle of the talking teacher as in that of the grown-up person by conversational twaddle; also, it must be allowed to go its own, not another’s, pace; it has a natural preference for literary form; given a more or less literary presentation, and the curiosity of the mind is enormous and embraces a vast variety of

subjects. I venture to predicate these things of “the mind” because they seem to be true of all persons’ minds. Having observed these and some other points in the behaviour of mind, it remained to apply the conclusions to which I had come to a test curriculum for schools and families. Oral teaching was to a great extent ruled out; a large number of books on many subjects were set for reading in morning school-hours; so much work was set that there was only time for a single reading; all reading was tested by narration of the whole or of a given passage, whether orally or in writing. Children working on these lines know what they have read months after and are remarkable for their power of concentration (attention); they have little trouble with spelling or composition and become well-informed persons.

“But,” it will be said, “reading or hearing various books read, chapter by chapter, and then narrating or writing what has been read or some part of it,—all this is mere memory work.” The worth of this criticism may be readily tested; will the critic read before turning off his light a leading article from “The Times,” say, or a chapter from Boswell or Jane Austen, or one of Lamb’s Essays; then, will he put himself to sleep by narrating silently what he has read. He will not be satisfied with the result, but he will find that in the act of narrating every power of his mind comes into play, that points and bearings which he had not observed are brought out; that the whole is visualised and brought into relief in an extraordinary way; in fact, that particular scene or argument has become part of his personal experience; he knows, he has assimilated, what he has read. *This is not memory work*, for which the proper formula is, repeat over and over a passage or a series of points or names with the aid of such clues as we can invent in order to *memorise*; we do memorise a string of facts or words, and the new possession serves its purpose if only for a time, but it has not been assimilated; its purpose being served, we know it no more; this is memory work, by means of which examinations are passed with credit. I will not try to explain (or understand) this power to memorise; it has its subsidiary use in education, no doubt, but it

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must not be put in place of the prime agent which is *attention*.

Long ago, I was in the habit of hearing this axiom quoted by a philosophical old friend: “The mind can know nothing save what it can produce in the form of an answer to a question put by the mind to itself.” I have failed to trace the saying to its author, but a conviction of its importance has been growing upon me during the last forty years. It tacitly prohibits questioning from without (this does not, of course, affect the Socratic use of questioning for the purpose of convincing an opponent); and it is necessary to intellectual certainty, to the act of knowing. For example, if we wish to secure a conversation or an incident, we “go over it in our minds”; that is, the mind puts itself through the process of self-questioning which I have indicated; that is what happens in the narrating of a passage read; each consecutive incident or statement arrives because the mind asks itself, “What next?” It is important that only one reading should be allowed; efforts to memorise weaken the power of attention, the proper activity of the mind; and if it is desirable to ask questions in order to emphasise certain points, these should be asked after and not before or during the act of narration. The child who is narrating should not be interrupted; and, after a few sentences, the narration should be taken up by another child, as many as possible being allowed to take part.

Our psychologists come to our support here; they, too, predicate, "Instead of a congeries of faculties, a single subjective activity, attention," and again, there is, "one common factor in all psychical activity, that is, attention."⁴

My personal addition to this is that attention is unfailing, prompt, and steady, when matter is presented suitable to a child's intellectual requirements, if the presentation be made with the conciseness, directness and simplicity proper to literature.

Another point should be borne in mind; the intellect requires a moral impulse, and we all stir our minds into action the better if there is an implied "must" in the background; for children in class the "must" acts through the *certainty* that they will be required to narrate or write from what they have read, with no opportunity for "looking-up" or other device of the idle. Children find the act of narrating so pleasurable in itself that urgency on the part of the teacher is seldom necessary; "narrating" is to a child like the "reeling off" which an author enjoys.

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Let me offer a complete chain of the links of that educational theory which I have endeavoured to work out, and which has, at any rate, the merit that it is successful in practice. It is not easy to distinguish how much of the thought of earlier educationalists I *may* have adopted and applied, but I venture to hope that I have succeeded in methodising the whole, so that education becomes what it should be, a system of applied philosophy; I have, however, abstained carefully from the use of philosophical terms.

Statement of Theory

This is, briefly, how the theory stands:

A child is a person, with the spiritual requirements and capabilities of a person.

Knowledge "nourishes" the mind as food nourishes the body. A child requires knowledge as much as he requires food.

He is furnished with the desire of Knowledge (i.e., curiosity), with the powers which enable him to apprehend knowledge with little aid from without—such as imagination, reflection, judgment; with innate interest in all knowledge that he needs as a human being, with power to retain and communicate such knowledge, and to assimilate all that is necessary to him.

He prefers that knowledge be communicated to him in literary form, and reproduces such knowledge touched by his own personality; thus, reproduction becomes to some extent original work.

The natural provision for the appropriation and assimilation of knowledge is adequate, and no stimulus is required; but some moral control is necessary to secure the act of attention; a child receives this in the *certainty* that he will be required to recount what he has read. This manner of education, it will be perceived, is entirely *self-education*; every step in their progress depends on the children's own efforts; they are delightfully conscious of progress and eager to go on; school-work, whether for teachers or children, has no longer the weariness of treadmill exercise. Again, a child requires to go *his own pace*; if this is prevented a serious obstacle is placed in the way of the natural desire of knowledge. This requirement is met by the act of narrating that which *he* knows, not that which another person demands in answer to questions.

Children have a right to the best we possess; therefore, their lesson books should be, as far as possible, our best books. They weary of talk and questions bore them, so they should be [p 658]

allowed to use their own books for themselves; they will ask for such help as they wish for.

They require a great variety of knowledge—concerning religion, the humanities, science, art; therefore they should have a wide curriculum, with a definite amount of reading set for each short period.

The teacher assumes a higher status and a far more interesting rôle; he affords direction, sympathy in studies, a vivifying word here and there, guidance in the making of experiments, etc., as well as the usual teaching in languages, experimental science, and mathematics; he is enabled to deal with individuals instead of classes.

Pursued under these conditions, “Studies are for delight,” and the consciousness of daily progress is exhilarating to both teacher and children. Let me add that the principles and methods I have indicated are especially suitable for large classes; what is called the “sympathy of numbers” stimulates the class, and the work goes with an added impetus; each child is eager to take part in narration or to do writing work well. By the way, only short test answers are required in writing, so that the labour of correction is minimised.

Books and Examinations

To two further points I must invite your attention, the choice of books and the character of the terminal examinations. I do not know better how to describe the sort of books that children’s minds will consent to deal with than by saying that they must be literary in character. A child of seven or eight will narrate a difficult passage from the “Pilgrim’s Progress” with extraordinary zest and insight; but I doubt if he or his elders would retain anything from that excellent work, Dr. Smiles’ “Self-Help.” The completeness with which hundreds of children reject the wrong book is a curious and instructive experience, not less so than the avidity and joy with which they drain the right book to the dregs; the children’s requirements in the books they read seem to be quantity, quality, and variety; but the question of books is one of much delicacy and difficulty. After the experience of a quarter of a century in selecting the lesson books proper for children of all ages, we still make mistakes, and the next examination paper set discovers the error; children cannot answer questions set on wrong books; and the difficulty of selection is increased by the fact that what they like

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in books is no more a guide than is what they like in food; in both cases a taste for lollipops prevails.

The examination questions set also require serious consideration; children must appreciate the fact that they are liable to be examined upon any page in several hundred pages, on the whole or the part of any or every book out of a score of volumes. But they must be assured by past experience that the questions put to them will be so to speak worth while, neither too obvious nor too subtle; but embracing points an intelligent person would be likely to notice in the books he reads, as well as the reflections upon those that are likely to occur.

The reader will say with truth, “I knew all this before and have always acted more or less on these principles”; and I can only point to the unusual results we have obtained through

adhering, not, "more or less," but strictly, to the principles and practices I have indicated. I suppose the difficulties are of the sort that Lister had to contend with; every surgeon knows that his instruments and appurtenances should be kept clean, but the saving of innumerable lives has resulted from the use of the great surgeon's antiseptic treatment; that is, from the substitution of exact principles scrupulously applied for the rather casual "more or less" of the general practitioner.

Whether the way I have sketched out is the right way remains to be tested more widely than in the thousands of cases in which it has been successful; but assuredly education is slack and uncertain for the lack of sound principles exactly applied. The moment has come for a decision; we have placed our faith in "civilisation," have been proud of our progress, and, of the pangs the war has brought us, perhaps none is keener than that caused by the utter breakdown of the Civilisation which we held to be synonymous with Education. We know better now and are thrown back on our healthy human instincts and the Divine sanctions.

There remains to try the great Cause of *Education v. Civilisation*, with the result, let us hope, that the latter will retire to her proper sphere of service in the amelioration of life and will not intrude on the higher functions of inspiration and direction which belong to Education. Both Civilisation and Education are the handmaids of Religion, but each in its place, and the one may not thrust herself into the office of the other.

It is a gain, anyway, that we are within sight of the possibility of giving to the working classes, notwithstanding their
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limited opportunities, that stability of mind and magnanimity of character which are the proper outcome and the unfailing test of a liberal education; also, that "the grand elementary principle of pleasure" should be discovered in unexpected places, in what is too often the drudgery of the schoolroom.

Milton's ideal of a "complete and generous education" meets our occasions,— "that which fits a man to perform, justly, skilfully and magnanimously all the offices both private and public of peace and war." Perhaps it remains for our generation to prove that this ideal is open for, and necessary to, persons of all sorts and conditions. It has been well said that,—

"As there is only one kind of truth common to us all, so there is only one education common to us all. In the case of the education of the people the only question is: How is this common education to be developed under the special circumstances of simple conditons [sic] of life and large masses of people? That this should be accomplished is to our mind the decisive mark of all real education."

The writer quoted offers no solution of the problem and it remains with the reader to determine whether that solution which I here propose is or is not worth a trial, remembering that;—

"No sooner doth the truth . . . come into the soul's sight, but the soul knows her to be her first and old acquaintance," and also that,— "The consequence of truth is great, therefore the judgment of it must not be negligent."—(*Whichcote*).

N.B.—More exact details of the working of the Parents' Union School are offered in two other pamphlets,⁵ one by Miss Drury and one by Miss Ambler. The cost of "numerous good books" for an elementary school has been worked out (and brought down) with the help of some West Riding teachers, so that £20 will cover the initial cost for a school of 160 children.

One other point I should like to emphasize; the scheme of education I propose removes certain disabilities which have hitherto attended children from elementary schools in their ascent of the educational "ladder"; teachers in Secondary Schools complain that these act as a dead weight in a class, because they have a very limited vocabulary and little general knowledge; under the conditions I have indicated, the elementary school child passes on with a remarkably good vocabulary and pretty wide general knowledge.

A LIBERAL EDUCATION
NO. 2. PRACTICE⁶
BY AGNES C. DRURY.

IF there is an excuse needed (as I feel there is) for reading a paper to the experienced and devoted teachers of the West Riding, it must be found in the motto of the Students' Association to which I belong. Ex-students trained by Miss Mason at the House of Education wear on their badge the motto: "For the children's sake." As it is for the children's sake that you have come to this Vacation Course, so it is for the children's sake—because we are convinced that they need what the P.N.E.U. has to offer—that I welcome the opportunity of telling you quite simply how we teach in the *Parents' Union School*.

The school is now divided into six Forms grouped in pairs. Children are admitted to Form IB. at six years old, from seven to eight they are in IA., nine to twelve in IIB. and A., twelve to fifteen in III. and IV., and fifteen to eighteen in V. and VI.

There are more than 2,000 members, half of them working with mother or governess in home schoolrooms, and an equal number in girls' schools and in preparatory schools for boys. Many of their governesses have been trained at the House of Education, yet not the majority. For though an ex-student naturally understands Miss Mason's principles and methods best, they can be carried out by others, for the whole aim is that the work be done by the children themselves. The teacher may give an introductory lesson on a new subject, period, personage, in order to claim the children's interest, and kindle their enthusiasm as she usually does by her own enthusiasm.

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She helps them to make comparisons, to summarise a passage, or a term's reading. But the children learn from books, suitable, well-written, or (as we habitually call them) *living books*, which they read and narrate.

This statement applies, of course, to subjects which can be presented in literary form. Now Mathematics, Experimental Science, Grammar and Languages require oral lessons, and are generally so well taught in schools that nothing need be said about them here. Small reference must be made to singing, drawing and handicrafts, though the methods of the Parents' Union School gain leisure hours every afternoon for the children to spend on these delightful pursuits.

The handicrafts which the House of Education students learn in order to teach them in the school are: Clay Modelling, Carton and Cardboard Modeling and simple Bookbinding, Cane and Rafia Basketwork, Educational Needlecraft and Rug Making, Wood Carving, Embossed Leatherwork and Metal Repoussé.

Bookwork is all done during the hours of morning school, ranging from two and half to four hours, according to age, with a break for play and drill. The time table includes, besides the subjects first mentioned, and Reading, Writing, Dictation, Composition and Recitation—the following historical and literary subjects: Bible Lessons, English, French and General History, Literature and Citizenship; also Natural History and Geography, and, for the upper forms, more books on the kindred subjects of Physical Geography, Geology, Astronomy, Botany and Physiology.

Programmes for a term's work are sent out to each member and the work is tested by examinations from headquarters carefully designed to enable the children to tell what they know. Teacher and children look eagerly at the new programme to see what books they are to read, or how many pages of the larger books which last two years or more. The number of pages set is divided by the number of weeks in the term, or double the number if there are two lessons a week. Then both teacher and pupils know how much should be accomplished at each lesson; the children feel the responsibility of getting through the work set and they give attention accordingly. A time table punctually adhered to is one secret of carrying out the programme, and its great variety partly explains its efficacy. At the end of a lesson, the change of subject refreshes the children, and they are only required to attend to one subject for a limited period, twenty

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minutes, half an hour, or three-quarters of an hour. They know that time wasted can never be made up, so that one must give one's whole mind to a thing or lose that chance of learning it and be seriously handicapped. This explains the fact that the examinations are taken without any revision. There is so much to read that there is no time for revision. Children from six to eight years old, during the years that they are learning to read and write, do a great deal of work in historical and literary subjects. Their books are read aloud to them and narrated by them. But the contents are not known from constant repetition but because children acquire the habit of attending to what is read when they know that they will be expected to repeat it, and because they have a natural appetite for knowledge. They are so much interested that families have been known to insist on doing the examinations by themselves when illness entailed their mother's absence.

First on the programmes and time-tables stand **Bible Lessons**. Here one of the chief objects is to get to know the very words of the Bible from the earliest years. Narrative portions of the Old Testament and the Gospel story from the New are read aloud to the 1st Form, and the children are asked to repeat them as nearly as they can in the words of the Bible. How well they do this is shown by the following examples dictated by a girl of nine in Form IA.:—

Tell the story of Jairus' daughter.

Jairus came to Jesus and said: "Master, my daughter is very ill, please make her better." And then another man came and said: "Don't trouble Jesus, because your daughter is dead." But Jesus went with Jairus, and when He got to the place where

Jairus lived everybody was weeping, and He said: "Weep not, for your daughter is not dead, but sleepeth"; and they mocked Him and said "Of course she is dead." And He went into the room and left everybody else outside, and said to the daughter, "Arise," and she arose, and He said to the mother and father, "Give her something to eat that you may see that she is really alive."

Tell of the feeding of the Five Thousand.

As Jesus got out of the boat a multitude came and were all very hungry, and Simon Peter said, "Lord, there is a boy that has five fishes and two loaves, but that won't be enough for all these people." And Jesus said, "Bring the five fishes and two loaves and bid the people sit down on the grass," and they did so; and He blessed the loaves and fishes and brake them and gave them to the disciples to give to the people, and there was enough to go right round, and everybody had as much as they wanted, and there were twelve baskets full of crumbs over.

The teacher prepares her lesson beforehand with the aid of the set book. But she does not talk a great deal. The new

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passage will probably have to be connected with the last lesson. An oriental custom, such as the wailing for Jairus' daughter, will be explained. And the children may be helped to form pictures in their minds, in short to visualise the scenes: such as that of 5,000 men, besides women and children, sitting down in ranks where there was much grass in the place. Then comes the one essential aim of every Bible Lesson. That is to give (in the words of Keble's hymn) "new thoughts of God." Such a thought as His providence feeding every one of us, as surely as He gave to the disciples to set before the multitude, is one very dear to children, and readily connected with their prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread." Sometimes the teacher reads the portion again at the close of the lesson in order that the sacred words may be the last thing left in the children's minds. Here is an example of narration from the Old Testament by a girl of eleven in Form IIB:—

Tell how the tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh fell under a misunderstanding. What lesson may we learn from the story?

After the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh had returned to their land, the other Israelites heard saying, "Behold the Reubenites, Gadites and Manassites have built an altar on the borders of Jordan, where we crossed when we came to Canaan." So they at once consulted to go up against them to war, and marched to the border, and saw that it was quite true they had built an altar on the bank of Jordan, where they had crossed. And the ten princes said to the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, "Why have ye done this, did not the Lord our God say there should only be one altar at Shiloh, why have ye then done this; is not the iniquity of Peor too little for us." Then the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh said, "We have only built an altar as a remembrance between you and us, so when ye in time to come say to our children, ye do not belong to us, you live on the other side of Jordan, we can show you this altar, and say, behold this is what our fathers built, in

remembrance that we once belonged to you, and that we are of the same blood." So the Reubenites and Gadites, also the half tribe of Manasseh showed the other Israelites that they should not judge too hastily another time. And it shows us the same thing, that we should not judge other people too hastily.

Then one from the 3rd Form by a girl of thirteen.

"Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place." Tell, shortly, the story which follows. In what various troubles does it comfort us?

When the Apostles came back from their trial journey of teaching and healing, they must have been tired; so Christ said "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place" because He knew that they would like to be alone with Him and tell Him all that they had done. But they could not keep away from the people long, they all came to Christ in the desert and He healed and taught them then the Apostles came to Him and asked Him to send them away so that they could get food, but Christ said "feed ye

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them" but they said "two hundred pennyworth of bread would not be enough for so many. Then Christ said "How many loaves have ye and they said unto him, "five loaves and two small fishes" and they brought them to Him, He took them and blessed them and gave them to the Apostles to give to the multitude, and they did eat and were filled, they that did eat were about five thousand, and they took up of the fragments that were left, about twelve baskets full, and he sent them away.

When Christ said "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place" it shows He knew what it was to be tired, because He was man as well as God and he knew that they would like to tell him all that they had been doing. It comforts us because it shows that God will never give us more than we can do, and that God often takes us apart sometimes through trouble. It also shows us that if we have faith it will be alright. To God nothing is impossible.

The last quotation contrasts well with that from Form IA., and yet what simple lessons have been drawn from the story.

These quotations from the Bible Lessons illustrate better than any other subject the power of *Narration*, by which Miss Mason sets such store. She often reminds us that the mind knows nothing but what it can reproduce in the form of an answer to a question put by the mind to itself. *We* do not question the children, for this disturbs them with the anxiety of finding out what answer we expect. And we refrain from interrupting a narration to correct mistakes. Our aim is to accustom the children to narrate in due order a passage that has been read to them only once. Each child in the class should know the whole, but one can only be allowed to tell a part as a proof of this, another child going on where the first leaves off. Of course, the reading must be good, not so fast or so monotonous that it makes no impression. A good narration depends also on the worth of the book. Should a teacher choose to amplify a lesson with passages of her own selection, it often happens that the children are unable to recollect what has been quoted from some text-book or Encyclopædia. But the right presentment of a subject by good writers appeals to the children and they remember and

relate the matter perfectly; so that the choice of books is a very delicate matter, and we have not leisure each to be his own authority. Long experience and constant revision of the syllabus are both needed, for children do no work on a book that does not suit them. Many books, even excellent ones, have been withdrawn from the programme because the examinations showed that they were not taken in by the children. This is reasonable, because the books are the sources of the ideas by which the children's minds are to be nourished.

History is the pivot upon which [sic] this whole scheme of education turns, because nothing else gives us so much instruction in the art of living. The interest in a lesson centres round famous men, great characters, and (when the children are older) great movements as well as great personages.

The following account of *how King Alfred learned to read* was dictated by a girl of seven in Form IB. in the Council School at Drighlington:—

When the Danes came to England the Saxons had settled down in their homes. Ethelwulf was the King of Wessex, and then he became King of England. His wife was called Osburga. She was a good and wise woman. One day she was sitting looking at a book and her five little boys were playing. Alfred, the youngest boy came to look. Soon the other boys gathered round her and then there were only 5 curly heads to be seen. The books in those times cost a lot of money, and the pictures were painted by hand and there were not many books. Osburga said "Do you like this book?" The boys said "Yes!" Then she said "Well, the first boy who reads this book shall have it." "Do you mean it?" said the youngest boy. "Yes! of course" his mother said. Some days after, Alfred came to his mother and read the book without a mistake. So she gave it to him and kissed him. Afterwards he became King Alfred, and he not only read books, but found time to write them.

The next is dictated by a boy of nine in a home-schoolroom in Form IA.:—

Tell what you know about Sir John Franklin.

There was a man called Sir John Franklin and he longed to find the North West Passage. So it was decided that he should go. He took with them more than a hundred men. The two ships were called *The Terror* and *the Erebus*. The day came when the last good-bye was said and they began sailing away towards the north. When they had been away quite a long time, and they did not come home, Lady Franklin and some other people got rather anxious about them. Years passed and nothing was seen or heard about Sir John Franklin and his brave men. They sent ships out to see if they could find them, they searched for a long time and could not find any signs of them. They stopped on strange islands and put food under some stones. They caught wild white foxes and put collars on them and on the collars was written where food was to be found. At last they found a can with a paper inside, which had written on it that they had found the North West Passage and that Sir John Franklin had died a few days later. They went on, and some people called Eskimos who lived right up in the north said they had seen some white men in sledges, and as they went they fell and died, and their skeletons were lying

about here and there. They had got some silver spoons and forks of Sir John Franklin's and they gave them to the men and they brought them home to England. And when they told Lady Franklin she was very sad indeed. She was going to have a monument made for him. But before she wrote it, she died too, so Tennyson wrote it.

The 2nd Form reads, besides English History, the contemporary period in a history of France. One question in the Easter examination was: *What were the chief points of the Petition of Right? Why did the Commons draw up this petition?* The following answer was dictated by a girl in IIB., nearly ten years old:—

The chief points of the Petition of Right were. (1) That there should be some cause shown before people could be put in prison. (2) The King must not make laws without Parliament's consent.

The Commons drew up this petition because the king (Charles I.) would do what he ought not to do without the Parliament's consent. He always said to them "Give me money" and the Parliament always answered and said "You must put right all this long list of grievances first." And he wouldn't do it: and you can tell how very silly the king must have been—for he asked, once, for a great deal of money, and they said they would only give him half, and he said—"Well—I won't have it at all!" That was Tonnage and Poundage. Once Charles really did try to get some money by fighting against Spain—for the Parliament wanted to have an army against Spain: but the Spanish won. So the Parliament was very cross with Charles and didn't give him any money.

The question on French History: *What do you know of St. Vincent de Paul?* was answered by a girl, nearly nine, in the same form, as follows:—

S. Vincent de Paul was the son of a poor farmer, and Vincent's duty was to tend the sheep. His favourite place to watch them was from an oak tree. His father thought the best thing for him to be was to be a clergyman and he was sent to a school to learn how to be one, and he got on so well that he went for 5 years to a nobleman's house to teach his little boys. And then he was left some money and had to go and attend to it, he went by land and when he was thinking of coming back a friend persuaded him to go by sea, and they had only got a little way out, when some pirates took the ship and took them to Africa. And there they were sold, and Vincent was sold to a fisherman, but as he was not a good sailor the fisherman sold him to an old chemist, who was very kind to him. And then the old chemist died and Vincent was given to his nephew who was very harsh, and he sold him to a farmer who had once been a Christian, and had many wives. One day one of these wives told Vincent to sing her a Christian song so he sang her one of the Psalms, and she was so touched that she told her husband she couldn't see how he could turn away from such a good religion. Then the farmer and St. Vincent went back to France.

St. Vincent's great works were among the poor, the first Foundling Hospital was founded by him, also the Sisters of Charity. He also went among the galley slaves.

These answers show that the children have pictured the events of other times and have realised that the people who took part in them felt much as we should do in similar circumstances.

General History is learnt in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Forms, from a book on the British Museum, which with its pictures and descriptions of the exhibits is of value even to those who do not live in London. This is shown by the following answer written by a boy of twelve in the 3rd Form, to the question:—
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What may we learn of the history of Athens from the Elgin Marble Room in the British Museum?

The Elgin Marbles are so called because Lord Elgin, the British ambassador at Constantinople, bought them, and had them removed from Athens to England. They carry us back to the time of Pheidias and his school. The wall of the room is decorated by a long band or frieze, depicting the yearly procession that began in the outer Potters' Field, wound its way round the base of the Acropolis, and up through the entrance by the Gate Temple, and on to the temple of Minerva, where the maidens presented a dress to adorn either her statue by Pheidias, or another supposed to have fallen from heaven. The metopes, in which the figures stand out in bold relief, depict fights between Lapiths and Centaurs. Then there are the East and West Pediments. The former depicts the story of how Athene (or Minerva) sprang fully armed from the head of Zeus; near are Hephaestos, who, with his axe, split open the God's head, Iris, the rainbow messenger, and Theseus. The other Pediment shows how Athens received its name. There was a dispute between Poseidon (or Neptune) and Athene, as to whose the state of Attica should be. The gods decided that it should belong to whoever gave the best gift to the city. Poseidon struck the rock with his trident, and a salt spring appeared (according to some a horse appeared); Athene, the goddess of wisdom, stooped down and planted a seed-stone which grew, as the company watched, into an olive tree, which spread along the river banks and added oil to the riches of the country. The city was given to Athene, and became Athens.

In connection with this book, the children keep a "Book of Centuries," in which they write down the events that come in their reading, each on the page appropriated to a century, and sketch on the opposite page a vase, a bust, a weapon or other specimen which is a record of the matter. This device helps the children to realise the lapse of time. For the same purpose a History Chart for the term is kept by each pupil above the 1st Form after the pattern of one originated by Miss Beale. A sheet of paper is divided into 100 squares for a century, ten years to a line. Events are recorded in the squares by symbols such as a crown or fleur de lys for a coronation, crossed swords for battles, a little map, a great fire. The designing of these little pictures impresses their relative positions on the memory, and consequently the correct order of events in a century. Dates must be given with every history lesson to place it correctly. A few should be learnt perfectly at each lesson and entered on the chart at leisure.

The English History book used in Forms III. and IV. rather seems to have failed to touch the imagination of the girls. It was difficult to find a good answer to the question: *Describe the action of James I. as regards foreign policy*, etc. But here are two extracts which show a living interest, the first by a girl of twelve in Form III.:—
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James' foreign policy was to be friends with all the other country's and if possible to have peace. He was, as it was very truly said "The wisest fool in Christendom" he thought that his foreign policy was really wonderful and that the country that would not follow it was exceedingly blunt-headed, but, unluckily they would not follow it and James was often finding that if he did not look out he would be in trouble with the country he was trying (in vain) to take his foreign Policy.

James tried to stop the war between France and the Empire (Germany and the Netherlands) but that of course was futile for they were not to be stopped in the middle of the war.

A girl of thirteen in Form IV. describes the "New Model" Army:—

Cromwell was the man who first of all started the New Army. He saw that a change was wanted, from the old state of affairs, and, as he said to a friend,—“How can you expect men, the simple country folk, or the rable of the land, to oppose gentlemen with gentle blood in their veins, who are ready to fight and die for their cause, and who are full of enthusiasm? You want men who are zealous in their religion, who are good soldiers, and who have some go in them.” Cromwell therefore got together a troop or regiment of cavalry. These men, were men who were prepared to sacrifice everything for their cause, and who really thought that the king was a tyrant, and that they fighting on the side of the right. He made them wear a sort of uniform, of buff jackets, and breeches, good tall boots, breastplates and helmets of iron, (which one them the name of ironsides) and good, straight swords which they knew how to use. These men he mounted on sturdy steeds, and gave them plenty of discipline and drill. These were the foundations of the Army of to-day.

These girls use the same book on French History as Form II., but being older they are expected to recognise cause and effect, as the following question shows: “*France could play no part in the affairs of the world in the early years of Louis XIII's reign.*” *What were the reasons for this?* This is briefly answered by a girl of thirteen in the 3rd Form:—

France could play no part whatever in the affairs of the world at the commencement of Louis XIII's reign. There was civil war going on between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants, and the whole country was very poor. The wars had stopped the people from cultivating the ground, and no corn was grown. To pay the armies, the people were heavily taxed, and once or twice they revolted. They had a minor for a king, and Mary of Medici kept a court where much of the money ground from the people was wasted in pleasure. When Louis became major, matters were nearly as bad as before, for he was not the man to be a king, or to keep order. It was no

use for the starving people to attempt to cultivate the ground, for the soldiers came and took all that they had grown away.

In addition, Form IV. uses a book on European History. The examination questions and her pupils' answers usually show the teacher whether her lessons have been inspired by ideas. For instance, the last question quoted, and also the following to Form IV., each give an idea for a lesson, and both are taken

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from the words of the books used in teaching. "*Nothing of any considerable moment was done in Europe for a whole generation which Cardinal Richelieu had not foreseen or prepared.*"

Explain and justify this statement. In preparing her next day's lesson, the teacher should note such a generalisation as this, and seek for instances in the context. She might call attention to the statement before the girls began reading, and advise them to note the proofs. These would then be written on the blackboard as the girls offered them in the course of their reading. Later on these headings might either be repeated from memory by way of recapitulation, or be included in a written report. Girls taught in this way soon acquire the power of grasping the salient points in a passage, and in the 5th and 6th Forms they read a considerable quantity of history by themselves, with the help of headings on the blackboard. During the Easter term, they studied the French Revolution and a volume of Carlyle was added to their English and European History books. An answer by a girl of seventeen shows the effect of having studied living books of history:

Describe, in the style of Carlyle, the fall of the Bastille.

What is this strange sound which falls on our ears? People are shouting, and crying, what is the meaning of all this? Look, in the suburb of St. Antoine, what is all this crowd of slowly moving people? In this part, worse than others, the hubbub seems to rise. All round the shop of the wine merchant see how they all surge, like some immense ocean in a storm. But now they move; onwards, ever onwards they move, towards that great and gloomy-looking building called the Bastille. Behind them are dragged two cannons, arms are quickly obtained from everywhere possible, and on they go surging and swaying, fighting and pushing, the women also with them, towards their goal. Those inside, cannot understand what is happening, how should they?

What to do? Shall they blow up the fortress? No, rather wait and see what is the temper of the rabble, whether they will come to terms or not. But no, they are set on having the prisoners released, by sheer force they will bring them out of that awful place. All round the building they surge, surrounding it on every side. For four long hours the weary fighting goes on. The women, too, are serving at the guns, they will help as well as the men, they, too, will help to demolish the thing which they loathe. What is happening at that gate over there? Is the drawbridge moving? Yes, it is descending. They, in the fortress, must be giving in. Look, it has reached the ground. See how the people rush on it, surely it will break under the strain. But no, they are hammering on the doorway now, they will *not* be kept back, everything is trampled down before them. At last the door itself is forced open, and in they all swarm. "To the

dungeons first!" they cry. What must the prisoners in there be thinking as the dull booming of the guns outside breaks in upon their silence. And now they are led out amid shouts and acclamations. What joy to see the light of day once more, *can* it be true, surely they will go mad with joy. But look,

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there is one who is really mad, for many long years has *he* been there, so long in fact, that his reason has gone. This is indeed a joyous day, in all future times it must be celebrated. This, we will call the year one, we will not count all those awful years that have gone before. No, this is an entirely new era. Woe, woe, to those who now try to take our liberty from us.

A criticism lesson on the succeeding period was given lately by a House of Education student to girls aged fifteen to seventeen. Passages were read aloud by the girls and the illustrations of the lesson that "History repeats itself" were pointed out by the teacher and quite appreciated. For example, criticism was directed towards the modern advocates of state control in connection with the failure of National Workshops established in Paris in 1848. And the war between Italy and Austria was vividly realised because of the situation in the present war, just when the Italians were withstanding the terrific Austrian onslaught in the Trentino.

Calendars and chronicles of the present war are kept by all forms above the 1st; and selections from the war news are read aloud to be reproduced as Compositions a day or two later.

A term's work under the head of **Literature** accompanies and illustrates the history, historical novels being included when they have taken their place as literature. Children who become familiar with the best writings find inferior work distasteful. And this explains why stories re-told to the children, e.g., from Chaucer, the Faery Queen, or Pilgrim's Progress, are not approved of. Since the value of the poem or romance lies not in the story alone, but in the telling of it, it is not fair to pick out the story as if the children are capable of enjoying nothing else. They can have the originals read to them when they are old enough, and translations by authors who do not write down to the supposed level of children. In Miss Ambler's school at Drighlington, Form IA. loves Greek Tales above all other lessons, though Pilgrim's Progress comes next. A girl of eight in this school dictated the following story of Ulysses and Polyphemus:

Ulysses sailed on until he came to another island. Then he took 12 men, and when they had walked on the shore a little while they saw a cave. Ulysses and his 12 men went into this cave and there was no one in it. It just looked like a dairy. There were baskets of cheese and bowls of milk. When they had been in the cave a little while, there came in a monstrous man. He milked his ewes. Then he put up a big stone at the door. Then he saw Ulysses and his men. Polyphemus got two of the men and killed them and knocked out their brains. He put them on his fire and roasted them and ate them. Then he drank a bowl of milk. Then he fell asleep.

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Ulysses thought of a plan. He got the giant's big stick and made a point at the end. He told his men to hold it while he put it into the giant's eye. Ulysses got three of the

biggest rams and Ulysses got underneath the biggest ram and tied his men to the others. The giant took the big stone from the door. Polyphemus called for the other giants, and they said, "What is the matter, Polyphemus?" He said, "Nobody has put out my eye." They said, "Well! if nobody has touched you why have you called for us?" and they went back. Ulysses and his men went out of the cave on the rams. Polyphemus said to the biggest ram, "You don't usually come out last." Ulysses went out to his ships and sailed away. When he had got out a little way he called out to Polyphemus, "If anybody asks who blinded you, say that Ulysses of Ithaca did it." Then the giant broke a big piece of rock and threw it at the ship. It fell in front of the ship and drove it back. Then he threw another big rock and that fell behind the ship and drove it farther out to sea. Then the giant prayed to his father, the sea god Poseidon, that Ulysses should never reach Ithaca, or, if he did, he should be sad and lonely.

The next example is from "Pilgrim's Progress." A boy of 7½ in a home school-room tells how Christian and Hopeful met with the Shining Ones.

Christian and Hopeful were in an orchard belonging to the King of the city when they met the Shining Ones. Then they went on and the Shining Ones said to them that they had two more difficulties to pass. Then they presently came to a big black river, and Christian fell in at first, then Hopeful fell in, but he managed to keep up above, and he had much ado to keep his brother's head above water. Then a great cloud came over him and evil spirits came round him, then, when he took heart, all the evil spirits left him alone to the mercy of the water. Then the Shining Ones met them again on the other side, then they went up the hill to the city with much ease. Then a whole crowd came out to meet them, then all the King's trumpeters came out to meet them, then they went on and all shouted, and men looked over the top and asked for their certificates and they were handed up to them and taken to the King. Then up came Ignorance and he knocked on the gate, but he couldn't get in.

The children in the 2nd Form read aloud a play of Shakespeare's in order simply to know and enjoy it. Longer books are read to them. One of Sir Walter Scott's novels, descriptive of the history period, is usually set for the term, or else a book by a contemporary writer, because the literary productions of a period enlarge our conception of its history. Compositions on subjects from these books are asked for during the term, and also at examinations. A girl of 12 (not one of the foremost), at Drighlington, thus described a scene from Macbeth, after hearing it beautifully read by a visitor to the school. *Say what you think led the doctor to come to this conclusion about the illness of Lady Macbeth: 'I think, but dare not speak.'*

In a small ante-room a doctor and gentlewoman were talking of Lady Macbeth. The doctor was trying to persuade the gentlewoman to tell him what

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Lady Macbeth had said any time as she was walking in her sleep, for it was an accustomed thing for her to do so.

While they were thus talking about her, she came walking very slowly into the ante room with a taper which was lit in her hand.

With the other hand she was rubbing the hand that held the taper, and all the time was talking of different things.

Some were about spots of blood on her hand, and about Duncan having a lot of blood in him, yet all the time she was in a fast sleep. At last she went to bed not knowing she had been up.

When she had gone the doctor said, "I think, but dare not speak."

He must have thought that Lady Macbeth had killed Duncan, but dare not say so for many reasons.

First, because Macbeth, who was now King, could have him hanged.

Another reason was he had not sufficient proof that it was true.

So he bid the gentlewoman goodnight, saying, "This is beyond my practice," and the gentlewoman replied, "I would not have a heart in my bosom like hers for all the world. Goodnight, good doctor"; and there they separated, not saying a word to anyone about what they had heard or thought.

We do not teach Composition as a separate subject, but it is found that children who read first-rate books, naturally express themselves well, spell correctly, and have rich vocabularies. Consider the choice of these lines by a little girl of 10 ½ in Form IIA., who copied them into her Nature Note Book:

"To me be Nature's volume broad display'd,
And to peruse its all instructing page;
Or, haply catching inspiration thence
Some easy passage raptur'd to translate,
My sole delight." *Thomson.*

The book on English Literature set for Forms III. and IV. gives only such details of an author's life as affect his work, and shows the scope and style of a book or poem by copious quotations which make one eager to read the whole work. The 4th Form reads more poetry and contemporary literature than the 3rd, e.g., a few of Bacon's Essays and three of Milton's Poems, when studying the reigns of James I. and Charles I.

Write, as far as you can in Bacon's manner, an essay on Adversity. This was done by a girl nearly 15, as follows:

It was an high speech of Seneca (after the manner of the Stoics) and yet an higher, far too high for a heathen, "Goodness in prosperity is good, but goodness in Adversity is yet an higher virtue." . . . Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament, Adversity the blessing of the New. Yet has not the pen of the Holy Spirit laboured greater in the lamentations of Job than in the rejoicings of Solomon?

In tapestry it pleaseth the eye better to see light figures on a dark background, than to see dark and gruesome figures on a light and glad background, judge therefore the pleasures of the heart by that which pleaseth the eye.

Prosperity discovereth vice, but Adversity discovereth virtue.

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The 3rd and 4th Forms in our Practising School, aged 12 to 15, had a criticism lesson lately on some short poems of Tennyson. With sympathetic guidance from the teacher (who restrained herself admirably from talking much about the passages she had selected for reading), the girls were able to perceive some of the characteristic beauties of Tennyson's work: his use of alliteration and repetition, the musical cadence of so many lines, his knowledge of nature, the wonderful pictures which we see as we read his poems. The girls showed an intelligent appreciation of the characteristics illustrated, as well as a sense of pleasure in the reading.

So it is not surprising that the girls of the 5th and 6th Forms, who read a great deal in a term, can make their own criticisms and comparisons—not dictated by teacher or textbook—and can recognise an author's style and some of its distinguishing qualities. The two answers read in imitation of Carlyle and Bacon go to prove this.

Having referred to spelling in connection with Composition, it is necessary to mention that we do not give unseen Dictation. The children in Forms II, III., and IV. prepare about two pages from one of their reading books, such as "Robinson Crusoe." The words they do not know are written on the blackboard for them to visualise till they can "see" them with their eyes shut. Each child next writes one or two of the new words on the board from memory to prove that they have been learnt. Then a small part only of the prepared passage is dictated, and the children are expected to write this without any mistakes. Sentences are read only once. The words are learnt again and written over correctly. The books set for History, Literature, and Geography are, of course, used for reading aloud as well as for composition and dictation. But to return to the object of our Literature lessons. It is to let poems and books themselves speak to the children; and therefore its purpose links Literature with Picture Study and listening to Music. Great use is made of these in the Parents' Union School, because children unconsciously form a taste for what is beautiful simply by contemplating the best. "We needs must love the highest when we see it."

From *Picture Study*, children become acquainted with a number of great pictures, so as to recognise them as they recognise a familiar landscape or the faces of friends. All the Forms have half-a-dozen examples each term of the work of one artist:

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for instance, Memlinc, Rembrandt, Titian, Velasquez, Turner, Jean François Millet, Holman Hunt. They study the picture before them, noticing all that it tells, and turn it over to describe it from memory. Sometimes the teacher calls attention to details while they are looking at the picture and describes the colouring if possible, or helps them to feel the beauty of design and light and shade. But nothing can take the place of the children's own observation, which enables them to know a painter's works by sight and to feel at home when they go into a good picture gallery. Here are two descriptions from memory. *The woman feeding the children*, by Jean François Millet. This is dictated by a child of 8.

The clouds in the picture look like evening or very early morning, and the three children are sitting on a doorstep and their mother on a stool in front of them with a

bowl of soup in her hand, and the middle one opens its mouth eagerly for the soup, there is an orchard right at the back there is a lot of chickens.

And a little girl of 11 in Form IIA. writes of "*The Wood Sawyers*," by the same artist, as follows:—

The Woodsawyers are sawing up a trunk of a tree into round slabs of wood, they each have their coats and caps off, and each have hold of the two handled saw, and you can see they are working most awfully hard to get the trunk cut up before they have to go home; a little way away there is another man chopping down the trees ready for the other men to saw up. The wood is very dark; there is a wall on the left with some ivy climbing up the wall, and it is made of flints. On the right there is a pit.

A programme of *Music* for the children to learn or to hear is issued for every term in the PARENTS' REVIEW. At the House of Education we have a concert at the end of each term to perform the works studied. Last term we had English Music before 1625. The piano pieces are chosen to suit different ages and the Practising School girls had learnt and played some of them, such as "The King's Hunting Jig," by John Bull; Selinger's Round" and "The Carman's Whistle," by William Byrd. Byrd's beautiful Canon: "Non nobis Domine," and an anthem ascribed to Henry VIII. were sung by the students, who had learnt them at their tonic sol-fa class; and the music mistresses sang a few Elizabethan songs as solos and duets, and selections from the church music by Palestrina, which was set in addition for use on Sundays. So much orchestral music is arranged for pianoforte duets that we often use these to gain some knowledge of classical masterpieces in preparation for hearing good concerts.

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Citizenship. An essential feature of the Parents' Union School programme is the use of Plutarch's Lives of Greek and Roman soldiers, patriots, statesmen, to give the heroic impulse to the citizen life. Aristides the Just, Themistocles, Pericles and Demosthenes, Brutus and Cicero, Solon and Lycurgus are famous for all time because of the services each rendered to his country. It is the man as a citizen whose history has come down to us and has made his name familiar enough to stand for ideals of national service and the conduct of statesmen. Plutarch's Lives, therefore, are read aloud to the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Forms, and narrated by the children, new names being written on the blackboard to assist the memory.

The 2nd Form was asked at the Easter examination:—1. *In what way did Pericles make Athens beautiful? How did he persuade the people to help him?* 2. *How did Pericles manage the people in time of war lest they should force him to act against his own judgment?* The latter question was answered as follows by a girl in Form IIA. nearly 12 years old.

Pericles never spoke anything that he ought not to have spoken. Pericles never drank wine nor any intoxicating liquid. He did this because he wanted to keep his mind clear, so that if anybody asked him anything that they ought not to ask he could reply properly and sensibly. He managed the people in time of war by shutting the gates of the city and by not letting them go out of the city. Pericles always kept his own

judgment by not listening to what they said, if it was against what he thought was right and what he thought ought to be done.

Indirect teaching on the duties of citizens is found throughout the children's reading, in history, biography, and above all poetry. It is not desirable to insist on the moral, even of a tale; only to secure that it is not overlooked. This is one reason why Miss Mason's book on elementary Ethics, "Ourselves," is read to herself by each girl in Forms III. to VI. without comment. It is intended to give that knowledge of self as a human being which issues in a right appreciation of other people. The children also have books about the laws and institutions of their own country and empire, and the management of local affairs. Similar subjects are headed "Every-Day Morals and Economics" in the two highest forms, and include some study of the problems of our Allies.

The aims of a *Geography* lesson are shown by the geographical readers we use. Map questions are given with each country and used at the beginning of every lesson that a thorough knowledge of the latitude, coast line, mountains, and so on, may give grounds for deducing the climate, products, habits of

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the people. Next the children are to store up pictures of the world we live in, and so they read books by such travellers as Mrs. Bishop (Isabella Bird), Sir Francis Younghusband, Sir Henry Norman; or a life of an explorer like David Livingstone. In order that these pictures of the imagination may be connected with the children's experience, *Out of Door Geography* supplies examples for comparison. The Ambleside students in training can actually follow the course of a river and see the meaning of watershed, basin, tributary, bed, banks, source, and so on, in the loveliest of concrete examples which lead to understanding the drainage of the Lake District as a whole. Ordnance maps are studied and explained, and by pacing with the compass, small plans of some principal roads through the village are made, sufficiently correct to illustrate the work of map-making. An understanding of this is indispensable for teaching even the 1st Form, which was asked in the Easter Examination: *Show by a plan what the place you live in would look like from an airship.* A boy of 7 in Form IA, who drew an excellent plan of his school and grounds, wrote the following answer to: *How does the compass help a Zeppelin to find its way to England?*

The compass has a little needle which always points to the North. All Zeppelins have a compass, and the German airmen in the Zeppelin look at the compass to see which way to go. If they want to go to England they would have to go West, so they would look at the compass and find the North, and as they want to go to the west they go to the left of this northern point. As they move further to the West the needle is trying to pull all the time to the right.

A little girl of 8 in the same form at Drighlington answered the following question: *Which is the hottest part of the earth? Why? How can you find out where the north is?*

The hottest part of the earth is the equator, and that is round the middle of the globe. It is the hottest because it is always under the sun and because the sun's rays shine straight upon it.

To find the north we can take a stick out at 12 o'clock and the sun is shining in the south, the stick will make a shadow pointing to the north.

At night we can see the North Star, and the Plough points to the North Star. If I want to find the north in the morning I can turn my face to the east and my back to the west, then my right arm points to the south and my left arm points to the north.

A short description of the *Nature Work* done by Ambleside students will best show how this subject is treated in the Parents' Union School. They go in small groups for Nature Walks to observe whatever they happen to meet, say trees, flowers, birds, insects, to begin with. Each chooses what she likes to bring home to paint (with the brush only) in her Nature Note Book, [p 678]

where she also writes such facts as cannot be recorded with the brush: the place where a specimen was found, a note of its rarity, how to recognise again a bird once seen, and so on; with dated lists of birds, resident or migrant, and of plants seen in flower month by month. These Nature Walks are prepared for and supplemented by indoor lectures on trees, flowerless plants, British animals and insects, Geology, Astronomy, and more detailed botanical and zoological studies. The school children likewise keep Nature Note Books and take Nature Walks, and they read in school many interesting books on the subjects just mentioned by authors who become quite intimate friends: Mrs. Brightwen and Miss Arabella Buckley especially. The children do not merely read about Natural History without specimens or experiments; neither do they learn scientific facts from objects and experiments alone, without a book. The oral lesson is remembered in a dry and mechanical fashion, for we cannot all be experts in every subject we teach; but in many cases we can use the books of those who have first-hand knowledge. How to use them can be illustrated by describing a criticism lesson given lately to the 2nd Form on the pores in the epidermis of a leaf. The children peeled the epidermis from a leaf of the wild hyacinth to see that it is transparent. The picture of a leaf seen in section under the microscope was given in their books, and they saw that the epidermis is a single row of cells on the surface. They read aloud in turn a passage telling how the plant gives off water-vapour through the stomata or "little mouths" and describing the guard cells. Then they looked through the microscope at these cells, first open and then closed by immersion in a solution of salt. Then followed the narration of the passage. Next the teacher showed some experiments which had been prepared beforehand. One leaf plugged into a test tube with cotton wool had deposited drops of moisture on the glass, proving that it transpired. Another leaf which was greased with vaseline on the under surface to prevent transpiration had not withered, and this fact supported the statement that most of the stomata are on the under surface of leaves. Then the children continued to read from the book and narrate. They had been required to observe facts and conditions and to draw conclusions, and the additional knowledge conveyed in the best way by the author of the book provided food for thought and clothed the dry bones of fact. In a lesson of this kind it makes no great difference if the children are new to the school. They are [p 679]

equally interested and can consequently narrate equally well with the children who are used to this method. As an example of how the little ones tell what they have seen, I will read the

description of a woodpecker dictated by a child in Form IA, nearly 8 years old, and two kinds of twigs by a boy of 9.

The Woodpecker when it goes up trees it goes first one side and then the other. Its tongue is very sticky at the end, he eats the insects and catches them by putting his tongue out. They stick to it. His back is a greeny brown, his wings grey and green, and his tail is yellow, and there's a streak of red on his throat and his head too. They don't have very comfortable nests.

A *Chestnut twig* is brown, and it has got things like horse shoes on it, it is fairly smooth. And its bud is brown too, but the top bud is fatter than the rest. But later on it gets stickier and stickier till at last all the brown shoots off and there is green underneath; the brown sheaths are a sort of cover for the leaves underneath. And still later on yet the green begins to get open and they come into leaves. But further on yet chestnuts begin to come, if it's a tree that's to say, and they drop off when autumn begins to come and boys begin to pick them up and play with them.

An *Ash* has a greyish stalk and has little lumps on its stalk, but its buds are black, very very black, they are big with sharp corners some of them, till by and by the flower comes out, and the flower is all bunches of lovely purple colour, they are very nice. Till further on yet little sort of keys come out and these are called the ash keys. Until further on yet they drop off, then we pick them up and have some fun with them. Sometimes we paint them; they grow in clumps.

It should be borne in mind that the questions usually deal with matters which the children have read weeks or months before, and they are able to answer without any immediate preparation.

Such a hurried survey of the programme almost leaves one breathless, and wondering how "one small head should carry all he knew." But the Parents' Union School has been working for 25 years, and the children are the best proofs of what is good for them. That the extracts from their papers are not isolated examples is shown by these 50 sets of last Easter's examination papers chosen after the majority of the papers sent in had been returned to the parents. In order that you may judge how much ground is covered in one term by children aged 9 to 12, the complete set of questions just issued to Form II. for the July examination has been placed in your hands. As a general rule, with few exceptions, every child answers every question, though in Arithmetic and Grammar the answers are not always accurate. The answers vary in length as well as in power, because each child is working independently, that is, at her own pace. So much work is set that the quick ones have plenty to do. And yet

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the slower ones are not hurried; they get what they can from the books according to their ability, and it has been noticed that backward children profit and become brighter when their minds are fed. We believe that all children are capable of educating themselves in the way I have described, and that such an education by books is *due* to all children of whatever parentage. At Drighlington Miss Ambler has proved that it can be carried out in a village school in a mining district. She started with the 1st Form over two years ago, and as the children move

up the school, they enter higher forms in the Parents' Union School, so that they are now well accustomed to the methods. You have heard a few extracts from their examination papers, and I am sure that you who teach large classes would be even more impressed than I was with their bright and eager faces and the unaffected delight in their books shown, not by a gifted few, but by a whole form.

¹ Read before an Educational "Course" at the Training College, Bingley.

² "Citizens to be." By Miss M. L. V. Hughes.

³ In connection with the *Parents' Union School*.

⁴ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, art. "Psychology."

⁵ The Secretary, Miss. E.A. Parish, P.N.E.U. Office, 26, Victoria Street, London, S.W.

⁶ A paper written for the Bingley Vacation Course, August, 1916