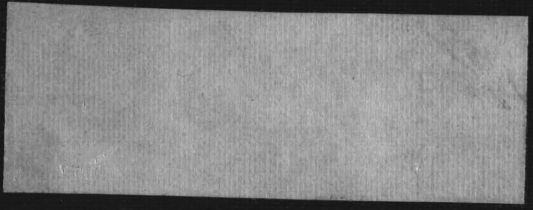


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EXPERIMENTS IN THE APPLICATION OF PRAGMATIC PRINCIPLES TO THE TEACHING
OF ENGLISH COMPOSITION

BY

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Principal of Teachers College High School
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Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements For the
Degree of Master of Arts

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P R E F A C E .

This thesis is the result of some of the author's attempts to solve a problem on which he has been working, both as teacher and student, for several years. He long ago reached the belief that English Composition as a school study has greater possibilities for arousing the interest of the student and for developing power in thought organization, than any other subject. But he has been confronted with what the majority of competent high school teachers assert to be the facts in the case, namely: that, in the entire high school curriculum, English Composition is the subject most detested by the students; that it is the worst taught subject in the curriculum; that, in proportion to its possibilities, its actual results, as seen by both teachers and students, are generally less than those of any other subject. His problem has been that of trying to realize in practice the possibilities of the subject, which are so manifest in theory.

For several years, his efforts produced hardly any favorable results, but a course in the Philosophy of Education Under Professor J. H. Coursault of the Teachers College Faculty, promised more light. He there obtained some ideas which stimulated him to attack the problem afresh. This thesis is the history of this new effort. He makes no claim to having originated the general theories of such investigations, but has merely applied to the particular field of composition, some principles which he obtained originally from Professor Coursault. To the latter, accordingly, is due much of the credit for whatever of value there may be in this thesis.

The original theory, while not modified in any of its essentials, has been given a much clearer setting because of assistance received by the author from Professors Fairchild, Charters and Meriam of the Teachers College Faculty. Professor Fairchild in particular was of great assistance in suggesting the common-sense method of developing rhetorical principles, as given in Chapter II, Section 4.

Acknowledgements should also be made to the following: to Misses Lucy Wolff and Maude Beamer, practice teachers in the Teachers College High School, for so cordially co-operating with the author in working out the experiments; to Mr. Bertram Harry for reading the original copy of the thesis; and to the author's friends, the students in his own section of the English II class in the Teachers College High School, 1907-8, for so willingly helping him in every way they could.

Carter Alexander.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE BUILDING OF THE THEORYIntroductory.

Composition, in the sense of meaning the organization and expression in language of one's thoughts, was an important activity of man at a very early time, for the reason that it was necessary to him in his struggle for existence; indeed, without it he could scarcely have out-distanced the other animals against whom he had to contend. It arose long before there were any schools and it would have continued and probably have improved greatly if they had never come into existence. So when schools did arise, it was very natural for man to introduce into them some form of study which should represent the valuable composition experience he had accumulated in previous times. The need for the composition activity has increased with man's progress and consequently he has ever found more and more need for keeping a corresponding subject in his school curriculum, until now this branch is one of our most important school studies. If this study in our schools at the present time is to represent truly the experience for which it stands, it must conform to the basic principles underlying that experience and any true method of teaching the subject must take these principles into account. Our first task is accordingly to discover if possible these principles.

But in the effort to find them, it must be remembered that composition as a school study has been in existence a great length of time so that the school work in it has in all probability been perverted from

its original aim and the principles consequently much obscured. Accordingly an examination of present school work in composition with a view to finding these principles would be a very difficult undertaking and would by no means insure correct results. Under these circumstances, it is well to remember that "Nature is our best psychologist" and to go to her to find these principles in their true and simplest form.

We cannot, however, go back to human experience before there were schools as this would be almost wholly conjecture, but we can find composition going on to-day apparently wholly free from school influences, in much the same way as it must have gone on before schools came into existence. An examination of such composition work to-day will take the place of a study of the earlier experience. Again, if we go back in the history of composition work in the schools, the nearer we can approach its introduction into them, the simpler and more natural the work is and consequently we can find the basic principles there more easily. We also know that composition is only one study in school and that the learning of it is only one phase of the procedure by which we learn anything. Any true method of teaching the study must then conform to the principles underlying the learning process,- the process by which we learn anything. We can find abundant material for a study of the nature of this process in any of our every day experiences.

The first part of this paper, then, will deal with the effort to find the basic principles underlying composition as a valuable experience, worthy of being introduced into the school, by examining: first, composition work outside the school; secondly, composition work in the schools in earlier times; and thirdly, the nature of the learning process. Let us now take up the first of these divisions.

Section 1. Composition Outside the School.

Before beginning the discussion proper, it will be well to state that in this paper composition is used to mean the mental bringing together or co-ordination of images as in narration and description, or of ideas as in exposition and argument, and the expression in language of these relations, usually to others. The composer discovers what are for him new relations between images or ideas and tries to express these relations by means of oral or written language, nearly always with the purpose of giving others the benefit of his discovery by getting them to apprehend these relations also.

But simply finding out what composition is, does not give us an adequate conception of its nature,- we cannot say we understand it fully unless we can determine the conditions under which it will occur. Let us, then, investigate the conditions under which the composition act normally takes place in life outside the school. It is at once evident that it will occur in two forms, oral and written.

It would be very easy to make conjectures regarding the actual occurrence of oral composition outside the school, but such a procedure is not scientific and consequently not conducive to good results. In this investigation the author observed carefully the conversation of Teachers College High School students at different times when they did not know they were being observed, when they were free to talk as they would outside of school, and studied their apparent motives in such conversation. After a number of observations, records of which were kept, the conclusions given later on were drawn. But in order to make these conclusions clear, the record of one such conversation as held by students in the high school office, is given. Most of the students were getting ready for a history lesson, and were, as usual, free to enter

and leave, talk as they pleased, or to study in groups or separately, if they did not disturb the others too much. In order to be perfectly sure of the matter, the students were the next day asked if they knew their conversation of the previous day had been taken down while they were talking and none of them had the slightest suspicion that such a thing had occurred. The principal often sat at his desk writing, and they thought he was doing this if they thought of the matter at all. It must be understood that this is not a selected list of students but represents a chance assortment, being chosen for illustration only because, in this particular instance, six or seven students from the composition class were present, and it was of course desirable to observe them outside the class if possible. The record represents the natural oral composition of students outside the school as well as anything the author would be likely to get hold of. For convenience in studying the record, each turn in the conversation is indicated by a numbered paragraph. The record here is a typical one and will illustrate the author's meaning as well as more extended records would.

RECORD OF CONVERSATION OF TWELVE OR FIFTEEN STUDENTS IN THE TEACHERS HIGH SCHOOL OFFICE WHEN THEY DID NOT KNOW THEY WERE BEING OBSERVED.
(Transcript of the author's notes made at the time.)

1. Conversation started with comments on other students; various questions in this connection asked and answered.
2. Discussion as to how many references some students had to read; asking for and receiving information on this point.
3. One boy discussed paper he was to hand in in history in a humorous way and showed it to the others so as to make them laugh. They did so and he then tried to get them to laugh some more by telling other jokes, - sample; He thought they ought to get extra credit if they had to read their references up at the university proper, as the books there were bigger than the ones in the high school. This aroused another boy who was studying half out loud about Plymouth Rock and the landing of the Pilgrims, and he tried his hand at a joke to show that our Plymouth Rock chickens came over in the May Flower originally. The first boy then made a joke to the effect that they ought to get extra credit if they read outside the text.
4. A boy asked where to find a reference book; received various directions until he found it.

5. Students exchanged ideas so as to get meaning of history lesson.
6. One boy kept asking what some questions were that, it seems, their teacher had given them. He kept breaking into the conversation of the others with his requests until he was greeted by "You make me tired", whereupon he did not ask again.
7. Questions and answers about Luther.
8. A boy hunted another reference book.
9. Discussion as to meaning of term "purgatory" and location of Hades, an understanding of which was essential to good preparation of the lesson. Considerable questioning and answering until all were fairly well satisfied. A new boy who had just entered made a joke on Hades. Finally the discussion became too much like hair-splitting, when one boy said regarding one of the fine distinctions, "I am not caring, myself". The discussion ceased at once.
10. A boy asked principal if he could take a book out before 4 o'clock, the regular hour; he gave arguments as to why he should be permitted to do this and received desired permission.
11. One boy happened to notice another for the first time and called out a greeting to him.
12. A boy explained to the group the workings of a bird-trap he had seen at a moving-picture show the night before. Other pupils explained similar tricks they had seen. One boy described to others the odd phrases used by one magician in his tricks. A general discussion of a ball trick by a magician whom nearly all had seen arose; there was considerable talk as to the merit of his work, the final verdict being that he did pretty good work. One boy asked if the others had seen a certain magician last year; they had not, so he explained to them how that magician worked his best tricks.
13. A boy asked for a reference book until he found it.
14. A boy came up to the principal to get permission to enter classes after absence; he tried to make the best possible presentation of his excuse so as to get the permit at once.
15. Another trick was described.
16. A boy expostulated with another for taking two reference books at once. The first boy carried his point and secured one of the books.
17. A girl asked if the clock were right. She remembered appointment she had with another girl at the general library and found she had waited ten minutes after the time. She expressed her uneasiness aloud and persuaded another girl to go with her to meet the first girl in the library.
18. A boy tried to persuade another to go with him to the library; unsuccessful.
19. Description of another trick.
20. Several students asked questions so as to get points in lesson cleared up and received satisfactory answers from the others.
21. Description of another trick; explanation of some difficult points in it to pupils who asked about it. It was the trick of a woman rising up apparently in air, and the use of the mirrors was well explained by one boy. The others kept questioning him until he made it perfectly clear.
22. A boy asked meaning of a term in English history. Several others explained it to him.
23. Boy mentioned above asked the other to go to library with him, this time first asking him how far along he was. Unsuccessful. Tried again, changing his language, but was still unsuccessful.
24. A boy asked principal's permission to take a book out half an hour earlier than the rules allowed. He was told it was against the rules,

where-upon he presented several reasons for being granted the special privilege and secured it.

25. A new boy came in response to a bulletin board notice, to explain to the principal why he had not been present at a composition conference. His explanation was not satisfactory and he was told this. He then tried to patch up his excuses, but was not successful. He next withdrew to a corner and asked another student in the same class some question about the matter. This student had previously had some trouble for missing a conference, so he explained the matter to the second one and apparently enjoyed having company in his misfortune.

26. During all this time three students who did not care to talk had been off in corners intent on their books. As the hour for the history class drew near, more of the students quieted down and read their lessons silently.

27. A boy asked where to find a reference book; another told him.

28. A notoriously lazy boy asked several students about the length and worth of several history references, implying that he intended to read only the shortest one, which he did, as soon as he received the desired information.

29. Discussion as to the meaning of certain references that had been given rather vaguely. As soon as the matter was cleared up, silence ensued for some time.

30. A boy who needed a ruler to plot a graph for his algebra work, asked various people where to find one, until he had exhausted all possible sources of information.

31. Discussion as to the merit of a certain teacher, between two boys; continued until both agreed that she asked too many questions, when it stopped.

32. After considerable quiet, whispering arose. It could not be heard very well, but was evidently about where to find certain history information.

33. The boy who could not persuade the other to leave before, now left without trying the other again.

34. Another boy persuaded a comrade to leave for the history class with him.

35. One boy asked where to put certain library books and another told him.

36. A new girl arrived, but not being in the same class with the others said nothing.

37. After a period of quiet for some time, the bell for classes rang.

This record then will be used to illustrate the author's conclusions regarding the occurrence of oral composition outside the school, conclusions which, it must be emphasized, were by no means obtained from this record alone. The paragraphs corresponding to each condition are indicated by numbers. These conclusions are that oral composition takes place outside the school when the composer desires:

A. To produce some effect on others.

1. By controlling them for his own ends.

(a) So that they may act as he wishes.

6-9-10-14-16-17-18-23-24-25-34

1. By controlling them for his own ends. (Continued).
 - (b) So that they may give him information.
1-2-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-12-13-17-20-21-22-24-25-27-28-29-30-31-32-35.
2. By satisfying them as regards the demands they make on him.
1-2-4-5-6-7-8-9-12-13-15-16-19-20-21-22-25-27-28-29-30-31-32-35.
3. By giving them pleasure or some other desirable emotion.
3-9-11-12-15-19-21.
4. By giving them useful information etc. so as to influence them for their own good.
12.

B. To please himself by composition.

1. By affording himself mental relief.
17-25.
2. By using his own powers or by expressing himself as the artist does.
3.
3. By pleasing others.
3.

It is not claimed that this is an exhaustive analysis of the conditions, or that the numbers cited give any exact proportion for the motives in each case, but this record is typical of the general conditions under which oral composition takes place in high school students outside the school, so far as the author has been able to discover. It is well, however, at this point to note the great frequency of the occurrence of the first three motives in A and the comparative infrequency of those in B.

The matter of determining the conditions for the occurrence of written composition outside the school is not so easily attended to. The testimony of high school students on things outside the range of the teacher's observation is apt to be rather untrustworthy as there is no check on it, but careful inquiry among the students with the best checks available, has resulted in the conclusion that the conditions are much the same as those necessary for oral composition, particularly those given in A. These give rise almost exclusively to the different kinds of letters the student has occasion to write. Under the influence of the motives mentioned in B, he does ^a little written composition in the

form of the diary and sometimes we find students who compose stories and poetry apparently for the pure pleasure of doing so, but such cases are rare. It should be noted that there is one condition under which the student writes outside the school that does not apply to oral work, and that is when he wishes to put something down in permanent form to serve as a reminder later on, in a note-book for example; this, however, is not what we ordinarily mean by composition.

To sum up, then, composition in life outside the school takes place when the composer wishes to produce some effect upon others or to please himself by giving expression in language to new co-ordinations of ideas or images. Part of the pleasure he creates for himself is due to the effect he produces on others, consequently the main motive in composition work in ordinary life is the desire to produce some effect upon others. In this connection it is well to emphasize some facts that are often overlooked by composition teachers, but which will be immediately apparent after reference to the record or to every day life outside the school. In general we do not purposely tell jokes or stories, give descriptions or information, or present arguments to people who know them as well as we do; that is, we do not compose unless there is some difference in intellectual or emotional level between us and our audience. Again, we take great pains to work up our old stories, jokes, etc. for new acquaintances; that is, we do our best composition work for those to whom we think our co-ordinations of ideas or images are entirely new.

Any inquiry into composition work outside the school, would not yield much fruit for teaching purposes, unless, in addition to determining the conditions under which the act of composition took place, it would also determine the conditions under which it is improved. We shall accordingly now consider this second phase of the matter. This

is a much easier problem than the other for, while it is difficult to see what causes a certain act of composition, after it is once started, it is very easy to view it objectively and see when it is improved. We do not need to take down much data for this but can readily formulate the principles by a little thought.

In this connection it is well to remember what is a mere commonplace, that we do not as a rule tamper with things that are satisfactory. It is thus with composition; so long as the composer is successful in producing the desired effect on others or in pleasing himself adequately, he does not try to improve in expression, and consequently not in the original organization of thought back of the expression. It is only when he fails in these lines that he tries to improve in them; this is very well illustrated in paragraphs 23, 24, 25 of the record on pages six and seven, where the students after failing in their efforts, try to remedy the matter by improving the expression of their thoughts. It will accordingly simplify the matter if we try to discover the conditions under which a composer fails in his expression.

In the first place if he has only a hazy notion of what he is trying to do, that is, if he does not apprehend clearly the precise effect he is trying to produce on others or the precise pleasure he is trying to give himself, he cannot of course aim straight at his goal and so will likely miss it. Also he may realize clearly what he is trying to do, and yet not be fully alive to the value of it so that he fails to put forth his best efforts and does not do what he is perfectly capable of doing. Again, it may be that in imitating others or in the exuberance of hope, etc, he has unconsciously set up for himself an ideal of expression far beyond his present powers of expression, in which case he is of course sure to fail.

But in all of these the failure to attain a strongly desired ideal of expression is the determining factor. So long as the composer is

successful in his efforts at expression, he has no occasion to consider the process, his attention being wholly centered on his ends. But if he is unsuccessful, his attention is naturally directed to improving the process. He will not, however, attempt to improve this process unless he desires very strongly to attain his ideal of expression and so is willing to make the effort again. In a great many cases we see the composer, although he knows he has failed, content to let things go rather than make a harder second effort.

Up to this point, while we have been investigating the conditions under which composition occurs and is improved in life outside the school, we have dealt with a comparatively small number of individual cases. Let us now pursue the inquiry in a still broader field, in the field of composition in the school where we are concerned with the composition experience of the countless millions of individuals who have lived in the past.

Section 2. Composition in the School.

Composition, like any other branch of the curriculum, is a condensed mass of valuable experiences to which the student is to be introduced. Its specific function is to enable him, as far as possible, to develop his powers of expression in language and improve in their use so that he will produce satisfactory effects upon others and also please himself more adequately. We shall now try by an examination of these experiences to find the conditions under which the individual composes and improves in his expression. But we must again recall the fact that composition has been taught for ages so that the underlying principles as they appear in the study to-day are much obscured. Accordingly, let us go back to the earlier periods of the teaching of the subject in order that we may find the principles in a simpler and less distorted form.

The origin of rhetoric, or what is the same thing, the introduction

of the study of composition into the schools, is involved in obscurity and it is not worth our while to spend any time in mere conjecture. We do, however, have a tradition of its origin which, while of course it is of no value as a proof, does harmonize with what we should naturally expect to have been the case, and what is more to the point, with later historical occurrences that are known to be authentic. Let us then examine this tradition, not as a true account of any real event, but merely as an illustration of the underlying principles of the event as it probably did occur.

According to most of the treatises on rhetoric, the story runs that after the expulsion of the tyrants from Syracuse about 460 B.C. a multitude of democrats arose to claim property of which either they or their ancestors had been dispossessed. Under the democratic administration each man had to present to the court his claims in person, and as in most cases there were a number of conflicting claims, the man who could best present his claim, won. In this situation Corax is represented as conceiving the idea of devising rules to help these claimants and so instituting the art of rhetoric. It will be noticed that this account illustrates the principle that only when men failed to produce by language the desired effect on others, did they feel the need of improving their composition.

Coming on down now to authentic history, however the art may have originated, the advantage of using the principles of Corax was seen and we know that the sophists soon applied them to expression in every sphere of life. Then literary men began to employ them to please themselves as well as their audiences better. All the improvements in rhetoric since have taken place in the same way, coming largely for the reason that men have found themselves in situations where they have been required to produce new effects by language. Consequently they have failed when using the

old methods of expression and so have turned their attention to improving the old methods or to originating new ones. For instance men studied composition at first that they might better persuade others; during the middle ages that they might be more successful in church disputations; and after the invention of printing mainly that they might be more proficient in all the forms of written composition. But the essential fact stands out clearly that men improved in composition only when they failed to produce by language the desired effect on others or to please themselves adequately and so felt a need for improving their processes of composition. Which fact, it will be recalled, confirms our conclusion from the discussion in section 1.

But to continue, if composition as a study is a racial experience that is of use in enabling the student better to fit himself for his present environment, it is evident that he will work up best to the present situation by a thorough realization of the essentials of this experience. This does not mean that he will have to follow the course of the race as the culture-epoch theorists hold, but that it will be best for him to relive in his own consciousness typical composition experiences that others have had and found to be valuable. If he is to get the full benefit of these experiences, it is advisable for him to undergo them in a natural way,- in other words, just as former individuals underwent them. If he is to realize himself fully now in the field of composition, there should be an identity of the essentials in his own experience with those in the experiences of former individuals; in short, if he is to improve in his composition, he should first fail to produce the desired effect on others or to please himself adequately.

From the foregoing considerations of the principles underlying composition, on the one hand as an activity outside the school and on the other as a part of the curriculum, let us now turn our attention to the way in which the student's natural activity that he brings with him to

to school is utilized in introducing him to the curriculum.

Section 3. The Nature of the Learning Process.

If men are to live and make any progress, it is very necessary for them to acquire valuable experience and information, whether they go to school or not. We ~~are~~ see them all the time acquiring such experience and information outside the school, and as the emphasis here is on the value of these things for life and not on the means of obtaining them, we may call this way of acquiring them the "life-process". But in school, although the ends are the same as in life outside, the emphasis is for the time being on the method of acquiring the experience and information and so we may designate this way of acquiring them by the name of the "learning process". Composition is only one branch of the curriculum so it is evident that the principles involved in its pursuit must conform to those upon which the learning process depends. Let us then endeavor to find these latter, beginning with an examination of the life process.

If we analyze any act of life by which we acquire new experience, that is, any act to which we consciously attend, we shall find that there are three distinct phases in its occurrence. First, the individual is in a present situation that for some reason is not satisfactory to him. He in some way projects or creates in imagination for himself an ideal situation that promises to be more satisfactory to him. He uses thought as a bridge to reach this ideal, that is, he thinks of ways of putting himself into the ideal situation. If he believes he has hit upon the right means, he probably tries it. If successful he ceases to think of this problem; if not successful, he tries out in thought other ways of attaining the ideal until he gets one he thinks may work, when he tries it as before.

Let us take an illustration from an experience familiar to nearly every writer. A person is using a fountain pen, yet so long as it

continued^s to write easily, he gives it no more thought than he does the motion of his hand; it is entirely outside his field of consciousness. But let the ink stop running, and his attention is at once directed to the pen; he is in a highly unsatisfactory present situation. He of course wishes^s to continue writing and this is his ideal situation. Accordingly he proceeds to try out in thought various means of attaining the ideal, in other words, of making the pen work. He first thinks of what may cause the stoppage of the ink, probably considering that it is due either to his having used all the ink up, or to some temporary obstruction in the pen's feed. He does not recall that the pen has flowed very freely lately so is inclined to think it is the latter cause and a shake of the pen which forces a drop of ink out, confirms him in this belief. He now thinks of ways of removing this obstruction, considering whether the forcing out of more ink will be likely to remedy the matter or whether ~~th~~ it will be necessary to take the pen to pieces and clean it thoroughly. He tries the former as it is the easier, but it does not work and so he tries the other. This plan works and he now reaches his ideal of writing with a pen that does not require his attention. He has acquired an experience that is invaluable for just such troubles with fountain pens in the future, one that will enable him to solve the problem more easily and quickly another time. In all of this the points to be emphasized are that he is in a present unsatisfactory situation; he projects an ideal situation; he attempts to reach the latter by thinking out and then trying various means of control. It is thus with all our other actions in conscious life.

Coming on down now to the learning process as simply a phase of the life process, we find that the learner in school is placed in an unsatisfactory situation; he is led to form an ideal situation that promises to be more satisfactory for his purposes; he is led to try out

in thought various means of reaching it until he decides upon one that is likely to prove satisfactory, in which case he tries it in practice and reaches the ideal situation, else tries another. The teacher in school sees that the whole process takes place within the field of the curriculum, so that the student will in this way re-live and thus acquire the valuable experiences for which the curriculum stands. For example, a teacher wishes a student to learn how to spell the word "control". Accordingly, after getting him to the point where he tries to use this word, the teacher then makes him dissatisfied with his present spelling of the word. He is induced to desire to spell it correctly, this is his ideal situation. He then thinks of various ways of finding out how to spell it, finally deciding to look it up in his dictionary because this is the shortest and surest way. Thus he determines his means of control and changes from a present unsatisfactory to a satisfactory situation as regards the spelling of this particular word. The teacher has only utilized the life process in having the student learn one selected bit of valuable information.

As we have now finished our threefold inquiry into the nature of the basic principles of composition as an experience worthy of being introduced into the school, we are in a position to formulate the essentials of a true method of teaching the subject, true because it conforms to the nature of the basic principles.

Section 4. The Theory Formulated.

Any method of teaching composition must of course provide for improving the process, but it is at once obvious that, before we can make any improvement in composition, we must have the act of it going on; consequently the first thing to do is to get the student to composing. If we remember the treatment of the conditions under which composition

naturally occurs, we shall recall that it takes place when the composer desires to use language to produce some effect on others or to please himself, consequently any correct method of teaching it must provide for placing the student in such a situation that he will naturally desire to compose in order that he may influence others or please himself. We shall thus get a process and it will then be time enough to speak of ways of bettering it.

In considering means for improving the process, it must be remembered that, as long as a person's composition produces the desired effect on others, or pleases himself adequately, it is satisfactory to him and so remains unnoticed. If, then, this process is to be improved, it must be brought to the composer's mind in such a way that he will not be satisfied with its results, so that ~~he~~ he will attend to it and be ready to consider ways of improving it. The correct method of teaching the subject then must provide for placing the student in such a situation after he has composed, that he will realize very clearly that he is not producing the desired effect on others or is not pleasing himself adequately. This, it will be recalled, is according to the natural way.

If to realize that we were wrong were sufficient to make us do right, few of us would do wrong; in the same way, if to realize that we were not producing satisfactory results by ~~our~~ composition were sufficient to insure correcting it, there would be very little inefficient composition work. But we know that the one is not true and it is the same way with the other. The student nearly all the time admits that he has not produced the desired effect on others or pleased himself adequately, but this in itself makes his composition work no better in the future. Any correct method of teaching the subject ~~th~~ must provide for the creation of an ideal that will be so strongly desired that the student

cannot rest until he has tried to attain it. He must be induced to set up for himself a higher ideal in composition and brought to desire it so strongly that he will not be content until he has tried to reach this ideal in a new composition effort.

It may be, however, in some few cases that the pupil reaches his ideal of expression and is perfectly satisfied. If this is the case, the ways of expression will not be attended to, as we have shown and he will make no improvement the next time. In such cases, the method of teaching must provide in some way for showing such a pupil that there are better ways of expression than he has used ~~either~~ although the ones he employed have been satisfactory to him. In this way he may be led to be unsatisfied eventually with his expression although at first he was pleased with it. As soon as he realizes that he is not satisfied with his composition, the method may proceed as before.

It would be of little avail to get a student to composing, to make him ^{unsatisfied} with his work, and to induce him to project a strongly desired ideal, unless some means of attaining this ideal were shown him. Consequently it remains to state that the true method of teaching composition must provide for leading the student to attain his ideal of expression, using of course first his own resources which he may have overlooked or not used properly at first, and secondly those new ones to which the teacher may direct him.

Having now stated in a somewhat scattered way the essentials of the correct method of teaching in accordance with the basic principles of the process of composition, let us now gather up these essentials and state them more clearly. Accordingly, in the light of our previous discussion we may conclude that the true method of teaching composition should:

- A. Create in the pupil the desire for composition by placing him in a situation where he will stronger^{ly} desire to use language

- (a) To produce some effect on others.
 - (b) To please himself.
- B. Place him in a difficulty as regards the effectiveness of his composition by making him realize clearly that he is not
- (a) Producing the desired effect on others.
 - (b) Pleasing himself adequately.
- C. Induce in him the formation of a highly desired ideal of composition
- (a) When he already knows he is not producing the desired effect or pleasing himself adequately.
 - (b) When he is satisfied as regards these things, in this case he must be shown a higher ideal and induced to desire it strongly.
- D. Lead the pupil to solve his difficulty, or to attain his ideal, by using:
- (a) His own resources.
 - (b) Other resources to which the teacher directs him.

In this method it must be emphasized that the ideal of composition gets its vitality from the original purpose of the composer. If he is made to realize keenly his failure to compose successfully where success is vitally connected with his most intense interests, he will not easily be checked until he attains the ideal of expression. But if he is set to composing under such conditions that he has only a perfunctory interest in the end to be gained by the process and consequently really does not care if he is unsuccessful in his expression, he may even fail to form any definite ideal at all. He must therefore be set to composing on matters in which he is vitally interested, he must have a very definite purpose that can be accomplished only through composition the process must be started under a full head of steam.

This concludes the building of the theory and we are now ready to take up the next chapter which deals with the theory of practice.

C H A P T E R T W O .
THE THEORY IN PRACTICE.

Introductory.

This chapter deals with the author's experiments in putting the theory into practice in the Teachers College High School* of the University of Missouri during 1907-8. The author had full charge of the Rhetoric and Composition course which is known in the school as "English II". This course is required of all students in the high school who wish to prepare for entrance to the University, unless they give very satisfactory evidence of having had the full equivalent of the work elsewhere. There were in the class during the year a total of sixty-five students, distributed in three sections, Section I being taught by the author and the other two sections by practice teachers. For further information concerning the general nature of the course and for complete details regarding the personnel of Section I, the reader is referred to appendices A and B respectively. The accounts deal with the work of all three sections, but mainly with that of Section I. Whenever the word teacher is used in this chapter, the author is meant unless otherwise specified.

In these descriptions of the experiments the author has taken great pains to give the facts as they actually occurred, in a plain, unvarnished form and to avoid injecting any personal opinions into the accounts. He firmly believes that the descriptions represent fairly well what any careful and impartial observer would have been likely to record.

The chapter follows the general plan of the outline of the essential principles of a true method of teaching composition as given on pages sev-

* This school is the Practice School for high school teachers in the Teachers College of the University of Missouri.

enteen and eighteen, the sections corresponding to the main divisions there. In addition, there is a section illustrating the way the whole theory was applied to the teaching of descriptions.

Section 1. Creation in the Student of a Desire for the Act of Composition.

The first great effort of the course was to get the students into situations where they would wish to compose, and this was aimed at mainly by placing them where they would wish to produce by composition some effect upon others.

To begin with, while they were not purposely placed in situations where they would wish to control others by composition, advantage was very frequently taken of times when they did wish to do this and they were advised to attempt it through the medium of themes; in nearly all such themes they tried to influence the teacher. Several times during the year they were asked to give suggestions for improving the course and at one time they wrote to inform him of the conditions under which they did their best writing so that he could do better work with them individually in the future. The last exercise of the year was a long theme in which each student endeavored to tell the teacher what he had gotten out of the course during the year. Student No. 4* with three others had apparently "cut" a class on a day when a holiday was granted by one of the departments in the University, but not by the High School; he was permitted to hand in a brief# to show that the group did not "cut" the class and hence should not receive the regular punishment. One of the boys, Student No. 3, was disciplined over his protest for missing two conferences without a satisfactory excuse, and on his own initiative wrote a brief to prove to the teacher that the punishment was too severe. A boy who was

* Numbers such as this refer to students in Section I as listed in Appendix B.

For a copy of this brief see Appendix C.

doing very poor work in all his subjects without apparent excuse, was allowed to present, in the form of a theme, his reasons for such conduct to the principal. It is evident that in all of these cases the students had strong motives for influencing the teacher in a certain direction and all such themes showed the benefit of it, for they were among the best received during the year.

Again, great pains were taken to have the student realize that other people were making demands upon him which he would like to satisfy by his composition work. In doing this the first thing was never to let the student lose sight of his audience. Students were frequently required to read their themes to the class, often getting out in front, so as better to realize they had an audience. The teacher did not read themes to the class except when giving very adverse criticism; when he had discovered good themes he wished to have read out, the authors were called upon to read them. The best themes for each assignment were frequently put upon the bulletin boards and the rest of the class examined them. Often, too, when the assignment was given, the students were cautioned to write for an imaginary audience,- in explaining, to write as though the audience were totally ignorant of the subject; in a debate, as though the audience at first believed in the other side of the proposition, etc. But to cap all, the teacher served as a reader for every theme. He read them all conscientiously, asking for only so much written work as he could thus attend to.

It is not, however, sufficient for^a student to know that he has an audience; he must feel that this audience is making a positive demand upon him, if he is to do good composition work. This demand was created by having the student write on individual subjects. He was permitted and encouraged to give narratives of his individual personal experiences; to describe things and scenes the class had never seen*; to explain things he

* This was perhaps unusually easy to do because the students in the class came from all over Missouri and surrounding states.

was interested in, but which the rest of the class knew little about; and to present to the class treatments of historical points necessary to^a clear understanding of the classics used in the course, which historical material none of the other students were expected to look up. Also he was encouraged in the conferences to work upon things concerning which he felt he knew more than the teacher and to narrate, describe and explain such things to the teacher. Student No. 15, for instance, who was having a great deal of trouble with exposition, took much interest in explaining to the teacher the peculiar meaning of certain words as used in his home region in Oklahoma, and consequently improved considerably in this kind of writing from that time on.

One way of emphasizing this demand of the audience upon the writer was the use of criticism. This was given by the other members of the class when the themes were read, the teacher taking great pains to see that it was fair, good-natured and kindly. When a student needed a rebuke for presenting careless work to the class, the teacher called upon a student whom he knew would give the required criticism in a fearless, yet friendly way. The teacher also gave private criticism that was close and severe, yet kindly and sympathetic, in aim, on all themes handed in.

In creating the desire for composition, one of the most helpful things is to get the student to compose because he wishes to please himself. This can be done in various ways, but the prime requisite is to keep him interested. In doing this it is of the utmost importance that he be permitted to choose subjects he is interested in and for this reason it was the custom in the course to allow the students just as much liberty as possible in this regard. The class was required to write in one form of discourse at a time and to bring out certain things in the composition, but the members were nearly always free to choose their own subjects. The extent to which they availed themselves of this freedom may be seen from the two following illustrations. In the first place, toward the end of the year,

the students were asked to explain their favorite quotations to the rest of the class, as an exercise in exposition. A list of good old familiar quotations was given in the text and they were referred to this, but out of twenty-one themes handed in, two students chose the same quotation from the book, and two others chose different ones, but the other seventeen chose subjects entirely outside the book, none of them duplicates. About the same time each student was also requested to define two terms in which he was interested. In all, forty-five were defined, and it would thus have been possible to have had forty-five duplicates, but instead there were only five and some of these were due to the fact that the authors were in other classes together, where the teachers had recently been taking great pains to make certain concepts clear to them.

But even if a student has an interesting subject, he cannot long remain interested in composition work if he is set a task that is too difficult for him, consequently the teacher gave close attention to the gradation of the work in the course, so as to retain the interest of the student. The work began with narratives of the personal experiences of the students, which were, of course, intensely interesting to them, and also very easy to manage, because the organization was nearly all provided for by a pre-determined time sequence which the student had only to follow. Then the work progressed through description where the matter of organization was more difficult, into the more abstract forms of exposition and argument. Within each of these general divisions the gradation of the work was also carefully watched; for instance, in description the fundamental image came first, then the point of view, then arrangement of details, then force, etc.

Again it is possible to make an appeal to a boy so that he will desire to compose, if it be remembered that he takes pleasure in doing what he can do well. For this reason also, the work was carefully arranged so as to go from the easy personal narratives up through the more abstract

work, always keeping within range of the student's present advancement. Furthermore, those having natural aptitude for the work were encouraged to take pride in doing what they could do well, which led to good results. At first thought it might appear that this is a motive that applies to very few, as not many students are supposed to have great ability in composition, but as a matter of fact it can be relied upon to reach almost every student some time in the year. It is very seldom indeed that a student is equally good in all the forms of writing; and, as soon as a new form of discourse is taken up, there is a general shifting of the relative standing of the students. The reader will find the record of the students of Section I, in this regard, in Appendix B.

And lastly, advantage of the audience was taken to give the student a chance to please himself by giving pleasure or useful information to others through his composition work. The utmost freedom in this respect was allowed the students and they were perfectly free to give the audience jokes, tales, descriptions, etc., that had pleased them. They did this very frequently. Then too they were encouraged by means of looking up individual topics to present valuable information to the rest of the class. The author's experience is that such an assignment as this pleases almost any student and is especially efficacious in arousing a lazy or listless one. Student No. 18, ordinarily put in about an hour and a half on a lesson and usually said that he considered the study of composition to be rather uninteresting. He was assigned the task of being responsible for all necessary Italian history while the class was on Addison; in performing this duty he ransacked the school library and his home library as well, putting in several times as much time as usual, apparently with the greatest eagerness and pleasure. At any rate, it was very evident that he took decidedly more interest in the work as a whole from that time on.

Section 2. Creation in the Student of a State of Unsatisfaction as Regards the Effectiveness of his Composition.

After the student has begun to compose so that there is some process to work upon, the method next requires that he be brought into a state of unsatisfaction as regards the effectiveness of his composition or else he will pay no attention to the process and consequently will not try to improve it. The word unsatisfaction is purposely used in this connection to indicate that at this stage of the process the composer is merely not satisfied with the effectiveness of his composition, but is determined to control the situation and so bring about the desired effectiveness. He does not in the least despair or desire to abandon the effort as he would if he were in a state of dissatisfaction. In bringing about this state of mind, two means were used: first, criticism by the class as an audience; and secondly, criticism by the teacher. The first one of these produced by far the greater results; for a confirmation of this statement the reader is referred to the table of motives in Chapter Three, Section II.

In getting the class to criticise as an audience, many themes were read out to them by the authors. In this case it will be remembered that the criticism was always frank, but kindly and was kept so by the teacher. A boy read a joke to the class and saw they did not laugh although he knew his joke was far funnier than others at which they had laughed freely. A girl told a story and some one objected that he could see no point to it and became more "mixed up" the farther she went along. Another girl tried to explain something and some one said he could not tell what she was "driving at!" A girl gave a description of a building and another girl said she could not form a picture of it in her mind. A boy repeatedly put a dry-as-dust moral on the end of each story, until he read one to the class and was criticised for preaching when there was no need of it. The authors in all these cases knew they had not managed their composition

rightly and they always remedied the faults in the next theme or at any rate made a noble effort to do so.

In this connection it is well to state that an objection sometimes brought by composition teachers against such class criticism, that it produces much bad feeling among the students and consequently soon results in their refusing to criticise each other, appeared to be without adequate foundation. Ill-natured criticism was practically unknown in the course and there was no difficulty whatever in getting students to criticise enough. Indeed, it was a trifle hard to curb their zeal, as they entered upon the work with such a zest that they found too many defects to consider conveniently at one time. The teacher's problem accordingly, was how to suggest in a general way what to look for and how to keep the criticism accurate and more discriminating, a task that was by no means difficult.

Such criticism as this, however, did not prove severe enough for the worst cases, so the teacher read such themes to the class after he had read them previously. In such instances, the authors were unknown to the class so there was the frankest possible and most thorough criticism from all the students, frequently even from the author who saw his theme in a different light when it was read by some one else. Often the mere reading by the teacher, who of course more or less unconsciously put into the reading his own interpretation of the sense, sufficed to show the author that the teacher's meaning was far different from what he intended to give. Slang was readily cured in this way, students who often used it themselves in conversation refusing to permit it to creep into a written theme which they regarded as something more permanent and which should accordingly, in their opinion, not contain things so transient and careless as slang. A striking example of the efficacy of such criticism was the following case. The teacher had tried in vain to get a hard-working, earnest, but eccentric young man, who was an inveterate reader and admirer of Mary Jane Holmes,

from perpetrating upon the class a species of fine writing that outdid even his favorite author. Finally, in desperation, the teacher read to the class one of his efforts in which, in all seriousness, he described a visit to his sweetheart. Among other things he told of her raven hair and eyes like the stars of heaven; he also described how he pursued his way through the solitary night, etc. The students went into a spasm of laughter, and, as soon as they could talk, a discussion arose as to whether the author was giving a humorous sketch, or was in "dead" earnest. The matter was finally decided in favor of the former, the students stating that anyone would have more sense than to try to be serious in any such fashion as that. The author in a conference later confided to the teacher that he meant it in all seriousness, and had never before realized what other people thought of such expressions. He never again wrote such a thing, his themes being thereafter fairly sensible and sane in tone.

In addition to the criticism of the class, that offered by the teacher is a very valuable factor in placing the student in such a situation that he realizes he is not producing the desired effect upon others. In this course, however, the main effort was to have the teacher give his criticism only as a more exacting audience of classmates would do. Readers who desire a detailed justification of this procedure are referred to Chapter Three, Section II where the motives that influence students to do good composition work, are given. The teacher was always careful to give written criticisms of such a nature that there would be constant reference to what an ordinary audience has a right to expect, for example: that a story have but one clear-cut point; that an outline give clearly the whole thing at once, as well as the parts; that a piece of expository writing be clear to persons ignorant of the subject; that an argument be suited to a person who has no particular opinion one way or another, or who is at present inclined to favor the other side, etc. This same procedure was

carried out with great success in the conferences where it was easy to show the student that he had not produced what would be a good effect upon an ordinary audience.

Closely akin to this was the plan of taking the student when he was satisfied with the effect and producing the opposite feeling in him. This was done either in written criticisms or in conferences by intimating that he had not done his best, or that he had not done his best as the case might be. These methods were used time and again during the year with excellent results, seldom if ever failing to make the student unsatisfied with the effect produced, and determined to do better.

Through both of these agencies, then, criticism by fellow students and teacher, the aim was to make the student not satisfied with the effect he was producing upon others by means of his composition.

The task of getting the student to realize that he is not pleasing himself adequately by his composition work is on the whole not a hard one. In perhaps the majority of cases he realizes it full well without any assistance from the teacher. Very often when a student came to conference and was asked about a certain theme, his reply was something like this: "That was poor, I knew; I tried pretty hard, but I simply couldn't get it to come out the way I wanted it." In such cases there was nothing left for the teacher to do on this point.

In the second place a great effort was made to have the student form the habit of criticising his own theme so that he would thus refuse to be pleased with shallow efforts. This was accomplished by giving the student careful written criticism on his theme, and detailed oral criticism in conferences. The written criticisms were almost without exception in the form of questions, that could not be answered until the student had carefully re-examined his work for himself. Great care was taken to ask questions that could not be answered by "yes" or "no" so that the student was led to form the habit of criticising his own work before he handed

it in. Examples of such questions are these: "How does this conclusion help out your story"?-"How do these three sentences help out your description"?-"What are you trying to do here"? "Is this what you intended to say"?-"Do you really mean this"?-"Read this as though you had never seen it before; do you easily grasp its meaning? What remedy can you suggest?" All of these encouraged criticism on the part of the author and so made him more likely not to be pleased with his effort.

Another way of showing him that he was not pleasing himself adequately was by comparing his present poor effort with some of his more successful efforts in the past, this of course being done as a rule at the conferences. However, if a teacher has a very good memory, he may indicate such things by written comments. It was hard for the author to remember so many themes all the time, so ^{he} did this work at the conferences. It was very easy to do it then, as each student was required to bring his complete file of themes for the year to each conference, so that it was possible to refer at once to any back themes. A hasty turning of the pages and observing the past criticisms sufficed to call up to the teacher without any effort all the material he cared to use for such comparisons. This necessitated good sensible praise for the student when he deserved it so that he would remember the pleasure he received from being commended for a good effort, and could compare this pleasure with what he experienced in being criticised for something not so good. Again, in the informality of the conference it was possible to show a student that he was not pleasing himself adequately because he was not doing so well as certain others he recognized as his inferiors or equals. This was not done in public so it did not humiliate the student, while the other students were not injured, for they were in a sense praised for doing superior work. This was found to be a powerful influence for controlling some students, being used successfully on Nos. 1,4,7,9,10,11,14,15,16,17,22. It, however, required some care in handling.

Section 3. Inducing in the Student the Formation of a Highly Desired Ideal of Composition.

Unfortunately, as we all know, realization of failure is not sufficient to insure success at the next endeavor in the same field. Only too often composition teachers hear something like this: "I know I am not doing that right, but I just can't do it and it's no use to try"; or, "That's all right for So-and-So, but I can't do anything like that". The author's experience leads him to believe that the battle is half won if the student can be made to realize that the desired effect is possible. This was usually managed in the conferences and was accomplished by tactful reference to what others whom the student recognized as his inferiors or equals, had done, or to some of his past themes where he had accomplished what he set out to do. After he once realized that the desired effect was possible, appeals to his respect for his audience, to his self-pride and to his spirit of rivalry could be depended upon to accomplish the result, if anything would.

In cultivating a respect for the audience it must be remembered that the teacher saw to it that the criticism from the other members of the class was kind, but very frank and just. It was found that students dreaded such criticism if they deserved it, more than any other; but, if they did not deserve it, seemed not to mind it particularly, except that in the latter case, they naturally defended their work against it. One experience of reading to the class a theme that was poor because of carelessness was usually sufficient for the writer, at least for a long time. Also, when the writer did please his audience, the pleasure he experienced was very keen if his face was any index of his feelings, and the teacher was careful to see that the audience gave him this praise when he deserved it. The most impassive boy's face would light up with pleasure when he received commendation from his fellows, and he would naturally desire to obtain such pleasure again.

In appealing to self-pride, it was the custom always to emphasize with the student that, no matter what the others did, he was expected to write up to the level of his ability, so far as the teacher's criticism was concerned. The class as a whole could not hold him to this standard, but his teacher could. This was emphasized in class, but particularly in the conferences. Frequently the teacher, as before mentioned, gave written criticism, such as: "Is this your best?"—"This does not read as your themes usually do; what is the matter?" Etc. Such criticism seemed to have more effect than any other the teacher ever used.

Rivalry is a strong spur to good work in composition teaching, as a reference to the treatment of motives for good composition work in Chapter Three, Section II, will show. But it obviously has its dangers that must be guarded against. The students in this course kept up this spirit mostly by themselves as they knew who pleased the class best. The teacher paid little attention to the matter, save to give praise when due and to display good themes on the bulletin board, or have them read in class by the authors. No grades whatever were put on the themes, the wisdom of which procedure will be apparent after a reference to the table before mentioned. In this course, no student knew the grade of another on any theme or on the whole work, unless the latter told him. A student who received a favorable comment from his teacher, however, usually managed to let some of the others see it, so that in this way, the class knew pretty well who were doing the best work.

It may occur to the reader now to raise a question as to what may be done with a student who has really produced good work and is consequently satisfied with the effect upon others and with the pleasure brought to himself. If he merely keeps up this record in the future, he will do good work, but he will not measure up to the improvement he ought to make; and, furthermore, we know that he is very liable to become conceited and careless so that he will deteriorate in his work. In the first place, it may be well to remark that such a state of things is extremely desirable at

times. Adolescents are people of a very emotional temperament for the time being, unusually sensitive to praise or blame. If there is never any good work produced, such a student becomes discouraged. If he does well and is praised for it occasionally, it only acts as a spur to better work. As a matter of fact, such a state of satisfaction rarely happens with the average high school student who is subjected to good criticism from his fellows and teacher; nearly always he feels that he has not expressed himself just as he desired.

In this course, if he lapsed through carelessness, self-pride could be depended upon in most cases to urge him to equal his former record. For a few of the best students who in fact nearly always pleased the others in the class and consequently had a right to feel satisfied with the effect, the teacher gave more exacting criticism in writing or in the conferences, chiefly in the latter, by telling them that, as they had greater ability, more was expected of them. Or, he got them to observe the classics and outside reading more closely and thus to see that it was possible to produce much better effects than they had brought about. In general, as soon as the student was unsatisfied with the effect produced, by whatever means this state of feeling was brought about, the procedure was henceforth as before given.

Section 4. Leading the Student to Attain His Ideal of Composition. -

It would be utterly useless to show a student he had failed in his composition effects, and get him to desire earnestly to improve, unless some feasible method of accomplishing this improvement were suggested to him. Accordingly, one of the great aims of the course was to show the student how to attain his ideal of improved composition. To accomplish this, he was led to develop the necessary rhetorical rules and principles in two ways: first, by a common-sense examination of his own and other people's ordinary composition activity outside the school; and secondly, by a study of model passages from the classics.

The basic principles of rhetoric are essentially those of common sense, and if they can be thoroughly developed from this source instead of from a text or classics, they take a much greater hold upon the student and manifest themselves as vital forces in his composition better. A great many of these principles were thus brought out during the course and a number of them are given below. In order to show better the informal nature of the work, the principles are given practically as they were formulated in class.

For example, it was brought out, at different times during the year, in discussing the every-day outside experiences of the students, that common sense demands:

1. That when we talk about anything, we talk about that one thing and nothing else. The frequency with which one may hear students when left to themselves telling each other to "Quit blowing", "Cut it out", "Get down to business" etc., abundantly testify to the fact that they realize the essentials of the principle of unity, although they probably are not consciously of it and have never carefully formulated it in so many words.
2. That when we describe a thing we describe only what we can see from one point, or else show carefully that the observer is looking at it from a different point.
3. That when we tell a story we keep the time order or else show how we change this order very clearly.
4. That when we explain anything we get better results by giving the reader a general view of the thing first and then a more detailed explanation.
5. That when we compose ^{an} imaginative story, the different parts must be thoroughly consistent with themselves, however unreasonable the story as a whole may be. Student No. 19 in writing a continuation of Stockton's "The Lady or the Tiger", had the hero at a critical moment pull a pistol from his pocket and shoot the tiger. The students at once criticised this as incongruous and had a rule formulated in about five minutes; the principle took such a hold on them that the author recalls no serious violation of it by any member of the class after this.

To cite another instance, the students during a frank class discussion of less than one period, with no previous work whatever upon the

subject, formulated the following principles:

In argument it is essential:

1. That you first understand the matter clearly yourself.
2. That you do not antagonize your hearer.
2. That you do not antagonize your hearer.
3. That you use only arguments that will appeal to him; it makes comparatively little difference whether they appeal to you particularly or not.
4. That you place your strongest arguments first and last.
5. That, in case you cannot answer an argument, you ignore it. A weak argument causes the hearer to suspect all the rest just as we usually suspect all a man says if we have caught him in one untruth.
6. That you state only the truth, for the same reason as that in 5.

This method was followed especially in teaching the uses of the various punctuation marks. The whole matter of punctuation was regarded as part of the mechanics of writing, and was treated simply as a common-sense device for enabling the reader to get the exact meaning in the shortest possible time and with the least possible effort. For example, it was easily brought out by actual tests on new sentences, that any device which would distinguish a main from a dependent clause in the same sentence, would help the reader appreciably. Where the dependent clause was extremely short, no separating device appeared to be needed, but where it was long, one was very necessary. It was also easily shown that endless confusion would result unless all writers and readers in the same language agreed upon a common way of pointing out dependent clauses so the students readily saw the need of following the conventional use of the comma in this connection.

Appeals to common sense, however, are not adequate for the task of impressing all the principles upon the student's mind sufficiently well. Common sense is common simply because it is very general and applies to so many things; therefore, in attempting to develop all the principles in this

way, the teacher soon discovers that there is a danger of getting into vague generalities that really do not take any serious hold upon the student's experience and vitally influence his conscious endeavor. Consequently, it is essential that the development of these principles by common sense be supplemented by their development through a study of the classics. In the common-sense method it is sometimes necessary for the teacher to guess at the particulars the student has in mind for his generalities, as there is such a very wide range of possibilities of experience in the various students in the class, that he cannot take time to search out these particulars for each one. Consequently, the resulting generalities are apt at times to be vague and indefinite for a great many students; to guard against this, the method of studying the classics was used, for thus it was possible to put all the class at work upon the same rather limited set of particulars, and by carefully discussing these it was easy for the teacher to see that each student carefully worked up these particulars, and consequently had the proper background for the development of concise generalities that would be thoroughly vital to him and would be realized so intensely that they would vitally affect his composition efforts in the future.

Accordingly, this year the class used four classics, one primarily for each of the four forms of discourse:

Eliot's Silas Marner for narration; secondarily for description.

Hawthorne's Twice Told Tales for description; secondarily for narration.

Macaulay's Addison for exposition.

Burke's Conciliation for argument.

As soon as the students in any given instance realized their failure to produce the desired effect and wished earnestly to produce it, they were usually given a lesson in which they studied suitable model passages from the classics so that they might formulate the necessary rules or methods. They were given questions on each such lesson as a guide for their study. With

these as a basis, they prepared the lesson as best they could and it was then discussed in class, the teacher of course going into considerable detail and explaining any difficulty that might arise or else having them work it out. The students took great interest in these lessons and worked well on them. For the benefit of readers who care to look farther into this particular phase of the work, the questions used in three of these lessons are given in Appendix D.

Section 5. Detailed Outline of the Work in Description.

It will perhaps clear up the whole method better if we take part of the course in detail; accordingly, below is given a rather full outline of the work in description. The work is outlined here just as it was presented to the class, with one or two minor changes to make it more intelligible to readers unfamiliar with it. The order of the lessons has not been changed, and the remarks are correct to the best of the author's memory and notes made at the time. Each lesson is numbered to show the sequence. It will be recalled that the proper classics had previously been studied as literature, so that the students were familiar with them. Where the classics were used as models, the word classic appears in parenthesis after the title of the lesson.

Outline of Work in Description.

Preliminary.

The class had been writing and studying narratives for about three months and had at various times felt the need of picturing the actors, characters and natural scenery in their stories so as to make them more interesting. They had also occasionally tried to work in a little description on their own initiative, but without much success; for, as they put it, when they tried to describe anything, "the description ran away with them". Consequently, after a little discussion of the matter, they eagerly undertook the study of descriptive writing.

By this time they were accustomed to starting out on things to do

them largely by themselves, so without any directions about description, they were assigned the task of writing a description of any one of the six buildings on the University quadrangle. This of course did not give them absolute freedom, but it was for the purpose of getting pictures of the simpler forms first and thus avoiding descriptions of persons, character-sketches, etc., which are too difficult for beginners. Accordingly, they had for their first work in description, a theme.

#1. Theme: A Description of One Building on the Quadrangle.

At the beginning of this lesson the students were asked whether they had experienced any difficulties; they at once said they had had numerous troubles. A little questioning brought out the fact that in their opinions their main trouble had been not knowing where to begin. This gave the class something to work on. Accordingly, a number of themes were read to the class by the authors and the other students were told to try to see if each theme gave them a clear image so that they could picture the building for themselves from the author's description alone, and not get confused. They were told to rate the themes as good, indifferent or poor on the basis of the clearness of the pictures presented. It was at once evident to nearly all the students that the good themes seemed to follow some plan while the poor ones did not.

Their attention was then centered upon the good themes, especially upon one they considered the best. In this the writer, unconscious of any method, for she had had no previous directions or experience in the matter, had said at the beginning of her description of Academic Hall that it was a large, low, box-shaped building of white stone and red brick, topped by a large dome. This of course contained a good fundamental image and attention was called to this fact, but the term fundamental image was not used. The students very soon concluded that it helped a description to give a good idea of the whole thing to start with. This conclusion was further confirmed by reference to some of the other good themes, and by contrast with some of the poor ones, which in several instances gave no idea

of the whole at all, or gave it rather late, when, as one boy said, it upset the whole picture he had been forming. The students were accordingly ready to go to work on a lesson that would show them how to make a good fundamental image and this term was then given them. The lesson, as outlined in Appendix D, was assigned.

#2. Lesson on Fundamental Image. (Classics).

In addition to the work in the classics, the fact that the fundamental image enables the reader to get hold of the picture in the easiest and quickest possible way, was further emphasized by the following method. A picture of a building that none of the class had ever seen was exposed for a second or so, at intervals of several minutes, and the students were questioned to see what they got at each glance. On the first exposure they got only the general shape, and appearance of the building, then at later exposures they added more and more details until finally they could give a fairly accurate description of the building. This brought to their minds very clearly indeed the way we get a picture of anything, by seeing it as a whole first and then by acquiring details and putting them as it were into the picture of the whole. This was a very important thing for them to learn, as it was not used here alone, but was applied all through exposition, which was treated merely as a sort of description in which the author uses ideas instead of images.

For the next lesson the students were to give especial attention to the fundamental image in a theme describing a building or something very similar, but were allowed perfect freedom otherwise.

#3. Theme with Especial Attention to Fundamental Image.

These themes were read as usual; and, in addition to criticizing them for their fundamental images, the students were told to be on the lookout for anything else that seemed to keep them from getting a clear picture; or as they put it, "muddled them in forming the picture". They noticed a number of minor things, but in particular they objected to

a theme which stated that Academic Hall had four entrances, when it was impossible to see more than three of them from any one place, and to a theme where the author stated specifically that he was across the street from a church; and, after giving a good description of the exterior, went into a minute description of the organ and other interior furnishings. The students knew that church, as it was one of those in Columbia, and instant objection was made that no one could see all those things at once, and consequently no listener could be expected to form a picture containing all of them. This, of course, gave rise to a discussion of the need of having a definite view point.

#4. Lesson on Point of View. (Classics).

#5. Theme with Especial Attention to Point of View.

These themes were read as usual, and it was brought out that, while the author might give a good fundamental image and state his view point very carefully, there were still a multitude of details that overwhelmed him so that he did not know what to put in, what to leave out, how to arrange them, etc. Consequently, the next assignment was a lesson on details, especially as regards their order.

#6. Lesson on Details. (Classics).

#7. Theme with Especial Attention to Details.

In the reading of these themes it was brought out by a little questioning that some of the themes had good fundamental images, definite view points and a fair handling of details and yet were very dry and uninteresting; while other themes read at this time or called to mind by the teacher, which were apparently no better than the first themes in the three particulars mentioned, were nevertheless bright and interesting. The authors of the dry themes naturally wondered what the trouble was and were very ready to enter upon any study that would remedy the defect. This gave rise to a study of ways of making the description effective. As several days were to be spent upon this topic, the next lesson was a rather

general one, covering the field as a whole.

#8. Lesson on Effectiveness by Use of Particular Words, Comparison in General and Contrast. (Classics).

This was further enforced by examples which the students had picked up rather incidentally, for instance, in Silas Marner, the comparison of Silas with a spider, and the contrast in the pictures of the two Christmases, as well as by specimens of good work in former themes. The principle of contrast was also emphasized by reference to the devices used by artists in coloring and framing pictures so as to bring them out clearly.

#9. Theme with Especial Attention to Effectiveness by Particular Words and Comparison.

In the reading of these themes, the teacher called attention to the comparisons that ran into figures of speech. He also brought up several good figures that the students had unconsciously used in this and previous themes. Among these examples was one in which a boy, in describing Academic Hall, said it reminded him of a father at the head of a table; another boy called the ivy on the buildings "shaggy". This discussion occasioned a desire to study a particular phase of comparison, namely, figures of speech.

#10. Lesson on Figures of Speech. (Classics).

The teacher also read some passages from Tom Jones where Fielding is ridiculing the mock heroic style, and gave the class some false figures from their own themes and other sources. It was brought out very clearly that figures of speech are used for effect; that they must seem to grow naturally out of the subject and general treatment; and that they defeat their own ends if they seem to be excrescences.

#11. Theme with Especial Effort to Use Suitable Figures of Speech.

#12. Lesson on Use of Verbs of Motion in Description. (Classics).

This lesson was suggested by Professor Fairchild. Here it was

clearly shown that an author frequently does very effective description by putting his main ideas into his verbs and making them verbs of motion.

#13. Theme: Lists of Sentences in Which Students Tried to Describe Sights and Sounds Suggested by Teacher, Using Verbs of Motion.

The students took great delight in this. The following are samples of this work:

Smoke from a distant gun puffs out.
 " " " " " rolls "
 A wet board walk in the hot sun steams.
 An empty wagon on a paved street rumbles.
 A loaded " " " " " creaks.

Up to this time there had been more or less a desire to describe people and occasionally a description of some person would creep into a description of things in motion or into the narratives. The students accordingly were at once ready to take up the problem of learning how to describe people.

#14. Lesson on How to Describe People. (Classics).

#15. Theme: a Description of Some Well Known Person in the School, Not Present in the Class.

The subject was assigned in this way to avoid embarrassment, and also to serve as a check on the faithfulness of the description. This assignment was undertaken with the greatest zeal and the students enjoyed immensely reading out their own character sketches and seeing if they could tell who was being described by the other students. In discussing these themes, the teacher brought out clearly that it was impossible to give a bare personal description without at the same time giving the reader some impression of the person described; also that some of the themes had fair central images and yet were not impressive as wholes. The teacher called up themes on other subjects, to illustrate the same principle and the students were soon ready to study the next lesson.

#16. Lesson on Description for Impression. (Classics).

#17. Theme to Give the Reader Some One Distinct Impression by a Description of Anything the Author Chose.

#18. Theme in Which Each Student Re-Wrote One of His Narratives
Written Earlier in the Year, By Adding Bits of Description
Where He Thought They Would Make the Story More Effective.

This, the final lesson on description, was for the purpose of showing the students that, although for the sake of clearness the forms of discourse were studied separately, they do not occur that way in ordinary writing, but normally are interwoven and strengthen each other. The students seemed to enjoy this very much and the themes as a whole were excellent.

With this, the description of the practical application of the theory in the Teachers College High School, comes to an end. In the next chapter let us try to get a true estimate of the value of the theory for practical work in high school composition teaching anywhere.

CHAPTER THREE . 4

ESTIMATE OF THE VALUE OF THE THEORY AS THUS APPLIED.

Introductory.

Any attempt to evaluate one's own work must necessarily contain an element of error arising from personal bias. In due recognition of this fact, the author in this chapter has tried to reduce this element to a minimum by taking, as far as possible, the estimate of the work stamped upon it by the students themselves, and by deducing his own conclusions only in instances where he has very specific data on which to base them. He has faithfully endeavored to avoid any hasty or unsupported generalizations.

The data for the opinions of the students were obtained from class themes* written toward the end of the year when the students had studied exposition so that they knew better how to think accurately and express themselves clearly; and from a long theme written by each student then present in all three sections, as a final paper for the year, in which he endeavored to show what he had got out of English II and to give suggestions for improving the work. The students were repeatedly told that they were perfectly free to put any thoughts they pleased into these themes, and would be graded only on organization, form, etc. They were also impressed at great length with the fact that the data were to be used later in a thesis and that any untruths or exaggerations by them would seriously invalidate the results. They were never given a hint of what the teacher expected or hoped to find so that their opinions were wholly uninfluenced from the start. They entered eagerly into the spirit of the experiments. They were especially cautioned against flattering the work of teachers and this caution was strictly observed except by two students in Section III, in their

* The object in having these themes written in class was to be absolutely certain that the work was wholly individual, and also to enable the teacher to determine the conditions exactly.

final papers. They were about to fail and were probably desperate. They, however, directed their flattery altogether toward the teacher and in no way toward the methods of work, so the author sees no reason to believe that this affected the rest of their data. The students were explicitly directed to be very specific and to give detailed reasons for all general statements. This caution was followed about as well as could be desired. The author is firmly convinced that the data are thoroughly reliable for the reason, that, as far as he can see, the students had every incentive to tell the truth and none whatever to distort things.

This chapter will discuss: first, the student's estimate of the work; secondly, the author's estimate of it; and thirdly, the value of the general theory for practical application in public high schools.

Section 1. The Student's Estimate of the Value of the Work.

In giving this estimate of the value of the work, we shall begin by considering what the students think are the points in its favor, and then we shall take up the recommendations they make for improving it. For the sake of clearness, it has been found necessary to give the treatment of this section in the present tense. Let us now examine what the students consider to be the strong features of the course, first noting their general estimate of it.

At the time of writing the final papers, all the students had had or were completing, in this or other high schools, of this and surrounding states, at least eight high school unit courses; while a considerable proportion of them had had even more than this number. The results from all the forty-four papers are as follows:

- 10 state specifically that this is the best high school course of any description they have ever taken.
- 4 state specifically that this is the best course they have taken this year.
- 7 state specifically that this is one of the best courses in the school.
- 23 state specifically that the course has been a very valuable one.

Sample expressions from these last twenty-three students are the following:

"I have been repaid many, many times for taking this course."

"It has well been worth while."

"I shall always be glad I had the work."

"It has made me like English for the first time."

"It has made me wish to continue in English."

From these latter statements, it is easy to conjecture the strength of those of the first three groups.

Coming down to particulars, the students seem to think that the greatest benefits derived from the course, have been apparent in the field of their life outside the school. The greatest one benefit observed here is an improvement in their thinking power. Nineteen students state they have improved greatly in this regard and many others imply it. The main benefits, in their opinion, are improvement in their ability to organize their thoughts independently and to think consecutively. To illustrate, Student No.11 states

"The ability to think (in the sense of consecutively)* I cannot remember ever possessing until this year. I was nervous and had not the patience to sit and think things out."

A girl in Section II says:

"I do not remember ever sitting down just for the purpose of thinking until this year."

Speed in thinking has also been increased in many cases.

Next in the minds of the students, comes improvement in expression, with clearness and the ability to interest others especially prominent. This is noticed by the students where they have been complimented at home for improvement in letter-writing, story-telling, etc. Student No.6 says:

"From childhood, in relating any incident, I was asked so many many questions and could not see why it was, but now I know it was caused by my want of clearness#."

A considerable number notice a decided improvement in their use of grammar and several say that ease in writing has greatly increased, their vocabularies have been enlarged and they have overcome timidity in expression to a great extent.

* The parenthesis is the author's.

See Appendix B for her record in exposition.

Much the same results from the composition work are observed by the students in their improvement in work in other classes in the school. This improvement is noticed particularly along two lines: first, of increased ability to think logically so that the preparation of history and other lessons that can be outlined, becomes very much easier; and secondly, of improved expression, especially in the matters of clearness, ability to interest others, and fluency. A good sample is the following by Student No.1 :

"When the Physics class began work, we were given directions for writing up experiments, but in spite of this, I found it difficult to make any explanation of the experiments that would be complete and at the same time clear and concise. Now, however, by using a few principles which I got from English II, I find it comparatively easy to write a good account of a performed experiment, and have lately had some of my experiments referred to as models of clearness. The same principles that have helped me in this, I have applied with increasing success to my oral recitations in other classes."

In the mechanics of composition, nearly all note considerable improvement in spelling and punctuation, and a fair number in hand-writing. These matters were always treated incidentally during the year, but correctness in them, ^{as} Student No.2 says, "came naturally because required". As regards spelling, the improvement, in the students' opinion, came because they reached a stage where they would not permit a word to go into their final copy unless they were sure of it. In punctuation, the good effects of the use of the audience are apparent. Student No.1 says in this connection :

"I knew the general laws for punctuation, but had not before this year been strongly impressed with the necessity of their careful application."

Student No.13 says:

ⁱⁿ "Before this year I had been going by rules which I had learned _{in} books, but now I have learned that set rules can't always be applied and the best plan is to put in punctuation wherever it is required to make good sense".

In discussing the method pursued in studying the classics as a basis for composition work, a number of the students state that they have got the rhetorical principles much better because these were worked out inductively from the classics and not taken from a text.

Twenty-six of them state specifically that they have noted a marked improvement in their ability to get the substance of what they read. Student No.8 for instance says:

"I can now get the substance of what I read much easier than I could before taking English II, for I used to try to get the whole thing in my mind at one time and so got very little out of my reading. Now I can pick out the main thoughts and get the substance of what I read much better."

This increased ability was of course due in part to the increasing experience of the students and to their study in other subjects, particularly history and literature, during the year; it does not, however, apparently occur to ^{any} single student to mention this, although they frequently discount other results. In their minds, at least, this increased ability is directly traceable to the English II work. A number also think they have a better taste for good literature, particularly because they have learned how to read a classic understandingly and enter into the spirit of it.

When we come to what the students think of the benefit derived from conferences, we may see at once that it is a very important topic; for as Student No.22 says, "Their value cannot be told in few words." In the minds of a good majority of the students, this is clearly the most important part of the work, Student No.13, for instance, saying:

I have received more benefit from one conference than from any week of recitations."

Let us now consider the benefits the students think they derived from the conferences.

To begin with, the personal element and the informality involved in conference work is considered to be very valuable by them, Student No.7 stating that the teacher in conferences, "Gives good advice which goes deeper into the thing than anything we have." A great many students note with care that the conferences bring about a better understanding between student and teacher, which results in better work, Student No.4 saying:

"A teacher can teach a person much better if he understands the pupil."

The students also believe that the conference work has been

responsible for a much higher standard of work in two ways: first, it makes the original themes better; and secondly, it insures more careful correction and consequently better themes later on. Taking up the first benefit, the students feel that the teacher in the conferences can make a better appeal to them so that they will respond by doing their best. Student No.1 says the conferences

"Acted as a personal appeal from a teacher who was giving his time to a student whose duty it was to repay this sacrifice by showing that the teacher's time was not being wasted on him."

Student No.6 says regarding conferences:

"I have been stimulated to a greater effort and a desire to do my best because the teacher expected this."

Again the students say they wrote better themes because they knew that when it came to a conference, they could not deceive the teacher. Student No.17 for instance says:

"The pupil must prepare his lesson better for he knows it is coming up again."

Student No.19 remarks:

"Conferences are the only true way of finding out how much the pupil is advancing in his work."

Student No. 3 thinks:

"Conferences serve to show whether or not the student is independent in his work."

The students also feel that they do better on their original themes because the conferences avoid the waste of time incident to many ordinary composition classes. They feel that they understand the teacher better and so know exactly what he assigns and wishes; consequently, they do not make so many mistakes in following directions, as in other classes. They also feel that the conference method focuses the student's attention on his own errors only. Under these circumstances he avoids the distractions incident to calling his attention to errors he does not make, but others do; he thus puts in more time and energy on his original themes with correspondingly better results.

The students also think the conferences have been very valuable in that they have made possible a form of criticisms that has resulted later on in better new themes. The students think the conference permits criticism

from the teacher that is very beneficial in four ways:

1. It goes exactly where it is intended.

Student No.17 says:

"When the criticism is given in class, it is probable that the very one for whom it is intended will only apply it to some one else, thinking it is not for him. There is no possible way of failing to pay attention in a private conference."

The reader will realize the truth of this if he will only recall talking with members of a congregation after the minister has preached directly at some of them.

2. It saves time.

The students emphasize the saving of time from the conferences, saying again and again that the student gets the criticism he needs so that his time is not wasted going over things he already knows. In another way time is saved because, in the words of Student No.5, "Any mistaken ideas in the student's mind are detected and corrected before they become deeply rooted." The difficulties are also understood more definitely; the student can consequently go directly at the correction and not waste time in conjectures.

3. The student pays attention to the criticism more carefully.

This is emphasized in many papers and is well expressed by Student No.17 in:

"The student must pay attention to the criticism for he knows it (the theme) is coming up again and it will show whether he has re-studied the subject."

4. The criticism is more thorough.

The students nearly all mention this; they think the freedom possible in the conferences results in their correcting the small points better. Student No.13 for instance says:

"I felt free to discuss things I never would in class." Things not understood in class are frequently cleared up in the conferences according to the students, because they are saved embarrassment and consequently feel free to watch minor things better. This has resulted, according to

4. The criticism is more thorough. (Continued.)

several, in a higher class of self-criticism that has produced superior work. The criticism has also been better, the students think, because the conferences have permitted it to be so definite.

No estimate of the worth of the course would be of much value, unless, in addition to giving the strong points of the work, it considered defects as well. Consequently, the author took great pains to find out what the students considered to be the weak places in the course. He did not say he was trying to find defects, because that would have embarrassed the students so that they would probably not have written what they really thought. Instead, he asked for suggestions for improving the course another year. This gave him precisely what he wished, but the students did not realize just how much they were criticising him and accordingly had no particular reason to feel embarrassed. They were repeatedly told to be very specific and give reasons for all suggestions. The only failure to observe these cautions is noticed in the case of a girl in Section II who says that the course ought to be made more interesting, but does not give the slightest hint as to what direction the increased interest should take. It is worth noting here that she is the only one of the entire forty-four to recommend making the work more interesting, with the exception of those students who advise selecting different classics another year. Let us now consider these recommendations which, for convenience, are grouped under somewhat general headings:

1. For More Use of the Audience.

There is considerable demand for ^{more} presenting of work by the author direct to the class, for the purposes of making him do better work and overcoming timidity. To carry this out, debates and literary society methods are recommended.

2. For More Conferences.

On account of the great value of the conferences as shown in the student's estimates already given, from sections I and III, a total of thirty students, seven recommend that there be more conferences, the usual suggestion being that they come once a week.

In Section II*, seven out of thirteen students recommend that they also have conferences. Some of these latter recommendations, especially from those students who had conferences in Section I the first semester and went into Section II the second semester, are almost pathetic in their eagerness to show the need ~~they have~~ felt for more personal help during the latter half of the year.

3. For a Different Apportionment of the Parts of the Work.

In regard to the forms of discourse, there are a few scattering recommendations to the effect that certain forms in which they were not good be given less time, while other forms in which they did better, should be given more emphasis. The main reasons assigned are that they think the latter forms more important. A number recommend more work in argument#. As regards the amount of theme work, several students recommend less of it. Student No.12, for instance, says this, but to offset his recommendation, Student No.8 advises more. A glance at Appendix B will show the reasons for these recommendations, so there are accordingly not given much weight. No other student recommends more theme work and only four others, all in Section III, recommend less. The latter give as their reason, that, when the lessons came every day, they ran out of material and became tired of so much writing. Of these four, it may be well to state that three of them were students who failed in Section I at the end of the first semester and had to take the work over, two of them failing again at the end of the year. The other one of the four was a student who came into English II for the first time at the beginning of the second semester; he also failed at the end of the year. Only two think that more grammar should be given; they

* This section was the only one that did not have conferences regularly.

The course was purposely planned so as not to give much time to argument, and this allowance was further cut down by the closing of the school a week earlier than was ~~expected~~ expected.

say they have not had enough for their purposes, (They intend to teach formal grammar in rural schools).

4. For New Subject Matter.

Six students think there should be more outside reading required so as to give them a better selection of models and cultivate a taste for good reading. Student No.7 advises that poetry and play-writing be given attention as some students have talent along that line, that would be a pleasure to them if developed. No one else, however, hints at this. There is a noticeable demand for better classics, six students in particular specifying that Addison and Conciliation should be changed on the ground that they are too uninteresting and complex, and require a great deal of information that students taking the course have had very little or no chance to accumulate beforehand; and which, if they do accumulate it as they read the selection, kills all appreciation of it.

5. Miscellaneous.

There were a number of scattering recommendations dealing with certain features of administration peculiar to the conditions for class work in the Teachers College High School. These have, however, no direct bearing on the general theory or its application, and will accordingly not be dwelt upon. Under this general heading comes a recommendation^{by} only two students that there be less inductive and more text-book work; it was apparently due to the fact that both of these students were inclined to memorize and "cram" so that they naturally preferred to get the principles of composition that way. However, three other students recommend more class discussion so as to bring out the principles better and fix them more firmly in the students' minds.

Section 2. The Author's Estimate of the Value of the Work.

In giving the author's estimate and conclusions regarding the work, it would be easy to make with perfect sincerity highly eulogistic statements, but again he has tried faithfully to get at the truth and so far as possible to avoid any emotional bias. He believes enthusiastically in his work for the results of the experiment in many ways far surpassed his expectations. It is now his purpose to try to give some reasons that will convince others of the justice of this belief on his part. This section will follow the general plan of the preceeding one, that is, there will be presented: first, the valuable features of the work; and secondly, suggestions for improving it.

To begin with, the course in his opinion was so successful because it was based upon the proper motives for inducing good composition work in students. He believes that the main motives for producing such work and for improving it, are those enunciated in Chapter I, pages six and seven. But in order to be perfectly sure about the matter, he made a careful investigation under the usual scientific precautions, with all the students one day present in Section I, a total of twenty-two*. These students were asked to tell as accurately as they could, the conditions under which they did their best composition, or the motives that prompted them to put forth their best efforts in composition. They were asked to indicate in some way the relative strength of the motives so that it could be told which one influenced each student the most, in his opinion. The students were not asked to put down any certain number of motives, but were to put down only the ones that influenced them, so various numbers were given. A list of possible motives was placed on the board, but the students were told not to use the order given there, nor were they restricted to this list. No student did follow that order nor did

* This was purposely held after the students had completed the work in exposition, so that they would be able to judge of the strength of the motives better, and express this relative strength better.

anyone use more than half the list given. The results of this test are given in the table below.

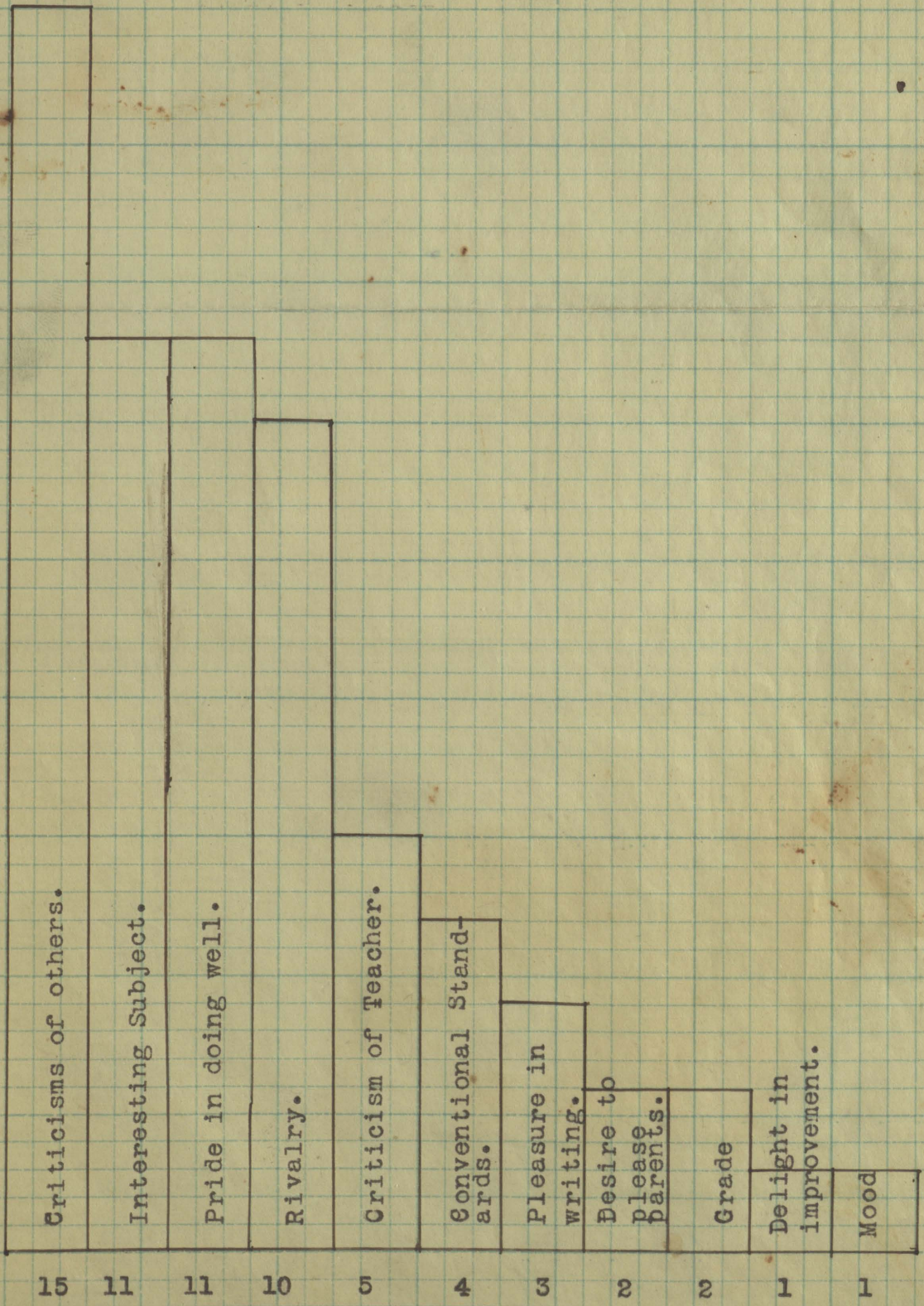
T A B L E I .
SHOWING MOTIVES, WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE STUDENTS IN SECTION I, PROMPTED THEM TO DO THEIR BEST WORK IN COMPOSITION.

<u>Motives.</u>	No. students mentioning it.	No. 1st. Choice	No. 2	No. 3	No. 4	No. 5
Consideration for criticism of the class.....	15	4	5	3	2	1
Interest in theme subject.....	11	6	3	0	0	2
Pride in doing well.....	11	1	5	1	3	1
Rivalry.....	10	2	5	2	1	0
Consideration for criticism of teacher.....	5	1	1	2	1	0
Desire to reach conventional standards in expression.....	4	1	0	1	2	0
Pleasure in composition for its own sake.....	3	3	0	0	0	0
Desire to please parents.....	2	2	0	0	0	0
Consideration for grade writer is making.....	2	0	1	1	0	0
Delight <u>is</u> seeing one's self improve.....	1	0	0	1	0	0
Particular mood for composition.....	1	1	0	0	0	0

The same data is given graphically in plates I, II, and III on the following pages, the plates being labeled so as to show exactly what is represented.

Plate I presents the motives simply as the students thought of them, but Plate II attempts to show the relative value of the motives more accurately. In both of these the unusual strength of what may be termed "the big four" motives is very apparent. Plate III presents the motives so as to show their duration. It is well to note in this plate that the interest in the subject is a more powerful incentive to begin with in many cases, but

GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF MOTIVES
WHICH PRODUCE THE BEST COMPOSITION .
(Tabulated from students' lists, according to number
of times each motive is mentioned, irrespective of
order of choice.).



GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF MOTIVES WHICH PRODUCE THE BEST COMPOSITION.
(Tabulated from students' lists, averaged by Australian Ballot System)-

1st.	choice	counts	5
2nd.	"	"	4
3d.	"	"	3
4th.	"	"	2
5th.	"	"	1

Columns Totaled.

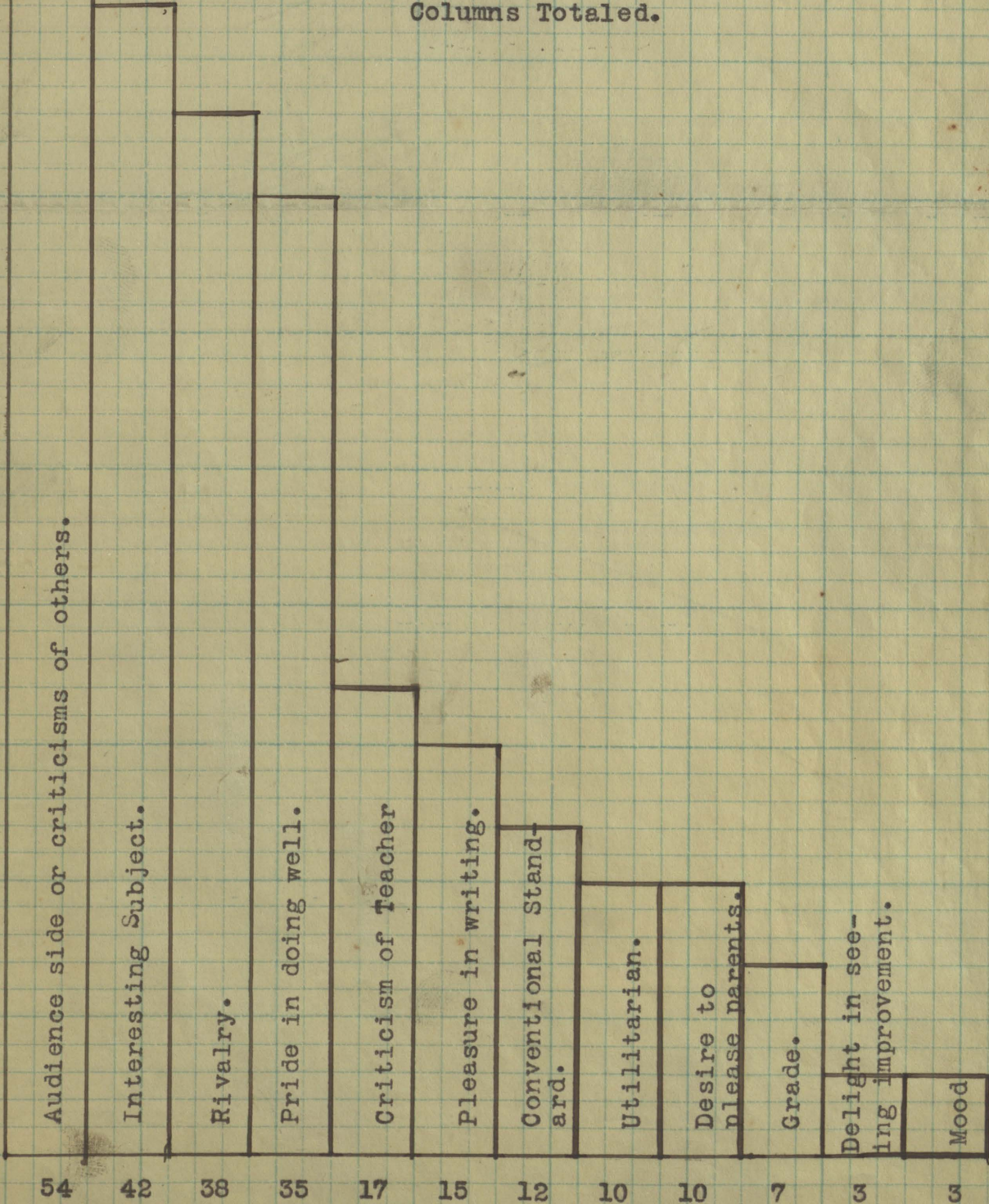


PLATE III.

GRAPHS REPRESENTING MOTIVES. WHICH PRODUCE THE BEST COMPOSITION. (Tabulated from students' lists, according to number of choices and rank of choices.).

Y = No. of choices.
 X = Rank of choices.
 1 choice = 30 mm.

- Audience.
- - - - Criticism of Teacher.
- Conventional Standards.
- Interesting Subject.
- - - - Pleasure in Composing.
- Pleasure in Improving.
- Rivalry.
- - - - Grade.
- Desire to Please Parents.
- Pride in Doing Well.
- - - - Mood.

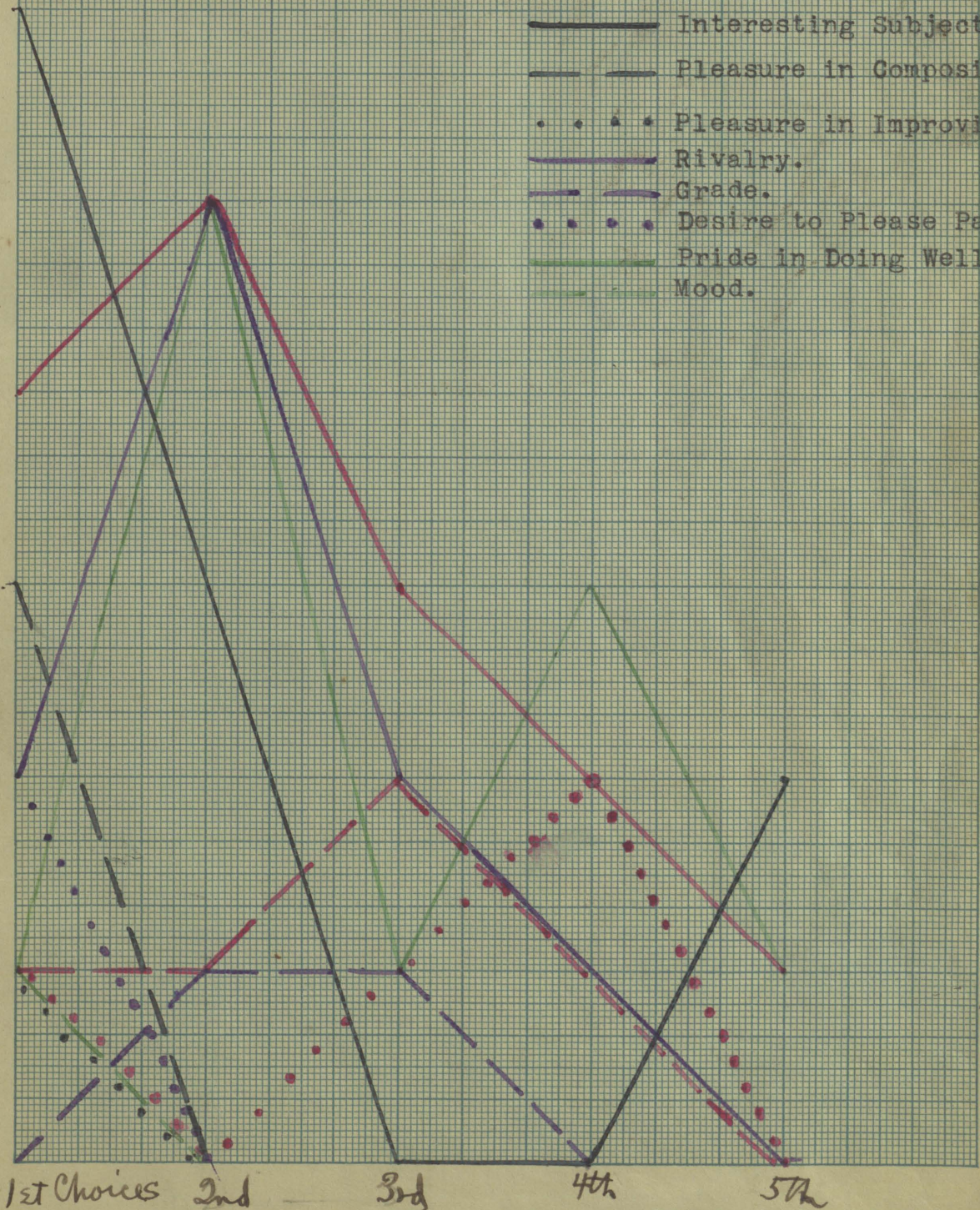


PLATE B. FOR SALE BY THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI LIBRARY, COOPERATIVE STORE, COLUMBIA, MO. DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

consideration for the audience is the motive that endures best all the way through. Pride in doing well is not a powerful primary motive but a strong secondary one. Rivalry is also not a good primary one, but appears for a short time as a powerful secondary one. Pleasure in composition is a great stimulus for a few students, but cannot be depended upon to last. Many composition teachers may find food for thought in the small value assigned to consideration for the criticism of the teacher, and for grades.

To sum up this point, while the author does not for one instant mean to say that his conclusions are incontrovertible, he does think that this study shows that his methods appealed to the motives which would induce these students to do their best in composition work. Furthermore, he feels safe in saying that these students are sufficiently representative of all high school students, that no serious error will result if any teacher of composition assumes that she may teach her class successfully by taking for granted that the four main motives for good composition work with them will be the ones shown by this set of students.

The audience feature in particular, in the writer's opinion, was the most important part of the methods. Aside from its value as the strongest motive in the minds of the majority of his own students, it kept a much better spirit in the relations of the teacher and students; the other students were doing much of the criticism, so that no ill will attached itself to the criticism offered by the teacher. It seemed that this feature was the back-bone of the entire method. The writer was formerly afraid that so much use of the audience might make the students feel that their originality and independence was interfered with, consequently he took the precaution to ask the students in regard to this matter. After the usual precautions, the students were asked to state very carefully if they had felt at all during the year that so much writing for the other members of the class had cramped them or made them feel that their originality was being interfered with.

The results from this test (Section I, twenty-one papers turned in) are as follows:

T A B L E II

Showing how Students of Section I Thought the
Methods of the Course Had Affected Their Originality.

Not at all.....	11	
Slightly.....	6	Of these, 5 a little at first because of timidity, which soon wore off. 1 slightly from a dislike to read before other students; apparently never any better: this was Student No.17 who was in class, only during the last semester. 1 a little from timidity at first; later more original.
Made distinctly more original....	4	
Very unfavorably or for any length of time.....	0	

21

This table, in the author's opinion, shows that the appeal to the audience, if carefully handled, need not be injurious to the student's originality; if anything, it may become a benefit to him by making him more original. The students on the whole seemed to feel that the criticism of their fellows was for their own good; that it was kindly and just, so that there was no need to dread it if they had tried to do their work well. But they did seem to consider that the approval of their fellows was a thing greatly to be desired and worth putting forth every effort to attain.

While the class was studying the classics, this same principle was also applied at times with excellent results in getting the students to read aloud. For example, in the study of Addison, five of his best essays in the Spectator were selected and one assigned to each of five students. Each student read his own essay to the class, but no one else read it. Consequently he felt that he was giving the audience something they had no chance to get otherwise. The result was that the vigor and meaning they put into their reading left little to be desired on this score.

One of the strongest features of the course, in the author's opinion, was the unusual interest and pleasure which the students apparently took in working up their compositions; the results in this respect were far ahead of those in any other composition class of which he has ever known. This conclusion is not based upon his observation alone, but was checked by testing the students. In order that the interest might not be that due in large measure to the personality of the teacher, the test was made upon the students of both sections I and II, a total of thirty-three students present. Each student was asked these questions:

"Have you before this year on the whole enjoyed composing themes ?
If so, why; if not, why not? (As nearly as you can tell)!"
"Have you this year on the whole enjoyed composing themes ?
If so, why; if not, why not ? (As nearly as you can tell)."

As there was an emotional element involved in this, it was of course to be expected that students might not take precisely the same attitude towards the work at this time as later on: this was the case. The test was given about the first of May and, in checking up the results by comparing them with those obtained from the final theme, several changes were noticed. These, however, in no case showed that a student had changed from enjoyment to dislike, but, in several instances, students on May first stated they did not enjoy the work, while in their final papers they considerably modified their former statements of the work. The reason for this was that they had in the meantime studied argument and liked it. The results of this test are given in Tables III, IV, and V .

It is scarcely necessary to say much regarding these results as they speak for themselves, but it is especially gratifying to note the great improvement in those who disliked composition formerly, as well as in the case of those who before this year liked it only fairly or moderately well. In this connection, the reader's attention is called to the fact that this improvement was not due in very great measure to the fact that this was the first time they had ever had composition work systematically, as a considerable

number of them had had such work before in one form or another, in good high schools*, too.

T A B L E I I I .

Showing Comparative Attitudes of Students Toward
Composition Work Before and During Course.

<u>Before this Course.</u>	<u>During this Course.</u>
<u>Number Enjoying Composition</u>	
Fairly Well.....5	2.
Average Well....4.....	20.
Extremely Well..0	<u>4.</u>
Total.....9.....	26
<u>Number Indifferent to</u>2.....	2
<u>Number Disliking Composition.</u>	
Average.....20	5
Extremely..... 2	<u>0</u>
Total <u>22</u>	<u>5</u>
33	33

* For further information on this point, see Appendix B.

T A B L E IV . (A).

Showing Change in Attitude of Students toward
Composition Work before and during Course.

Attitude before Course.	Change in Attitude.
<u>Number Enjoying Composition.</u>	
Fairly well5	(3 changed to average enjoyment. (1 remained same.
Average well.....4	(1 changed to extreme enjoyment. (1 changed to indifferent. (1 remained same. (2 liked better.
Extremely well.....0	(4 appeared here, but these are accounted for elsewhere.
<u>Number Indifferent to</u>2	Both changed to average enjoyment.
<u>Number Disliking Composition.</u>	
Average.....20	(1 changed to indifferent. (1 changed to fair enjoyment. (12 changed to average enjoyment. (1 changed to extreme enjoyment. (5 still disliked, but one of these less so.
Extremely.....2	(Both of these changed to ex- treme enjoyment.

T A B L E . IV. (B).

Showing Change of Attitude of Students toward Composition
Work before and during the Course, by Percentages.

3% of students dropped back as regards improvement in attitude.
20% of students remained stationary as regards improvement in attitude.
77% changed for better as regards improvement in attitude.

However, the reasons advanced by the students for their change in attitude are worthy of careful attention and are accordingly given in tables VI and VII on the following pages . It will be noticed that the reasons assigned for improvement support very well the general methods of the course and that the definiteness of instruction mentioned by the largest number of

the class effectually settles any objection that may be raised to the effect that such an informal and inductive method of composition is likely to produce vagueness and inaccurate results. The reasons advanced by those who did not improve need little comment, with the exception of the fifth one, which comes from a mentally deficient student in Section II. The other reasons in several cases, it will be noted, are scarcely worth considering.

Growing out of the definiteness of instruction, in all probability, but at any rate certainly appearing from some cause, it was noticed this year that the students did an unusually efficient grade of thinking. This has already been noted by a great many of the students. It manifested itself to the teacher in the form of a much more intelligent and logical organization of thought on the part of the students, with a resulting easier and more fluent expression for the precise purposes of the author. This was in part, probably due to the definiteness of the instruction and to work on the classics, particularly the last two selections; but, in the author's opinion, it came largely from the fact that the students considered their audience so much. This keeping of the audience in mind and thinking constantly about the precise effect to be aimed at, produced a directness of aim, etc., that was never approached in the author's classes before. As a result, this class showed an unusually intelligent and precise use of the principles of unity, coherence, and emphasis, although very little formal work, and indeed very few lessons, were devoted to these principles.

T A B L E V .

Showing Reasons Advanced By Students for
Change to a More Favorable Attitude.

Number of students
mentioning it

- | | | |
|----|---------|---|
| 1. | 15..... | Definiteness of instruction; better knowing what they were doing; having a definite goal. |
| 2. | 8..... | Greater freedom of subject permitted. |
| 3. | 6..... | Increased practice made it easier. |
| 4. | 5..... | Gradation of work so they could see improvement. |
| 5. | 4..... | Increased realization of value of composition in other things. |
| 6. | 3..... | Use of classics showed them how. |
-
-

T A B L E VI .

Showing Reasons Advanced by Students for not Changing
to a More Favorable Attitude.

-
-
- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Boy who dropped from enjoyable to indifferent.
Took too much effort; could not get grades he used to get.
Student No.2. |
| 1 | Naturally became worried when he had a task to perform; could not rest until he got them off his hands. Later said work was more pleasurable.
Student No.7. |
| 1 | Temperamental dislike for organizing his thoughts; he later liked argument.
Student No.8. |
| 1 | Too hard; disliked criticism of his teacher. He had been lazy. From Section II. |
| 1 | Could not well see what was to be done. Mentally deficient student from Section II. |
| 1 | Disliked it naturally; could not get good subjects. Lazy; did poor work all around. From Section II. |
| 1 | Hard to find subjects others would care to listen to. Remained partly enjoyable.
Student No.16. |
-
-

The method of using the classics in this course also brought about some very good effects. In the minds of the students, it produced an ability to get the substance of anything read much more easily than formerly; and from the teacher's view point, their improvement in this same ability was very marked. The method was first to study the classics as wholes and then to take the more detailed work by studying thought units as subheads. This produced in the students a considerable facility in getting the relations of the parts of a piece to the whole with a consequently increased ability to get the gist of a thing easily. The plan of going to the classics to discover the methods of work employed by good writers, and of trying to imitate these methods, also resulted in much outside work on the part of the students, for it encouraged them to hunt for good examples and to notice good or poor effects in their reading outside the class. Very frequently during the year, various students called the teacher's attention to books, magazine articles, etc., that illustrated well or poorly various features of the work at the time under consideration, most suggestions of this sort being given of course, in the conferences, although no such work was required. The students at various times also supplemented the work in the classics by introducing into their themes new effects observed elsewhere; this was very helpful. Of course once in a while some poor effect was imitated, as in the case of the boy already cited on page twenty-six; there were, however, very few such cases, and the good results from this original work far outweighed the bad.

One of the strongest features of the general method of the course was undoubtedly the use of the conferences. The value of these conferences has already been shown by what the students think of them, but it is well to emphasize some of the points mentioned by them and to bring out others. The conferences brought about a better understanding between teacher and student than could ever have been hoped for, under a system of class instruction alone. Through them the teacher was enabled to understand the

student's thought before it was expressed; this of course gave him as teacher an immense advantage. A noticeable result was a much higher standard of work because the teacher was in a position to appeal much more effectively to the motives that make for the best efforts in composition. The teacher found that they produced in him an inspiration and a freshness that materially helped him to make the work more interesting. They also enabled him to give the student a much superior form of criticism.

This criticism was applied just where it was needed and was more impressive because given personally. It was also more thorough and searching for the teacher could feel at liberty to speak as frankly as necessary when he had the student in private, while the latter took such criticism without the slightest ill-will toward the teacher; although he would have resented keenly much milder criticism given in public. Furthermore, the students were very free to ask for help on matters they were troubled with; they were consequently brought to be more careful in their work and to do more effectual self-criticism. The corrections by the students after the criticism, were much better than under class instruction only, for the teacher could always see that such corrections were made faithfully and accurately, and by the student alone, which he could never do altogether satisfactorily if he used written criticisms solely. On this matter of corrections, while it may theoretically be better, according to the authors of the text used*, for the student to improve by trying to eliminate the same error in a new theme rather than by correcting it in an old one, it is the writer's experience that such a theory is well nigh incapable of being put into actual practice with a class. The reason for this is that the teacher cannot remember what errors each student made in his last theme so as to watch for

* Brooks-Hubbard; Composition and Rhetoric, Preface, Page 5.

them in the new one. It is also frequently very inconvenient, if not impossible, to get the last theme back to the student before he begins the new one. Consequently, it is necessary for the teacher to see that the student realizes fully the errors in the old themes and improves the process of composition by forming the habit of criticising his own work before he leaves it. The best way to do this is to have the student correct his old errors so that he may know definitely what they are; this correcting can be done in conferences better than any place else. The conferences also saved an enormous amount of time usually devoted to seeing that corrections were made, and to class drills and "grinds" on the mechanics of composition,- spelling, punctuation, grammatical construction, etc., which in the usual composition class, often occupy so much time and are so distasteful to teacher and students as well.

One of the best ways of testing the worth of any teaching is to see how well the abilities developed by the student in that particular subject are carried over into work outside the class. If the course be judged by this test, the results seem to be gratifying. The students have already given considerable testimony in this regard, but the teacher also noticed the good results of the composition work as manifested in the other classes in which these students recited. Nor was this his view alone. At one time during the year, Professor Charters* started a "hospital" for students in the school, who naturally or habitually spelled poorly. As the composition students did much more writing than any others in school, their spelling could be more accurately observed; a fair proportion of them, naturally, were soon in the "hospital". In testing them, Professor Charters had them write compositions, sometimes wholly original and sometimes using certain words he gave them. On one occasion he asked the author about several students and it was found that he had picked out all the students in English II then in the "hospital", although he did not know they belonged to the composition class,

* Supervisor of Instruction in the Teachers College High School.

simply by the superior organization and distinctive style apparent in their themes. These students were of course among the poorest in the composition class, so it may be conjectured how much this ability was carried over in the case of the better students. There was also a much saner use of the principles of composition in the class, which was, according to the testimony of the students, carried over into work outside the school. The work in this class was better linked with other work, in the teacher's opinion, because it concerned itself more directly with things outside the composition class. The result was that the students felt at liberty to write about whatever they were interested in; consequently, they were free to bring about the connections with other subjects themselves and did not have to be driven to do this superficially by the teacher.

This concludes this part of the author's estimate of the value of the work, but the reader who cares for further proof is referred to Appendix C where sample themes from various students are given. These themes are arranged so that the students' progress may be easily noticed at one reading.

While the course as a whole was more than satisfactory to the teacher, and while he sees no occasion whatever to modify his original theory in any of its essentials, there are still several places, which have naturally been discovered during the work of the year, where the course might be improved. Let us now turn our attention to some of these possible ways of improvement, which, for convenience in treatment, are listed below.

1. Use of the Audience.

The use of this was in the main highly satisfactory, but the course might be materially improved by the extension of this principle still further, particularly by developing a body of student readers for composition addressed to the eye. Most of the themes this year when read in class were addressed to the ear; the only appeal, to any considerable extent, made to the eye, occurred when the themes were read by the teacher. This could be improved upon

1..Use of the Audience. (Continued.)

by using the other students as a "visual audience", if the expression is permissible, which could be easily managed by having a theme handed over to several other students to be criticised for visible form. This was provided for to some extent by putting the themes on the bulletin board, but, as no poor themes were thus exhibited, only the better writers received much benefit from this.

The audience feature of the work, however, seemed to produce a noticeably poor quality of reading aloud of the classics by members of the class. They would read very well indeed their themes and anything which they were given to look up individually; also, in a class discussion, ^{if} a student needed to cite a passage to support his position, he would turn to it and read it excellently. But the students simply would not read well passages that they felt the others had in their books before them so that there was no real need for reading them. The teacher talked to them of the advantages of being able to read well, but it was hard to get them to regard this seriously when common sense told them that they were right in the matter. His own conclusion is that this ^{is} something that can be helped only by taking advantage of more of those cases in which they do read intelligently and letting the other readings, which are really of little use, go. The fact that they could read well when there was a real need for it, showed their ability in this direction so that, if advantage were taken of such occasions, they would probably read well whenever it was necessary. They could be asked to present to the class good examples of the principles under discussion obtained from outside sources, which examples would of course be individual. In this way it would be possible, if the teacher insisted that these specimens be short, for the student to do as much reading as he would likely do anyway if he read the paragraph or two that would be his share of the

reading in the classic on any one day.

2. Apportionment of Work

In this connection it has already been noticed that some students recommended more time for argument. This coincides with the author's view; to accomplish this, the time allowed narration could easily be shortened. Description and exposition do not seem to have an undue amount of time, but they could if necessary be shortened a little. At any rate, a shortening all along the first two-thirds of the course might be desirable with a view to giving more time to the last two classics, if these are to be studied again. There was apparently sufficient time for the other two classics. There might also be a slightly smaller amount of writing, although this on the whole did not seem to be any undue burden on the teachers or on the students except those in Section III, who had their recitations daily and who also were very poor in the work.

It might be well to include a few more class themes; the teacher of Section III felt this to be the case, but it hardly seemed to be necessary in Sections I and II. The writing of themes in class does produce a readiness of expression, but it also tends to great shallowness, the students frequently racing through and then sitting without doing anything. It is unjust to require all to put in the same amount of time on the same thing; but several idle scattered students sitting throughout the class are not calculated to assist work on the part of the others. This tends to what someone calls a "fatal facility" in composition, that is conducive to anything but good results.

3. Use of the Classics.

The work with the classics this year was on the whole satisfactory, but it seemed that at times certain things were being developed from an inductive study of the classics when they might

3. Use of the Classics. (Continued.)

4 have been brought out with much more ease and in less time by the common-sense method described in Chapter II, Section 4. This latter method, however, as already stated, has a tendency to waste time and result in vague generalities. To obviate this, the text might be well used more as a reference, the teacher after the discussion referring the students to the treatment in the text, indicating only the essentials there; students will look up a reference without much trouble if it is short and very succinct.

The classics themselves, beyond a doubt, should be changed, with one exception. Silas Marner was very satisfactory, but Hawthorne proved too introspective for most of the students. Stevenson's Treasure Island or Kidnapped would make a good substitute for the latter. Macaulay's Addison was very unsatisfactory, as before indicated, and should by all means be eliminated. If it is desired to keep a classic by Macaulay, his Johnson, would prove a better choice. The Conciliation proved to be very hard for a considerable number of the class, and also exceedingly dry for some, but on the other hand it appealed to some of the students more than any other classic studied this year. The author is inclined, from his experience and that of others with whom he has talked, to discontinue the use of this particular classic, but has so far found no satisfactory substitute.

4. Outside Reading.

The results in this direction were not what they should have been. It is true that each student read a good book the first semester and the author knows that nearly all of them were reading something most of the time as they would tell him about the books and cite examples of what they had found in outside reading, but he feels that he might have managed to have them read more. It would be an easy matter to remedy this another year by preparing

4. Outside Reading.

a list of good books with which the teacher was familiar and requiring the students to read a certain reasonable number of these, the teacher carefully selecting a book suited to the nature of each student and talking it over with him at the conferences. Much better results and a better liking for good literature would be obtained in this way than by assigning formal book reviews and work of this kind which are really beyond the ability of most high school students and are very distasteful to them. All the abstracting necessary can be secured in connection with the study of the classics, where the passages are sufficiently short for the students to handle with success.

5. Forms of Discourse.

It has been suggested to the author by various people whom he has consulted, particularly Professor Fairchild of the Teachers College Faculty, and by books on the teaching of composition, that it might be possible to do away with the treatment involving the use of the forms of discourse and approach the matter more from the study of the paragraph, etc. But it seems to the author that this takes a subordinate element and centers the attention upon it while leaving out the biggest motive of all,- the precise effect the writer aims to produce upon his reader. He aims to tell an interesting story, to paint a vivid word picture, to explain a thing lucidly, to convince an opponent, etc., and the paragraph and sentence are minor elements in this. The treatment by the forms of discourse lays hold of this main motive and works with it.

It might be possible to distinguish only two divisions, literary and logical composition, the former involving the co-ordination of images intended to center the reader's idea upon these images, and the latter involving ideas and aiming to center the

5. Forms of Discourse. (Continued.)

reader's attention upon the explicit expression of the relations involved between these ideas. Narration and description would be covered by the former and exposition and argumentation by the latter. Such a division might be simpler and if it were followed, the purpose of the writer might be clearly kept in mind, but hardly so clearly as under the present division. The author would very much be opposed to letting a student write as he pleased under any form, and then trying to improve the expression of what he did choose, as some suggest. This might work with only one or two students, but it would seem impossible to hold a class together under this plan. Again, under such conditions, the student might get a very inadequate experience for he would probably choose that form in which he was best and seldom if ever try the others; although he might, under the conditions obtaining this year, after a short trial in them, learn to like them and use them to re-enforce his work in the particular forms he did not like. Then, too, any such license would tend to destroy the definiteness and clearness of instruction that meant so much to the students, according to their testimony. A throwing down of the bars would result in the students wandering off in various directions instead of going directly toward one fixed point. The attention of the students could hardly be centered upon any one thing at the same time and there would be no need whatever for keeping the class together except for the purpose of studying some of the more mechanical elements of writing.

6. Correlating with work of other classes.

It seemed at times that the results would be better if more advantage could be taken of the work that the students had to prepare in other classes, so that they might be permitted to devote their time in the composition class to the form of such work.

6. Correlating With Work of Other Classes. (Continued:)

There were, however, certain unsurmountable difficulties in the administration of the practice work, which made this out of the question. It would, not, on the other hand, as is sometimes advocated, be advisable, in the author's opinion, to have any great part of the written work in the composition class consist of that which is to be handed in in other classes. In this case, the main motive for good composition, the difference in intellectual or emotional level between the writer and his audience, is entirely lacking. No amount of preaching at the other teachers is ever going to bring them to a point where they will use the written work which in their classes is test work pure and simple, for the purpose of giving the student a chance to write upon something concerning which he knows more than they do. The work in these other classes must of necessity partake more or less of the nature of examination or test work. Concerning the evil effects of such writing upon good composition work, an English teacher, whose book every composition teacher should read, has well said*:

"Examinations... tend to paralyze the powers of exposition. The mental attitude enforced on the examinee is the slightly ridiculous attitude, for a writer, of a person obliged to give information to some one who already possesses it. In every day life you are silent in the presence of a person better acquainted with a subject than yourself. It is only in the examination-room that you tell the better-informed person, your examiner, what he already knows and what he is often intensely bored to be told again. If you are a wise person and clever examinee, you allude, you hint, you suggest, you convey your knowledge in the briefest possible form, that is, in a form totally unintelligible to the previously uninitiated."

Such work as this is surely not desirable in the composition class; it certainly does not enable us to start the process of composition under a full head of steam, but rather to work under

* Hartog: The Writing of English, p.75.

6. Correlating With Work of Other Classes. (Continued.)

inadequate propulsive force, which will of course produce inadequate results. If this be not the case, the student will prepare the same composition for two different audiences, the two teachers, who do not and never can bear the same relation to him, so far as the information he is trying to give them, is concerned. This lack of definiteness of purpose is likely to produce a violation of the cardinal principle of unity that may lead to serious results. And finally, it may be urged against such a plan, that it gives the student work in exposition almost exclusively.

Section 3. The Value of the General Theory for Application in Public High Schools.

As this thesis is written partly in the hope that it may be of some assistance to other teachers of composition, it will be well to consider the application of the principles herein given to the teaching of composition in public high schools. From an experience of several years in such teaching himself and from talking with others who have taught there, the author sees no reason why all of these principles and methods could not be successfully applied and used in any high school, with the possible exception of securing enough conferences. In public high schools it is usually desirable to spread the composition work over the four years; the authorities of the Teachers College High School would very much prefer to do that, but, as it is in some senses a preparatory school, they are compelled to concentrate on composition in one year. The principles could, however, easily be applied throughout the four years, the course simply being extended to cover that period, and taking part of the time devoted to English; or else the field could be gone over several times, each time more intensively; or it could be gone over first with no attention to the forms of discourse, leaving them to be differentiated later. These are minor matters and would not

affect the working of the principles. Different classics could be used as the teacher might desire, and certainly a great many more of them. In using classics, for inductive work on rhetorical principles, it is very necessary that all the students use the same edition to avoid wasting much time. With a four years course, the finer points could be taken up much better and the results should be very much better than in this course. The conferences, are, however, a very essential part of the work of applying the principles, and should be provided for at all costs.

To many teachers, it may seem that conference work is simply adding a great burden to a teacher already weighed down by work. This is by no means the case. In the first place, conference work is not like class routine, but is informal in its nature, and, while none the less valuable in its results, requires no formal preparation and is the most inspiring and invigorating work the composition teacher can do. This year it almost never seemed like work, but was more like a chat or little visit with a friend. Again, the matter of arranging for conferences if viewed from the teacher's side, is almost wholly a matter of merely doing a different kind of work in the same time, and not putting in more hours. The composition teacher in a great many schools puts a grade on every theme, keeps a record of that grade, and of the correction of the theme, not clearing the record until the theme is satisfactorily corrected. Now with the conference method, the teacher has no need to keep a daily grade record or to put grades on the themes. He knows what each student is doing, and if any reference to themes is necessary, each student may hand in all his themes for the month at the end of each month, arranged in order, when a glance will tell the teacher all that is needed. Then, too, if good work is to be done, the teacher must see to it very carefully, that the student thoroughly corrects his errors. This requires that after the student has corrected his theme, he return it to the teacher who then looks over it to see if the corrections are satisfactory. This necessitates a great deal of work in keeping the themes in order, besides looking over the errors. The conference method simply takes about

the same time to look over the errors, but this is done with the student himself, and all the labor of keeping the themes in order, etc. is placed upon him. The routine work of the teacher is certainly much eased by having the student do the arranging of themes before he comes to conference. On the whole, if the work is done thoroughly in either case, the use of conferences really takes very little extra time on the part of the teacher. Still, if he feels that he cannot spare so much time, it may be possible for him to see the weak ones once in two weeks, and the others less frequently. This is not good for the latter, but it is a fair makeshift. Again, if the composition work is at all concentrated in one class, it is best to have rather frequent conferences there and less frequent ones in the others. Once in two weeks was found to be the most advantageous arrangement for conference where students were writing very frequently, and the author gave half-hour conferences; but frequently he found that he could accomplish everything possible in twenty minutes, so let the student go then.

The finding of times that will suit the students is a more difficult matter. It is of course desirable that as many conferences as possible come during school hours; in fact some teachers insist that they must come then or not at all. It is indeed possible to get a large number or all of them during that time. If the teacher is keeping study hall, any period during the day, several can be worked in then; they can be given at recess, a little before noon, immediately after school or early in the morning. They do not tax a teacher as regular teaching does, so he can give them very well at the periods indicated. The author gave them under such circumstances all year. It would be better to have the student off wholly by himself, but it is not necessary as the teacher and he can talk in low tones and be perfectly private. In the author's class it was found that students made no objections to coming at such times as they felt that what they received from the conference more than made up for any inconvenience. Again a number of conferences were held each Saturday morning as a rule, and instead of disliking to come on that morning a considerable proportion of the students

rather preferred to come then, as such conferences were given when the teacher was fresh and were consequently regarded as of more value.

As a last resort more time might be taken from the recitation period. The author believes that three recitations and the other two periods in each week devoted to conference work, will produce much better results in a year than five periods of class recitation without any conference work. Again, the teacher of composition if abreast of the times may be able to demonstrate to his superintendent that his subject is essentially a laboratory one, which it certainly is; that his ~~must~~ laboratory instruction must be individual as in the case of the sciences; that he must have double periods just as the science teacher has. This will provide abundant time for such work, and is an arrangement already employed in some of the good eastern high schools. With these suggestions, the author trusts that any teacher will be able to arrange for such conferences as he needs for his work; if he can do this, he should have little other trouble in applying the general theory.

I N C O N C L U S I O N .

With this, ends the treatment of these experiments in composition in the Teachers College High School during 1907-8. The author, of course, does not hope that a final solution of the problem has been reached, but he believes that he has made progress in that direction because he has achieved a clarification of his ideas,- the first step necessary in the solution of any problem.

Professor Barrett Wendell has truly observed:

"It is by no means true that if the reality be a very definite thing to us, our words will so show it to others*."

Nevertheless, the author hopes that he has made clear to the reader the things that he himself believes to be real, namely: that his theory of composition is in general the true one because it is founded upon the basic principles of the composition experience; that his methods of teaching the subject were on the whole in accordance with the nature of the true theory of composition; that in large measure the object for which the experiments were conducted, was attained. This object, it will be recalled, was to make composition interesting to ordinary high school students, and to more fully realize the magnificent possibilities of the subject.

* Barrett Wendell: English Composition, p. 214.

A P P E N D I X A .

SECTIONS OF THE CLASS.

<u>Section</u>	<u>Recitations</u> <u>per week.</u>	<u>Semesters</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>	
				1st. S.	2nd. S.
I.....	3.....	Both.....	Carter Alexander..	38.....	25
II.....	3.....	Both.....	Lucy Wolff.....	22.....	23
III.....	5.....	Second..	Maude Beamer.....		14

Note 1:-

Sections I and III had half-hour conferences, once in two weeks. Section II had no regular conferences.

Note 2:-

Section III was made up largely of students who had failed the first semester in the other two sections. They took a rapid review of narration and then went ahead on the regular schedule.

APPORTIONMENT OF THE WORK.

<u>Number of Lessons</u>	<u>Classics</u>	<u>Principles</u>	<u>Themes</u>	<u>Total</u>
Narration.....	14.....	8.....	17.....	39
Description.....	4.....	9.....	10.....	33
Exposition.....	7.....	7.....	10.....	24
Argument.....	8.....	1.....	3.....	12
Totals.....	33.....	25.....	40.....	108

Note 1:-

All recitations were one hour in length.

Note 2:-

Part of the classics used for description had been covered in the reading for narration.

Note 3:-

The final theme of the year is listed under exposition.

Note 4:-

About a dozen class themes were given incidentally during the year; no detailed record has been kept of these.

BOOKS USED.Text.

Brooks-Hubbard: Composition and Rhetoric: A. B. C.
Used as a reference book only.

Classics. All Lake Edition, S. F. & Co.

Hawthorne: Twice Told Tales: for description primarily;
for narration secondarily.

Eliot: Silas Marner: for narration primarily; for
description secondarily.

Macaulay: Addison: for exposition.

Burke: Conciliation: for argument.

A P P E N D I X A .

BOOKS USED. (Continued).

Note:-

All classics were studied first as literature; they were later used as a basis for working out rhetorical principles inductively.

OUTLINE OF SUBJECT MATTER.1. NARRATION.(a) Classics.Twice Told Tales:

Gray Champion)

Wedding Knell)

Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe)

Peter Goldthwaite's Treasure)

One lesson each.

Silas Marner. Nine lessons.

Life and Style of Author, one lesson.

(b) Development of Principles and Theme Work. (Numbers show the order in which work was given.)

Lesson.	Title.	Theme en.)	Title.
1..	Informal Discussion as to nature of work.		
2..			Oral Reports.
3.....	The Introduction.		
4.....			Oral Stories; partic attention to Int.
5.....	The Point of a Story.		
6.....			Written theme for point.
7.....	The Conclusion.		
8.....			Theme for conclusion.
9.....			Theme for unity by details.
10.....			Theme for coherence and sequence by time order.
11.....			Unity by means of time relations.
12.....	Unity, Coherence and Sequence.		
13.....			Outline of <u>Silas Marner</u> , Chap. IV. to show how author observed principles of lesson #12.
14.....			Outline of a Story on Basis of previous work.
15.....			Writing of Story to follow outline.
16.....	Lesson on Plot. Mass introduced.		
17.....			Writing a Plot.
18.....			Story to correspond.
19.....			Imaginative Story

APPENDIX A .(Continued).

(b) Development of Principles and Theme Work. (Continued).

Lesson.	Title.	Theme.	Title.
		20....	Imaginative Story; special attention to climax.
21.....	Conversation in Stories.	22....	Using Conversation to complete an un- complete story.
23.....	Different Trains of Events.	24....	Different trains of events.
		25....	Character shown by action only.

II. DESCRIPTION .(a) Classics.Twice Told Tales:

Sunday at Home	}	Three lessons.
Rill From the Town Pump		
Little Annie's Rambles		
Toll Gatherer's Day		
Vision of the Fountain		
Snow Flakes	}	Life and <u>Style</u> of Hawthorne, one lesson.

(b) Development of Principles and Theme Work.

This has already been given in Chapter II, Section 5.

III. EXPOSITION .(a) Classics.

Addison: Outlined with gradually increasing differentiation.
One Birdseye View and five detailed lessons.
Life and Style of Macaulay, one lesson.

(b) Development of Principles and Theme Work.

Lesson.	Title.	Theme.	Title.
1.....	The Introduction to Exposition.	2....	Paragraph each to show: How something is done. Why something is <u>done</u> . What something is.
4.....	Unity and coherence in exposition..	3....	Theme to show in what A's powers as a writer consisted.
5.....	Use of the outline in exposition.	6....	Write-up of what was learned in lesson <u>5</u> .

III. EXPOSITION.

(b) Development of Principles and Theme Work. (Continued).

Lesson.	Title.	Theme	Title.
		7....	How to use the University Library. Write-up of a class excursion there.
8.....	Definition, division, delimitation, synonyms.	9....	Explanation of one's favorite quotation.
10.....	Exposition by repetition and examples.	11....	Theme: two paragraphs to illustrate lesson #10.
12.....	Exposition by comparison and obverse.	13....	Theme for lesson #12. Same subject in two different ways.
14.....	Exposition by cause and effect, and details.	15....	Two paragraphs to illustrate lesson #14.
		16....	Paragraph transition.
		17....	Final Theme.

IV. ARGUMENT .

(a) Classics.

Conciliation:

One Birdseye View and six detailed lessons.
 Life and Style of Burke, one lesson.
 Outlined by briefs with gradually increasing differentiation.

(b) Development of Principles and Theme Work.

Lesson.	Title.	Theme.	Title.
1.....	Introduction to Argument. (This was the lesson outlined on page 34).		
		2.....	Brief on either side of any subject of student's choosing.
		3.....	Brief on different subject.
		4.....	Brief on opposite side of question taken in 2 or 3.

A P P E N D I X B .

PERSONNEL OF SECTION I, ENGLISH II, TEACHERS COLLEGE
HIGH SCHOOL, SECOND SEMESTER, 1907-8.Section 1. General Information Concerning Each Student.

This section is given for the purpose of enabling the reader to see that the experiments were conducted with an average set of high school students. It will also show him how the author studied his own students. There is here presented only such information as was found to be of value in actual teaching. The data were collected incidentally throughout the year by the author in conferences, but for the sake of absolute accuracy, he had the students write answers to very specific questions; this was done only after he had become well acquainted with them so that they would not hide things from him. The material obtained in this way is given below in a very condensed form. Only twenty-one students happened to be present at that time, so only these are discussed here. The ones not discussed, were weak students who had changed sections or left school.

This treatment deals with the students of Section II only as the author knew these better than the others. Aside from the students who were doing special* work, four in number, the personnel of this section did not differ appreciably from that of the other two, except that Section III, as before noted, was made up largely of weak students. The author believes that the students of Section II, without serious error, may be assumed to be fairly representative of average high school students doing composition work. It is true that their average age is above that of most high school composition students, but this condition, while it makes for earnestness of purpose and industry, has two very decided disadvantages ;

* This means that these students had done part of the work in other schools and were consequently permitted to take the work with the class, but were required to do special work outside.

first, such students are very eager to get through the high school as quickly as possible and are not so willing as younger students to do the necessary drill work: second, they are past the formative period and wrong habits of expression are much more firmly fixed in them than in the case of younger students. These two disadvantages, in the author's opinion, offset the advantages before mentioned.

Let us now take up the data regarding the students. To avoid any embarrassment to the students, they are each given a number after being listed alphabetically. All towns etc., mentioned below, unless otherwise specified, are in Missouri.

No. 1. Boy, 19 years, from village, preparing for academic work, possibly journalism later.

Interested in politics, literature, science, athletics, English, mathematics, and Latin.

Better in written than in oral expression.

Previous schooling very irregular. Attended rural school irregularly until 10, then village school until 14, Out of school until 17, then back in village high school two years.

Previous work in English very limited. Had studied elementary grammar and had one year of composition work, without much practice. Most of his knowledge of English gathered from reading outside of school.

Had lived all his life in a community where the correct use of English was practically unknown. His family used ordinarily good English and corrected him at home for slips in grammar.

Very fond of reading, especially fiction, poetry and history. Had read some from practically all great English and American writers, including some of the best short story writers of today.

Fine student in everything, especially in the literary side of composition. Only literary artist in the class. Of a timid disposition, but developed much under use of audience method. Did special work.

No. 2. Boy, 16 years, preparing for academic work. Career not decided upon.

Interested in athletics, history and people.

Previous schooling very varied. Had been to good schools, but seldom long in one place, and had moved all over the country.

Had had good formal training in grammar and some in composition. Thought he knew more than he really did.

Communities he lived in used bad English.

Family used fair English and corrected him occasionally.

Had read many books of adventure for boys and much rather trashy fiction, very little solid material.

Very variable and superficial in his work. An average student, except that he did nothing very thoroughly.

Better in written expression than in oral expression.

- No. 3. Boy, 12 years, thought he would be a doctor. From cultured small city.
Interested in athletics, electricity, history, physics, and biology.
Oral expression very much better than written.
Grade work taken in excellent schools, but with numerous changes.
Spent only 4 1/2 years in the grades, and did not finish the work thoroughly.
Sophomore in T.C.H.S. where all high school work had been taken.
Had had excellent formal training in English.
Home communities used good English.
Family used good English and corrected him.
Had read a great deal in books of adventure, and in popular science books for boys.
Very bright boy, who had, however, had insufficient preparation. At his age, he was too restless, etc., to care for work out principles very much. Developed a good deal during the year and came out in fair shape at the end. Was unusually large for his age and so really was more advanced than his years indicated.
- No. 4. Boy, 15 years, from village preparing for academic work; later probably engineering.
Interested in athletics, mathematics, languages, and doing good school work. Better oral than written expression.
Had been in fair public and private schools; had been pushed in his work.
Had had good formal English grammar and some composition.
Home communities used from poor to fairly good English.
Family used excellent English and corrected him occasionally.
Read almost incessantly, mostly fiction of lighter sort.
Good student in everything, but particularly brilliant in mathematics. Great logical ability, but almost no artistic sense.
- No. 5. Boy, 21 years, from a large city, preparing for engineering work.
Interested in engineering, mechanical contrivances, athletics, mathematics, and English.
Better in oral than in written expression.
Had had good grade work in city schools, but had obtained high school work chiefly in night schools; had been out of school practically for five years.
Community used fair English.
Family used fair English and sometimes corrected him.
Had read much in books and periodicals on engineering, and in fiction.
Student of good native capacity, who had been injured by being out of school so much. Made a noble effort to overcome his handicap, but it was very hard work for him. Aside from his never being able to improve his spelling a great deal, he rounded out his work in good shape by the end of the year. His poor spelling seemed to be practically hopeless.
- No. 6. Girl, 15 years, from cultured Missouri small city, preparing for academic work.
Interested in gymnasium work, elocution, English and mathematics.
Written expression very much better than oral.
Graded school education good, but varied.

No. 6. (Continued).

One year in good high school.
 Good previous formal training in English.
 Communities lived in used from poor to good English.
 Family used excellent English and corrected her very carefully.
 Never cared for reading much, but had read a little of the better class of present-day popular fiction.
 Good worker who was much hampered by illness. Had great difficulty in making herself clear until work in exposition was well under way. She then developed very rapidly and was much more successful later on.

No. 7. Boy, 18 years, from large city, preparing for medical work. Interested in athletics, medical work, and physical sciences. Oral expression much better than written. Had had excellent grade and two years high school work. Had had very best English training. Had read a great deal, covering, in school, good classics, and outside, lighter fiction.
 A good worker, on the whole about an average student. Very peculiar in that he could understand nothing unless it was presented to him just as he wished it. Got things twisted very easily. At times did unusually good work.

No. 8. Boy, 18 years, from a farm, future work uncertain. Interested in reading, agriculture, history, and a little in athletics.
 Written expression very much better than oral.
 Had had one year in T. C. H. S. after a rural schooling.
 Had had only English I,
 Home community used very bad English.
 Family used very bad English and hardly ever corrected him.
 Had read a great deal, mostly fiction on history and adventure.
 A good student in history. Had good logical ability, but was very timid. Did little good in English until exposition was reached. Not good in other subjects.

No. 9. Girl, 15 years, from cultured small city, preparing for academic work.
 Interested in art, music, reading, having a good time, basketball, history and English.
 Could do well in both mediums of expression, but in practice considerably better in oral.
 Grade school work taken in private school with exception of one year in good town grade school.
 Sophomore in T. C. H. S. where all high school work has been taken.
 Good previous English training on formal side.
 Had always associated with people who used very correct English.
 Family used unusually correct English and corrected her often.
 Had read a great deal in books of adventure for boys and in sentimental fiction.
 A bright girl, capable of doing a very high class of work. She, however, really did rather poor work as she was too much interested in having a good time and in the boys, to apply herself well. Had a fine literary artistic touch, but did not care to do the work necessary to develop it.

No. 10. Girl, 24 years, from a small town, preparing for musical work in an eastern conservatory.

No. 10. (Continued).

Interested in music, society, athletics, and literature.

Attended a rural school until seventeen, then irregularly thereafter. Had never been in high school before, but had taught a grade in a village school.

Previous English work had been fair on formal side, as far as it went, but consisted of literature and grammar without any composition. Home community used fair English.

Family used fair English and sometimes corrected her.

Had read a little, chiefly in the standard American writers.

Mature, careful and conscientious worker, who did excellent work except when she had too much work in other subjects. Did special work.

No. 11. Boy, 20 years, from large city, preparing for business.

Interested in art, athletics, zoology, English and history.

Written expression slightly better than oral.

Had had excellent training in city graded schools; two years in city high school, but had failed. Out of school two years before entering here.

Had done little in English before, because it was never made interesting to him.

Home community used excellent English.

Family used excellent English and corrected him closely.

Had read much, but chiefly very exciting fiction and some trash.

Did excellent work in the course. Was very much interested in it and it was a pleasure to the teacher to see the transformation in him during the year. This course undoubtedly was a great factor in keeping him in school.

No. 12. Boy, 18 years, from rural community, preparing for agricultural department.

Interested in farm work, Sunday school work, athletics, society, mathematics, science, and English.

Much better in written than oral expression.

Completed average rural grade school, then attended good private preparatory school one year.

Previous English training, except in private school, very poor.

Home community used incorrect English and so could not correct him.

Had never read to amount to anything outside books studied in school.

Somewhat dull, but very hard-working student. Very timid, but developed a good deal under audience method.

No. 13. Girl, 19 years, from rural community, preparing for teaching.

Interested in social gatherings, German and history.

Unable to express herself to any advantage orally; good written expression.

Very varied and poor grade work in rural, mixed and graded schools.

One year's previous work in good private preparatory school.

Home community used very poor English.

Family used fair English and corrected her often.

Had read a good deal, chiefly in standard authors and in books for girls.

A very timid, hard-working girl of average intelligence, hampered considerably by ill-health and too much outside work. She developed a great deal under the personal help possible in the conferences.

- No. 14.** Boy, 16 years, from small town, preparing for law.
Interested in athletics, girls, reading, politics, English and American history.
Much better in written than in oral expression.
Previous grade education in rural schools, with exception of parts of two years in large city. High school work taken in T.C.H.S.; sophomore.
Home community^M used good English. (Rural community was strongly influenced by a good denominational college).
Mother used good English and corrected him carefully.
Had read a great deal, but chiefly books of adventure for boys, and fiction.
Boy of good intentions, but a slow thinker, lazy and inclined to waste his time in foppish pursuits.
- No. 15.** Boy, 17, years, from southern state, preparing for academic before business career.
Interested in business, athletics, science, history, and mathematics.
Oral expression much better than written.
Had had a very irregular schooling, with two years of fair high school work.
English not given much attention in previous education.
Home community used fair English.
Family used very good English and corrected him.
Had read much light fiction.
Brilliant talker, but very superficial and inclined to put up a brave front when he really had little to back it with. Was in class only the second semester. Knew his failing and tried to overcome it, but was not wholly successful.
- No. 16.**
Girl, 18 years, from cultured small city, preparing for teaching.
Interested in few things here in Columbia. Interested in English work, particularly literature.
Better in written than oral expression.
Had graduated from a high school.
Had had very poor English work, no composition whatever.
Community used fair English.
Family used good English and corrected her frequently.
Had read a great deal; varied, but good range of books.
A student of average ability, but peculiar. Impossible to get her to change her mind after she once formed an opinion.
- No. 17.** Boy, 17, years, preparing for academic work with possibly some sort of literary work later.
Interested in athletics, horses, reading, machinery, photography, school work, English and history.
Better in written than oral expression, but good in both.
Grade work taken in excellent schools, but in seven different towns.
One year each in two good high schools, previously.
Excellent previous English training, including theme work, mainly formal.
Home communities used good English as a rule.
Family used good English and corrected him incessantly.
Had read a great deal, but mainly in boys' books of adventure and light fiction.
A bright boy, good student in everything, but with unusual ability in composition work. Was doing special work.

No. 18. Boy, 14 years, from cultured small city, preparing for journalism.

Interested in everything pertaining to newspaper work, athletics, Better oral than written expression, but good in both.

Previous schooling rather brief, but good. Had gained much general knowledge from traveling, reading and doing reportorial work.

Had not had much English training, but had read widely in standard works. Had always associated with persons older than himself.

Family used excellent English and formerly corrected him, but he had reached a stage where he did not need this.

Had read widely in history, biography and classics, and good current magazines.

Brilliant student in all subjects requiring logical thought. Very quick, but nervous and impatient. Very easy for him to get gist of anything.

No. 19. Girl, 15 years, from cultured small city, preparing for teaching. Interested in athletics, reading, social gatherings, history and English.

Considerably better in oral than in written expression.

Grade work taken in good small city schools and private schools.

One year in good high school previously.

Good previous English work, but had failed in composition the year before in another high school.

Home community used good English.

Family used good English and corrected her.

Had read much, nearly all light fiction.

A hard-working, ambitious, personally attractive girl, who was handicapped by a temperamental inability to organize her work. While she never entirely overcame this defect, she made considerable progress. Of a rather romantic turn of mind.

No. 20. Through an oversight, this number was not assigned to a student. The error was not discovered until the body of the thesis had been typewritten. To avoid confusion, the original scheme of numbering is retained.

No. 21. Girl, 20 years, from rural community, preparing for academic work, later for teaching or professional nursing.

Interested in music, elocution, manual training, English and history.

Much better in written than in oral expression.

Completed an average rural grade school at age of thirteen.

Then illness kept her out of school for five years. Then attended a private preparatory school one year.

Previous English training, except that in preparatory school, poor.

Home community used poor English.

Family used good English and encouraged her to do so.

Had read considerable, chiefly good fiction of lighter sort.

A very hard worker, who did good work everywhere. She was hampered by a lack of experience, caused by seclusion during her illness, but she made excellent use of what she did have. Very sensitive and required much encouragement, but her appreciation of the work made it a pleasure to have her in the class. Did special work.

No. 22. Boy, 18 years, from village, preparing for academic work. Interested in music, traveling, hunting and fishing, English science and mathematics.
 Rural schools only, but seldom went the entire term.
 Only part of a year of high school work previously.
 Only fair rural school English, no composition work. Good grammar work.
 Home community used fair English.
 Family used good English, brothers corrected him frequently.
 Had read a fair amount of short stories, but not many books.
 Became interested in reading from the classic work and read more later in the year.
 An earnest, hard-working student, of a rather slow turn of mind, but with sound judgement. Developed greatly during the year.

Section 2. Record of Students' Work.

T A B L E VII .

SHOWING RECORD OF EACH STUDENTS' WORK IN THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF DISCOURSE*.

<u>Student No.</u>	<u>Narration.</u>	<u>Description.</u>	<u>Exposition.</u>	<u>Argumentation.</u>
1.....	S.....	S.....	F to G.....	S.....
2.....	F.....	F.....	F.....	G.....
3.....	F.....	F.....	W.....	F.....
4.....	F.....	F.....	G.....	G.....
5.....	F.....	F.....	G.....	G.....
6.....	F.....	F.....	W to G.....	G.....
7.....	G.....	G.....	F.....	S.....
8.....	F.....	F.....	G.....	S.....
9.....	W.....	W.....	G.....	F.....
10.....	S.....	S.....	G.....	G.....
11.....	S.....	S.....	W.....	F.....
12.....	W.....	W.....	F.....	F.....
13.....	G.....	G.....	W.....	F.....
14.....	FG.....	G.....	W.....	F.....
15.....	Not in Class.....	F.....	W.....	W.....
16.....	Not in Class.....	W.....	F.....	F.....
17.....	Not is Class.....	S.....	G.....	S.....
18.....	G.....	F.....	S.....	S.....
19.....	W.....	G.....	W.....	F.....
20.....	Not Assigned to a student.....			
21.....	S.....	S.....	F.....	G.....
22.....	F.....	F.....	F.....	G.....

* In this table S means Strong work.
 G means Good work.
 F means Fair work.
 W means Weak Work.

A P P E N D I X C .

SPECIMEN THEMES BY STUDENTS OF SECTION I, ENGLISH II,
TEACHERS COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL, 1907-8.

These specimens are presented for the benefit of those readers who may care to see some of the actual work done by the students. The author has tried to give only such themes as fairly represent the work of the class. He has conscientiously avoided presenting only the best work. In order to be fairer still, these themes are given, with the exception of reproducing the handwriting, precisely as they were first handed in. Furthermore the students did not know that these themes were to be later used in this thesis. The attention of the reader is called to a fact well known to composition teachers, but sometimes overlooked by others, namely, that any student is apt at times for various reasons to make stupid blunders in his composition work, which he by no means makes habitually.

I.

A BRIEF.

This is the brief referred to on page 20. It was the first brief the writer handed in, and, in accordance with the usual custom, was gotten up with almost no directions from the teacher. By Student No. 4.

To Prove "We did not cut English History April 23, 1908."

Introduction

- I. Something must be done to get the credits. There are two ways,
 - A. Staying after school and making up the work.
 - B. Proving it was not a cut.

Brief Proper:-

- II. The first can not be done for:-
 - A. We are probably going to leave town as soon as school is out.
 - B. If we do stay in town we will want some job which will have to be gotten as soon as school is out.

- III. The second can be done for there is a good deal of evidence to show it was not cut. namely.
- A. Have had all of us solemnly swear it was not meant for a cut.
 - B. The teacher saw us pass the window of the room they were reciting in.
 - C. Went straight to our homes after we left the room.
- IV. The argument that we should not have gone to the Farmers Fair when it was so late, can not stand for:-
- A. We did not know what time it was.
- V. The argument that we should have been to class on time can't stand. for:-
- A. We did not know what time it was until the three o'clock bell rang.
 - B. Others have been later, many times, than we were.
- VI. Since once before, we had class in another room, under the same circumstances and some of the students were late and after waiting a while in our regular room went home. Our case is exactly like it.

Conclusion.

- VII. Therefore we should not have to stay after school to make up the work we missed, since the others, in a case just like ours, were excused.

II. Treatment of Similar Subjects by Same Student at Different Times.

of the two themes given here, (a) was No. 10 in Description. (See p.81). (b) was the last theme under Description. (See p.42). While these themes were by no means written for the same purpose, the reader may easily note how the student improved in organization, conscious striving for effect, vocabulary, diction, sentence structure and ease of writing. By Student No.22.

(a). A Picnic.

Last summer I went out with a crowd of boys and girls on a picnic. We went to a large spring and lake about ten miles from home.

When we arrived it was noon and ate our dinner before we started to bum around. We then hired some boats and intended to go out upon the lake boat riding. One of the boats was very small and not supposed to carry more than four persons.

We all wanted to cross the lake to see a large cave. As we did not have enough boats six of us got into the small boat. I was rowing and not paying strict attention to where I was going ran into some bushes.

This caused some excitement among the crowd and while they were moving about some one stepped on the edge of the boat, and this turned the boat on one side and it sunk. We were not very far from the bank, and the water not being deep we waded out in safety. After getting wet we had to give up our trip, so we got ready and went home. The rest of the crowd stayed and enjoyed a good time so they all roasted me for being so carelless.

(b).

A Picnic.

Last summer a crowd of boys and girls decided to attend a picnic. It was given in honor of the old federal soldiers on a beautiful island not far from a small country town.

It was a clear morning and the dew covered plains glistened as the beaming sun stretched its red rays over them. Later in the morning the sun became warmer and the air was so calm that not even the leaves of the trees were moving. Finally small white clouds began to appear in the sky. Now and then one would glide across the face of the sun and cast a shadow over the burning surface of the earth. Still no breeze arose and the day became very sultry.

Our crowd consisted of two girls and two boys who never borrowed trouble or dreamed of dangers until they were upon them. The distance was about ten miles and we decided to drive it instead of going by rail for our road led across a beautiful prairie and we were anxious to see the scenery. We got a carriage and started on our enjoyable trip about noon. When we had driven about five miles, our attention was attracted by the rolling peal of thunder. Looking to the west we saw a heavy black cloud rising. It came up very fast and the thunder pealed louder and keener. The lightning began to streak the black surface of the cloud by its constant flashes.

We drove very fast but when we reached our destination the rain had almost overtaken us. We stopped only long enough to inquire about a hotel. There was only one hotel in the town and it had been filled long before we reached it. The rain began to come down in torrents and the wind was blowing a gale.

We were fixing the curtains on our carriage and preparing to make the best of it when a friend driving by recognized us. She was very much astonished by seeing us in such a critical situation and insisted that we come immediately to her home. After a short drive we reached it and were soon under shelter.

The rain was soon over but it spoiled our picnic plans so we spent the remainder of the afternoon with our friend. After supper we started home and enjoyed a beautiful moonlight drive.

III. Improvement Produced By Consideration for Audience.

These two themes show the improvement made by Student No. 17 in choosing a good subject and treating it in an interesting way. He entered the class the second semester and consequently had not had the work in organization gained from narration. (a) is his first theme, and (b) is one written three weeks later. He chose both subjects of his own accord.

(a).

A Shop .

Having entered a shop on Broadway and found it temporarily deserted by the clerks, I paused near the front and gazed about me.

High rows of shelves extended down the centre of the room, while at the rear could be seen a place fitted up for picture-framing, with benches, tools, and long strips of moulding.

A more careful examination of the shop showed me that

IV. Improvement in Definiteness of Purpose.

In these two themes, may be seen the improvement made by Student No.21 in unity, definiteness of purpose and use of specific words in descriptive writing. (a) was her third and (b) her sixth theme in description.

(a). The crossroads church.

One evening I went to my home church to preaching.

A black cloud was slowly rising in the sky. As I stood at the gate in front of the building I was greatly impressed by the ghostlike appearance of the church and graveyard.

The church is situated on two crossroads. One road runs north and south, the other east and west. This structure is surrounded by several dwelling houses, a store, and a blacksmith shop, which reminds me of a priest at the head of his flock.

As the building is seen from the front it resembles an immense box with two entrances, and roof upon it. It is painted white and decorated with tan.

Two flights of steps, which are made of wood lead into the two entrances. There are four double doors leading into the church. These doors are painted a tan color. And last but not least is the steeple extending high into the air.

(b). The Prairie.

One morning while we were out camping I woke real early to view the landscape. It was day-break. A light-red streak was gradually rising in the east which gave to the surroundings a ghastly appearance in the dim-gray shadows of the morning.

As I looked at the scenery the loud, shrill notes of the fowls in the neighboring barnyards broke the stillness of the air. Then as the sun peeped slowly from its secluded place, I could see in the faint light the farm houses dotted here and there over the earth.

From this scene my gaze wandered farther on to fields of golden grain. A heavy dew had fallen in the night, and the dew-drops shone upon them. Some parts of the fields were illuminated with light, while other parts were dark, like a dreary solitary place when the sun slowly envelopes it.

The sun had at last burst forth from its haunt and we were ready to continue our journey.

V. Improvement in Thought Organization.

In the two following themes, the reader may note the improvement in thought organization made by Student No.19 who was, it will be noted in Appendix B, page 90, very weak in this respect. It will be seen that as her thought has cleared up, her sentence structure has correspondingly improved. (a) was the first and (b) the fifth theme in description. (See Chap.II, Sect.V)X.

V. Improvement in Thought Organization. (Continued).

(a). "The Agriculture Building."

Upon entering the campus, of the University of Missouri, the first building to the right is known as the Agriculture Hall. This is the only building that escaped the destruction of fire in 1892, and is principally noted for its difference from the handsome buildings surrounding it.

Its style of architecture is a relic of the days when designers believed in but very little adornment. The idea of beauty does not enter very largely into the details of this building, but what it lacks in this respect, it more than makes up in substantial quality. The building is four stories high, almost square, and the exterior is entirely lacking of ornamentation. On the left side of the rear, on the roof is an old belfry. Eight stone steps lead up to the main entrance, which is in the center of the front. The double doors are heavy, made of an enduring wood.

In front there are four large windows on the first floor while on the third and fourth there are six each.

It is not very imposing according to modern idea, but it cannot but help to impress one with its simplicity.

(b). A Historical Building.

One day while walking in a distant part of the town, I stopped before a two-story, red brick building, covered with ivy.

The steps, leading up to the porch were of substantial stone, with a high wall of stone on each side. On the top of these were small pots of flowers. Four massive colonial pillars, gave a stately appearance to the building.

The porch was almost hidden from our view by the beautiful vines. A heavy door of dark wood, seemed to be standing on guard. The door was plain, with the exception of a large, brass knocker.

Above the first floor porch, was the one of the second. There were also four large pillars, almost covered with vines. A large, door, with shutters, stood in the middle of the porch with a large window in either side. A balustrade surrounded with ivy covered the porch. The roof above this came to a point.

although the house was almost lacking in ornamentation, it never failed to attract the attention, on account of its colonial style and historical memories.

VI. An Expository Theme.

The following specimen was handed in by Student No.18 for the third theme in exposition (See p.82). For this assignment, each of five students read one of Addison's representative essays. The others listened, took notes, and from these alone wrote the theme.

Addison's Range of Powers as a Writer.

Addison's genius lay in the fact that he had a wide range of powers in writing. He was equally adept in narrative, descriptive, expository and imaginative writing. Examples of

his descriptive writings are found in "Account of a Visit to Westminster Abbey" and "Death of Sir Roger de Coverly". His imaginative description is shown in his "Vision of Mirza", his narrative in "Transmigrations of Pug", and his expository in "The Royal Exchange."

"The Vision of Mirza" is an account of what a man saw in company with a genius from the top of a mountain. It is purely imaginative. The man tells the genius what he sees in the valley below and the genius explains it. The river running through the valley is compared to that part of eternity in which the earth exists. At either end the river is covered by a mist representing the beginning and the ending of the world. A bridge over the river is compared to human life. There are trap doors on the bridge through which many of the persons crossing fall. This represents death. "The Royal Exchange" explains the good merchants do in bringing the people of earth more closely together. Addison represents himself going to the 'Change' and seeing articles from all the different countries. He shows how the blessings are divided up among the different climates so the people of the earth will have to have intercourse with each other.

"Account of a Visit to Westminster Abbey" describes Addison and a friend seeing the famous statues, tombs, etc. of the Abbey. "Transmigration of Pug" narrates the different persons and animals into which a person was changed. It is a letter written by a man who places it beside a monkey and deceives a lady into thinking the monkey wrote it. The monkey is represented as having been a President of a College in India, a flying fish, an English banker, a bumblebee, and other things, before he became a monkey. "Death of Sir Roger de Coverly" gives a letter from a servant announcing the death of his master and describes the scene at a London Club when it was received.

These essays show Addison's proficiency in four kinds of writing. There are probably faults in them, but they are few and inconspicuous. There are some character sketches in several of the essays, but they are short and are not at all tiresome. In his imaginative descriptive essay ("Vision of Mirza"), he describes, so one can easily picture it to himself, a scene most difficult to imagine. His humor is good and he usually succeeds in putting the reader in the desired state of mind. One cannot resist laughing when Addison pictures a statue in Westminster Abbey whipping a friend's grandfather or when he asks how long ago Jacob visited Scotland. His ability in satire is shown when he jokes about the lady's sparking days in "Transmigrations of Pug". He uses simple, easily understood language. This helps the reader considerably in the "Vision of Mirza" where the scene is difficult to imagine. Addison may moralize but it is done so neatly that it is not offensive.

In short Addison has a wide range of powers and can write several kinds of writing well. There are probably faults in his essays, but they can not be discovered without searching for them.

VII. A Description.

Written by Student No.1 about the middle of the work in description.

An Old Deserted Mine.

The most desolate spot I know, and the one most



carefully shunned by the superstitious people of our community, is an old abandoned lead mine which has the reputation of being haunted. When one forces his way through the thick and tangled growth of brush which encloses the small clearing around the mine, it is indeed a desolate sight that meets his view.

About the center of the space is the deep, dark shaft with a tall, skeleton tower standing over it, while crouching around in the rank growth of weeds, are several other buildings almost rotted to the ground. The heavy timbers of the tower are beginning to rot, and they creak and sway when the wind sweeps through them. Above the crumbling roof, at the very top of this tall structure are two great iron pulley wheels, which are used to hoist the ore from the mine. Just beneath the old, rust-eaten roof, a little car track runs out to a huge dump of gray-looking waste rock. The little car is standing about half-way out the track, as though work had been suddenly stopped while a load of rock was being taken out. The next story below is where the rock was crushed, but now only the lighter pieces of crushing machinery are left- the heavy ones having fallen through the rotten floors, leaving great ragged holes to show where they had been. At the foot of the tower, around the shaft is a high paling fence which has been almost torn away by falling timbers and pieces of machinery.

Bad as the condition of the tower may be, the other buildings are in a still worse state of ruin. The old blacksmith shop is little more than a shapeless heap of wood and iron, while the oil and powder houses are almost as bad. At a short distance from the tower is the engine room, with a tall, slender smokestack reaching far above the roof. From one of its windows are two rusty iron ropes which run to the wheels on top of the tower and then fall dangling into the shaft.

None of the picturesque beauty which generally attaches itself to old ruins is to be seen here. There is no clinging ivy nor woodbine. There are no moss-covered stones nor stately columns. Instead, everything is bare, except for a coat of grease and grime. The ruined buildings are merely heaps of rotten wood and rusty iron overgrown with rough ill-smelling weeds. The whole is a scene of desolation and ruin in which one does not care to linger.

A P P E N D I X D .

SPECIMEN LESSON PLANS USED IN ENGLISH II,
TEACHERS COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL, 1907-8.

These lesson plans are fair specimens of those worked out by the author during the year. They are given just as they were written on the board for the students, with a few slight changes in phraseology for the purpose of making them intelligible to the reader.

I. THE POINT OF A STORY .

(Lesson 5 in Narration. See page 81.).

Classics used:

Hawthorne's Twice Told Tales.

The Gray Champion.

The Wedding Knell.

Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe.

Peter Goldthwaite's Treasure.

Questions:

1. In the four stories read, can you find places where they are especially interesting? If so, specify. Find in each the point at which you are most interested.
2. Where, in each of the stories in which you find such a point, does it come? (Beginning, middle or end.)
3. Can you find any previous expressions in each story that help you to appreciate the point when it is reached? If you find any such expressions, what and where are they? Are there any such expressions later? If so, specify.
4. If you find any such expressions as those mentioned in 3, how plainly is the point stated in them?
5. On the basis of your observations from these four stories, what rules can you give for making a point to your story?

II. THE FUNDAMENTAL IMAGE IN DESCRIPTION .

(Lesson 2 in Description. See page 38).

Classics used:

Hawthorne's Twice Told Tales. (Lake Edition, S. F. & Co.)

Eliot's Silas Marner. " " " " " "

Questions:

Examine carefully the following descriptions, taking care to note exactly where they really begin and end:

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|----|-------|
| (a) The sunrise on the church, | <u>T. T. Tales,</u> | p. | 47. |
| (b) The spring in ancient times, | " " " | " | 177. |
| (c) The toll gate, | " " " | " | 241. |
| (d) The Red House parlor, | <u>S. Marner</u> | " | 63-4. |

II. THE FUNDAMENTAL IMAGE IN DESCRIPTION . (Continued).

Pick out carefully what you consider to be the fundamental image in each one and list the other things given in each description.

1. How definite and exact, as compared with the picture you have in mind ~~after~~ reading the whole description, do you find each of these fundamental images?
2. In each case what effect do you find that the later details have upon the fundamental image?
3. In each case pick out the words that seem to affect the fundamental image. Where do you find them?
4. Where in each case do you find the fundamental image?
5. From the classics studied, pick out at least two other descriptions that you consider to have good fundamental images, giving reasons for your choice.
6. What are your conclusions as to how to write a fundamental image for a description?

III. UNITY AND COHERENCE IN EXPOSITION .

(Lesson 4 in Exposition. See p.82. The class had had the first two terms defined in description.)

Classics used:

Eliot's Silas Marner, paragraph on pp.236-7* (Lake Ed.
Macaulay's Addison, paragraph on middle of p.179) S.F. & Co.

Questions:

1. In the passage from Silas Marner, what is the main thought is it easily found? Where is it? What keeps it from being clear?
Underline all the essentials in this paragraph, and read these essentials through consecutively. What about the proportions of the paragraph before and after the non-essentials have been removed?
2. Study the passage from Addison.
 - (a) What is the main thought in this paragraph? Where does it come? Compare the ease with which you find this with the ease with which you found the main thought in 1.
 - (b) Take each thought in this paragraph. Does it help any to make the big thought clear? If so, how? If not, why not? Take out the non-essentials; how much have you left?
 - (c) Take the different thoughts in this; does the understanding of any of these depend upon the previous ones? If so, how? If not, why not? Change the order of several of these thoughts; what is the result?

* This is the famous passage in which Dokly Winthrop undertakes to explain her ideas concerning Providence.

APPENDIX D. (Continued).

III. UNITY AND COHERENCE IN EXPOSITION. (CONTINUED).

3. In Addison what good examples of several paragraphs grouped into larger units can you cite? What effect upon making the whole essay clear do such groupings have?
4. Find at least three places in the essay up to p.188 where Macaulay changes from one group to another. How does he appear to ~~make~~ make these changes? (Take care to give some real reason.)
5. What are your conclusions as to how to secure unity and coherence when you are explaining anything?

B I B L I O G R A P H Y .

- BAGLEY: The Educative Process.
- BENSON: From a College Window.
- BROOKS-HUBBARD: Composition-Rhetoric.
- BROWN: The Making of Our Middle Schools.
- BUCK: Function of Grammar: El. Schl. Tchr., III, 480.
The Metaphor.
- BUTCHER: Aspects of Greek Genius.
- CAMPBELL: Philosophy of Rhetoric.
- *CARPENTER, BAKER AND SCOTT: The Teaching of English.
- CHAMBERLAIN: The Child.
- CHUBB: The Teaching of English.
- COOKE: Function of Reading: El. Schl. Tchr. I, 111.
- COURSAULT: The Learning Process.
Lectures in the Principles of Education, U. of Mo., 1905-6.
Lectures in the Philosophy of Education, U. of MO., 1906-7.
- DAVIDSON: History of Education.
Education of the Greek People.
- DEWEY: Child and Curriculum.
Educational Situation.
Interest as Related to Will.
Ethical Principles Underlying Education.
School as a Social Center.
- DEWEY AND McLELLAN: Psychology of Number.
- ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA: Article on Rhetoric.
- FAIRCHILD: Lectures in the Teaching of English, U. of Mo., 1908.
- HANUS: Educational Aims and Educational Values.
- HARTOG: The Writing of English.
- HERRICK: Methods of Teaching Rhetoric in School.
- HINSDALE: Teaching the Language Arts.

* This book contains the best bibliography on rhetoric, that the author has been able to find.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. (Continued).

HORNE: The Philosophy of Education.

HOBHOUSE: Mind in Evolution.

JEBB: Primer of Greek Literature.
Attic Orators.

JESPERSEN: Progress in Language.

KAVANA: How I Learned to Write.
Some Recent Phases of English Teaching.
The Constructive Side of English Study.

KEELER AND ADAMS: High School English.

MAHAFFY: Old Greek Education.

MARSH: English in Secondary Schools.

McMURRY: Method of the Recitation.

SPENCER: Philosophy of Style.

THORNDIKE: Educational Psychology.
Principles of Teaching.

WELTON: Logical Bases of Education.

WENDELL: English Composition.

WEBSTER: Teaching English in the High School.

