FRESHMAN ENGLISH AND THEME-CORRECTING

IN HARVARD COLLEGE

BY

C. T. COPELAND
LECTURER ON ENGLISH LITERATURE

AND

H. M. RIDEOUT
INSTRUCTOR IN ENGLISH

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

In English A, the Freshman course in English Composition at Harvard College, there were last year[1] six hundred and twenty or thirty students, and eleven instructors. There are two possible reasons, then, why a review of this course in its aims, methods, and attainments, might not be of any service to students or teachers of English Composition: first, the scale on which the course is constructed is probably much larger than would be necessary in most other cases; and second, the independence of the instructors, each of whom is apparently allowed to teach according to his own judgment, would not seem to promise a generally available method. In point of fact, however, these two possibilities are slight. To the present writers, at least, it seems that the working scheme of English A may very well be applied, with modifications, of course, to smaller classes or to individual students; that the

[1] 1899–1900.

seemingly independent work of the instructors will show, when examined, similar means and ends; and that at any rate a brief explanation of the course may suggest something practical to one who is attempting either to attain for himself or to impart to others a simple and adequate prose style.

For this, the habitual use of correct and intelligent English, is what the instructors try to drill into the Freshmen. The problem is not without its difficulties. At one extreme of this class of Freshmen are the illiterate and inarticulate, who cannot distinguish a sentence from a phrase, or spell the simplest words. At the other are fairly mature writers, who need only to discard certain crudities and to gain variety and flexibility. Between these two extremes come many sorts and conditions of students. The avowed object of the work is to bring all this heterogeneous class of young men, by constant training from October till June, to the point where they can write English of which they need not be ashamed. A few men do more, and achieve something like a style of their own; several men do less, and are either required to take the course again, or are passed on to a half-course of like training in the Sophomore year. The great rank and file, however, who gain steadily throughout the year, arrive somewhere near that adequacy of expression and structure which is the real aim of the process.

Before taking up this process in its details, we shall do well to look at a few matters of mechanism. At

the beginning of the year each student is required to provide himself with Professor Hill's "Rhetoric,"[1] with an English Composition Card,[2] and with the regular theme paper, which has a margin of an inch at the left of the sheet. He is then requested to choose, from nineteen "sections," that subdivision of the class which meets at the hour most convenient to him. Thus he assigns himself, practically by lot, to the instructor who is to take charge of his work throughout the year. Finally, he informs himself of the routine and amount of the work. He is to write twelve fortnightly themes, from three to six pages in length, and on every week day a theme of not more than one page. Each fortnightly theme, and many of the daily themes, if particularly faulty, must be rewritten, or if fairly successful, revised. He is to attend three lectures or recitations per week, — twice in his own section of thirty men or so, once in a general meeting of several sections (called the "third hour") to listen to readings and talks by either the instructor in charge of the whole course, or the Dean of the college. At least four times in each half year — about once a month — each student must hold a conference with his instructor, to review his work and learn his individual needs. Every month, moreover, he must read one or two prescribed books, of which he is

[1] Adams Sherman Hill: "The Principles of Rhetoric." New York, 1895.

[2] Arranged by Professor Hill, and published by Charles W. Sever, Cambridge; it contains a key to the abbreviated marks of correction.

1899–1900

	Daily Themes	Fortnightly Themes	Examinations	Reading[1]	Meetings and Conferences
October	Subjects taken from observation of surroundings. Translations once a week. "Third-hour" themes. Special exercises in class.	Oct. 25. Theme I.: "Who I Am, and Why I Came to Harvard." Due rewritten or revised, as all other fortnightly themes, within two weeks.		"King Henry IV.," Part I., or "Antony and Cleopatra," or "Twelfth Night."	
November	As in October.	Nov. 8. Theme II.: "How to Make or Do Something." Nov. 22. Theme III.: "Something Learned in a College Course."	An examination, one hour long, at the discretion of the instructor.	Mr. Kipling: "The Jungle Book."	
December	Weekly translations. "Third-hour" themes. Special exercises in class. No restriction as to the subjects of other daily themes.	Dec. 6. Theme IV.: "An Expression of Opinion on some Topic of Interest." Dec. 22. Theme V.: No subject prescribed. A criticism of one of the "required" books recommended.		Thackeray: "Pendennis," or (for those who have read "Pendennis") "Henry Esmond," or "Vanity Fair."	Every week: Two lectures or recitations in each "section" of about thirty men; one meeting of several united sections, with lectures and writing of "third-hour" themes.
January	As in December, with the addition of Invitations, Letters of Acceptance, etc.	Jan. 17. Theme VI.: A Biographical Portrait.	The midyear examination (three hours).		
February	As in December.	Feb. 28. Theme VII.: A Description.		Macaulay: Life of Clive, or Life of Johnson, or Life of Hastings.	Every month: One conference, — an interview, for fifteen minutes, between student and instructor.
March	As in December.	March 14. Theme VIII.: A Description. March 28. Theme IX.: A Narrative.			
April	As in December.	April 11. Theme X.: A Narrative.	An hour examination, at the discretion of the instructor.	George Eliot: "Adam Bede."	
May	As in December.	May 7. Theme XI.: A Brief. May 23. Theme XII.: An Argument.			
June			The final examination (three hours).		

[1] Throughout the year the students read Professor Hill's "Principles of Rhetoric." They also read one book of "The Golden Treasury," and commit to memory fifty lines from the Fourth Book.

expected to form an intelligent opinion. In February a three-hour examination tests his knowledge of the first half-year's work; in June the final examination likewise brings him to account for the whole year; and any instructor may, if he think best, hold hour examinations in November and April.

All this scheme of work might be tabulated as on pages 4 and 5.

With an understanding of these requirements, at least in outline, the students go to work at the task which is first to begin and last to stop, — the writing of the daily themes.

CHAPTER II

THE DAILY THEMES

For the first month or more, the daily themes — which, as a regular part of its work, the college owes to Professor Wendell — are written on subjects the range of which is limited. The writers are not allowed to go their own gait and in their own direction. They are, on the contrary, under pretty definite orders. By far the greater bulk of the daily themes must deal with the writers' new surroundings. Things that they have lately seen in and about Cambridge, glimpses of the college here and there, little episodes of their everyday life, — these are what they must try to reproduce in one-page sketches, four days a week. The other two days bring a change, to be sure, but no freedom of choice: on one day, the students must translate a passage from the literature of Latin, Greek, French, German, or some other language; on the other, they must write, at the class meeting of the united sections, either a review of what the officer in charge has just read or told them, or a comment that shows some reaction. But two thirds of the daily work lies in local and contemporary description or narrative. The young

men must not dream dreams or see visions, not recall their childhood, or their first fish, or their last summer vacation; they are to open their eyes, and keep them open, to scenes and events near at hand. They have at least a chance to show their alertness, and often to describe with the eye on the subject.

And just what result appears, in these early batches of themes that every morning come tumbling in through the slots in the door of the conference-room? To any one who should start to read them for entertainment, little enough; they are for the most part far from interesting. One is indeed struck with the lack of interest, the colorless, trite, impersonal way in which the writers have recorded their impressions. One might easily foresee that the range of subjects would not be wide; yet one might expect that young men of good intelligence would make even commonplace subjects more readable. At the first of the year, however, an instructor does not find in a bundle of thirty-five themes perhaps more than two or three that seem to come from men who have really seen and thought for themselves. If the instructors were on the watch for originality, this average might prove depressing. But the instructors are looking out for no such thing. They forecast that the general run of themes will be stock accounts, in stock phrases, of the melancholy falling leaves, of the gloom that attends waking on a rainy day, of the gray squirrels that frisk in the Yard, of runaway horses that "dash madly," of Saturday football games,

marvelously dull, and of trips to Bunker Hill. All this the instructors read with a fair amount of cheerfulness; for they know that these accounts, so inert and meagre, come not so much from natural dulness as from small vocabularies, feeble structure, and the other results of insufficient training.

The first effort of the instructors, then, is not to make the daily themes interesting, but to make them correct. In the two weeks before the first fortnightly theme, these daily exercises are the only material from which to teach punctuation, spelling, grammar, the right use of words, the principles of structure, and whatever else ill-prepared youths need to learn. The special kind of subject is prescribed merely that the students may have a fairer chance to make themselves interesting. If they succeed, so much the better; but first they must seek correctness, and live in hope that the other things may be added unto them. There is much to tell them. Punctuation is with most of them an empty name. As for spelling, one man, in describing a girl's beauty, spoke of her "noze" and "cheaks"; and another said that a friend of his possessed the sense of "whit and humer." These are exceptional cases; but when one comes to structure, the deficiency is general and manifest. A great part of the men disregard the limits of the sentence and the paragraph in a way that takes one back to the days before Dryden.

A glance at the specimen themes numbered 1 will show, perhaps, what an average daily theme in October

is like, what the corrections[1] of the instructor try to do, and what results are obtained in rewriting. The example is chosen almost at random from a number of early themes.

It will be seen at once that the instructor's marks — made very hastily, as must happen where so many pages have to be read in a short time — are directed at a few salient defects. Besides the uncertainty of punctuation, the too frequent use of present participles is pointed out to the writer as one of his particular weaknesses. The only comments on the substance deal with the vagueness of one passage, and a questionable attempt at being imaginative. All this is of course rough and "sketchy." The rewritten version, moreover, can hardly be thought a highly finished work or even a great improvement. But the two drafts do show that the beginner has for the most part understood the corrections and noticed at least one undesirable tendency in his mode of expressing himself.

If we multiply by twelve this first draft with the corrections,[2] and by three or four the rewritten copy,

[1] A few of the more common marks of corrections are:
Cst. Faulty construction.
K. Awkward, stiff, or harsh.
P. Fault in punctuation.
R. Redundancy or repetition.
S. Sentence objectionable in form.
For a complete list, see the English Composition Card (p. 3, footnote 2).

[2] For other specimens, see the themes numbered 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Number 3, although written in a year when English A was not in its present form, is given here because the method of correcting and rewriting is still the same.

we shall have a hint of what the first two weeks of daily themes may show an average student. It will not be much more than a hint, however; for the actual amount that the student may learn in this time will depend on his readiness to ask his instructor the necessary questions about the corrected themes, on his study and application of the principles and examples in Professor Hill's "Rhetoric," and on his attention to the talks that deal with this very work which he and his classmates are then doing. The many themes that the lecturer reads aloud to the class, with running comments, explain and suggest important facts. Indeed, a half hour of reading aloud, with remarks on the phrasing, structure and general character of each theme, will show the class more of what to practice and what to avoid than would weeks of marginal correction with pen and ink. And when a student knows that his theme may come next and be torn to pieces or praised before his classmates, he usually has a wholesome interest in the lecture.

The chief faults that the readers of the themes inveigh against are — one may have gathered from what has already been said — such as naturally fall into four classes. These are faults in spelling and punctuation, in the use of words, in the construction of sentences, and in the construction of paragraphs.

Of the four divisions, the province of spelling and punctuation is the one in which occur most of the nearly hopeless cases. A course in composition is manifestly not a course in spelling. If a student sin

in this respect crudely and by wholesale, therefore, he receives his theme back with the misspellings underscored, with the grade E, which means failure, and with the warning that unless his spelling improves he cannot pass in the course. In case that he has been only careless, this warning is enough; and with the aid of spelling-books and dictionaries he can work out a fair degree of salvation. If mentally incapable of training himself to spell, however, he must not hope to get a passing grade. This rule is necessary. And a noticeable tendency to misspell lowers dangerously the grade of any work, no matter how capable it may be otherwise. With punctuation the process is hardly the same. Habitual disregard or misuse of the marks of punctuation will, to be sure, earn grades as low as bad spelling ever gets. But punctuation, if one may judge from early examples in English A, is not closely enough attended to in preparatory school work; and as it is, unlike spelling, easily learned from a few rules and exercises, it would be rather unjust to turn the students loose with the command to punctuate for themselves or fail to pass. For rules, they are directed to Professor Hill's pamphlet on punctuation, which briefly explains the use of the principal marks, and gives examples. For exercises, the following simple drill has proved fairly effective. An instructor, choosing a connected passage which involves many different punctuation marks, reads it aloud to the class, without inflection, and separated into meaningless groups

of words; the students take down these dictated phrases, arrange them, and try to punctuate the whole passage correctly. Some member of the class then reads his results aloud, so that every doubtful case can be discussed and settled. This exercise is of course only one of several devices which any instructor is at liberty to try. It seems, on the whole, to benefit those men who take hold of it conscientiously. In spelling, the men must be left to learn for themselves; in punctuation, an instructor can, at the cost of a very little time and trouble, really give them help.

It is on the use of words and on structure, however, that the most labor must be expended. The great trouble with the use of words in an early theme is that there are far too many of them. "R" is a mark which the instructors must use continually in these first weeks of correction. Most Freshmen use two adjectives where one would suffice, and a roundabout phrase instead of a single word. But still more noticeable at the outset is not so much the redundant phrasing as the general prolixity of all the theme. It seems well-nigh impossible for most Freshmen to begin a piece of writing at the beginning, and to end at the end; they must rather have an explanatory prologue, and a moralizing, interpreting epilogue. A writer is telling, for example, how his fire went out this morning: he begins — "What is so cheerless and bare as the empty grate?" Another, to describe

Lexington Common on Sunday afternoon, starts by carefully explaining that "having nothing to do to-day, and being tired of staying in the room, a friend and I took a car to the North Station, and after half an hour's wait, got a train" — and so forth. A third man, after an account of many perplexities encountered in going by electric car to Dorchester Heights, winds up thus: "So it is in life. We may have a definite aim or object after which we strive, but if we do not learn the route . . . in the first place, we are sure to go from the right path." The men feel that to begin or end exactly with the matter in hand is not graceful. It is only after many a slash of the instructor's pen through the top and bottom of the daily page that they learn to describe or narrate simply, without flourish, apology, or philosophical reflection. A great part of the correction, too, must strike at the middle of the page, where there is generally a deal of commonplace circumstance that only weakens the important details. From beginning to end, then, in general substance and in particular phrase, the daily themes are valuable training in cutting out surplusage.

Besides using more words than are needed, the Freshmen misuse many words and phrases. A list of the errors in this respect would be far too long here. They are chiefly the common improprieties that one hears and sees every day. By checking off each impropriety in the themes, and explaining either in conference or in class just where the mistake lies, an

instructor can break his pupils of many inaccurate and ungrammatical expressions.

The same process applies to the renewal of the Freshman vocabulary, which is a thesaurus of colorless words and threadbare phrases. One cannot, to be sure, present to each writer a stock of forcible, vivid words, and expect him to use them henceforth. But one can point out — and it is necessary to point out many times — that certain phrases do not enable a reader to see, hear, feel, or in any way share the original experience of the writer. This thing or that "can be seen," or "could be heard"; "we arrived at our destination;" "it was a magnificent spectacle;" "a beautiful scene meets the eye;" "the book was intensely interesting;" "I was much impressed;" "the play was in every way a success;" "thus adding a new charm to the scene," — these are a very few of the ways of the beginner in his theme. There is no natural sin inherent in any of them, nor are they by any means examples of the Freshman style at its poorest. It is not, however, a question of right or wrong, but of better or worse. The instructors are merely trying to make their young charges ashamed of so much reliance on bald and commonplace phrase, and so little attempt to find newer, more specific words.

To teach the principles of structure from these first daily themes is not so easy a matter. It is impossible, at all events, to take the time, in a necessarily hurried reading, for rearranging clauses and reconstructing

sentences. An instructor can emphasize and illustrate in his talks, however, the value of firm sentences. He can at least mark "awkward" or "straggling" against passages here and there, and trust that the writers will ask for an explanation. He can indicate, too, where a paragraph should or should not begin. And finally, he knows that when the fortnightly themes come and bring him a better basis for illustration, he can turn from these rather empirical marks of correction to the more practical help of rearrangement.

CHAPTER III

THE LATER DAILY THEMES — PRESCRIBED FORMS

BESIDES the early themes that must be contemporary narrative and description, there are many others which in the course of the year are prescribed for special purposes. Of these the weekly translations, already mentioned, form a considerable part. Every Saturday the writers of daily themes must choose a short passage from the literature of another language, and make of it the best English version that they can. As a result, there comes in every week a strange set of fragments from hither and yon, — one-page bits from Cæsar, Cicero, Virgil, Xenophon, Lysias, Herodotus, Homer, Goethe, Schiller, Heine, Molière, Dumas, Sainte-Beuve, and whatever other ancient and modern authors a Freshman may happen to have read or to be reading. All these passages for translation, although chosen at haphazard, serve one definite purpose. In the first place, the translators are in good company. The Saturday themes are almost always much the best in range of words, effectiveness of phrase, and firmness and variety of sentences.

The following theme,[1] a fair example of the average,

[1] All specimens of Freshman writing printed in the text, have been allowed to stand as they were written, without change in spelling, punctuation, or construction.

shows a direct gain in form when compared with the earlier specimens:

"*Translation from 'Les Trois Mousquetaires'*

"It was almost midnight. The waning moon, red as blood from the lingering traces of the storm, was rising behind the little village of Armentières, which exhibited in that pale light the gloomy profile of its houses, and the skeleton of its high, ornamented steeple. In front, the Lys rolled along its waters like a river of molten fire; whilst on its other bank, a dark mass of trees was sharply outlined upon a stormy sky, covered by large copper-colored clouds, which created a sort of twilight in the middle of the night. To the left, rose an old deserted mill; its sails were motionless; and from its ruins an owl was uttering its sharp, monotonous, recurring screech. Here and there on the plain, to the right and to the left of the path which the melancholy train was following, there appeared a few stunted trees, which looked like distorted dwarfs crouched down to watch the men in that ill-omened hour."

Besides this benefit, which is noticed at once, there comes a more gradual improvement in the writers' ability to seize upon a passage that shall be not a Procrustean piece lopped off at random, but a unit with significance and interest of its own. Moreover, although the students are encouraged to keep as closely to the original as possible, and so to hunt out new and exact words, they are not by any means obliged to be literal; they should rather try to catch the spirit of each author in a particular passage, and to reproduce that faithfully, according to the English idiom. They must

learn, too, that in technique this idiom demands several changes from the original; that it will no more do, for example, to follow slavishly the structure than it would to copy the punctuation; that many good Latin constructions are bad English; that one cannot always translate sentence for sentence, and so on. The temper of the original extracts must be preserved as sensitively as each translator can manage to preserve it; the structure, only so far as good English usage allows.

There are one or two further warnings that the students need in this weekly exercise. Some men, through either misunderstanding or laziness, choose passages too simple, too elementary, to give any valuable practice. There is no sense, plainly, in translating such bits from French Readers or "Kinder- und Hausmärchen" as: "There was once a man and his wife. They lived at the edge of the wood. They had two sons" — and so on. There is of course no style, no structure, to be learned or imitated here, — nothing more than the simple, jerky sentences which far too many students write habitually of their own accord. The same is true, to some extent, of many plays which, however good they may be dramatically, contain few passages of dialogue that can be imitated as really valuable prose. Poetry, too, except in the rarest instances, does not seem to help the translators: although they have to use a few new words, they all too often turn out a page either of very bad verse or of prose that is indifferent, if not strained and unnatural. Short prose selections from the best

Another prescribed form for the daily themes is a summary of each fortnightly theme. Each of these summaries is, like any "daily," one page long. It should give definitely the subject of the long theme of which it is the forerunner, and explain what the general substance and treatment will be. These synopses are useful in three ways: they enable the instructors to reject unsuitable subjects or suggest better methods, they force the writers to plan fortnightly themes at least one week ahead, and they give practice — which is much needed — in condensing. It is hardly worth while here to give an example of these summaries. They are technically successful if definite, fluent, and compact. *Multum in parvo* is of course their ideal. And though they are fewer and farther between than any of the other short themes, a dozen of these prefaces, carefully done, will in some measure show a writer how to be succinct.

The following list of subjects, reprinted from the slips distributed among the class last year, speaks for itself:

ENGLISH A

Friday, January 12.	A formal invitation to attend an evening party.
Saturday, January 13.	Translation.
Monday, January 15.	An acceptance of the invitation of January 12.
Tuesday, January 16.	An informal invitation to dinner.
Wednesday, January 17.	An acceptance of the invitation of January 16.
Thursday, January 18.	
Friday, January 19.	A letter of introduction.
Saturday, January 20.	Translation.

Monday, January 22.	An application for a position addressed to a person with whom you are not acquainted.
Tuesday, January 23.	A letter of congratulation.

The writing of these special forms is a drill more generally needed than perhaps any other. For one thing, it illustrates practically and personally the question of Good Use, the necessity of obeying convention. With full and careful explanations by the instructors in class — or better still in personal conference — most men can manage to remember for future use the shape which these exercises are finally whipped into. And that, with all too great a proportion of the class, is lamentably necessary. "Shall be unable to accept" for "is unable," has to be corrected often; sometimes the pleasure of the instructor's company is "requested at a formal party"; misplaced dates, addresses, and the like, are very common; and worse yet, many students have to learn that, when a communication begins with "Mr. Smith" and "Mr. Brown," "you" and "I" cannot appear later. Such mistakes as these, and a good many unclassified errors in taste, call for a plain, emphatic correction that shall drive home the nature and necessity of good form.

In the little schedule just given, two facts are noteworthy. First, the Saturday translations, which we have already discussed, are not allowed to stop. And second, the acceptance of one invitation is due on either Wednesday or Thursday. This latter fact, which

would seem to show that one theme in the week was left free from prescription, means rather that on Wednesday one half of the class, on Thursday the other half, meet the Dean of Harvard College, or Mr. Hurlbut, the instructor in charge of the course, and write the regular "third-hour" themes.[1] Any review of the required work would be incomplete if it did not include these weekly pages written in the general meetings. Not that they are more important, regarded as compositions, than many of the foregoing forms of daily work; indeed, they may not be as important as some others. They range from hurried, inaccurate, and incoherent reports, through brief comments that say little, to thoughtful and often original developments of some suggested idea. We may say, however, that they are more reflective than the usual run of daily themes. Here are two examples, taken at random:

"In listening to the essay which has just been read,[2] I was inwardly flattered by the fact that some of the recommendations which Stevenson gives I had already executed; viz. that when reading a book, one should jot down in a note book any passage which strikes one as being particularly good. This I have done to some extent, especially in reading Victor Hugo's works. I have also tried to retain in my mind any line or verse of poetry which I think is particularly good, and I remember in reading Browning a few of such lines. In one of his poems about love he writes, 'I am

[1] See page 3.

[2] R. L. Stevenson: "Memories and Portraits"; "A College Magazine," Sect. 1.

your own, I am your You'; and in another he writes, 'She loved everything she looked at and she looked everywhere.' I have tried to imitate or copy Victor Hugo. To my mind Hugo is the most forcible of modern writers. In the 'Toilers of the Sea' the ending is the most forcible and dramatic one I have ever read. In that work in the ending he describes the hero as sitting on a rock with the tide rising about him, watching a vessel which bears his love away from him; as the sail disappears so the head is covered by the water. 'Nothing remains but the sea.'"

"When the launch is just coming out from Sandusky Bay past Marblehead, the great lamp fills the boat with light, making the brass engine and wheel shine as in daylight. It seems as though there were no other radiance on the shore; but when, as I bring her round the end of the dock at home, I look back across the dark water, I can hardly distinguish Marblehead Light from the others. There is Lakeside, Cedar Point, The Harbours, Sandusky Light in the bay, and a multitude of others.

"And so it seems to me that a man, always hovering near one subject, may become unaware of the importance of others. Ruskin, in a passage[1] which the Dean just read, speaks of the superiority of books as companions over persons. He urges us to read more, to enjoy the talk of good men and great, to make ourselves the partakers of all the richness of ages past. He says that, in books, we hear not the thoughtless, casual talk of men of genius, but their best, prepared and elaborated for our benefit. Not a word of the depth of human companionship which cannot be in the case of a written thing. Surely Mr. Ruskin is very near the light of literature.

[1] Ruskin; "Sesame and Lilies"; "Of Kings' Treasuries."

"Well, so be it, there is another man in the glare of a white flame, who hardly sees the light of Ruskin's lamp. Mr. Carnegie says that 'the great fault of the American people is over-reading.' "

Each of these shows, in its own way, the meditative and reminiscent character of the Wednesday and Thursday themes. Each shows too, we hope, that when a Freshman sits down to meditate he can arrive at having — not much, perhaps, but something to say for himself. The two themes contain references, moreover, to the authors from whom selections had just been read. Besides these authors the list through the year includes such writers as will illustrate different things: Cardinal Newman, in many extracts that deal with education; Professor G. H. Palmer's "Self-Cultivation in English," especially where he speaks of using new words in everyday conversation; the fight with Apollyon from "Pilgrim's Progress," the Peter episode in "Cranford," and many another bit to show how this or that effect is obtained, in general choice of words, in descriptive work, in narrative; for examples of argument, Burke's speeches: — and so the list might be prolonged. But enough has been said to show how eclectic it is, and how the Freshmen, forced to give fairly close attention to authors of whom they are perhaps ignorant, may wish to widen their range of reading.

And yet, after all, it is not the book read or the theme written on Wednesdays and Thursdays that gives these meetings their real importance. It benefits

the Freshman to make their first acquaintance with certain good books, and to think and write upon the excerpts; but a greater benefit lies in the fact that the informal talks are not confined to matters of composition. At the beginning of the year many Freshmen — boys just released from restraint and set to acting for themselves — find their ideas of conduct more or less confused. In affairs both large and small they need sensible advice. And this is what the "third-hour" talks try to furnish them. It would be hard, indeed, to give Freshmen better counsel than that in which Dean Briggs helps them to form their ethical perspective. As his talks are not committed to writing, and not reported, it is impossible to reproduce one here; but the following bit (from a report "on the condition of Harvard College during the academic year 1895–96," made by the Dean to the President of the University) will show the tone and temper of these familiar discourses:

"The curse of college morals is a double standard — a shifting, for the convenience of the moment, from the character of a responsible man to the character of an irresponsible boy. The administrative officers accept without question a student's word; they assume that he is a gentleman and that a gentleman does not lie; if, as happens now and then, he is not a gentleman and does lie, they had rather, nevertheless, be fooled sometimes than be suspicious always (and be fooled quite as often). Frankly treated, the student is usually frank himself; our undergraduates are, in general, excellent fellows to deal with: yet so much is done for them, so many opportunities are lavished on

them, that the more thoughtless fail to see the relation of their rights to other people's, and, in the self-importance of early manhood, forget that the world is not for them alone. Students of this kind need delicate handling. They jealously demand to be treated as men, take advantage of the instructors who treat them so, and excuse themselves on the ground that, after all, they are only boys. This double standard is seen in both theme-copying and sign-stealing. Its moral effect is probably more insidious in the former than in the latter; for whereas persons more or less mendacious pass muster in all society but the best, no decent community outside of college will put up with a thief. In college, both offenses have been tolerated, through the pernicious doctrine, held by some respectable persons, that the life of every young man — or at least of every young gentleman — takes in a period of engaging anarchy, during which period almost anything short of murder may be winked at as boy's fun. Fun, and not crime, is doubtless the motive; and the fault is no more in the young men than in those staid citizens who boast of their own early escapades and are content that their sons should behave no better than they did. Yet, wherever the blame lies, the real nature of these acts is so plain to any one, however young, who suffers himself to open his eyes, that the usual slow processes of education may perhaps be effectively discarded. Sign-stealing, for example, received a sudden check when the Corporation removed stolen signs from the dormitories, and when Judge Almy, himself a Harvard man, spread widely the announcement that the student next convicted of stealing a sign should go to jail. The rapidly educational effect of this announcement suggests a royal road to the suppression of cheating. What we want is a penalty that educates, and educates not the offender only but the easy-going college public, which in this matter has been persistently blind."

CHAPTER IV

DAILY THEMES — MISCELLANEOUS

THUS far we have considered the forms of daily writing prescribed regularly for the whole class. We shall do well now to look at some of the forms which, required at the pleasure of one and another instructor, are put into practice by perhaps only a section here and there. The imitations of masters of English prose, reviewed on page 20, as if they were demanded of all the men, are so closely akin in nature to translations that it seemed best to take them up out of turn. With this single exception, however, we have examined only the exercises recognized as part of the year's work for every student. It is impossible to discuss in the present chapter all, or even the best, of the special drills by which different instructors try to gain this or that end. We can give here only some of the kinds of daily themes which some instructors ask for.

It is safe to say, however, that nearly every one of these various kinds is chosen with reference to the particular province of composition in which the writers are engaged at a given time. Descriptive daily themes, that is, may be exacted when the men are studying the

principles of description in the "Rhetoric," and practicing them in fortnightly themes; narrative themes, when the rest of the work is in narration; and the same conformity holds with exposition and argument. Early in the course, for example, when the half-year's study of exposition had begun, the following device was tried. An instructor read aloud an account of the process of separating gold from quartz; the students of his section were required to take notes on the reading, to rearrange these notes, and then to set forth for themselves, in as connected and finished a manner as possible, the facts so hastily jotted down. The attempt was, of course, to give practice in grasping details according to their proper relation, and in transforming crude masses of fact once more into well-adjusted exposition.

Most beginners find it, however, easier to recount physical facts than it is to disentangle their own ideas. A simple exercise will often help them in the latter difficulty. When a new lot of fortnightly themes has been handed in, the instructor sometimes gives each pupil the theme of some one else, bidding him write a one-page criticism of it and return both manuscripts to the desk at the end of the hour. This practice is profitable in more than one way. Not only will it give the students a chance to straighten out muddled ideas, but it will rid them of the all too popular belief that to "criticise" means to attack tooth and nail. However blindly they may belabor or praise one another's work

at the outset, they will often develop, after a little of this practice and with some help in the talks of the instructor, the ability to write critical comments that are discriminating, just, and fairly well turned.

As in expository, so in descriptive work; by many inventions the instructors try to keep their pupils busy in the right direction. Sometimes they make each man write a short description of his nearest neighbor in the class. Of course the themes thus written are too personal to be used as material in later lectures; but the writers can find out in conference what success they have had with these snap shots at close range. For sketches that shall have more perspective and more motion, the class is often "assigned" to some particular corner of the college world, — different parts of the gymnasium, it may be, or the tennis courts on a bright afternoon, or the Yard, or the river with its crews, or Harvard Square at some busy season. The need of prescribing scenes that are so obviously full of motion may be better understood, perhaps, when one has looked at the following example. It is hard to imagine a ball-room more wonderfully motionless.

"'*Becky Sharp*' — *The Ball Scene*

"The stage proper was devoted to the ball-room, which was open on the left, and supported by marble pillars. From this you could see the shrubbery beyond and the many Japanese lanterns that were scattered among the trees. On the center and back of the stage a magnificent marble staircase was constructed. After a rise of about eight steps, there

was a spacious landing, and from this steps led off to the right and to the left. Each part of the staircase supported elaborate and beautiful candelabra. The right wings of the stage represented a solid marble wall. The whole made a setting at once attractive, gorgeous, and grand.

"The minuet, danced by richly costumed men and women, completed the picture of an elaborate ball given by one of the 'overlords' of the French."

Studies in still life are scarcely needed by a class of whose work this is not an unfair specimen.

Very often, however, a man is left to choose his own subject for description, with the recommendation that it be some person or place which he takes interest in recalling. Results of this practice may be seen in these four sketches.

"We walked silently, in single file, along the faint trail. A huge log barred the way now and then, the path swerved off violently, and passed round the jagged, earth-stained roots of the fallen tree; though if the trunk were not too large, the trail went over it, and left behind a smooth spot on the rough bark. The tangled woods to right and left were overgrown with all kinds of brushwood, especially with small maples. They were struggling hard for life and light; for the jealous tamaracks, selfishly forgetting the troubles of their own youth, towered on all sides and shut out the sky. Nature had tried every device to save the young trees; saplings an inch thick ran up fifteen feet, for in the depths of this silent Michigan forest no wind switched them about. Then, too, every dark green leaf was quite horizontal, stretched out like a child's hand to feel the rain;

nor did any leaf skulk under another, as on a grown-up tree, but each one lay open to catch its share of the dusky light."

"The Storekeeper

"He was a portly man, somewhat past middle age, but hale and hearty as the sailors that used to come sculling in from the boats to trade at his store of 'general merchandise.' His shiny buff face was surrounded by sandy hair and a short beard of the same shade. In conversation his eyes would wander until he reached an important point, when they would suddenly become fixed upon one's nose to emphasize his remark. At the same time he would clap his mouth shut and compress his broad lips. This latter practice, showing, as it did, his own immense satisfaction with what he said, had the effect of quenching any attempt at argument. Among the porch loafers he would always reserve his opinion till the last, to deliver it with great force and elegance; and invariably he put an end to the discussion."

"In autumn, when grape-picking begins, no fairer field for work than the Sweet Valley Vineyard can be imagined. Surrounded on all sides by the low hills along the lake shore, it lies safe from the storms that come across the water. Southward it rolls away, over the gentle hills, until in the distance the grapevines look like grass on a smooth lawn; high rocky cliffs hem it in on the north; and on all sides the trees on the hills mingle their gold and scarlet to deepen its dark rich green. On the vines near at hand thick clusters of dark blue hang among the lower leaves, a sweet, persuading odor of Concords fill the air, a few vines that have broken their ties bend gracefully above the orderly rows, with tendrils seeking a support in vain. From far

away comes the sound of a gun, deadened by the hazy atmosphere, and robber birds rise noisily in flight."

"Nippersink Creek is a crooked little stream, struggling along through a weedy channel, and bearing, as it always seemed to me, an additional burden in its clumsy Indian name. Far back in the quiet country, however, the creek reveals another nature, as different as can be from its downstream steadiness. Upon the high meadowlands it flows along in a clear, shallow stream, over yellow sand-flats streaked with quivering strings of weed. Now and then the water grows murky for a short space, where a herd of cows is standing idly on the muddy bottom. Soon it clears off again and swings round a sharp bend with a rush, only to divide and flow through a dozen pebbly channels, shadowed by the flitting forms of timorous sunfish. For a time, the banks of the stream draw together. Then the water grows deep and black, and on its surface float sleepy mud-turtles, each with its head upstream."

Themes of this sort, besides coming as a change from the subjects more limited in scope, often bring with them something of the pleasure of reminiscence, — a pleasure which tends to make the pen march more willingly.

When the classes are passing from description to narration, it may perhaps be necessary to give them some kind of work which combines the two forms of writing. For this purpose the very simple work of letter-writing will prove useful. The men might be required, for example, to write a short letter from Mr. A in the city to Mr. B in the country, and then,

changing personality and place, to write Mr. B's reply. This means an attempt to revive a forgotten art, if you like; but for the present purpose it is a drill, not so much in epistolary form for its own sake, as in the process of handling both scenes and events briefly yet entertainingly.

For out-and-out narrative, one might find numberless devices. To write synopses of stories read aloud, for instance; this, though elementary, calls for such careful appraising and adjusting of many facts that it is extremely hard to do well. The composition of one-page dialogues is also both hard and good training. Adroitness in managing conversation is something that Freshman writers are not alone in needing. To avoid, if nothing more, the monotony of reiterating "he said," and "she said," and "said he, going through the window"; to make the talk sound in some measure real; to gain in point, flexibility, resource, — this is what the writing of dialogue tends to bring about. And the more ambitious work in narrative, the two fortnightly themes that take the form of true or fictitious stories, will be the better for it.

Clumsy dialogue is no more common, however, than are bungling beginnings. Two or three daily themes devoted to practice in getting stories under way will surely be not too many. The men must learn to make the outset really the outset, — neither the preface to an introduction nor a point somewhere in the middle, from which one must turn back for an explanation of

previous events. Few better exercises, for narrative purposes, can be given than those in starting a story. Let each student try to achieve one page which suggests a person, a place, and a motive, and he will be readier to begin an actual piece of continued narrative. A successful daily theme of this sort will contain characters, scene, and plot, without being either too vague or too downright.

What has been said about the daily themes in connection with narrative, descriptive, and expository work, will hardly apply as well in the case of argument. Of course, an instructor can read a part or the whole of some argumentative composition, such as Macaulay's speeches on the bill to amend the law of copyright, and ask for a statement of the main arguments. But these miniature briefs are for the most part not very profitable. The students can get more good from reading arguments at their leisure, from giving themselves practice in brief-drawing, and from conference on the brief that serves as the eleventh fortnightly theme. Some few argumentative processes may perhaps be learned in the daily writing; but in the main, one page has not proved a convenient space.

After this incomplete review of certain forms of daily themes, it might seem that a student has not much opportunity to write upon his own subject and in his own vein. This is not, however, the case. Besides all these tasks, prescribed or recommended, there still remains a good proportion of themes that any man

may write as the humor seizes him. So large is this proportion, indeed, that students sometimes ask for more prescribed subjects, with the complaint that their own stock has given out. After the first few weeks of daily themes, there comes to most Freshmen a great vacuity of mind; the themes grow alarmingly feeble; but with some patience and a little sparring for time, they get their second wind, and go on fairly well.

As to daily themes altogether, it should be remembered that their value lies in the continuity of practice. They cannot, coming in so great number, be so minutely corrected as to teach their writers much about structure. Indeed, as the year goes on, the instructors comment less and less on form, and more and more on substance. Yet however few marks of correction each page may bear, in their accumulation the daily themes, properly used, will break their writers of much that is undesirable, and will develop, if not a firmer technique, at least a tendency toward good habits in writing.

CHAPTER V

THE FORTNIGHTLY THEMES — FIRST HALF-YEAR

A GLANCE at the tabular view on page 4 will show that the fortnightly themes are not distributed equally among the four kinds of composition. On the contrary, half of the fortnightly work — the first six long themes — is expository; of the rest, two are descriptive, two narrative, and two argumentative. This preponderance of expository writing will be easily understood, however, if one remembers what has already been said as to the object of English A. It is not to turn out professional story-tellers, or ready-made poets, or in fact any kind of artists with words. It is to train a number of young men in the use of correct and readable English. Plainly, then, exposition should form a greater part of the year's work; for it is exposition that nine men out of ten will have to deal with in later life, perhaps nine times out of ten when they sit down to write at any length. Description and story-telling form part of the course for several reasons: they give the students the new interest of a change; practice in them will often enliven a man's expository style; they produce, in men who have tried them with little success, a better

appreciation of descriptive and narrative masterpieces; and possibly they may discover to some youth that he has an interest in writing sketches or stories, joined with the ability to do so. To let them share equally with exposition, however, in the scheme of the year's work, would be as unwise as to omit them altogether. Practice in them is needed; but it is not so much needed as practice in explanatory and argumentative writing.

So much for the general plan of the fortnightly themes; as for their nature, it is of course needless to say that they are very different from the daily themes. An instructor is supposed to read the former much more slowly and thoroughly than he reads the latter, and to employ more time in suggesting better words or phrases, cutting out passages or filling them in, recasting clauses, sentences, and paragraphs. Instead of indicating by a mark in the margin that a sentence is clumsy, he arranges it in a better form. Not that he ever does a student's final revision for him; far from it; but in any real difficulty, any question obscure and perplexing to a student, the instructor suggests on paper one way of solving the problem. In addition, he writes on the back of each composition a general criticism, from fifty to seventy-five words in length. Throughout, then, his work on the fortnightly themes is more minute and more reconstructive than usual; and the students, for their part, are expected to use more than ordinary pains in rewriting or revising.

One cannot hope to classify here the endless mistakes,

the multifarious corrections, on which all these pains are expended. It would be difficult even to hint at them. The examples given[1] will show, perhaps, something about the general character of the errors, comments, and changes.

A good deal of the instructors' work must go, for instance, toward making their pupils understand that the beginning and the end of a sentence, as the most prominent places, should if possible contain the most important words; and that adjacent paragraphs must be connected not only in thought but in phrase. These and all other questions of form must be discussed, explained, reverted to, time and again. A few slashes of the pen, a mark of transposition here and there, a connective inserted or changed, will often show a beginner how to transform loose, shambling sentences into firm ones that march with confidence; and the "fortnightlies" afford the best chance for this practical lesson. Sentences weak and monotonous with "but," "and," or "so," are very common in Freshman English. They can easily be made over into something like vigor and fluency if one only has the patience, in correcting, to substitute other connectives, especially those which involve the use of periodic form. Not that periodic sentences are recommended as being intrinsically better than loose ones; it would be a great pity if any such

[1] See the specimens of fortnightly themes. The corrections represent unfavorable rather than favorable comment, because the encouraging criticisms are generally given in conference.

false impression should be given. The students need drill in periodic forms merely because those forms are new or rare with them, and because their style will be the better for a decrease in the amount of looseness. The same reasons apply to many corrections which, considered merely in and for themselves, would be nonsensical. An instructor might object, for example, to a sentence ending with, "there being no men to carry out the plot." Why should he object? It is not that such constructions are naturally vicious, or that they are not found, and found often, in good writing; but that these novices in structure are already too fond of easy, lax, "go-as-you-please" sentences, which readily become no sentences at all. A little compulsory use of periodic order, so far from exposing the novices to the danger of artificiality, tends to give more poise to whatever they may write.

One should remember, then, that the correction of fortnightly themes needs to be made with fairly minute attention to form, and, dealing as little as possible with counsels of perfection, to be largely a matter of actual reconstruction. It is well to mention, moreover, — what might easily be guessed, — the necessity of keeping the required reading in the "Rhetoric" parallel with the fortnightly work. In the first half-year, when exposition holds the field, the students should read what Professor Hill says, not only about exposition, but about the choice of words, number of words, arrangement, and whatever other principles they need to have explained. The

chapter on description accompanies the writing of Themes VII. and VIII.; that on narration, Themes IX. and X.; and that on argument, Themes XI. and XII.

With all this in mind, we may turn to examine the first fortnightly theme. Its title, "Who I Am, and Why I Came to Harvard," may at first seem odd. Yet there is more than one reason why the first theme should be written on this subject. In so large a class, an instructor cannot have too many opportunities for learning something about the personality, early training, and (so far as may be) the aims of each of his pupils; and if useful for nothing more, these first personal themes may, and often do, contain hints as to the special needs of this or that man. They are by no means mere tables of facts, however, to be filed for reference. Undergoing immediate and in many cases sharp correction, they are a Freshman's first experience, for that year at least, in writing connected passages at greater length and for more detailed criticism. Several things in the nature of the subject combine to aid him. In the first place, the idea of writing an autobiographical sketch often seems novel enough to interest and amuse him; in the second, the construction is made less difficult by the fact that his account has for the most part only to follow the natural sequence of events, — that the narrative instinct will help him; and in the third, such unmixed exposition as is necessary is fairly simple. With all this in his favor, each young autobiographer writes an article from three to six pages long and slips it into the

theme box. When corrected, this article is returned to the author, who must revise or rewrite it within two weeks. Thus the routine of the fortnightly themes is begun, simply enough.

The second long theme is quite as simple. It is an explanation of "how to do or to make something." Here, obviously, is nothing but exposition reduced to lowest terms, the explanation of a general process. And yet before one can be sure that the men will understand this elementary work, one must carefully make clear the nature of exposition, and the points wherein it differs from description or narrative. An instructor does this, it may be, by showing what an exposition of the game of football is like, and what the story of a football game; or by contrasting an explanation of the process of manufacturing shoes with a description of the interior of a shoe factory. Any number of such illustrations will be available to give the students a clearer idea, which they decidedly need, of the expository mood. In dealing with any ordinary class, there need be no anxiety about discussing the idea too thoroughly. For the rest, one must rely on the nature of the subject to carry a writer through. If he can only keep his head, and follow closely with mere good sense whatever process he may have chosen, the very fact that it is a process will provide the outline. The order of ideas, that is, will prove to be already determined, if only in a fashion more or less rough. But as each man must nevertheless work out for himself the details of structure, there will

be quite enough to keep him and his instructor busy. It is mostly dull work, with little or no chance for an average writer to show his own native gifts; many of the themes will be crude and labored accounts of how to make a wash-bottle, to find the specific gravity of something, to play tennis, or to manufacture gunpowder. Some, more bucolic, tell how to train a colt or keep bees, — on which subjects two Freshmen wrote capital little articles. But the level of the themes remains a dead level. Dulness, however, is not so much to be guarded against here as obscurity. And if a writer manages to make his particular process plain, and to keep his sentences and paragraphs fairly in hand, he has done tolerably well. If he has been entertaining, or perhaps original, so much the better for him; but most of these beginners will have enough difficulty in trying to be accurate and intelligible.

With the third long theme, which must set forth "something learned in a college course," a new element begins to appear in the work. Here, it will be noted, the men may still be dealing with cut and dried matters of fact, but they are not doing so of necessity. A student may select some mathematical or chemical process, and so have the general outline once more furnished him; but on the other hand he may, as many students do, choose to write on "English and American Legislation," "Livy as an Historian," or "The Rise of the Church in the Middle Ages." These are plainly subjects that require thought, prevision of the whole matter as a

unit, and some little exercise of ingenuity in arrangement. In other words, that a writer shall know what he is going to say *in toto*, in what spirit he is to say it, and what is to be the coördination of the parts, — this knowledge the third theme calls for more urgently than does either the first theme or the second. It is at this stage of the course that an instructor should give as much help as possible in matters of general plan. He should show how an explanatory composition will succeed best, as a rule, when it progresses from simple ideas to complex; how this or that selection, read aloud, contrives to give to a plain explanation variety and interest; how picturesque bits here and there, figurative illustrations, flashes of personality, enliven a discussion without making it digress.

The chance to enliven their work thus, if they can, is soon given to the men without restriction. For the fourth long theme, they are asked to express their opinion on some question that has lately interested them. There is to be no attempt at argument, except in so far as a clear expression of opinion, with the reasons for it well stated, may happen, by convincing a reader, to achieve the purpose of argument. Each man has merely to discuss, in good faith and with good sense, an interesting matter as it appears to him. Last year many students chose the wars in the Transvaal and the Philippines, the growth of trusts, and other familiar topics. Nearly all of these opinions were, of course, immature; many were not so much real

opinions as they were the residue of none too thorough reading; yet the average was nearer to successful exposition than the average of the earlier themes, and a few men expressed themselves not without individuality. On the other hand, several writers went woefully astray as to general structure, and produced mere sets of disconnected and inconclusive assertions. The removal of all leading-strings, the lack of chronological or otherwise arbitrary sequence, the necessity for bringing orderly thought out of a normally muddled mind, left many a novice at fault. It is no wonder, then, that some students who have thus far written coherently "go to pieces" at this point, and take to jotting their ideas down at haphazard. But their case is not desperate. Thorough rewriting and a conference with the instructor will usually help them to recover their balance, provided, of course, that they make enough effort of their own. At most, they are very few; the larger part of the class will have had enough practice, in three long themes and many short, to make them steadier and surer writers.

So true is this of the class as a whole, that for the fifth "fortnightly" no subject is prescribed. It must be expository, to be sure; but the only other condition attached is a recommendation — not a requirement — that it be an essay connected with the prescribed reading. The students are advised for their own good to try a kind of work which is not only more aspiring than usual, but also a step toward the habit of criticising, of appraising what they read. The suggestion meets with considerable response. One finds, among the fifth themes, essays on the character of Arthur Pendennis or of Falstaff, on Mr. Kipling's "Jungle Book," on whatever phase of the required reading has seized a young man's interest. If any man prefer to choose his own subject, he may do so, and welcome; for the chances are that, in case his preference is at all a decided one, the result will be a more vigorous piece of writing than his earlier labors. Altogether, then, the fifth theme is an experiment in giving the class free scope.

The sixth and last exposition, which closes the first half-year's work, brings the class back within prescribed limits. The beginning was an autobiography, the end is a biography. Each student is requested to write a short essay on some well-known man — a hero worshipped in boyhood, perhaps, or merely some figure conspicuous at any time in the world. An account only of the life and deeds of a noted man is not, however, what is wanted. That could be compassed by an easy transcription of the encyclopedia. To interweave facts with an estimate of the man's character, to do this skillfully, in a just proportion, should be the aim of the composition. If successful, the result will be a kind of biographical portrait; it will contain no more historical facts than are significant; it will present the man and his surroundings pictorially, so far as that is possible without interrupting the expository purpose; and

it will give an individual opinion as to his place and meaning in the history of the world. Several of last year's themes were thus successful, and were sensible, interesting short articles. A strange company was assembled, to be sure; in it were Socrates, Mohammed, Copernicus, Machiavelli, Napoleon, Robert Burns, Decatur, Henry Clay, Lincoln, Mr. McKinley, Mr. Cecil Rhodes, Admiral Dewey, and many others. In several of these diverse cases the writers' interest in the persons of their choice seemed genuine; and whether from real interest or not, the themes, on the whole, were better in execution than usual, and pleasanter to read. The chief fault in themes of this sort is apt to be a bad adjustment of proportion between events and critical estimate, and a failure to give a vivid glimpse of the hero as a human figure. For the rest, however, the sixth themes have commonly shown a creditable improvement in technique, and an ability, gained through considerable practice, to work out more complicated problems in the presentation of fact and ideas.

The progress of the six themes in exposition is, in short, from easy processes to more and more difficult. Along with constant exercise and illustration in the mapping out of whole compositions, there is quite as constant criticism and correction in the details of style. At this stage the pupils have got themselves sufficiently under control to be ready for more elaborate attempts. They have had, for the present, enough exposition;

more than enough, they themselves feel. So after the midyear examination, they take up description and narration. At the end of the second half-year they revert, not indeed to exposition proper, but to the closely allied form, argument.

CHAPTER VI

THE FORTNIGHTLY THEMES — SECOND HALF-YEAR

In turning to the descriptive and narrative themes, let us once more take warning as to their purpose. That purpose is not to manufacture young literary men or professional writers of any sort. It is to give the students respite from a long course of what has become drudgery, to stir up if possible a new interest in the work, to make them observe more keenly and record more vividly, and to give them a better appreciation — through their own difficulty and failure — of notable achievements in literature. One should remember, also, the nature of the daily exercises given in connection with these kinds of composition.[1]

The fortnightly work in description consists of Themes VII. and VIII. The subjects of these the writers are free to choose, on condition that the summaries, handed in as daily themes one week in advance of the corresponding "fortnightlies," satisfy the instructors. The important difference between the two themes is that Theme VII., the first experiment in description, is apt to be much the more elementary in form. As in

[1] See pp. 31–36.

the substance to be treated they are virtually alike, they need not be considered here separately.

For preparation, their writers have the daily descriptive exercises, pages 254 to 280 in the "Rhetoric," and the lectures in class. These informal lectures, to be thorough yet simple, must depend largely on practical illustrations, which can be got in few better ways than by reading passages aloud, with explanation of their merits and defects. An instructor might read, for example, Mr. Kipling's "The City of Dreadful Night"; among other things, he would point out how much motion there is in certain words. He would show how instantly effective these words are, and how the substitution of less kinetic phrases would make a given passage fall flat. And so he would take up one selection after another, letting the students see for themselves how the different effects are brought about, or explaining where they are at a loss to see. A caution, too, against sketches of the guide-book sort will not come amiss before the seventh themes are written.

When that writing has taken place, there will be a labor of reformation for the instructors. A good, sound expository style often proves a poor descriptive one. Men who in the first half-year have written with intelligence and spirit, begin the second half in a fashion surprisingly stupid. They have been interested in a person or a place, and yet somehow cannot call it up in words with any distinctness. Sometimes, of course,

the trouble is temperamental; the men have such good practical heads that they can deal with only matters of the plainest fact; more often, however, it is merely a failure to understand as yet the descriptive mood, and a lack of specific or unhackneyed words. When students are once brought to see the futility of such phrases as "could be seen," "presented a beautiful picture," "was a most delightful spot," "a worthy subject for the artist," and all that host without life, color, or meaning; when they see, for example, that they have used a part of the verb "to go" where they might have meant "to walk," "run," "stride," "shuffle," "crawl," "grope," "strut," "amble," "trot," "mince," "whirl," "scuttle," or any of the manifold ways of going; when they have learned a hundred things — of which one cannot give more than the faintest hint here — about the value of finding a word close to their intention, close to the appearance or motion they wish to conjure up: — when they have once seen the nature and meaning of all these rudiments, they have made an advance toward understanding the descriptive spirit.

They must, of course, learn a great deal more of both detail and general theory. In their first search, more or less enthusiastic, after words graphic and (to them) novel, they are likely to be seized with an epidemic of adjectives. "There is nothing like hay for faintness," said Lewis Carroll's Hatter; and for vividness, thinks the Freshman, there is nothing like your adjective. For a few weeks, at any rate, this part of speech is

usually overworked. A favorite device with many men (and a common sign, by the way, of the novice), is to drive adjectives continually in pairs. "The gaunt, gray rocks," "the blue, dancing waters," "the dark, sinister scowl," are forms which, though good enough singly, become tiresome when used throughout a whole sketch. Here, for instance, are two pages from a descriptive fortnightly theme, rather freer from this fault than usual.

"*On the Ontonagon*

"It was a slow, lazy day, toward the end of August. As I lay at length on a flat, lichen-covered rock, and absorbed its pleasant warmth, I reflected that far away in Illinois the prairies were quivering with the heat, and that the trees along the country roads were brown and stifled with dust.

"The scene before me was quite different from the one which I pictured to myself. It lay in Michigan, not in Illinois; a silent forest, blackened here and there by fire, fell away before me, and then strode part way up the steep side of Iron Mountain, a league distant; and, instead of the dusty country road, I saw a clear trout stream, hurrying down a long series of granite terraces. Native guides called it the 'Cascades of the Ontonagon.'

"On one of these flat granite bowlders I was lying. In the spring, the ambitious little river had swelled out to a width of perhaps a hundred feet; but with each day of summer it had grown more retiring, till now any fisherman might pick his way across it, dry-shod. The water slid along quietly, for the most part. Now and then, however, it squeezed between two rocks with a hollow, metallic gurgle, or chattered noisily over a bed of shifting stones. Just below me, as I have said, the cascades descended in irregular

steps for a thousand feet. There the stream became a succession of waterfalls and black, foam-streaked pools. And beneath every slowly circling eddy of froth, none could tell how many trout might be lurking.

"The plaintive, insistent call of a flute-bird drew my attention from the river. The sound came from a belt of dead pines near by, standing up thin and gray without their foliage. I could see the stiff, angular branches against the sky; but near the ground, a bushy second growth of maples, poplars, and yellow birch had begun to show, partly hiding the ravages of the last forest fire."

In this case the pairing of adjectives is not so conspicuous as it might be; but unless the writer had been warned, he might have let this dangerous trick creep into his style.

Students should be taught to look also for specific verbs, which will render unnecessary an adjective here or an adverb there. If they persevere in their search, the writers will come nearer to a terse style. They will notice, perhaps, that the force of many of their most effective verbs is the force of compressed metaphor. This may lead them further to look for figures that flash pictures before the mind of a reader; in which course they cannot proceed without overcoming their aversion — native in Anglo-Saxons — to examining their impressions sharply. In rare cases, men are even prompted to follow the advice of Gray, that "half a word fixed upon or near the spot is worth a cartload of recollection." And although the total gain in descriptive ability may not be striking, the class will show, when

the eighth theme is compared with the seventh, a general advance from bald and literal enumeration toward description that has color, motion, a semblance of reality, and perhaps a tinge of the imaginative.

In this advance, however, there is evident danger of going astray. To take a single instance: a man feels that he has been "cursed out" for writing too prosaic an account. "Why, then," he thinks, "here goes for something really dashing. I'll be dull no longer. I'll be suggestive, and all that." This is a good resolution; but in his struggle to be vivid he runs the greatest risk of artificiality. A straining after figures will betray the best writer into conceits; with beginners, its results are often droll. "The tall chimneys," wrote one man, in describing a fire, "the tall chimneys fell with a look of despair." Another described the Mystic River as a "gigantic monster, winding down on its way to swallow up the city of Charlestown." And there are many other instances, just as grotesque, of misguided effort. All that an instructor can do is to issue warnings. He can keep reminding his pupils that the endeavor to find striking phrases is laudable, but only when tempered with common sense; and that, after all, good conventional dulness is better than absurd originality.

Between the two evils, absurdity and dulness, the writers of the seventh and eighth themes must learn to steer a middle course. If they can, they have done much toward proving themselves able to write in a new vein, without discredit. If, as happens, they turn out

a few capital sketches of people and places, they have accomplished something positive in the special field of description. Best of all, most of their later writing shows that they understand more clearly the value of pictorial words, and that out of this self-conscious struggle with language they have brought a greater power to express themselves with point.

In the next two themes, IX. and X., the purpose is likewise to develop the students' range and versatility. They must now handle, not only the various aspects of men and things, but events, actions, motives. They must tell two short stories, true or fictitious. Some of the exercises preparatory to this work and parallel with it, may be recalled by a glance at pages 35, 36. Besides these, and just as in the case of the long descriptive themes, much of the instructors' work consists in reading aloud good extracts — short stories, passages from histories or novels — and examining them critically before the class. For bits of straightforward narrative, the rescue of Friday from the cannibals in "Robinson Crusoe," and Christian's fight with Apollyon in "The Pilgrim's Progress," serve admirably. They hold the attention of the students with a closeness which makes one suspect, alas, that the stories are new to the audience, and which carries its own lesson of vigor in simplicity. Beautiful simplicity the men may see in the Book of Ruth, a story which experiments have shown, unhappily, to be quite as little known by Freshmen nowadays. A score of other qualities, good or

bad, are illustrated from as many different kinds of stories.[1] Skillful beginnings, ingenuity of plot, dramatic presentation of characters and use of motive, brisk yet natural dialogue, the right proportion of effective details, successful movement, consistent point of view, — all these and their opposites are studied by actual example.[2]

Obviously, it is not expected that the students, when they write their own stories, will deal in matters so intricate, or produce works of a high order. It is enough for them to make a true story interesting, and a fictitious story both interesting and artistically true. The study of all these models and all this theory is profitable in two ways: it gives each man a few simple tests which he can henceforth apply, for his private satisfaction, to whatever narrative he may read; and it shows him, in his own present work, how and where to begin, how to manage the few men and women who serve him as characters, how to keep the interest from decreasing as the story progresses, and how and where to make an end. Very few if any of the stories last year reached even the standard of undergraduate fiction. There was a good deal of sentimentality and

[1] A few of the many books which the instructors read in whole or in part were Poe's "The Cask of Amontillado," Stevenson's "Will o' the Mill," Maupassant's "La Mère Sauvage," Miss Jewett's "Fame's Little Day," Miss Wilkins's "A Village Singer," Hardy's "Tess of the D'Urbervilles," Mr. Kipling's "The Strange Ride of Morrowbie Jukes" and "The Man Who Would be King."

[2] See pages 281–299 in "The Principles of Rhetoric."

melodrama; there was a large class of stories from which one carried away only a vague impression that a number of things had happened. A plot was good occasionally; the treatment, very rarely. But as the instructors had expected no greater results, they felt no disappointment. On the contrary, there was encouragement in the fact that although the structure was more free and easy, the grammar and the other details of plain technique were careful, and the sentences, in becoming less cramped, had not become too sprawling. The greatest benefit derived from the practice in narration — as from that in description — is its tendency to make a writer's style unbend. Few men can write two passable stories without enlarging their vocabularies, consciously or unconsciously; and the probability is that just as the new words recruited for story-telling will have more or less piquancy, so the narrative "swing" will carry the men on to write readier sentences, less prim and conventional, though no less firm.

One might imagine that the students would be reluctant to leave narration and turn to argument. If there were any young literary artists in the class, they might feel aggrieved. Being youths of a quite different sort, however, the Freshmen take hold of the work on the Brief (Theme XI.) and the Argument (Theme XII.) with an interest that is almost surprising. Except for such men as have got some practice in the Freshman debating club, they know little or nothing

about any form of dialectics; and in the excepted cases the acquaintance is far from being thorough. At all events, whether or not from a sense of inexperience in practical work, many of them attack the problem of argument with uncommon zeal.

As preparation for Theme XI. each man has the chapter on Argument to read in the "Rhetoric," the usual lectures, and an especially careful statement (due as a daily theme one week before the brief) of the question which he means to argue. He is urged to study the specimen briefs in Professor G. P. Baker's "Principles of Argumentation," and to follow the valuable directions there, in drawing up the outline for his own process of reasoning. In addition, he has usually the chance to appoint a special conference with his instructor, for the purpose of discussing the difficulties in brief-drawing, particularly as they appear in his chosen question.

Those difficulties are not, after all, great; but with a class that has not yet formed habits of logical thought, or learned much about the dangers of fallacy, they must be disposed of by the instructor simply, thoroughly, and repeatedly. The first and most evident necessity is that the men learn how argument — the art of making the mind of some one else not only receive ideas but believe them — how this process involves the principles already learned in exposition, plus the new processes of convincing and persuading. It is well, by the way, for the students to examine Erskine's defense of Lord

George Gordon,[1] for an example of the aid which description and narrative may give to argument. A still more practical need is that each man shall learn to analyze a given question, and to frame in precise terms a proposition which expresses without ambiguity the idea he wishes to establish or overthrow. In their classes the instructors may illustrate such analysis and definition, by taking up some apparently plain question and showing how this or that term must be defined before the question can mean anything at all. This kind of work, especially if members of the class are called on to take active part in analyzing and defining, will bring home to many a man the fact that before he can draw up a brief, or indeed even think consistently, he must make and keep clear the sense of terms which he has all along considered as self-explanatory. If his ambition be, for instance, to determine whether or not John Bunyan was a poet, he will have the long labor of finding out what he means by the word "poet." In like manner the proposition, "Christian Science should be Restricted by Law," cannot be discussed until a meaning has been fixed for "Christian Science" and for "restriction by law." Besides getting an exact meaning for each term, the students must learn to determine at once which side of a question gives them the presumption, and which the burden of proof; to find what is the special point at issue: to avoid arguing beside that point, to look out for the pitfalls of *post*

[1] Discussed in Professor Baker's "Principles of Argumentation."

hoc ergo propter hoc, of false argument from analogy, antecedent probability, or sign, and in short of any of the long list of fallacies. More than once, too, the students should be reminded that they must not ignore an opponent's objection; that in refuting they must give their adversary fair play, and not belittle or misrepresent him; and that, throughout their work in argument, their spirit is the spirit not so much of the prosecuting attorney as of the judge delivering his "charge," — or at least of one who is not trying to win an argument at all costs. They must not merely "write for victory," as Dr. Johnson sometimes talked for it.

Few if any of the students, in fact, do consciously try to make the worse appear the better reason. If the briefs were only as logical as they are honestly meant, the results would be successful. As it is, some of the briefs make their first appearance in a hopeless state. Most of them, indeed, have to be gone over thoroughly with their authors in conference, as the corrections usual in other fortnightly themes would not suffice here. A talk together enables an instructor to show a pupil more plainly and more quickly in what respects the brief should be changed. It would not be profitable, therefore, to give a specimen brief in this book, when there is little or no written record of the suggestions and corrections. It is enough to say that the instructors, in conference, try to help each pupil toward making the chief arguments form the main

heads of the brief, arranging them in proper sequence, and supporting them, not by mere assertion, but by sound evidence and reasoning.

The twelfth and last theme is an argument, from six to twelve pages long, written from the preceding brief. In following the outline of Theme XI, however, it should of course be put together in such a way as to conceal the framework, the angles, of the brief. Each writer is urged to make the argument a masterpiece, as if it were to be a final test of what he can accomplish after the year's practice; out of the dry bones of the eleventh theme he is to create, if he can, a body that lives and moves. The argument should be, in other words, not an enumeration of reasons, but an interesting, spirited discussion, with the triple cogency of logical structure, persuasive temper, and thrust of phrase. With this ideal before them, the students write their last fortnightly theme. Coming at the very end of the college year, it cannot be given back to them for revision or rewriting. It is read carefully, however, has its grade entered in the record-book, and is then stored away, with all the other manuscripts of its author, to be kept until called for at the end of the Senior year.

CHAPTER VII

READING, EXAMINATIONS, GRADES, AND CONFERENCES

THE work in English A includes more than the continual practice in writing, the attendance at lectures and conferences, and the study of the "Principles of Rhetoric." During the year the Freshmen read, as we have already seen, several prescribed books of widely different nature.

It might be asked why this reading is called for at all in a course of composition, and why, if it must be, the books are chosen so apparently at random. These two possible questions it may be well to answer. "Outside" reading is prescribed because these beginners — like all beginners — need to see how other and better persons have done the kind of work which they are trying to do. Again, so few of them have been brought up to read anything at all, or would now start to read of their own accord, that an acquaintance with a few books must be forced upon them. If they are men of the right sort, they will not let the acquaintance drop; at all events, they cannot let it drop until after the examinations. There is, to be sure, an excellent half-course in English Literature

(English 28) open to Harvard Freshmen; but many of them, especially Scientific Students, cannot so arrange their work as to include it, and many more do not yet feel any real interest in English Literature. It is to stimulate an interest, if possible, that required reading is made a part of English A. The men are advised to read the prescribed books as they would read anything for their own amusement, — not as text-books, receptacles of fact out of which they must stuff themselves for examination. If they like a book, they should try to discover why they like it, what passages, what qualities, have pleased them; if they dislike it or are indifferent, what their reasons are for that. There should be neither feigned admiration nor unreasoning disgust, but an honest opinion, based upon thought. And if a man becomes used to thinking about the work of other writers, he may give more thought to his own.

As to the variety in the required list, which contains Shakspere, Mr. Kipling, and others, this also has its explanation. Why, when the time for reading is so limited by other necessary work, are not the required books chosen only from among the best in the language? Why are they not distributed more evenly among the important periods of English Literature? Well, here is a class of young men, some of whom have been known to think Dickens and Shakspere contemporary, and many of whom have no further critical method than to lump all printed books together, from Homer down

to "Janice Meredith," under the vaguely respectful title of "standard authors." Plainly, such young men need training in discrimination; and by reading several unequal and unassorted writers, about whom they must collect something intelligent to say in an examination, they may learn to distinguish the good, the better, and the best, — to give each author something like his historical and literary place. Whether they do this or not, they should be able to see where one of these good or great writers has notably accomplished, or failed to accomplish, what they themselves have set their feebler pens to.

As with the required reading, so it is with the "Rhetoric." Although the instructors use this book for systematic study parallel with the theme-writing, it is not to be learned by rote. Rightly used, it serves as a code of suggestions, brief but pregnant and well illustrated, in which a reader may get many a starting-point for his own thoughts. And when a student learns that in an examination he shall be "held responsible" for a given number of pages in the "Rhetoric," he should recognize that he is expected, not to cram into his examination-book a certain measure of crude facts, but to present carefully the result of his reflection on several ideas, his own development of them. What the man himself has thought about this or that rhetorical principle, is the real gist of a good answer in an examination. Let us not, however, be misled by this. There are of course many definitions, many concentrated statements

of principle, which have the force of axioms, and which the "Rhetoric" sets forth with great good sense and conciseness. These the class are at liberty to repeat verbatim in examination, if they choose. There is no reason, for instance, why a man should waste time in framing a new definition for some term which he is asked to explain, and of which he has Professor Hill's succinct definition already at hand. In other respects, however, it is the man's own ideas and phrasing that make an answer valuable. It is hardly necessary to add, as qualification, that an answer has no value if it be not couched in good English; substance goes for nothing without form.

The following examples show the nature of ordinary questions and answers. They are taken at random from the regular midyear and final (three-hour) examinations, and from some of the one-hour tests that any instructor may give to his sections whenever he sees fit. The answers are not, of course, exhibited as models, but are printed just as they stood in the "blue books." Nor would all the questions here be counted equal parts of a whole examination paper.

"I. 'Clearness is a relative term.' Discuss."

1. "Clearness is a relative term in that what is clear to one person may not be clear to another. Audiences and readers differ widely; and if a speaker or author would make himself clear to all his hearers or readers, he must bring himself down to the level of the lowest. What may be perfectly plain to educated men will be Greek to an uneducated street laborer. Hence, if a person is speaking or writing to scholars, he may use words and expressions that may be perfectly clear to them and use them without stopping to explain; but if he is speaking or writing to illiterate persons, he must bring himself down to their level, and use language intelligible to them.

"Clearness and precision are not necessarily the same. For instance, a scientist speaking to scientists may use scientific words and phrases that express exactly what he wishes to say. He will be both precise and clear. But if he uses those same scientific terms to an audience of ignorant people, he will still be precise, but no longer clear. And in order to make himself clear, he may have to sacrifice precision to a certain extent by using less accurate but more comprehensible language. This he must do whenever necessary, for clearness is the first essential in either writing or speaking.

"Shall a writer then never use scientific terms? By no means. He must always keep in mind the class of readers he will have, and write what will be perfectly clear to them. If he can keep both precision and clearness, well. But he must be clear at any cost, even at the cost of precision."

2. "Clearness is a relative term because it depends on the character of the audience or readers, and on the nature of the subject treated. Clearness by no means implies precision. For instance, a treatise on a medical subject would contain many accurate, precise terms, and would be quite clear to a doctor; but its very preciseness would make it unintelligible to the general public. There are, too, many words which no two men interpret in the same way. Such are 'liberty,' 'church,' and 'society.' These expressions

should be avoided or defined, if there is any danger of confusion or ambiguity. It is, of course, necessary to take meanings for granted, to a certain extent; for no man could stop to define all his words."

"II. Define and illustrate the following terms: 'barbarism,' 'solecism,' 'trope,' 'euphemism.'"

"A barbarism is a word or phrase not English.

"1. Obsolete words: 'pattens.'

"2. Words of native or foreign origin not yet established: 'standpoint.'

"3. New formations.

"A solecism is a construction not English. It may take the form of:

"1. Incorrect use of foreign nouns, as 'cherubim' in the singular.

"2. Incorrect use of the genitive case.

"3. Putting a nominative as the object of a verb: 'Let they who will do this.'

"4. Improper use of reflexive pronoun.

"5. Use of a demonstrative pronoun, in reference to a noun not given.

"6. Use of 'either,' 'neither,' in reference to more than two things.

"7. Improper use of number, with collective nouns: 'The news are good.'

"8. Improper use of 'can' and 'may:' 'Can I pass the butter?'

"9. Incorrect use of 'shall' and 'will.'

"10. Use of a tense which does not express the meaning intended.

"11. Use of the indicative for the subjunctive.

"12. Use of an adverb for an adjective: 'The sea looks roughly.'

"13. Incorrect use of a preposition.

"14. Putting an adverb between 'to' and the infinitive.

"15. Use of double negative.

"16. Omission of a word necessary for clearness.

"A trope is the turning of a word from its literal meaning. Metonymy, Synecdoche, Simile, Metaphor, and Personification are all tropes. For example, 'Saladin was a fox in council'; 'As idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean'; 'The Turk governs with a loose rein.'

"Euphemism is fine writing; that is, the use of gaudy, flowery phrases and words to hide either plain facts or unpleasant realities. For example, 'casket' for 'coffin,' 'an ovation' for 'applause.' In some cases it is allowable, especially when it is used to avoid unpleasant suggestion."

"III. The Character of Beatrix Esmond.

"Beatrix Esmond began early to show the worldly, unpleasant side of her nature; for, when she was a little girl, every attention paid to her brother, Frank, caused her a fit of jealous temper. As she grew older, other traits appeared. Fickle and coquettish as she was, she yet had some appreciation of her mother's strength and purity. She was far too headstrong, however, to curb her spirit for love of any one; and an early escapade with a young lord of the neighborhood, when she and he were as yet only children in age, revealed her true nature to her parents.

"At her father's death, Beatrix flared up, for a moment, into fierce anger at Henry Esmond. It was like her to do this; for Harry was in no

way to blame for her father's fate. As the years passed, Beatrix was now friendly, now rude to Henry, to her mother, to every one about her; but not till she became a Maid of Honor, at court, did her real worldliness and selfishness show forth.

"This position at court was gained largely by her beauty, which was the topic of society chatter. No one realized the power of her eyes, the grace of her figure, better than Beatrix herself, though it brought crowds of ardent admirers about her. The possessor of charms like these, however, did not intend to hide them under a bushel by marrying a man of her own station; and for this reason she eagerly seized the chance of an 'alliance' with a lord of Scotland. His sudden death revealed to her the fact that she had secretly dreaded the marriage.

"Not long after this episode, Henry and Frank undertook their plan of restoring the rightful heir to the throne of England. The Prince, who had been living a careless, perhaps vicious life in France, took shelter for a while beneath the Esmonds' roof, in London. During his stay, Beatrix conceived what seems to have been a real passion for the man. The Prince, never slow to respond to any advances, was so taken up with Beatrix that he paid poor attention to his weightier interests. At length Frank and Henry realized the danger. Beatrix was removed to the country-house of the Castlewoods, for safety, but not before she left a secret note for the Prince.

"After the Prince learned of her removal he refused

to stay longer with the Esmonds. Some time passed, and the day finally came when he was to meet with his partisans, in secret, and take the oath of allegiance to his country. The Prince had disappeared. Beatrix's note was found. Henry and Frank rode hard all the following night and arrived at Castlewood in time to save the girl's reputation, but not her honor. The Prince swore to the purity of his intentions; and as nothing could undo what had been done, the men patched up a peace. Beatrix was angered too much for any reconciliation, and lived, from then forward, away from her family.

"Beatrix had, I think, an unusually warped nature. She was not lacking in all lovable traits, at first; but she gave free rein to her ambition, and, being of an imperious disposition, lost all sense of moderation and self-restraint. At heart she was hard and cold. Her fits of kindness came less from impulse than from a guilty conscience. She was not misled by weakness; she went astray with full knowledge of her actions.

"I am sure that this is a true estimate of her character, because she never, for one instant, aroused my pity or sympathy, as a character of natural attractiveness would be sure to do, however faulty or even impure it might be."

"IV. Explain fully the uses of 'shall' and 'will' in direct and in indirect discourse to express futurity.[1]"

1. "In direct discourse, to express simple futurity, 'shall'

[1] The uses of "shall" and "will," by the way, give more trouble to more Freshmen than almost any other question of grammar.

is used with the first person, 'will' with the second and third, as follows:

I shall		we shall
	you will	
he will		they will

"In interrogations, to express futurity, 'shall' is used with the first and second persons, 'will' with the third, as follows:

Shall I?		shall we?
	shall you?	
will he?		will they?

"In indirect discourse, to express futurity, if the subject of both clauses is the same, 'shall' is used in all three persons, as follows:

I say that I shall,
you say that you shall,
he says that he shall.

"If the subject of both clauses is not the same, the same auxiliary is used as in the direct discourse, as for instance:

He says that I shall,
he says that you will,
you say that he will."

2. "To express futurity in direct discourse, 'shall' and 'will' are used as follows: 'I shall, you and he will, we shall, you and they will.' The reason for the use of 'will' in the second and third persons is one of courtesy; for by using 'will' we assume that the person or persons referred to are given a voice in the matter. Courtesy is, of

course, unnecessary to oneself. The same reason explains the use of these words in indirect discourse. For instance, 'He says that he shall go' (both verbs having the same person as subject). But, 'He says that you will go.' The two verbs have different subjects here, and hence courtesy demands the use of 'will.'"

"V. Discuss the principles of construction whereby emphasis may be secured, — emphasis not merely of words and of sentences, but of larger portions of the composition.

"Show how emphasis in this larger sense is illustrated in any one of the plays or the stories you have been asked to read."

"The chief factor in the emphasizing of a single word is its position in a sentence. The beginning of the sentence is an emphatic position for an important word or phrase; unimportant words and phrases should, as a rule, not be placed there. Even more emphatic is the end of the sentence as a position for an important idea. Hence words may be emphasized by being placed either at the beginning or end of the sentence.

"Another means for securing emphasis, if the forcible word be in the predicate, is by inversion. For instance, the arrangement of 'Down came the storm,' 'Now is the time,' emphasizes the adverbs at the beginning. This inversion, however, should not be used too often, lest it become tiresome, and thus defeat its own purpose.

"Stronger even than inversion as a means of emphasis is climax — the arrangement of ideas leading from the less to the more important. A good example

is Cicero's famous, 'Abiit, excessit, evasit, erupit.' Antithesis also gives emphasis; as, for instance, 'We eat to live, not live to eat.' Skillful repetition also lends emphasis to the idea repeated. The statement of an idea both literally and figuratively, or from two different points of view, serves to enforce it on the reader.

"For sentences, much the same rules hold true. Position at the beginning or end of a paragraph, arrangement in the order of climax or antithesis, all serve to emphasize.

"Still larger portions of a work may be emphasized by grouping all other matter around them as subordinate or accessory; that is, by making everything else dependent on them.

"An excellent example of this may be found in Thackeray's 'Henry Esmond.' The two parts most emphasized are the death of Lord Castlewood in the duel, in the early part of the book, and the arrival and doings of the young pretender to the throne, near the close. The action of the early part of the book leads up to the first of these as a climax; then come events many and varied, but all dependent on the death of the nobleman, and caused by it. Finally the tide of the story, after so long an ebb, begins to rise once more until it reaches the highest point of all with the climax at the end of the book. When a reader has finished the work, these two events are the ones stamped most clearly on his mind, around which all the rest of the book seems to cluster. Such is a skillful emphasis."

"VI. Discuss the tests of Good Use which should govern a writer or speaker in the choice of words."

"In the selection of proper words it is well to follow the best writers of the day; so in the whole work of composition it is best to take as a model the best writers of the present time, and likewise, the best of past times. No one writer combines in himself all the excellences that make good composition. What was good in the seventeenth or the eighteenth century may and may not be good now. The styles of different authors change, and the styles of different ages change. Good Use is dictated by the best scholars of any time taken as a whole and not separately.

"The style of Gibbon or Macaulay is heavy compared with the present; the matter of paragraphing changes, being rather different now from what it was a century ago. The use of long sentences is growing obsolete if it has not already; more short sentences and a greater variety of them are found in writers of to-day."

Other examples of questions are:

"Discuss the principles of narrative writing, and show how these principles are illustrated in 'Adam Bede.'

"Define and illustrate the following terms: 'unity,' 'pathetic fallacy,' 'deduction,' 'trope,' 'ease,' 'periodic sentence,' '*argumentum ad hominem*,' 'good use.'

"Discuss the principle of Unity and its application to sentences, paragraphs, and whole compositions."

"Is the following sentence (in italics) periodic or loose? Why? Rewrite the sentence so that it shall be the kind of sentence, periodic or loose, which in its present form it is not:

"'*And with all that, and with the certainty that those things were gone forever, arose the great longing for one more breath of liberty, for one more ride over the boundless steppe, for one more draught of the sour kvass, of the camp brew of rye and malt.*'"

The examination-grade of each student is entered on his record-sheet in the instructor's book, and forms a part of the data from which to determine the grade of his work for the whole year. For both examinations and themes the marks given run from A, which means a grade between 100 and 90, to E, the sign of failure, which means anything below 40. Of course, grades that stand for an instructor's impression of a piece of writing cannot be mathematically precise. One may, however, explain A (a mark rarely given) as signifying that a man's work not only is correct, but has some maturity of thought, some distinction of style, some originality; B (90 to 78), that the work, though less distinguished, still shows more individual qualities than the average; C (78 to 60), that it is in the main sound and intelligent, — that the writer need not take any further course in composition unless he wishes to do so; D (60 to 40), that it is faulty or irregular, and that in his Sophomore year the writer must take a half-course in composition; and E, that he must take English A again. To give one of these marks at the end of the college year is to strike a balance of all the marks, daily, fortnightly, and examination, on a student's page in the record-book. An average of all these

will be a fairly just estimate, formed from corrected impressions; especially since the page also contains a condensed criticism of each fortnightly theme. At the weekly meetings of instructors, moreover, the standard of grades is kept uniform for the whole class, and all doubtful cases are discussed and settled.

No matter what the intrinsic value of a student's writing, his grade is of course lowered if he be guilty of neglect. Failure to rewrite or revise, for example, may result in an "E" for work that in itself deserves a better mark. Indeed, students are continually urged to rewrite or revise with the greatest care; for to see their faults, to get any good from the corrections of the instructors, they must follow those corrections in actual practice at once.

Students should get much help, too, from the conferences; but the latter should not be thought of as merely technical lectures, focussed on one student. That may be, and indeed should be, one form of them; an instructor, by picking up a bundle of manuscripts and reviewing them rapidly with the writer, can point out faults or merits vividly and specifically, and even in fifteen minutes can give a good deal of the advice which that writer especially needs. On the other hand, — or rather at the other extreme — the instructor and the student may spend the fifteen minutes in friendly talk about some question which may or may not be connected with English Composition, but on which the Freshman wishes to have the opinion or advice of

an older man. All conferences, at any rate, whether or not they are limited to technical instruction, are meant to give instructor and student a chance for friendly discussion, for that better acquaintance with each other which is impossible when one man is upon the lecturer's platform and another in the seat of the student. In a course in writing, pupil and teacher cannot become too well acquainted. And finally, it should be remembered in this course that if reading maketh a full man, and writing an exact man, conference maketh a ready man.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

AFTER this rough outline of the year's work in English A, there remain a few words of further explanation. A reader should not forget that in many cases the writers of this book have taken up only some of the methods of some instructors. They have tried, however, to make these methods represent the many others that they could not review. Again, as the course in its present reconstructed form has been given for only one year,[1] it might seem that some of the conclusions in the foregoing chapters have been made by hasty generalization. But this would not be true. One year in a course of this size, with such a prodigious amount and variety of manuscript, furnishes quite enough cases for inspection; and these one can verify from the results of previous years, when English A was in its simpler form. At all events the present working scheme of the course has proved itself, even in the first year, practical and adequate. Much of its suc-

[1] This was written at the close of the college year 1899–1900. It should be said that the methods used in that year so far justified themselves as to be adopted in all important particulars for the year 1900–1901.

cess is due to Mr. B. S. Hurlbut; his experience with both Freshman English and Freshmen, and his exceedingly good management, made a new and complicated system work without difficulty. Finally, it might be well to glance at what some of the students themselves have written about the year's work. At their final meeting with Dean Briggs they were asked to express candidly their opinion as to what the course had done for them. Of the following specimens, the first is one of the frankest among the very few complaints:

"It hardly seems possible that this is the last weekly meeting of Section IV. The year has gone faster than any former one, I can think [of]. It is quite natural, at this time, to look back for a moment, and consider my English A course. Has it improved me? Have I got any real good out of it? Speaking candidly, outside of the Thursday meetings, I do not feel that I have got very much out of it, — that I am better off than I was at the beginning of the year. In an endeavor (and a not very successful one) to conform to certain rules, I have lost all originality, — everything has a sort of labored rehashing, which makes whatever I have to say, dull and uninteresting."

This, by the way, is the less discouraging to instructors because, when compared with any of the writer's earlier work, it shows a distinct gain in structure. If he has got nothing else from his practice, he has learned to complain more effectively.

The other two themes show the spirit of the average comments.

"In this, my last theme, I think it would not be amiss to state what good I have received from English A. Primarily, it has opened my eyes. I see details and colors in objects which I would not have discerned had I not been on the lookout for something to describe in a theme. 'Tis true that I rarely wrote a description with fine detail, but the practice of looking for things to write about has unquestionably done me a deal of good. I am beginning to learn how to express my ideas. The lesson of unity of thought and expression has been one which I have worked at. Rapidity in collecting my thoughts has also come to me from theme-writing, for necessity has often compelled me to write a theme in ten minutes. No doubt some of them must have appeared so, but I have received the benefit of quick concentration of thought. I have aimed at variety of ideas and variety of expression, and have succeeded somewhat. These are only a few of the many good results of English A."

"I rejoice that this is my last daily theme for this year; yet I recognize that much good has come of them, and that I am the recipient of a goodly share of benefit. If a person is going to learn to write English, he must *write* it. Subjects may be scarce; but they are not half so scarce as appropriate, specific, well-sounding words and forcible constructions, which are necessary to the success of themes. A great weeding-out process has been in operation, estimable and effective when the Freshman looks properly at the matter. He must see that he has been really made over, or rather, that his style of composition has been remolded into firmer material. The rigid modes of correction, if followed even to a very small degree, must have had some effect on his former tottering standard."

SPECIMEN THEMES

THE SPECIMEN THEMES

Of the following specimens, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 are daily themes, and 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, fortnightly. 1 and 3 (in their original versions) and 4 and 5 are reproduced in facsimile. They are all average pieces of Freshman writing, chosen virtually at random.

The rewritten versions of Themes 4, 5, 6, and 12 are not given here. Theme 7 and its rewritten form are intended to appear as fragments, to show how completely two corresponding pages in the first copy and in the second may differ, and how a writer, in the first exercise of the year, may gain in expressing himself connectedly. The rewritten version, by the way, also shows the corrections made at a conference.

One should remember that in all these specimens the rewritten forms are not offered as models.

Use fewer present participles, and avoid nominative absolute constructions

K.

The day being clear, which by the way seems to be the exception and not the rule here, we set out for that Mecca of all visitors to Boston Bunker Hill.

Our first experience in the subway was rather enjoyable because it was something entirely new.

Arriving at the Monument we sat down for a few moments to rest, then, my friend who had been sick lately, not feeling able to attempt the climb to the top, I commenced the tedious journey. The winding stairway on which I counted two hundred and ninety-four steps, seemed interminable, but at last I reached the summit.

The sun being bright I obtained a few snap-shots of the city below, from one of the windows, with my camera which I had not, for a wonder, forgotten to bring along. On the way down, the hollow shaft in the center of the structure gave forth weird echoes which seemed like the voices of the brave sons of the Revolution in memory of whom the pillar was erected. After signing the register I went forth to join the throng which greets new-comers to Boston with: "Have you been to Bunker Hill yet? Well you really ought to go."

Vague.

Choppy.

??

SPECIMEN THEME 1. REWRITTEN VERSION

The day was clear, as few of the days in Cambridge appear to be. We took advantage of the weather and set out for that Mecca of all visitors to Boston—Bunker Hill.

Our first experience in the subway was rather enjoyable because it was something entirely new.

When we had reached the Monument, we sat down for a few moments, to rest. My friend who had been sick, feeling unable to attempt the journey, remained below, while I began the tedious ascent. The winding stairway, on which I counted two hundred and ninety-four steps, seemed interminable, but at last I gained the summit.

As the sun was bright, I was able to obtain a few snap-shots of the city below with my camera, which I, for a wonder, had not forgotten to take. During the descent, weird sounds echoed and reëchoed through the hollow center of the Monument. They sounded to me as though the ghosts of the heroes of the battle, in whose memory the Pile was erected, were resenting the intrusion of the sight-seers.

After signing the register I went forth to join the throng which greets new-comers to Boston with: "Have you been to Bunker Hill yet? Well, you really must visit it before you leave town."

SPECIMEN THEME 2

Verb? A little girl of about eight years, a poodle, and a doll. This was the party that entered a Harvard Square car a little above Harvard Bridge. The little girl sat down with the poodle under one arm, and the doll under the other, and smiled at the other occupants of the car. She seemed to mean, "I'm a pretty big girl to be travelling all alone, don't you *p.* think so." The car rolled on until it reached Hol- ^ yoke St^. Here the little girl with her two darlings, *?.* calmly and proudly arose, passed down the aisle, *Loose.* jumped off the car, and walked slowly down the street, pausing every now and then to admonish her *Ease?* doll, which was exceedingly refractory.

SPECIMEN THEME 2. REWRITTEN VERSION

A little girl of about eight years, a poodle, and a doll made up the party which entered a Harvard Square car the other day. With a smile at the other occupants of the car, she sat down with the poodle under one arm, and the doll under the other. She probably wished to say, "I'm a pretty big girl to be travelling all alone, don't you think so?" The car rolled on until it reached Holyoke Street, where the child calmly and proudly rose and left the car. As she walked slowly down Holyoke Street, I could see her pause every now and then to admonish her doll, which was evidently in very poor temper.

Conversation.

The art of intelligent conversation is far more important than the art of writing, for the reason that for every time we write a letter, we converse with someone a hundred times.

K R

Too splendid.

We should therefore do everything in our power to develop our vocabulary and to improve our style. For this purpose let us not be afraid of using new words, merely because they sound a trifle forced at the first attempt; let us not be afraid of employing a spirited or even an audacious style of speech; but let us, like Patrick Henry, plunge into the midst of a sentence and trust in God to pull us through.

Only in this way can an intelligent, spirited interesting flow of language be developed; for as the well-worn proverb "nothing venture, nothing have" applies here as elsewhere. Unless we break away from the fetters of a hackneyed worn-out vocabulary, and stilted ~~conversation~~ conventional sentences, we can never hope to become brilliant conversationists. sp.

a strange mixture

Begin without delay to give more attention to punctuation. Amplify that theme when you rewrite

SPECIMEN THEME 3. REWRITTEN VERSION

Conversation

The art of conversation is far more important than the art of writing, for the reason that we are apt to talk with some one many times oftener than we write a letter, or otherwise express our thoughts in writing.

We should therefore do everything in our power to develop our vocabulary, and to improve our style. For this purpose, let us not be afraid of using new words, merely because at the first attempt they sound a trifle forced; let us not be afraid of employing a spirited or even an audacious style of speech. But let us rather, like Patrick Henry, plunge into the midst of a sentence and trust in God to pull us through.

Only in this way can an intelligent, spirited, interesting, flow of language be developed; for here, as elsewhere, the well-worn proverb, "nothing venture, nothing have," may be advantageously applied. Unless we enlarge and improve our threadbare, and all too incomplete vocabulary, and change our stilted conventional sentences into something more fluent, we can never hope to become brilliant, or even interesting conversationalists.

Use fewer words.

A maple tree stands close by. Its foliage is green yellow and red. With every puff of wind the leaves rustle. Then some let go their slender hold, and down to the ground ~~the~~ come flitting where they dance around in little chorus bands happy that their days of a life well spent are almost over. Every night and every morning I see that the leaves on the tree grow fewer, that the green one are losing their emerald green hue to a greenish yellow, and that the yellow ones become still more yellow. As they turn from green to yellow their little stems lose their firm hold [they had] and when fully ripe drop. Soon all will be gone. The leaves of the trees show that winter is coming on and they form a blanket for the earth to cover the tender grass and roots beneath them from the cold snow.

R.
Too many "and's."

There were groups of fellows standing about in a circle. Every now and then the observer from his distant stand could see different members of the various groups gesticulate to each other; and they appeared to be explaining the attempt of some person to grasp a swinging body, that was suspended in the centre of the group on a rope. The observer drew nearer and he could hear the remarks and see the gesticulations which showed how this one should have done, and explained why that one had succeded or failed.

The observer had drawn his conclusions and made up his mind that the onlookers belonged to the varsity squad, but this illusion was soon dispelled. The cry of "Freshman squad this way!" drew nearly all the onlookers away, and the observer changed his conclusion as to how the foot-ball dummy should be tackled.

too impersonal.

p.

p + cap.

K.

SPECIMEN THEME 6

The selection from ~~Mr~~. Stevenson's book, describing his method of learning to write, emphasizes the fact that technique is the first thing to master. In this point he is sustained by nearly every author I have read, not merely in regard to literature but in every form of accomplishment. *Loose.*

After all, one man's writings are the composite photograph, as it were, of the scenes portrayed by other writers. *?*

The daily practi~~sing~~ce necessary to master the technique of any form of exercise ~~of the~~ mental or physical ~~faculties~~, is the worst kind of drudgery; to most people; but it is really the only way in which the thing can be accomplished. The saying, "Practise makes perfect," appears the more true, the more one thinks of it. In fact it is not only true but almost a self-evident truth. *R.* *V.* *Sp.?* *Order* *Fewer words.*

Stevenson showed his determination by keeping up his practise —. whether he liked or not, I do not know; "but one thing I do know," as the blind beggar said: That Stevenson accomplished his purpose. *Sp?* *Order.* *no cap*

INSTRUCTOR'S COMMENT: —

Connect your ideas better.

R. "as" as he thought it the best place for the study of Chemistry, which has always been my hobby. As I agreed
nina- with him there, and, as I before remarked, the University
abso- con- ction K. sity seeming to offer the best facilities and induce-
nsi- ments, I came to Harvard.

I have always been a great reader and used to like History especially, but since I began to study the latter, I sickened of it. Poetry was never my favorite and prose descriptions are very much of a bore to me. Physics and Mathematics have always appealed to me more or less, but Chemistry has been
p. my favorite study, and I thought once of studying
Sp. medecine, but decided I had not the time for it. English Literature and Rhetoric, I never cared for
p. particularly, because it was never made interesting
p. for me, but I always liked German and French, the only two languages besides English that I have studied.

p. My health has never been of the best, but I have
Sp. kept constantly in Gymnasium practise and have begun to feel the good effects of it. Wheeling has been my favorite exercise for years.

Congregationalism has been my religion since
p. youth, and I see no reason why I should change. I

have an abhorrence for all sorts of what appear K.
hypocritical forms and rites.

My friends have been comparatively few but most p.
of them have been true friends.

Now that I have seen a [redacted] College life I would not change it for any mercantile position.

INSTRUCTOR'S COMMENT: —

This is discreditable work. Your spelling is weak, your sentences are a mere slop of "and" and "but," and your paragraphs are bunches of words without any organic relation to the whole composition. The progress of the whole theme is careless and erratic.

You should be extremely careful in re-writing. Plan the entire theme beforehand, see that each part is in its proper place, and brace up your sentences. Punctuate.

specialty. Harvard offered the best advantages, so I started my final preparation. My father, who had never had a college education, and who had always been anxious for me to go to "College," particularly chose Harvard for the same reason that I did. Then again, he thought it would be better for me to study away from home as, if I went to Columbia or some other one nearer home, I would be very apt to neglect my studies, having numerous outside engagements. At a distant place like Harvard, on the contrary, one would be more likely to study more, there being nothing outside to draw him away.

no cap.

There was one mistake I made in coming to Harvard: I should have taken the entrance examinations a year before I did. I was better prepared at that time, but, of course, not being sure I was coming here, in fact, not knowing I was going to any college, I did not take any examinations. My methods of thinking had also been changed by the fact that I had been at work in a bank for six months before I came to Cambridge. It was harder, therefore, to get into the swing and routine of study again, than it would have been had I come directly from the High School where I prepared myself.

K.

A Day on Charles River

We started from Riverview, Waltham, early one morning last summer, to paddle as far up the river as we could and return that day. Our party consisted of only three, my sister, a friend of ours, and myself. I had never been in a canoe before, but as there were two to paddle, I only pushed straight ahead and let the other fellow steer. The day appeared as if it would be a perfect one, there were no clouds and just enough breeze to make things comfortable.

p. *x* *Condense to 4 words.*

Along the lower part of the river there was nothing new, but was just as I had often seen it. I soon got the 'hang' of paddling, and we made good time till we came near Newton Lower Falls. There the river was narrower and not so deep, so that the current was quite strong. A little further on the river divided. The branch to the right appeared the deeper, so we started up that one, but we had not gone far when the canoe rubbed on the bottom. We were, however, near enough to the island to step out on it. This was the begining of a long carry past two or three dams. ~~We~~ crossed the island and the other branch of the river, ~~and~~ were soon out on the highway. After a hard carry we at last reached the water and continued our way up the river. This

What was? *p.* *Vary your S.* *Sp.* *Vary S.* *p.*

part of the river was rather shallow and full of large rocks rising above the surface of the water.

Sp.! In a few minutes we were at Newton Uper Falls, where there were two dams. The short distance between them is, perhaps, the most beautiful part of ^ the river, though a great part ^ its beauty is due to the high arch of Echo Bridge. A mile or so beyond this, the river became broad and deep, and flowed through a wide tract of meadow. By this time it *p.* was noon, or at least time to eat something. Right opposite us on the shore there was a little hummock *p.* covered with pine trees. We made for that, and were soon comfortably seated under the trees eating potato-salad, sandwiches, and stuffed eggs.

After we had rested we started towards home. The return was a repetition of the journey up, ^ except *that* ^ the order of things was reversed. When we *Sp.* arrived at the uper falls we noticed a bluish haze on the western horizon, and by the time we reached the lower falls the sky was covered with great banks *Implied in "racing."* of clouds racing by (at a lively rate). We made the last and longest carry in a hurry, but in our haste we put the canoe in the river ~~before the water~~ *K.* was deep enough to float it when we were in it. By *p.* this time it had darkened, and the wind began to *R.* blow and tear through the trees as if (it was) trying to keep pace with the clouds above. After struggling *G.* and shoving for most five minutes we reached deeper

water. A little way ahead there was (there was) a x private boat-house which had a covered porch, and we made for that. Just before we reached the float there was a great flash of lightening, followed im- *Sp.* *p.* mediately by a sharp crack and then by a deep roll of thunder. This seemed to have shattered the clouds, for it began to pour as I never saw it pour *p.* before. When we recoverd *e* from the blow of the *Sp.* lightening we found the canoe was fast on a rock. *Sp.* My sister, who had been rather nervous during all this fun, now gave a groan, for she thought we were *p.* lost, but I thought it was great. A final shove sent *K.S.* the canoe off the rock and up to the float, so that we *p.* were soon under cover.

The down pour lasted for about half an hour, and *p.* then it settled into a steady rain. We waited over an hour to see if it would not stop, but as it did not, and as it was getting late, we decided to go on in *no cap.* the rain. We fellows took off our coats, Collars and ties, and caps so my sister could keep them dry with *K.* herself under all the pillows, shawls, and things we had. The rain kept up steadily, but it was warm and the canoe seemed to go easily through the darkness. We went thus for about four miles, but I am sure I enjoyed it as much, if not more, than the dry *G.* part of our journey.

There has been too much "and" and "but" all through your theme.

INSTRUCTOR'S COMMENT: —

For this time of year, such a piece of work as this, with such a variety of obvious mistakes, is very elementary. The grade is E.

SPECIMEN THEME 8. REWRITTEN VERSION

A Day on the Charles River

We started from Riverview, Waltham, early one morning last summer, to paddle as far up the river as we could and return that day. Our party consisted of only three, my sister, a friend of ours, and me. I had never been in a canoe before, but as there were two to paddle, I only pushed straight ahead and let the other fellow steer. The day promised to be perfect, there were no clouds and just enough breeze to make things comfortable.

Along the lower part of the river there was nothing new; it was just as I had often seen it. I soon got the 'hang' of paddling, and we made good time till we came near Newton Lower Falls. As the river was narrower and not so deep there, the current was quite strong. A little further on the river divided. We started up the branch to the right, since it seemed to be the deeper, but we had not gone far when the canoe rubbed on the bottom. We were, however, near enough to the island to step out on it. This was the beginning of a long carry past two or three dams. Crossing the island and the

other branch of the river, we were soon out on the highway. After a hard carry we at last reached the water and continued our way up the river. This part of the river was rather shallow, and full of large rocks rising above the surface of the water.

In a few minutes we were at Newton Upper Falls, where there were two dams. The short distance between them is, perhaps, the most beautiful part of the river, though a great part of its beauty is due to the high arch of Echo Bridge. A mile or so beyond this, the river became broad and deep, flowing through a wide tract of meadow. By this time it was noon, or at least time to eat something. Right opposite us on the shore there was a little hummock covered with pine trees. We made for that, and were soon comfortably seated under the trees eating potato-salad, sandwiches, and stuffed eggs.

After we had rested, we started towards home. The return was a repetition of the journey up, except that the order of things was reversed. When we arrived at the upper falls, we noticed a bluish haze on the western horizon, and by the time we reached the lower falls, the sky was covered with great banks of clouds blowing by at a lively rate. We made the last and longest carry in a hurry, but in our haste we put the canoe in the water before it was deep enough. By this time it had darkened, and the wind began to blow and tear through the trees as if trying to keep pace with the clouds above. After strug-

gling and shoving for almost five minutes, we reached deeper water. A little way ahead there was a private boat-house which had a covered porch, the only shelter in sight. Just before we reached the float there was a great flash of lightning, followed immediately by a sharp crack, and then by a deep roll of thunder. This seemed to have shattered the clouds, for it began to pour as I never saw it pour before. When we recovered from the blow of the lightning we found the canoe was fast on a rock. My sister, who had been rather nervous during all this fun, now gave a terrible groan, for she thought we were lost. A final shove sent the canoe off the rock and up to the float, so that we were soon under cover.

After the downpour had lasted for about half an hour, it settled into a steady rain. We waited over an hour to see if it would not stop, but as it did not, and as it was getting late, we decided to go on in the rain. We fellows gave our coats, collars and ties, and caps to my sister to keep dry with herself under all the pillows, shawls, and things we had. Although we had to go thus for about four miles through a steady rain, it was not cold, and the canoe seemed to go easily through the darkness. I am sure I enjoyed it as much as, if not more than, the dry part of our journey.

SPECIMEN THEME 9

THE SALZKAMMERGUT

~~The sight that greeted us~~ that July morning was very pleasant. Looking from our window I could see the sun ~~with all its rays~~ clearing the mist that hung over the hills. Overhead was the clear, blue sky, with a white, fleecy cloud rapidly scudding over it. The fresh, bracing air, the cheerful sun, the sweet-smelling grass heavy with dew, (all the splendours of the morning) tended to make everyone in our party feel happy. Even the bird singing on the tree, and the curly-headed shepherd boy slowly driving along his flocks, seemed to be suffused with the warmth and brightness of the sun on that day.

R. *R.* *Trite.* *Too much.* *p.* *p.* ? ?

As we stepped into our carriage and drove to the salt-mines we passed many fields with the fresh mown hay in large stacks, and in the gentle breeze the pleasant odor drifted upwards. The farmers drove past on their large, rumbling wagons bound for the market, which was already filled with a mass of venders disposing of their wares.

Quite a trick! *p.* *Trite.* *Pt. of view lost.*

At last we arrived at the mines and we soon had slipped on the rubber suits and caps they provide for you there, each with a lantern in his hand ready for the fray. A funny looking set we were. The ladies with large bloomers and bulky coats and the gentlemen looking just as awkward.

p. ? *K.* *p.* *Vb.*

Do not "pair off" your adjectives.

The guide now led the way into a narrow, dark tunnel. We walked a long distance until we came to a large open space. The air was biting and cold, the atmosphere was damp and heavy, and not a ray *R.* of light penetrated into the darkness except that which came from our flickering lanterns, but the excitement and interest drove away all feeling of *?* dumbness, depression, and cold. The walls of this *p.* large vault were white and looked like crystal. *Recast S.* This, was rock salt ~~and~~ the guide told us ~~that this~~ *p.* ~~was the salt~~ in the form in which the miners found it. *R.*

At the end of the vault was a thing they call a *p.* "Rutschbahn." This is simply a log, carefully planed and put on an incline at an angle of 45°. It *^* has ropes for people to hold on if necessary. The guide seats himself at the head and the party follows. Then they are pushed off and slide down the pole. *G. Sp.* I will never forget the senation of this mad ride. *x* The velocity is increased the nearer you get to the *p.* bottom, and though the whole thing only takes a few seconds it seems to ~~as if it~~ last~~ed~~ an hour. There *R.* we were sliding down a frail, thin piece of wood into *Trite.* a bottomless depth. My whole past life shot through my mind with lightning rapidity.

V. At the bottom of this "infernal machine" we came *p.* to a large salt lake; the sides of which are decorated *tense?* with innumerable lanterns. The air tastes salty down there, and everything is soaking wet. We stepped

into a boat and were rowed across. This lake is 100 *x* feet long and three feet deep. It is of pure salt water which comes from the mine. We next came *¶* to another "Rutschbahn." Descending this, we *p.* reached the place where the mine had been worked, for the stones are strewn about and huge piles of *tense.* rock nearly cover the place. In one corner stands a large square object made completely of salt from *V.* the mine, and bearing the inscription "Glück Aŭf," the miners' expression for "Good Luck." *p.*

Now another tunnel opened before us and we were on our way back. But we were to return in a *x* quicker way. Soon a little car appeared, having a bench in the middle, on which we all seated ourselves. Then we were pushed off, and since there was a down *R.* grade we went very fast. Before we knew it we had shot out of the tunnel into daylight again. I felt dazed and absolutly hot compared with my *Sp.* sensations in the tunnel. We then had our pictures *R. p.* taken in our miner's costumes and started homewards. We had seen much and whenever I look at our *p.* pictures of this trip I think of the magnitude of *Insincere in tone?* Nature's wonders and charms.

INSTRUCTOR'S COMMENT: —

You give one or two fairly good descriptive touches, but not enough in proportion to the chances you had. The sentences, though still weak, are slightly better. Your punctuation is, however, entirely inadequate, and your phrasing tends to be redundant.

Rewrite.

SPECIMEN THEME 9. REWRITTEN VERSION

THE SALZKAMMERGUT

Looking from our window, that July morning, I could see the sun clearing the mist that hung over the hills. Overhead was the clear, blue sky with a white cloud rapidly scudding over it. The fresh, bracing air, the cheerful sun, the sweet-smelling grass heavy with dew tended to make everyone in our party feel happy. Even the bird singing on the tree, and the curly-headed shepherd boy slowly driving along his flocks, seemed to be affected by the brightness of the sun on that day.

After stepping into our carriage we drove to the salt-mines, and on the way we passed many fields with the fresh mown hay in large stacks, and in the breeze the pleasant odor drifted upwards. At last we arrived at the mines, and we soon had slipped on the rubber suits and caps they provide. A funny looking set we were. The ladies were resplendent in large bloomers and bulky coats, and the gentlemen looked just as awkward.

The guide now led the way into a narrow tunnel. We walked a long distance until we came to a large

space. The air was biting and cold, the atmosphere was damp, and not a ray of light penetrated the darkness except that which came from our flickering lanterns; nevertheless the excitement and interest drove away all feeling of depression and cold. The walls of this large vault were white and looked like crystal. The guide told us that this was rock salt in the form in which the miners found it.

At the end of the vault was a thing they call a "Rutchbahn." This is simply a log carefully planed and put on an incline at an angle of 45°. It has ropes for people to hold on to if necessary. The guide seats himself at the head, and the party follows. Then they are pushed off and slide down the pole. I shall never forget the sensation of this mad ride. The velocity is increased the nearer one gets to the bottom, and though the whole thing takes only a few seconds, it seemed to last an hour. There we were sliding down a frail piece of wood into a bottomless depth.

At the bottom of this infernal machine we came to a large, salt lake, the sides of which were surrounded with innumerable lanterns. The air tastes salty down there, and everything is soaking wet. We stepped into a boat and were rowed across. This lake is one hundred feet long and three feet deep. It is of pure salt water which comes from the mine. We next came to another "Rutchbahn." Descending this, we reached the place where the mine had been worked,

for the stones were strewn about and huge piles of rock nearly covered the place. In one corner stood a large square block made completely of salt from the mine, and bearing the inscription, "Glück Aŭf," the miners' expression for "Good Luck." Now another tunnel opened before us, and we were on our way back. But we were to return with more speed. Soon a little car appeared, with a bench in the middle, on which we all seated ourselves. Before we knew it we had shot out of the tunnel into daylight again. I felt dazed and absolutely hot compared to my sensations in the tunnel. We then had our pictures taken in our miners' costume, and started homewards.

SPECIMEN THEME 10

A Morning in Tarrytown Harbor

"Get up, old man! it's four o'clock," was shouted *p.*
into my ear, and as I slowly opened my eyes, I saw our captain's face bending over me. At first I was half-dazed, and did not comprehend the meaning of his words. Suddenly, like a flash, and by the aid of another poke in my ribs, I realized that it was my watch, and scurried out to relieve the captain. *This puzzles one.*

After a few whispered instructions the captain retired to the cabin and left me to keep the lookout.

Although *it was* August, the air ~~was of that~~ damp, chilly *tr. R.*
~~kind which~~ penetrate*d* ~~one~~ *me* through and through. *Condense, and make it personal.*
A dense fog had settled all round us, and I could distinguish only those objects immediately near the boat.

It was desolately lonely and quiet; scarcely a *K.*
breeze stirred. In fact, the air was literally saturated *K.*
with a fishy smell which made the atmosphere almost stifling. Occasionally I heard the mournful howl of a dog, which was rendered all the more woeful and greatly magnified by the heavy atmosphere. And now, *p.*
wonders of all wonders! The captain was snoring.

p. It was no common snoring, either. He had a peculiar way of whistling whenever he exhaled, and at
Sp. each exhilation the tone was of a little higher pitch than the previous one — a sort of "music of the
p. spheres —"

Just as I was thinking of spheres a large fiery orb peeped up on the horizon. It grew larger and larger, and rose so quickly that it seemed as if I could see it move. The mist began to scatter before its warning rays as if by magic. Now the curtain of fog raised and revealed to me the beautiful valleys of Sleepy Hollow, with its fields of ripening grain. The heavy dew on the grain shone and glistened like
? diamonds. From a cottage near the shore rose small
Use ? curls of gray smoke which wafted away into oblivion, and there were signs of life and activity near by.

V. When I saw these men stirring about, I concluded it must be nearly breakfast time, and therefore pro-
R. ceeded to call the crew. After much yawning, and some "cussing," the other "Three men in a boat"
p. came out on deck, and helped in the preparations for breakfast. Our larder was so well filled with canned
Coherence. meats and preserves, cookies, bread, and, in fact, all the necessary food supplies, ~~so~~ that it was not much work to prepare a meal. For breakfast, however, we always made coffee, and now our troubles began. By some unknown accident the coffee-pot had fallen overboard the day before, and no doubt was now

being us d by the mermaids. But the genius of four yankee boys was equal to the occasion. We deter- Cap.
mined to have peaches for breakfast and use the empty can for a coffee-pot. Never was coffee more delicious.

While we were eating, a glorious breeze sprang up, and, moreover, it was down the river. The tide, also, was going out. Now for a sail! The waves danced round the boat; white-caps were seen on all Weak.
sides of us. Our nerves tingled with delight as we hurried about to make ready for the start. Hurrah! we're off! The sails catch the breeze, and the small Tense?
craft bounds over the waves as if she too were glad to be released from her moorings.

INSTRUCTOR'S COMMENT: —

This, as compared with your seventh theme, shows a gain. You understand better, apparently, the descriptive method. And yet, although pleasant and readable, this sketch is by no means as vividly distinct as you ought to make it. Rewrite, with a special effort to be more graphic, to suggest pictures more sharply.

SPECIMEN THEME 10. REWRITTEN VERSION

A Morning in Tarrytown Harbor

"Get up, old man! it's four o'clock," was spoken so close to my ear as to make it seem as though some one had shouted into it, and as I slowly opened my eyes, I saw our captain's face bending over me. At first I was half-dazed, and did not comprehend the meaning of his words. Suddenly, like a flash, and by the aid of another poke in my ribs, I realized that it was my watch, and scurried out to relieve the captain.

After a few whispered instructions the captain retired to the cabin, and left me to keep the lookout. Although it was August, the damp chilly air penetrated me through and through. A dense fog had settled all round us, and I could distinguish only those objects immediately near the boat. It was very lonely and quiet; hardly a breeze stirred. In fact, the air was filled with a fishy smell which made the atmosphere almost stifling. Occasionally I heard the mournful howl of a dog which was rendered all the more woeful and greatly magnified by the heavy atmosphere. And now, wonders of all wonders!

The captain was snoring. It was no common snoring, either. He had a peculiar way of whistling whenever he exhaled, and at each exhalation the tone was of a little higher pitch than the previous one — a sort of "music of the spheres."

Just as I was thinking of spheres a large, fiery orb peeped up on the horizon. It grew larger and larger, and rose so quickly that it seemed as if I could see it move. The mist began to scatter before its warning rays as if by magic. Now the curtain of fog raised and revealed to me the beautiful valleys of Sleepy Hollow, with its fields of ripening grain. The heavy dew on the grain shone and glistened in the morning sun. From a cottage near the shore rose small curls of gray smoke which were wafted away into oblivion, and there were signs of life and activity near by.

At the sight of this activity I concluded that it must be nearly breakfast time, and called the crew. After much yawning, and some "cussing," the other "Three men in a boat" came out on deck, and helped in the preparations for breakfast. Our larder was so well filled with canned meats and preserves, cookies, bread, and in fact, all the necessary food supplies, that it was not much work to prepare a meal. For breakfast, however, we always made coffee, and now our troubles began. By some unknown accident the coffee-pot had fallen overboard the day before, and no doubt was now being used by the mermaids. But

the genius of four Yankee boys was equal to the occasion. We determined to have peaches for breakfast and use the empty can for a coffee-pot. Never was coffee more delicious.

While we were eating, a glorious breeze sprang up, and, moreover, it was down the river. The tide, also, was going out. Now for a sail! The waves danced round the boat; white-caps were omnipresent. Our nerves tingled with delight as we hurried about to make ready for the start. Hurrah! we're off! The sails caught the breeze, and the small craft bounded over the waves as if she too were glad to be released from her moorings.

SPECIMEN THEME 11

THE MONASTERY OF SAINT VINCENT

As I emerged from the cool, dense woods, through which the road to the Monastery of Saint Vincent led me, the burning rays of a midsummer sun fell unmercifully upon me (, in marked contrast with the delightful coolness which I had just left behind.) Before me rose a long, steep hill, beyond which, outlined against the clear, blue sky, the spires of the monastery chapel were just visible. Pausing occasionally to wipe the perspiration from my brow, I slowly ascended the hill. A stone's throw from the top I saw the high, gray wall which enclosed the Benedictine estate. The road turned sharply to the right, and ran along past the huge iron gates. I could not help thinking, as I entered, how many men, wearied by the cares and vexations of the world, had passed through those gates into a life which they could henceforth never leave.

R. & conventional. See above.

Contradictory.

?

Why need you have tried to help it?

The monastery buildings, although ~~were~~ clustered on the top of a low hill; ~~but~~ were surrounded by so many trees that I could only see parts of them. I fol-

tr.

lowed a winding path, lined on both sides with rows of tall horse-chestnut trees, which afforded me welcome relief from the heat of the sun. Suddenly the tolling of a bell broke upon the death-like stillness of the air. A few minutes afterwards I heard an indistinct humming, which gradually became so clear that I was able to recognize the voices of men chanting. Through the trees at the left I saw, within a white picket-fence, the plain, gray crosses of the monastery cemetery. A procession of monks was just entering the cemetery. At their head four of the brothers carried a black, wooden coffin. I saw at once the meaning of the tolling of the bell and the chanting of the priests. The bier, with its following of black-gowned monks, formed too gloomy and mournful a picture for me to look at; so I quickened my steps, and soon had the satisfaction of seeing the crumbling brick walls of the principal building a few steps in front of me. It was a large, oblong-~~shaped~~ structure, three stories high. Within that building, as I afterwards found out, were recitation and living rooms for about a hundred students of the Saint Vincent's College Preparatory School, and also for some fifty or more candidates for the priesthood, and, in addition, rooms for over four hundred lay-brothers and forty priests of the Order of Saint Benedict.

Trite. *Ease?* *Ease?* *Is this probable?* *R.* ^

I ascended a flight of stone steps, and entered the office, where I asked a monk if I might see a certain

friend who was a student in the school. The monk took me to a reception room, departed with my card, and, in a few minutes my friend appeared. After a short chat, my friend took me around the estate.

Consts.?

We first visited the chapel, which stood at the right of the main building, and was much larger than I had at first supposed. My friend informed me that the building of the chapel was the exclusive work of the brothers. Even the brick~~, with which it was constructed,~~ was the product of the monastery brick-kiln. Though, at that time, the chapel was still unfinished, it was, however, an imposing structure. Four spires were in process of erection, and massive, bronze doors were being hung. Otherwise the exterior work was complete.

Means? *R.* *R.* *Not properly related.*

In strange contrast with this beautiful building, was the commonplace, ivy-covered gymnasium building, which stood a short distance back of it. To the left of this, stood the picturesque old chapel, in which several generations of priests had celebrated mass. The belfry of this chapel contained the monastery bell.

Wk. & trite.

My friend next conducted me to a slightly elevated piece of ground behind the gymnasium building, from which I got a full view of the farm. This farm has the reputation of being the largest and finest piece of private property in Pennsylvania. Before me lay acres and acres of fast ripening corn, wheat, barley, potatoes, and other farm produce. Many

monks were working in these fields. Along the
Sp. banks of a small stream, which zigzaged through a
R. sunny meadow, a large herd of cows could be seen grazing.

I saw near by a brown wooden building, which my friend informed me was the mill where the monks ground their grain. Farther to the left, within a small brick building, from the chimney of which a dense cloud of smoke was issuing, a dozen brothers were brewing the famous Saint Vincent's beer, which is known all over the world. Near this building I saw the ice-houses and a large pond. The whole expanse of land formed one great valley, bounded, far in the distance, by a continuous ridge of hills,
? which was surmounted by the monastery walls. As I gazed upon that scene, I thought I had never seen anything like it before. I should have willingly looked longer upon it, but it was growing late, and the time of my departure was fast approaching.

My friend and I now walked around to the left side of the main building. On slowly descending ground the monks had laid out beautiful flower beds, which were one continuous extent of red, pink, blue, and white ~~colors.~~ A large orchard almost filled the
R. valley below. At the edge of this orchard was a hennery, from which old hens, with their broods of young chickens, went clucking and scratching for worms among the flowers and around the foot of
Abrupt. fruit trees. I had but a few minutes to enjoy this view.

Finding out from my time-table that the next train for Pittsburg would leave Beatty Station in half an hour, I took a reluctant leave of my friend, who directed me to a shorter road to the station than the one by which I had come, and was soon on my way Csts. ? back to the "Smoky City."

During the course of the afternoon, my friend had given me much information about the history of the monastery and other interesting facts. He told me that the monastery was the general headquarters of the Benedictine Order of monks in America. If a church of that order needed a priest, the Abbot of Saint Vincent's sent one. During the early part of the eighteenth century, an abbot and two lay-brothers of the order had come to America, by direction of the pope, and had found the monastery in what was Sp. then an unhabited section of Pennsylvania. Since Sp. that time, the American branch of the Order of Saint Benedict has rapidly grown in wealth and prosperity, until it has become one of the leading orders of priests in this country.

INSTRUCTOR'S COMMENT: —

The chief fault with this description is the prevalence of "I." Instead of saying "I saw," "I gazed at," and the like, put before us the objects themselves, animated by the right verbs. Your sentences are too much alike.

Rewrite in a less inert form.

SPECIMEN THEME 11. REWRITTEN VERSION

The Monastery of Saint Vincent

As I emerged from the cool, dense woods, through which the road to the monastery of Saint Vincent led me, the burning rays of a midsummer sun fell unmercifully upon me. Before me rose a long steep hill, beyond which, outlined against the clear, blue sky, the spires of the monastery chapel were visible. Pausing occasionally to mop my forehead, I slowly ascended the hill. A stone's throw from the top I saw the high, gray wall which enclosed the Benedictine estate. The road turned sharply to the right, and ran along past the huge iron gates. As I entered, I thought involuntarily how many men, wearied by the cares and vexations of the world, had passed through those gates into a life which they could henceforth never leave.

The monastery buildings, although clustered on the top of a low hill, were surrounded by so many trees that I could see only parts of them. I followed a winding path, lined on both sides with rows of tall horse-chestnut trees, which afforded me welcome relief from the heat of the sun.

I soon had the satisfaction of seeing the old brick walls of the principal building a few steps in front of me. It was a large, oblong structure, three stories high. Within that building, as I afterwards found out, were recitation and living-rooms for about a hundred students of the Saint Vincent's College Preparatory School, some fifty or more candidates for the priesthood, and over four hundred lay-brothers, and forty priests of the Order of Saint Benedict.

I ascended a flight of stone steps, and entered the office, where I asked a monk if I might see a certain friend, a student in the school. The monk took me to a reception room and departed with my card. In a few minutes my friend appeared. After a short chat, my friend took me round the estate.

We first visited the chapel, which stands at the right of the main building, and proved to be much larger than I had at first supposed. Though, with four spires in process of erection, and massive bronze doors being hung, it was as yet unfinished, it was a very imposing structure. The building had been erected exclusively by the brothers. Even the brick was the product of the monastery brick-kiln.

In strange contrast with this beautiful structure was the commonplace, ivy-covered gymnasium building, a short distance back of it. In the old chapel, to the left of this, several generations of priests had celebrated mass. In the belfry hung the monastery bell.

My friend next conducted me to a slightly elevated piece of ground behind the gymnasium, from which I got a full view of the farm. This farm has the reputation of being the largest and finest piece of private property in Pennsylvania. Before me lay acres and acres of fast ripening corn, wheat, barley, potatoes, and other farm produce. Many monks were working in these fields. Along the banks of a small stream a large herd of cows grazed quietly.

Near by stood the brown mill where the monks ground their grain. Farther to the left, within a small brick building, from the chimney of which a dense cloud of smoke was issuing, a dozen brothers were brewing the famous Saint Vincent beer, which is known all over the world. Near this building were the ice-houses and a large pond. The whole expanse of land formed one great valley, bounded, far in the distance, by a continuous ridge of hills, along the summits of which ran the monastery walls.

My friend and I now walked round to the left of the main building. On slowly descending ground the monks had laid out beautiful flower-beds, which were one mass of red, pink, blue, and white. A large orchard almost filled the valley below. At the edge of this orchard was a hennery, from which old hens, with their broods of young chickens, went clucking and scratching for worms among the flowers and round the foot of fruit trees.

Finding out from my time-table that the next train

for Pittsburg would leave Beatty Station in half an hour, I took a reluctant leave of my friend, who directed me to a shorter road to the station than the one by which I had come. I was soon on my way back to the "Smoky City."

SPECIMEN THEME 12

A Bit of Real Farm Life

p.? Not far from a large manufacturing city of New
p. Hampshire, bordering on the Merrimac River lies the
K. R. quaint town of Bedford. This town, like all New Hampshire towns, is divided up into districts, each with its own schoolhouse, usually placed near one of the main roads. I was fortunate enough to have the
Sp. opportunity of attending one of these shools, during
Grammar. the spring term. Never will I forget the impression that school made on me.

Right word? K. Early one Monday morning I took my seat or rather bench with the rest of the scholars, and listened to a rather stern lecture from the teacher about good behavior. Glancing around the room, I beheld some twenty boys and girls, varying in age from six
Can you not make a better sentence of this? to sixteen years. All were barefooted, the girls wearing neat little frocks and the boys overalls. One little girl wore her hair in a knot at the top of her head, as the day was very warm. Her sharp, homely features gave her the appearance of a dried up, old lady. Doubtless this poor little creature was obliged to wash the dishes, mend stockings, cook,

and help in the hayfield, although she could not have been more than twelve years old. At the close of school for the day, her father came to take her home in an ancient concord wagon, which had never seen water except as it fell from the sky. The horse suffered from a similar neglect, but looked well fed. Roughly dressed, and extremely uncouth in appearance, the father showed more tenderness in lifting his daughter into the wagon than many better educated men would have shown. Slowly gathering up *p.* the reins, the farmer drove home to a little red farmhouse, with its numerous out-buildings.

Examine this ¶, and see whether you think it a unit.

The setting sun cast a red glow of warmth about the old homestead, making the holly-hocks in the front garden look more brilliant than usual. In the barn-yard, the hens were eagerly gulping down their evening meal. Down the lane from the pasture came the cows, their distended udders looking like toy balloons. How peaceful and contented they looked as they entered the "tie-up"; far indeed are they from the maddening crowd's ignoble sway. From the farm-house could be heard the good wife singing as she prepared the evening meal. As it grew dusk, the whippoor-wills began their plaintive calls to one another, like the angelus sounding the hour of rest. Everywhere the heavy, night air seemed laden with the smell of new mown hay. The moon came up, flooding the fields with its silvery light, transforming night into a fairy-like day. All was still save for

This is a rather feminine formula.
p.
Quotation?
Too "literary."

the distant bark of a fox or the cackling of the hens disturbed by some prowling animal.

Many such a night have I spent in that quaint, old town of Bedford, unable to sleep from pure joy at seeing nature thus in her most beautiful phase. My heart would almost burst with a feeling of gladness, and often tears would spring into my eyes. The thought of the weary, drudging life that goes on daily amid such beautiful surroundings is like a pathetic song. The little school-girl and her father never fully realize the sublimity, the grandeur of their home in Nature's favorite haunt.

Stiff.

p.

INSTRUCTOR'S COMMENT: —

An encouraging piece of work. Your choice of details is well made, and for the most part shows an understanding of the descriptive method. The passage about the farmer's wagon is a bit of shrewd observation, shrewdly expressed.

In several places your phrasing appears rather old-fashioned. Revise.