

called reading and appreciation of literature. For more than mere mastery of the words and sentences is required for real literary experience; one must bring all his past experience to bear. This greater good it is our business to secure to pupils in the greatest possible measure. For this, we can easily demonstrate to our own full satisfaction, far more is accomplished by a half-hour of whole-hearted living among worth-while experience in books than by weeks of formal meeting of reading requirements and study of notes and other apparatus.

In discussing the actual business of teaching interpretation and comprehension of what is read, therefore, we need to make fundamental a distinction between two major divisions of the problem:

1. *Reading Ability*

The mechanics or technique that is essential to understanding what printed matter means and getting its sense; and

2. *Enjoyment of Literature*

Realization and interpretation of literature, which requires having experience and bringing it to bear, by reconstructing and recombining, for gaining more experiences.

The chief purpose of this differentiation is to effect a separation between the gaining of necessary mechanical skills—in word-study and reference work and the like—and the more genial and joyful living in and enjoyment of life in books, where one is beyond the chill reach of technical requirements. Once one has gained the necessary skills and made them automatic, he is free to gain wide and deep realization from literature with no halt through the difficulties of reading technique.

STERLING A. LEONARD

The greatest single causation of retardation is irregular attendance; the greatest causation of irregular attendance is the withdrawal of children to work upon the farm.—*School Life.*

II

SOME NEW KEYS TO THE KING'S GARDEN

The wide experimentation in the physiology and psychology of reading during recent years, with the resulting body of theories, is causing a marked restatement of aims in this, the most important of all elementary school subjects. This in turn is demanding advancement in practise, both in methods of teaching reading and in the texts used. As a consequence many new texts are appearing on the market. In looking them over, we naturally try to formulate a set of standards, a sort of measuring stick, to judge them by. First, we are concerned as to the hygienic considerations. Does the book satisfy the requirements in mechanical construction, in size of type, length of line, and quality of paper? Second, we look at the content, or material. Is it intrinsically worth while? Does it meet the child's needs in literature at that particular period of his development? Does it give him valuable or interesting information? Is it sufficiently new in reading texts to warrant its use? Are the selections arranged in a series of topics, and are they sufficiently long in the upper grades to stimulate the child to read the book from which they are taken? Third, we want to know that the author has not only thoroughly assimilated the best contemporary thought on reading, but also that he has arranged a set of materials which will facilitate getting the desired results, and has carefully outlined a set of helps for the teacher so constructive that they will stimulate her into growth. The preparation of such a series of texts with the accompanying manual is not only of educational value; it has a deep social significance. For the whole problem of an educated citizenship is bound up in the ability to develop power through rapid acquisition of world experience, that is, ability to study, or read silently. There has been too little realization of this fact; we have too long left our children to struggle alone for entrance into the king's garden instead of proffering them the key.

The *Chadsey-Spain Readers*¹ for the junior high school are an attempt to meet these requirements. The editors assert that a reader for these grades is necessary and preferable to "classics" as the basis of the work in reading. They state that in order to meet the standards in silent reading the material used must be of interest to children at this period, and that for the most part selections must be within their intellectual comprehension. They have been particularly successful here; there are stories of animals, of travel and adventure, historical tales, with a goodly representation of the classic. The authors have desired to further good citizenship and are conversant with the laws of moral growth. The selections for this purpose are scattered through the books so as not to advertise their aim, and they are worth while for their style and gripping interest for the adolescent, aside from their patriotic bearing. In the main the selections in these readers are of medium length. They are not grouped. Unless the teacher is skillful they are not apt to result in the child's reading the entire book from which they are taken. Sometimes there are short prefatory notes, and a few thought questions are appended. There is a glossary at the close of each book. No teacher's manual has been provided.

The books are well bound, but in an objectionable, easily-soiled light gray. The type barely meets the requirements for adult readers and the lines are far in excess of the generally prescribed 90 mm. The illustrations are good and contribute to the interpretation of the subject matter.

Aside from interesting content, these books offer no contribution to the problem of reading in the junior high school. They are adapted for use as a basal reader, or as a supplementary series for those who still want their supplementary reading matter in a reader.

¹ *Chadsey-Spain Readers*, by Chas. E. Chadsey, Dean of the College of Education, University of Illinois, and Chas. L. Spain, Deputy Superintendent of Schools, Detroit. New York: Century Company, 1920. Seventh Reader. 357 pages. (\$1.00.) Eighth Reader. 389 pages. (\$1.05.)

The title of *The Everyday Classics*² series suggests its purpose, the selection and arrangement of the best in the world's heritage of classical literature for use as a basal reader. The authors state that the supplying of a common store of knowledge and folk-thought to the children of a nation has much to do with its unification—thus they see a distinctly social purpose in their work. The series naturally falls into two groups, the readers for grades three to six—no attempt to contribute to the problem of primary reading is made—and those for the junior high school. The material in the books for the grades is well chosen, is quite varied in its appeal, is grouped, even in the third reader, and is well graded. Very early in the series we find thought questions, and suggested comparisons with other related bits of literature both from earlier readers in this series and from other books. In this and other ways much help in guiding the child's wider reading is given.

The early books contain a pronouncing vocabulary at the close of each lesson. Gradually, however, the child is led by a series of carefully planned exercises in word study to go to the glossary at the close of each book for such help. The books contain valuable suggestions for studying each selection.

Throughout, there are numerous selections designed to give information about and love for America. These are wisely chosen and will prove of great value in our national task of encouraging good citizenship.

The seventh and eighth year books are quite different in aim and consequently in content. The seventh year book treats of American life and ideals. The material in the main is entitled to the term classic, but one wonders why this concentrated attempt to teach Americanism in one year, and why

² *Everyday Classics*, by Franklin T. Baker, Professor of the Teaching of English in Teachers College, and Supervisor of English in the Horace Mann School, and Ashley H. Thorndike, Professor of English in Columbia University. New York: Macmillan, 1917, 1919. Third Reader. 272 pages. (72 cents.) Fourth Reader. 352 pages, (80 cents.) Fifth Reader. 384 pages. (84 cents.) Sixth Reader. 416 pages. (88 cents.) Seventh Reader. 424 pages. (96 cents.) Eighth Reader. 415 pages. (96 cents.) Teacher's Manual for grades 3 and 4. (50 cents.) Teacher's Manual for grades 5 and 6. (50 cents.) Teacher's Manual for grades 7 and 8. (60 cents.)

none but American selections should have been chosen for the inculcation of love for country and community. The eighth year book has as its purpose an introduction to literature and also attempts to bridge the gap usually occurring between the "grade" reading and high school literature. The stories and poems used in these two readers are in the main of medium length; but many of them are literary wholes, and they are well chosen. The helps to study are carefully planned and should prove invaluable. The manual is really a good treatise on literature for children at this period. It should encourage the teacher to gather the books from which the selections in the readers are made into her school library and enable her to lead the children to read them.

The books are well bound and attractive looking. The type is good and the lines conform very nearly to the 90 mm. length throughout the series. It is refreshing to see the junior high school child's eyes conserved in this way.

As a basal series these books are unusually good. They are equally well suited for supplementary use, provided the material is not a duplication of that in the series already in use.

*The Winston Readers*³ consist of a primer and five readers. The method used in beginning reading is in line with the thought of prominent educators. It is thoroughly synthetic: the child hears a story, retells it, dramatizes it, reads sentences from it, is given practise in the recognition of words and word-groups from these sentences, and finally in the analysis of individual words into sound elements. All new words are presented in word-groups or sentences. The method uses stories of intrinsic interest from the very first; the child never reads disjointed sentences for the sake of phonetics or word study. In connection with this reading for

content there is a carefully planned parallel course in phonetics designed to give the child independence in word synthesis by the end of the second year. The blackboard work in preparation for the primer is definitely worked out, and is good. The child begins to read print, but script is introduced later on in the year. There are review lessons provided, always related stories. These are for blackboard work. Silent reading lessons are introduced into the primer and some very clever schemes for them are illustrated. The method takes a sane constructive attitude toward expression in oral reading. The manual for the primer is interleaved with the pages of the primer; in other words, the teacher's edition of the primer contains on parallel pages specific directions for teaching each lesson. This manual is very complete, it is up-to-date, it is well graded, it provides suggestions for the phonics as well as the reading, and it gives possible correlations with the reading. A thoughtful touch is the leaving of quarter-pages occasionally for teacher's memoranda. The beginning teacher could not go wrong by literally following the directions in this manual. This does not mean that there is not plenty of room left for initiative on the part of the able teacher. The manual for the first reader is separate.

The publishers offer a complete set of helps, word cards, charts, seat work, etc. This is reproduced in the back of the primer manual so that any teacher who prefers can copy it for herself.

The books are well graded, the beginning of each is simpler than the close of the preceding one. The material is well chosen, and in the beginning books is, on the whole, fresh. It is of varied interest throughout the series. The stories are not grouped, but large units of subject matter are introduced as early as the second reader.

The readers are good mechanically, being well bound, of good paper and type. The lines above the first reader conform very nearly to the desired 90 mm. In the primer and first reader the idea of reading by word-groups is carried over into the length of the lines, the general idea being to have at the first one word-group per line. Later two or more word-groups are used, but care is taken that no word-groups shall be separated at the end of the line. This makes

³ *The Winston Readers*, Sidney G. Firman. Superintendent of Schools, Glen Ridge, N. J., and Ethel H. Maltby, of Corning, N. Y. Illustrated by Frederick Richardson. Philadelphia: John C. Winston Co. 1918. First Reader. 125 pages. (60 cents.) Second Reader. 275 pages. (66 cents.) Third Reader. 252 pages. (72 cents.) Fourth Reader. 306 pages. (80 cents.) Fifth Reader. 348 pages. (88 cents.) Primer Manual. 131 pages. (96 cents.)

for much shorter lines than usual. An experimental study showing the effect of this arrangement upon speed in silent reading and expression in oral reading is needed.

The illustrations are inimitable, especially in the early books. They are well placed, and will create a desire to read the story.

These readers are well adapted for use as a basal series. The method of initiating beginners into the magic art of getting thought from the printed page is quite superior, and the first books of the series are equally suited for use as basal or supplementary readers. The later books make no new contribution to the teaching of silent reading in the middle grades, except in supplying good material. In the fourth and fifth years this is largely the traditional material for these grades; so these two books are not so well suited for supplementary use as the earlier ones. The manual for the first year is of such decided constructive value that no teacher or student of primary reading can afford not to give it careful attention.

*The Boys' and Girls' Readers*⁴ are mechanically almost perfect. They are substantially and charmingly bound, the paper is good, and the type meets all requirements—as does the length of line. The material is eclectic in its wide appeal, is of intrinsic worth, is different from the traditional school reader content, and is arranged into related topics. The poetry is selected with rare feeling and a delicate understanding of the child, especially the boy. Suitable stories of adventure, of travel of industry, and of animals are included. The author has never forgotten that these readers are for future Americans and that love for our country should be fostered. In the introduction the author has suggested another topical arrangement on a seasonal basis and has listed selections for different holidays. The helps to study are splendid and will result in improvement in history, geography, etc., as well as in reading. Careful thought questions are given, and graded exercises in word study are provided. Rapid reference reading is stressed as well as in-

terpretative reading, and an introduction to newspaper reading is included.

The teacher's manual is separate, one volume for the three years. It is constructive and will develop the teacher's initiative. In addition to a full treatment of each selection, it gives a most valuable digest of the pertinent facts in the modern science of reading, with applications to the upper and grammar grades. It gives the aims of reading as outlined by the best authorities in the country, and definite suggestions for accomplishing them. It treats of reading tests and provides material for speed tests, with complete instructions for giving them. The treatment of expression in oral reading is sane and will lead to good results, while the directions for silent reading should lead to the formation of good study habits on the part of the children. Dramatization, the writing of little plays, oral composition, school programs, and reading clubs within the grade are instances of suggestions for those who will wish to teach reading by projects. The teacher's bibliography is complete.

One need only note the authorities quoted by Miss Bolenius to feel that she has thoroughly grasped the best thought in her field. He needs only examine this manual and set of readers to be convinced that she has gone far in the application of this thought to practise in the teaching of reading, and that she has provided an unusually suitable body of material for use in the class room. In fact, these books fill a long-felt want. They meet all requirements for a basal series, but are equally good as supplementary readers. The series including the manual should be given careful study by every forward looking teacher and educator. The teacher in the middle grades and in the junior high school who feels her children's inability to study, and who is student enough to realize that it is due to their lack of training in silent reading, will be stimulated into a real constructive study of the problem. If she cannot introduce the readers into her work she can easily adapt the method for use with her adopted set of books. She can, in fact, hardly read this manual without being inspired to better prepare herself for participation in this unparalleled opportunity, the guiding of the thought of a future generation of Americans by teaching them how and what to read.

KATHERINE M. ANTHONY

⁴ *The Boys' and Girls' Reader*. Emma Miller Bolenius. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1919 Fourth reader. 276 pages. (72 cents.) Fifth Reader. 308 pages. (76 cents.) Sixth Reader. 340 pages. (80 cents.) Teacher's Manual. 229 pages. (80 cents.)