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## English is the Most Important Study.

Syllables govern the world, said Selden, and Noah Webster said, Language, as well as speech, was the immediate gift of God.

In my report to the Board of Trustees of the Normal College for the year 1900, the following sentence appeared: The most important department of study is the English which should be a common centre for all the other departments.

Studies may be divided into three classes, those that are indispensable for the development and cultivation of the mind; those that are practical and useful in the affairs of life; and those that are mainly ornamental. In the first class are English literature (with its concomitants grammar, composition and rhetoric,) pure mathematics and mental and moral science; in the second class are chemistry, physics, geology and biology, and in the third class are the fine arts, music, drawing, painting and sculpture.

History, which is "philosophy teaching by example," might be placed in a class by itself; or it may be termed the twin sister of literature. When properly taught and thoroughly studied, its importance cannot be overestimated.

Translation of dead or living languages best cultivate the judgment, the most useful of the mental faculties; and, no matter how high the scholarship, without judgment the individual may become an intellectual failure.

The young man after graduation from college goes forth into the world to seek employment. His degree is proof sufficient of his education, but that is not enough; he must undergo a peculiar and indefinite examination, totally different from that of the schools, before he will receive an appointment. His dress will be inspected, his address carefully noted, his tone of voice closely observed and his choice of words weighed and considered.

His highest rating will be for correct English speech; and yet if deficient in mathematics, his language may reveal incorrect reasoning or unsound judgment. Every person, everywhere is measured by his English, by what Swift terms as the best definition of a true style, "Proper words in proper places."

As a rule the great statesmen of England and America won exalted position and world-wide fame by means of their pure classical English. This power was not obtained by nibbling at many bits of sciences and arts, but by concentrating their faculties on Latin, Greek, English and pure mathematics. These men became strong by struggling with difficulties. Of course there are enough exceptions to prove the truth of the rule.

The demand for college bred men as teachers in all institutions of learning is rapidly increasing. The great positions in government are being gradually filled by men whose minds have been trained by a regular college education and if they excel in English their success is secured.

The tongue is the working tool of the teacher, and that tool must be an excellent one in order to produce superior results. Some writer has said that "The living voice teaches better than books." But the voice to be alive must have a heart below it, and must possess, too, what is called magnetism. Aaron had the voice but Moses had the magnetism. The greatest of all teachers taught not with books but with his living voice. "His disciples came unto him; and he opened his mouth and taught them saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Books are good aids when properly used but the voice of the great and wise teacher is the voice of God.

Thomas Hunter,  
President Emeritus,  
Normal College.