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Armstrong Manual Training School Yearbook, 1902-1903

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ENGLISH

[[image - black & white photograph]]
MISS EMILY A. HARPER
HEAD-TEACHER OF ENGLISH AND HISTORY

"Histories make men wise; poets, witty; * * * logic and rhetoric, able to contend."

[[line]]

An attempt has been made in arranging the English course to incorporate in the High School work some of the excellent features of the grades. An examination of the course of study and methods of teaching used in graded schools will reveal a system of correlation of studies which is undoubtedly beneficial. There one instructor teaches many subjects. The result is that he knows each pupil's weak points. This is as of especial advantage in English, for the pupil who is deficient in Grammar receives constant drill in this subjecting his other classes. Even the Arithmetic lesson affords an opportunity to impress upon the mind the value of the agreement of the subject and the verb. Much has been written about correlation of studies. By some special teachers it is regarded merely as one of the fads with which our modern educational system is cursed. Carried to the extreme, it does result in every teacher's attempting to teach every other teacher's subject as well as his own. This would be indeed a Herculean task.

However, in the High School work no less than in the grades there is a harmony in studies, and the English course has been planned so as to bring into close relation other subjects taught in the school by basing written work largely upon the pupil's experience. We have deliberately adopted the much talk of correlation idea by combining three subjects usually taught separately. Composition, Literature, and History. It needs but an enumeration of these subjects to see this intimate relationship. Nevertheless it may be interesting to note the arrangement of our course as to bring this happy combination.

United States History and History of American Literature are studied the first year together with selections from representative American authors. The composition work based upon texts read, as well as upon pupil's experience, embraces Narration, Description, and Exposition. The plan for the second year is similar to that of the first, English History and Literature being substituted for the American authors and history. The compositions work is Argumentation. In the third and fourth years the plan is somewhat modified by reading such classics as are required for college entrance examinations and admission to the Normal School for which the four-year courses prepare the pupil. But believing that best teaching is that in which precept and example are combined, these are so arranged as to harmonize with the composition work. The pupil has before him specimens of classic English and is trained to test their excellence by applying the laws of composition he has learned. Thus his mental grasp upon these principles is strengthened and his power of appreciation is developed. As in the first two years, power of thought and facility of expression are acquired by written work based upon what pupils see and

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think and do as well as upon the text books read. Modern European



History is studied in the third year and Ancient History in the fourth. This, in general, is the course of study. A few changes are made to adapt to the needs of various classes of pupils. Pupils are made to adapt it to the needs of various classes of pupils. Pupils taking the Business and the two year Manual Training Course devote one quarter in each year to business letter-writing.

Throughout the course, care is taken not to carry the extreme the analysis of beautiful selections so that the reading of an English classic becomes a hated task rather than a pleasure. As the purpose of literature is to please, so it is the duty of the English teacher to that pupils enjoy and love the works of the great masters.

Effort has been made to find material that would illumine the historical period studied, and while not too difficult for the pupil's comprehension, would yet present stimuli to the growth of his vocabulary, as well as illustrate the principles of composition taught.

Language sense, or power to recognize the quality of language, is developed by the study of the classics. Pupils compare passages which they enjoy or recognize as beautiful with the work of inferior authors or with their own. Thus the power of selection is developed and unconsciously the pupil's expression is improved.

In written work accuracy is insisted upon. Since the purpose of all language is to convey thought, clearness and exactness are essential. But the mechanical as well as the art side receives attention. The applicant for a position in the business world can give no greater recommendation than a neatly written letter.

When all is said, writing is but slow talking. Our work would indeed be in vain if pupils were not carefully trained in oral expression. To express one's self well when on one's feet should be the goal of one's ambition. While the general class-room work is excellent training in this, nothing has been of greater value than the second year's work in Argumentation.

[[image - black & white photograph]]
MISS IDA A. GIBBS
TEACHER OF ENGLISH AND HISTORY

"Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man."

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