

GREEK AND ENGLISH DIALOGUES FOR USE IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
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PREFACE.

When I had the honour — now about thirty years ago — of being appointed to the Chair of Humanity in the University of Aberdeen, a city then, and still, famous for the excellency of its Latin scholarship, I had not been many weeks employed in the discharge of my new functions when I became aware of certain very glaring perversities and absurdities which had grown up, like tares among the wheat, in connexion with an otherwise admirable system of training. Of these perversities the following were the most prominent. In the first place, the young Latinists had been taught, with a great amount of labour, a system of rules about the pronunciation of words to which they systematically gave the lie whenever they opened their mouths. One of these rules, for instance, I recollect, commenced thus — for they were in Latin — "*os produc*" — which was meant to inculcate the doctrine that in the Latin language, when a word ends with the syllable *os*, the vowel in that syllable, like a long note in music, is pronounced with a prolongation of the voice, as when we say in English the *Pōpe*, and not the *Pōpp*, *hōpe*, and not *hōp*. But in the face of this rule, which has no sense at all except as regulating pronunciation, they never made any distinction in reading betwixt *ōs*, the mouth, which follows the rule, and *ōs* (according to English orthography *oss*), a bone, which is an exception. And in perfect consistency with this glaring inconsistency, they dealt with their rules for final syllables through the whole long weary catalogue, pronouncing *longōs* as if it had been written in English *longōss*, which is not a whit less ridiculous than if an Englishman were to talk of having the *gut in his toss*, instead of the *gout in his toes*. The next thing I noticed in the linguistic habit of the Aberdeen Latinists was, that whenever I addressed to them, in the way of conversation, the shortest sentence in the language which they professed to understand, they looked very much surprised ; a peculiarity which indicated certainly that the colloquial method, which I had taught myself, and which was largely practised by Erasmus, Amos Comenius, and other distinguished scholars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries all over Europe, and is still, to a considerable extent, practised on the Continent, had, in Aberdeen at least, fallen altogether into disuse. And not only had the colloquial element in language been neglected, but there were no signs whatever of a living appeal from the tongue of the teacher to the ear of the taught having played any part in the course of scholastic indoctrination, to which the young men had been subjected ; and this appeared the more strange as the laws of the Northern University were regularly written and read out in Latin, and discourses in that language delivered constantly by the students of theology in the Divinity Hall. Closely connected with these three perversities, and springing manifestly from the same root, was the extreme narrowness of the vocabulary of which these young gentlemen, so nicely drilled in curious syntactic rules, had been made masters. It was plain their memory had been well packed, or at least their phrase-book well stored, with a routine of military phrases from Caesar's Commentaries ; but if the Professor, speaking the language which he taught, told an ill-bred lad to take off his hat, or to raise his voice and not squeak like a weasel, they understood no more of his diction than if he had addressed them in the dialect of the Brahmins. It was plain that, whatever else they had been taught, the objects round about them and immediately before their eyes had, so far as their training was concerned, been considered as non-existent. It was plain also that they had never been taught to think in the language which they had been studying ; for, instead of directly using their store of words to express their thoughts, they had always to go through the process of a translation through the English ; a process unnatural, cumbrous, and slow, and so beset with difficulties that it ought never to be largely used without the facilities which a previous exercise in the more natural, direct, descriptive, and colloquial method so richly supplies.

There is a class of persons who will think that all this is but the necessary consequence of the difference in the method of teaching which belongs to a dead, as contrasted with a living, language,

and that nothing more should be said about the matter. But a moment's reflection will show the inadequacy of this notion. No doubt one may imagine the case of a solitary individual, for special professional purposes, getting up the mere bookish form of a language as presented to the eye, without concerning himself in any degree with the living reality of the vocal organism, as it addresses itself to the ears of those who use it ; but this is not the way in which either a practical knowledge of language for purposes of business, or a scientific knowledge for the cultivation of the taste, is ever acquired, — certainly not the way in which the classical languages are taught in our great schools and colleges. For, though a book is always the medium of instruction, the book is read aloud, and thus raised from the category of a dead record to that of a living utterance ; and this to such an extent that compositions in Greek and Latin prose, and even more notoriously in verse, passing in some way or other through the ear, form a prominent part of the scholastic drill of our classical scholars. It appears, therefore, that the dead language is to a certain extent resuscitated, and the ear, though not scientifically treated, is nevertheless used. Let it therefore be used in the proper sense of that word, and not rather, as it too often now is, grossly abused. If we profess to derive an aesthetic luxury from the nice balance of Greek and Latin verses, and the grand roll of the classical prose periods — a luxury which has no meaning except as addressed to the ear — let us not stultify ourselves by writing verses from rules which contradict the practice of our ears, and by admiring periods enunciated in direct antagonism to the demonstrable orthoepy and rhythmical harmony of the languages of which they are a part. In this respect, so far as teaching is concerned, there can be no difference between a living language and a dead ; of the dead as of the living, the ear is the direct receiver, the memory only the storehouse, and the judgment the dispenser of the stores. No rule, indeed, of grammatical or philological science has any significance except in reference to what is spoken ; and if the articulate speech be not actually regulated according to the known rules of the language, then the rules become a display of cumbrous pedantry, and the speech an incongruous mixture of natural expression with random blundering and conventional grimace.

These remarks, founded as they are on nature and the plainest common sense, point to a radical reform in some of our methods of scholastic drill, such as has been already indicated by Professor Jowett of Oxford, Mr. Farrar of Harrow, and other distinguished English teachers. I have myself not only taught the principles of such a reform, but acted upon them consistently, both as Latin Professor in Aberdeen, and as Greek Professor in Edinburgh, for a period of thirty years. That my practice may as yet have produced little effect in Scotland was only natural ; for neither is Scotland a kindly climate for classical literature generally, nor is the meagre Scottish schoolmaster, taken generally, found less tinged with the proverbial conservatism of the profession than his fat aristocratic brother in the south. No man should grumble because his right reasons do not forthwith jump into right practice. There is plenty of time for all changes ; and truth in the long-run, under fair circumstances, is sure to prevail. But if I am not much deceived, we are now arrived at an important crisis in the educational life of this country, which makes the moment especially favourable for a recurrence to first principles. The inadequate results attained by the present methods of classical training are universally complained of ; the claims of rival subjects are becoming every day more clamorous and more just ; in mere self-defence, therefore, the advocates of the ancient learning must study to avail themselves of methods at once more natural, more scientific, and more expeditious. I am convinced also that there is a great amount of secret dissatisfaction with the prevalent methods felt by many intelligent teachers, who are too closely inosculated into the existing machinery to be able to attempt the necessary reform. From these considerations, and with these feelings, it is that I have, after many years' delay — for I had no lack of more genial occupation — prepared the present work for publication, the exact end and practical use of which I now proceed to state shortly.

I start from the proposition that *in the acquisition of any language, whether living or dead, the commencement must be made with a living appeal from the tongue of the teacher to the ear of the learner, and this with direct reference to objects in which the learner feels a natural and a familiar*

interest. This is the principle on which nature proceeds when teaching the mother-tongue, and, therefore, must be the correct one ; only in the scholastic teaching of languages the teacher has the advantage of being able to use nature according to a calculated and graduated plan, so as to achieve the same end by the same plan indeed, but more systematically and much more expeditiously. The teacher also has the advantage of dealing with a growing or a grown mind, while nature, in the first instance, deals with an undeveloped mind. Now, if all our classical teachers could speak Greek and Latin as fluently as many a German governess speaks German, there would be no need of a book such as I now present. Having the materials and the dexterity, the teacher might be trusted to chalk out the steps of the graduated scheme for himself. But as we well know, the great majority of our teachers are not so accomplished ; and many of them, however willing they might be to try the conversational method, are so over-worked and so ill paid, that they have no leisure to make the requisite excavations for themselves. I have therefore come to consider it my duty to do this work for them ; and the system on which I proceed is this : I choose some score or two dozen subjects of particular interest to young men going through the usual course of school and college education in this country ; under each of these heads I give a dialogue, in double columns, English and Greek, intended to bring into play some of the prominent notions and words belonging to the subject, in the familiar tone of conversation, such as intelligent students may be supposed to use ; and to each dialogue is appended a short list of additional words and phrases, to supplement in some degree the necessary omissions of the colloquy. The practical object in the work of teaching which such a book strives to attain, is obvious. Both master and scholar are furnished with a rich store of words not requiring to be sought for by any distracting process — words expressly chosen with the view of enabling them to name every familiar object in Greek which they can name in English ; while the dialogues plunge them into the living element of Greek, in which they may learn to plash about joyously like young porpoises in a sunny sea.

It will be evident from these remarks that I do not put forth this work as a substitute for any educational book now used, but altogether as an addition. I have, in fact, no quarrel with either Greek reading or Greek writing as at present practised ; I only say that the conversational method, or, if you choose — for it makes no difference in the principle — the method that proceeds by forming a direct bond between the thought of the learner and the features of an external object through ear and tongue, — this method, I say, has certain advantages which do not belong to the others ; and I further give practical prominence to the great truth, that, under all methods, the first thing to be correctly educated is the ear. Neither do I intend this book as the boy's first step to Greek dialogue. It is a book which supposes boys already considerably advanced ; but it is a book also which supplies to the intelligent teacher the materials by which he can easily construct for himself the boy's first step, while in the hands of the willing student it presents direct aid to the practice of thinking and speaking and writing Greek, much more ready for use, and more safe in the using, than what he may find in an alphabetical dictionary.

I will now proceed to state how these objects can be attained ; for there is no doubt a vulgar notion abroad that speaking any language is a very difficult process, and speaking a dead language a dexterity belonging only to consummate scholarship. Of this idea we must, in the first place, get rid. Suppose, therefore, the pupil in his first lessons has learned the scheme of common nouns in the first and second declensions, and with that the present indicative and the infinitive of any simple verb, he may then immediately commence to think and speak in the language. Let it be, for instance, a bright day ; the master, pointing with his finger to the sky, says to the scholar, λάμπει ὁ ἥλιος — The sun shines; ὁρᾷς τὸν λαμπρὸν οὐρανόν ; — Do you see the bright sky ? which, of course, he understands, the master having given him the words previously, or explaining them at the time by pointing to the object meant ; and with equal ease he can be made to reply, ὁρῶ τὸν λαμπρὸν οὐρανόν — I see the bright sky. Now, will any man of common sense say that it is more difficult for a teacher to say this short sentence in Greek than in English ? If he feels the least difficulty in putting such simple words properly together, he is plainly unfit even for the most

elementary teaching. Very well. It is with speaking any language as it is with drawing or playing on an instrument. You commence with playing a single note, or adjusting a single pace, at first slowly, and it may be, in the case of very awkward persons, painfully, but gradually with ease, and if the stages of the process are well calculated, very soon with dexterity. All beginnings are difficult. The master will then proceed to name every object in the room, making his practice always keep pace with an enlarged knowledge of the grammar. The elements of syntax will, of course, be taught also according to this plan, by the living necessities of practice ; and frequent repetition, combined with a graduated rise, will cause a large stock of words, idiomatically expressed, to slide easily and gracefully into the ear, which otherwise must have been forced into the memory through cold formulas of the understanding.

With regard to my own academical teaching, the way in which I mean to use this book may be simply told. I will merely do what I have constantly been in the habit of doing without the vantage-ground which the book supplies to the student. I will intimate to the students of a class that tomorrow I shall address some remarks to them on a certain subject — say, the seasons and the weather — and in preparation for this they will be so good as look over the vocabulary of the chapter so named. In our Scottish Universities working is the rule ; and there is no doubt that four-fifths, or perhaps nine-tenths, of a class will do this, or any other thing they are bid. Next morning comes ; and I forthwith describe a snow-storm, or a frost with skating, or any other suitable subject, and by interrogation find that the students, or at least those of them who are worth fishing for, thoroughly understand me. I then intimate that I expect the students themselves, or at least such of them as are bent on improvement, to take my place on the day after, and make the description *viva voce* before the class. This accordingly is done ; and so on with other subjects in a space of time not more than twenty minutes, and leaving ample room for reading forty or fifty lines of a tragic author besides. Then, to insure accuracy, I impose a written composition on the same subject as the conversation, and constructed always so as to involve a graduated advance in the knowledge of the leading rules of syntax ; and this composition is minutely revised and commented on once or twice, or, it may be, every day a week by myself or the class tutor.

In estimating the full value of this descriptive and conversational method of teaching the classics, one or two additional observations require to be made. As a text to these we cannot do better than take Bacon's well-known aphorism, " Reading makes a full man, speaking makes a ready man, writing makes an accurate man." This is the exact state of the matter in the case of a full-grown man acquiring knowledge through the medium of a language which he perfectly understands; but that the maxim may be applicable to young men learning a foreign language, we must alter it a little ; for it is just because it is difficult to make young persons read much in a language imperfectly understood that we must adopt some machinery for supplying, in the early stages at least, the place of reading ; and that machinery is speaking. Let us therefore say — modifying the Baconian maxim so as to suit exactly the method according to which I conceive classics ought to be taught, — "Speaking makes both a full and a ready man, reading and writing, within the limits usually practised at school, and under the correction of constant analysis and construction, make an accurate man." Now, what I say is, that our classical teachers, while they make a boast of producing the minutely accurate man, fail to produce the full and the ready man ; and this defect is what the conversational method is specially calculated to supply. For how does it act ? In the first place, it forces a man to entwine directly with his every-day thoughts the names of a thousand objects that might not otherwise occur; and, in the second place, it creates a process of repetition ten times more rapid than that which arises out of the existing slow process of reading and writing. It facilitates, therefore, while it does not in the slightest degree curtail, either reading or writing. Neither does it dispense with rules, but renders them more largely serviceable. It does not prevent or proscribe, but rather pioneers the way, and provides facilities, for the more curious problems of written accuracy. Fluency first, and preciseness afterwards. This is the order of nature. A man must have his nails before he pares them.

The conversational method has further some special advantages in reference, on the one hand, to certain philological and literary peculiarities of the Greek language ; and, on the other, to the place which the physical sciences must necessarily occupy in the improved education of the rising generation. With regard to the first point, it is well known that, while in the march of Latin sentences, and the attitude of the Eoman speech, there is a certain formal majesty which seems to betray the juridical training of those who used it, the forms of the Greek language, on the other hand, are marked by the graceful flexibility which belongs to the dialogue of common life ; and this form accordingly is that which has been used with consummate mastery by the best writers of the language. In the colloquial form are embodied equally the practical wisdom of Socrates, the poetical philosophy of Plato, and the philosophical humour of Aristophanes. By using the colloquial style, therefore, in the teaching of Greek, we are giving prominence to precisely that element which is most characteristic of the language, and a familiarity with which is the most patent door to the thoughts of its greatest writers. Then, as to the natural sciences, no well-informed person can doubt that the narrow jealousy with which they have been hitherto looked on by a certain school of scholars must forthwith die out, if, indeed, it is not already dead ; and, in this view, it is plain that, as the language of the natural sciences is pre-eminently Greek, a method of teaching which fastens directly upon real objects, must furnish a common ground on which science and classics can embrace each other with a mutual respect and a common benefit. In my opinion, every classical school should devote, as indeed they do in the German gymnasia, at least two hours a week to the natural sciences ; and under such an arrangement it will be the wisdom of the classical teacher to repeat in the Greek hour some of the lessons of the scientific hour, and explain shortly, in colloquial Greek, the birds, plants, or other objects of nature which formed the material of the Science lecture. In order to encourage teachers to do this, I have taken care to make the scientific part of my vocabulary as copious as the nature of this little work would permit. Supposing, however, that there are some classical teachers who, whether from ignorance, indifference, or prejudice, will not be prevailed on to enter into that friendly alliance between science and scholarship, which is so much for their mutual benefit, there remains for them also an application of the descriptive method, which it is wonderful has been so long overlooked. I mean the introduction, upon a liberal scale, into the schools, of what, in opposition to pure philology, has been termed the archaeology of classical studies. Nothing would be easier, in this day of photographs and cheap adumbrations of all kinds, than to have in every classical school a museum of enlarged representations of objects of ancient art and mythological subjects from vases or other ancient monuments. To these a collection of casts of celebrated statues, and bas-reliefs might soon be added ; and if the classical teacher, twice or thrice a week, for only half-an-hour, were to give a viva voce Greek description of these objects, an element would be added to our system of classical training both instructive and delightful, and calculated not less to improve the taste than to furnish the memory and give precision to the ideas, of the young scholar.

The objections which I have occasionally heard urged against the colloquial method of viva voce description here recommended, so far as they are not founded on the mere laziness, carelessness, or conservatism of teachers, are of that description which spring up in the minds of persons who have either not considered the subject seriously, or, from want of practical experiment, do not know how the method really works. There is not the slightest question, on one point, that to remit his scholars *simpliciter* to a book, and confine his teaching rigidly within the boards of a book, is the method which is most naturally resorted to by a teacher of small attainments, or of easy conscience. But of that class of educational mechanics I take no account. There is no work requires more energy and more enthusiasm than teaching ; and he who does not teach with fervour will never teach with effect. But as for those who know that teaching the green mind of youth how to swell into bud, and to burst into blossom, is one of the most delightful of human occupations, to them I say that the difficulties in the way of the general adoption of the method here sketched are purely imaginary, and will vanish in a moment at the touch of an honest and manly experiment. In one of the idylls of Theocritus, two Alexandrian women are represented as going out to see the feast of Adonis in the

streets ; and, when they come to the palace where one of the principal shows of the occasion is to be exhibited, they find a great crowd of people ; whereupon one of them says to the other, "*Can we get in ?*" "*I suppose we can,*" says the other ; "*at least we may try !* Agamemnon could not have taken Troy, unless he had made up his mind to try ; so neither can we succeed in breaking through this crowd unless we try." And thus it is with all other practical things. To be known they must be tried. I have met with scholars, for instance, who told me that it was impossible for the human organs to pronounce the word *av^pwTTos* in such a manner as that the accent should be on the antepenult, while the prolongation of the voice, which prosodians call quantity, is on the penult ; but I answered the objection in a moment, by enunciating the word *lándhōlder*, which is in every respect the exact counterpart of the Greek word. I of course know practically that there is no real difficulty in doing what I habitually do in my own class-room with the utmost ease. And as to what may occur to some persons that there is no use of speaking languages which are now spoken by no man, I answer, in the first place, that so far as Greek and Latin are concerned the fact is not exactly as stated ; for Greek and Latin are both actually spoken by not a few persons, and if spoken in a rational way by persons studying these languages in this country, would prove of no small utility to British scholars travelling abroad, as not a few pointed anecdotes can avouch ; and, in the next place, I say, that I do not practise Greek description of objects, and Greek conversation, as an end, but as a means ; and I have proved by experiment that this practice not only does not prejudice reading and writing, as now used, but, as already stated, immensely facilitates and improves both these exercises. In fact, it is the only efficient way to turn the languages taught into the blood and bone of the learner in the shortest possible time, and with the greatest amount of profit. As little does the practice of colloquial Greek in any way interfere with the scientific anatomy of language on the principles of comparative philology, as now practised by all thorough-bred teachers, a practice which, when not prematurely protruded, or pretentiously paraded, must certainly be regarded as one of the most notable advances recently made in school tactics. In conclusion, I have only to return my sincere thanks to those gentlemen who have performed for me faithfully the fretful duty of revising the Greek of the dialogues. A work of this kind, however carefully executed, will no doubt contain some errors, which it will require no microscope of the curious critic to detect ; but after passing through the hands of such accomplished scholars as Professor Lushington of Glasgow, Professor Geddes of Aberdeen, Dr. Clyde of the Edinburgh Academy, Dr. Donaldson of the High School, Edinburgh, the Rev. F. W. Farrar, Head Master of Marlborough College, and Mr. W. Merry of Lincoln College, Oxford, my Greek may reasonably be expected to have been well weeded of any of those modernisms and linguistic slips which might give just cause of offence to a scientifically trained teacher.

OPINIONS OF CELEBRATED SCHOLARS AND THINKERS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COLLOQUIAL AND DESCRIPTIVE METHOD IN THE TEACHING OF LANGUAGES.

" In omnibus fere minus valent praecepta quam experimenta.

" Omnem sermonem auribus primum accepimus.

" Excitat qui dicit spiritu ipso, nec imagine et ambitu rerum sed rebus incendit. Vivunt enim omnia et moventur, excipimusque nova illa et nascentia cum favore et sollicitudine.

" Scribendo dicimus diligentius, dicendo scribimus facilius" — QUINCTILIAN.

"Ad linguae cognitioneum plurimum habebit momenti, si inter bene loquaces educetur puer, Fabulas et apologos hoc discet libentius, ac meminerit melius, si horum argumenta scite depicta pueri oculis subjiciantur, et quicquid oratione narratur, in tabula demonstretur. Idem aequè valebit ad ediscenda arborum, herbarum, et animantium nomina, praesertim eorum quae non ita passim obvia sunt, veluti rhinoceros, tragelaphus, onocrotalus, asinus Indicus, elephantus. " Scis bonam eruditionis partem esse scire rerum vocabula. Hic supra modum peccatur a grammaticis vulgaribus, quorum vitio fit ut adolescentes post multos annos in grammatica contritos vix norint ullius arboris, piscis, volucris quadrupedis aut leguminis verum nomen" — ERASMUS.

" Omnis lingua usu potius discitur quam praeceptis : id est audiendo, legendo, relegendo, imitationem manu et lingua tentando quam creberrime, " Instituendi erunt varii de rebus discursus, quos forma dialogistica concipi quatuor haec suadent: primum nihil est homini naturalius colloquio, quo sensim sine sensu perduci potest quocunque : secundo colloquia excitant animum, foventque attentionem, idque ob quaestionum et responsionum varietatem, eorumque varias occasiones et formas, intermixtis subinde quae oblectant. Tertio serviunt dialogi cum rerum impressioni firmiori, tum repetitioni (etiam inter discipulos ipsos privatim) faciliori. Denique quia potior vitas nostras pars colloquio constat, eleganter compendioseque ad eam manu ducitur juvenus, si res non solum intelligere sed et de illis expedite disserere consuescat." —AMOS COMENIUS.

" Sane pueriles animi mire capiuntur narratiunculis et picturis. Figurae singulae monstrentur, explicentur: quorum occasione sylvani vocum Latinarum addiscere licebit." — GERARD JOHN YOSSIIUS.

" For their studies, first, they should begin with the chief and necessary rules, of some good grammar, and while this is doing their speech is to be fashioned to a distinct and dear pronunciation, as near as may be to the Italian, especially in the vowels. For we Englishmen, being far Northerly, do not open our mouths in the cold air wide enough to grace a Southern tongue, but are observed by all other nations to speak exceeding close and inward, so that to smatter Latin with an English mouth is as ill as learning as law French."— JOHN MILTON.

" If you will consider it, Latin is no more unknown to a child when he comes into the world than English, and yet he learns English without master, rule, or grammar ; and so might he Latin too, as Tully did, if he had somebody always to talk to him in this language." — JOHN LOCKE.

" Why should the old practice of conversing in Latin and Greek be altogether discarded? " — PROFESSOR JOWETT