

which are sought to be dispensed with in this scheme as external examinations, may if necessary be retained as internal examinations; and the Colleges now that they will form 'the body of the University and not as heretofore mere outlying limbs of it and will have to work under newer, better and healthier conditions, may be safely entrusted with this kind of work which more properly and legitimately belongs to them.

The scheme which is set forth in skeleton here was originally sent to the Registrar of the Calcutta University with a request that it may be submitted to the Government of India for consideration; but under orders of the Vice-Chancellor it was put up before the annual meeting of the Senate held on the 17th April and ruled out of order. This is my only apology for venturing to approach the Government of India direct with this humble scheme.

SOME HINTS ON THE CHOICE OF BOOKS.

(CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 44.)

FICTION forms a most widely popular branch of literature to-day. Provided that the fiction read is of the best, there is little reason to cavil at this state of affairs. Fiction-reading wisely conducted may contribute very largely to culture. The best novels educate, elevate and ennoble. Almost all history has been laid under contribution for their subjects, and the reader who enters intelligently into the fortunes of the various characters is sure to have his knowledge of history greatly increased.

Take the Waverley novels, for instance. The man who has read these carefully will be found to possess a knowledge of history greater and more enduring perhaps than that of many who have sought it from the more conventional source of the orthodox historical manual. While this is true, the reader should by no means rest satisfied with the knowledge of history which he gathers from Sir Walter Scott. He should study the periods with which the various novels deal and endeavour to estimate for himself how

far they have been correctly interpreted by Scott. Woodstock for instance should be made the centre of a course of reading embracing the whole period of the English Revolution. It should lead to the reading of Carlyle's "Oliver Cromwell," of such a work as Masson's "Life and Times of John Milton," of Frederick Harrison's monograph on "Cromwell," of Gardiner's histories and so on. The same method may be advantageously followed with almost every historical novel.

I might draw up a course of reading in historical novels for the benefit of the readers of this magazine. I would follow the chronological order and each novel in the list is intended to be used as an introduction to the history of the period with which it deals :—

- I. Kingsley's "Hereward the Wake" (Norman Conquest).
- II. Scott's "Ivanhoe" (Richard I).
- III. Scott's "Talisman" (the Crusades).
- IV. Lytton's "Last of the Barons" (Wars of the Roses).
- V. Reade's "Cloister and the Hearth" (A tale of the Middle Ages).
- VI. Kingsley's "Westward Ho" (Elizabethan Age).
- VII. Scott's "Abbot" (Mary Queen of Scots).
- VIII. Scott's "Fortunes of Nigel" (James I).
- IX. Shorthouse's "John Inglesant" (Charles I).
- X. Conan Doyle's "Micah Clarke" (Monmouth's Rebellion).
- XI. Thackeray's "Esmond" (Queen Anne).
- XII. Dickens' "Tale of the Two Cities" (French Revolution).
- XIII. George Meredith's "Vittoria" (Italian Liberation).

Other courses of reading in historical novels may easily be drawn up.

Another excellent and methodical way of reading fiction is to study it as literature. Trace its development from its source to the present time. For this purpose help will be got from Proff. Raleigh's work on the "English Novel" in the University Extension Series, from Dunlop's "History of Fiction," Masson's "British Novelists and their style," and Dawson's "Makers of English Fiction." Very interesting and useful also is Sir Walter Besant's lecture on the "Art of Fiction."

But when all is said that can be said in favour of the studious reading of Fiction, the fact remains that the majority of people will read

Fiction for enjoyment rather than education. And it is right that it should be so ; besides there is consolation in the thought that the great novelists teach and uplift as well as amuse. Read therefore and enjoy without stint the works of Scott and Dumas, Thackeray and Dickens, Hardy and Meredith, George Eliot and Charlotte Brontë, Stevenson, Kingsley (both Charles and Henry), Blackmore, Wilkie Collins, William Black, Charles Reade, Fennimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Victor Hugo and many other writers accredited of fame whom we cannot mention here. And do not forget the old books :—the “Arabian Night’s Entertainments,” “Don Quixote,” “Robinson Crusoe,” “Gulliver’s Travels.” &c.

POETRY and the DRAMA are the “realms of gold” in which the student will journey as fancy bids him. For lyrical poetry he will find Proff. Palgrave’s “Golden Treasury of the best Songs and Lyrical poems in the English language,” an excellent guide and companion. The various anthologies which Proff. Arber is editing and the Clarendon Press is publishing are also very good and useful and are excellent value at half a crown a volume. A useful work giving biographies of the leading poets with selections from their works is Ward’s English Poets. The general introduction to this by the late Matthew Arnold is a master piece, and should be diligently studied by all lovers of poetry.

The choice of individual poets will depend largely upon the taste of the reader, as the choice of editions upon the state of his purse. The poetry of Tennyson almost all will enjoy and now that his poems have been added to the Globe library they may be had in a good edition at a moderate price. Longfellow is another poet almost universally popular, and there are few households where his poems will not be highly appreciated. For Shakespeare perhaps the best popular edition is the Globe. It is a good plan to study favourite plays in separate form. The Temple edition volumes are beautifully printed and tastefully got up. A poet who is not always appreciated is Wordsworth. His best work will be found in the volume of selections edited by Matthew Arnold for the Golden Treasury Series. Should this volume be relished, the reader might then procure the poet’s

complete works edited by John Morley. Keats, Shelley and Matthew Arnold may also be procured in the Golden Treasury Series. Chaucer will never be a very popular poet; but those who go to the trouble of mastering his language are richly rewarded. Spenser, Milton, Pope, Dryden and Cowper are all issued in the Globe library which can be thoroughly recommended. Robert Browning is a poet whose writings are well calculated to give stimulus and strength. His terseness makes him often difficult to follow, but it is worth while trying to understand him. The young reader might begin with the shilling volume of selections and then go on to one of the volumes of the Canterbury Poets Series. The Canterbury Series includes various volumes of poetical selections, many of which can be had nowhere else, and which are well worth attention. Goethe's "Faust" and Dante's "Divina commedia" are two of the great poems of the world which we can read in various translations. The plays of Sheridan and Goldsmith should not be missed. Good cheap editions may be had in Cassell's National Library. The lover of poetry, in fact, however poor, has in these days no need to stint his taste, for Mr. W. T. Stead's Penny Poets have brought the main body of the best verse within the reach of every one.

For CLASSICAL literature the ordinary reader has to depend upon translations for his enjoyment of the ancient writers. Thanks to the labours of a multitude of scholars he does not on that account fare very badly. Admirable translations are available of the works of most of the great writers of antiquity. The lot of the general reader who wants to acquire some acquaintance with the classics is indeed easier than it was only a decade or two ago. In Messrs. Blackwood's excellent series of Ancient Classics for English Readers are to be found concise and trustworthy introductions to all the great authors. Indeed, the majority of people and even of educated people go through life with less knowledge of the great writers of antiquity than is to be found in these accessible volumes. The other aids to the appreciation of classical writers are also numerous.

Take Homer, for instance. In the Ancient Classics Series there are works by W. L. Collins dealing with both the Iliad and the Odyssey. Mr. Gladstone's celebrated primer on Homer is published by Messrs.

Macmillan at one shilling. No amount of reading about an author will do much good unless the author is also read ; so from books on Homer we must pass to Homer himself or at least as near him as the translators will allow. The translation of Homer in common use is that of Pope. It can be had with Fleetman's illustrations in the Chandos Classics, one volume each to the Iliad and the Odyssey. Many good judges of poetry prefer the version of Chapman to that of Pope. James Russell Lowell says :—"Chapman has made for us the best poem that has yet been Englished out of Homer." Thanks to Messrs. Dent, Chapman's version can now be had in most dainty form in the Temple Classics. Of prose translations the best is that made by Butcher and Lang. From the works here mentioned a selection can be made sufficient to give a good insight into the works of the Grand Old Grecian bard.

Plato is another of the old Greeks whose works are worthy of careful and assiduous study. A good edition of his "Republic" is that translated by J. Llewellyn Davies and D. J. Vaughan and published in the Golden Treasury Series. In the same series will be found the "Trial and Death of Socrates" translated by F. J. Church and a new translation by J. Wright of "Phaedrus," "Lysis" and "Protagoras." Horace and Virgil can probably best be studied in the prose translations in the Globe Library. Mrs. Browning has translated the "Prometheus Bound" of Æschylus into English verse. His whole seven tragedies have been translated by Dean Potter. For good translations of other works of the ancient classical writers in editions at moderate price, the reader is referred to Morley's Universal Library published by Messrs. Routledge and to the Scott Library.

A. K. G.
