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## REPORT OF THE DELEGATES TO THE CONFERENCE ON UNIFORM ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS IN ENGLISH

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The meeting of the delegates in regard to the uniform entrance requirements in English took place on February 22. They had presented for their consideration certain criticisms made by the schools, and certain questions which had been under more or less formal consideration for a number of years. The committees interested in the investigation of the English question in various parts of the country had made the effort to learn what the wishes of the schools were, through individual teachers, and through the clubs and representative bodies of teachers, school principals, and college teachers and professors. The result was the clear impression on the part of the national committee, including the representatives of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, the Middle States and Maryland Association, the Middle West Association, the Western Association, and the Southern Association, that the principal criticism on the methods hitherto prevailing in the effort to attain uniform entrance requirements in English was the lack of sufficient choice and of opportunity for initiative on the part of the separate schools and of the teachers of English. This feeling was expressed in the replies made to a set of blanks sent out to schools and colleges. The answers have been duly formulated by a committee under the charge of Principal Wilson Farrand of the Newark Academy. The committee, whose representatives from this Association were Dr. Buehler, Professor Peck, and myself, therefore found a large part of the work already accomplished. A set of blanks, covering ten questions, had received answers from a body of schools in the neighborhood of two hundred and fifty—sample schools. Professor Peck had made an investigation on behalf of New England, by which he was assured practically of the same results—am I right?—and this confirming material, being brought together, very much abbreviated the work of the committee and economized the use of time.

The conclusions which were reached were, however, perhaps worthy of consideration. They were substantially as follows: It is evident that the capacity of pupils for reading and for literary study differs greatly in

different schools and in different parts of the country. While English is evidently receiving earnest attention in the schools, and while many schools are reading a larger number of books than is specified in the requirement, there is a distinct feeling that the examinations compel a kind of reading and a memorizing of facts that do not approve themselves to the teachers. The strongest and most general objection is to the restriction of the teacher in the selection of the books. This objection and the preceding one apply particularly to the books for reading as distinguished from those for study.

In answer to the question, "Does the division of the requirement into (1) books for reading, and (2) books for study commend itself to you?" Twenty-seven colleges say yes, five no; one hundred and thirteen schools say yes, twenty-six no.

A general objection was that, in spite of the supposed distinction between reading and study, all the books had to be studied.

The question, "Is the requirement for study satisfactory, and, if not, what specific objection have you to make?" made it clear that there is really no objection to the present requirement. The real objection is to specific books, and these books vary with individual schools and teachers. A book that is particularly objected to by one school is often much liked by another. There are nineteen objections, for instance, to Macaulay's *Addison*. Many say that the books as a whole are too hard; but that is a general criticism, and no specific list is offered to meet the difficulty.

"Does the present requirement for study, in your judgment, lay too much stress on accurate knowledge of the books, and too little on testing the ability to write good English?" The answer in reply to that was: twenty colleges say yes, eighty-six no; nine schools say yes, and a large majority no.

"Do you favor the setting of a larger list of books to be read, not studied, and the testing of the candidate only on his general knowledge and appreciation of the books and on his ability to write, with an additional test in composition on some subject not taken from the books?" The answers there show that the preference is for the existing method as a whole.

An effort was made to secure a set of criticisms on the specific books. The result was that Shakespeare was found to be universally popular, and, whether for reading or for study, met with favor. Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* seemed to be universally approved of. The attack on the use of Burke on *Conciliation* disappeared. According to this set of figures, Burke on *Conciliation* is one of the most popular of the books. In some parts of the country *The Princess* is one of the most popular books. At the same time, some of the written criticisms offered were most severe on that par-

ticular book, and the arraignment by representative teachers of it was severe.

An effort was made to secure some notion of what a supplementary or substitute list would be like, and as the result of a collection of the answers made in reply to the question, "What books would you suggest?" the following list is offered. Only those that are named by at least five persons are given below. The figures show the number of persons naming each book.

Arnold . . . . .	<i>Sohrab and Rustum</i> . . . . .	15
Bacon . . . . .	<i>Essays</i> . . . . .	9
Blackmore . . . . .	<i>Lorna Doone</i> . . . . .	5
Browning . . . . .	<i>Selections</i> . . . . .	14
Bryant . . . . .	<i>Selections</i> . . . . .	6
	<i>Thanatopsis</i> . . . . .	5
Bunyan . . . . .	<i>Pilgrim's Progress</i> . . . . .	9
Burns . . . . .	<i>Cotter's Saturday Night</i> . . . . .	6
	<i>Selections</i> . . . . .	17
Byron . . . . .	<i>Childe Harold</i> . . . . .	6
	<i>Prisoner of Chillon</i> . . . . .	7
	<i>Selections</i> . . . . .	6
Chaucer . . . . .	<i>Prologue</i> . . . . .	15
	<i>Knighte's Tale</i> . . . . .	7
Defoe . . . . .	<i>Robinson Crusoe</i> . . . . .	5
Dickens . . . . .	<i>Christmas Carol</i> . . . . .	12
	<i>David Copperfield</i> . . . . .	13
	<i>Tale of Two Cities</i> . . . . .	23
Emerson . . . . .	<i>An Essay</i> . . . . .	11
Franklin . . . . .	<i>Autobiography</i> . . . . .	10
Goldsmith . . . . .	<i>Deserted Village</i> . . . . .	17
	<i>She Stoops to Conquer</i> . . . . .	12
Gray . . . . .	<i>Elegy</i> . . . . .	13
Hale . . . . .	<i>Man Without a Country</i> . . . . .	5
Hawthorne . . . . .	<i>Twice Told Tales</i> . . . . .	13
Irving . . . . .	<i>Alhambra</i> . . . . .	7
	<i>Sketch Book</i> . . . . .	20
Keats . . . . .	<i>Eve of St. Agnes</i> . . . . .	6
	<i>Selections</i> . . . . .	11
Lamb . . . . .	<i>Essays of Elia</i> . . . . .	10
	<i>Tales from Shakespeare</i> . . . . .	6
Longfellow . . . . .	<i>Evangeline</i> . . . . .	17
	<i>Miles Standish</i> . . . . .	8
	<i>Wayside Inn</i> . . . . .	8
Lowell . . . . .	<i>Commemoration Ode</i> . . . . .	6

Macaulay . . . . .	<i>Lays of Ancient Rome</i> . . . . .	8
Palgrave . . . . .	<i>Golden Treasury</i> . . . . .	5
Pope . . . . .	<i>Rape of the Lock</i> . . . . .	8
Ruskin . . . . .	<i>Sesame and Lilies</i> . . . . .	8
Scott . . . . .	<i>Kenilworth</i> . . . . .	10
	<i>Marmion</i> . . . . .	14
	<i>Quentin Durward</i> . . . . .	9
	<i>Talisman</i> . . . . .	11
Shakespeare . . . . .	<i>As You Like It</i> . . . . .	25
	<i>Hamlet</i> . . . . .	17
	<i>King Lear</i> . . . . .	8
	<i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i> . . . . .	15
	<i>Tempest</i> . . . . .	13
	<i>Twelfth Night</i> . . . . .	12
Shelley . . . . .	<i>Selections</i> . . . . .	12
Spenser . . . . .	<i>Faerie Queene</i> . . . . .	14
Stevenson . . . . .	<i>Kidnapped</i> . . . . .	7
	<i>Treasure Island</i> . . . . .	14
Swift . . . . .	<i>Lilliput</i> . . . . .	10
Tennyson . . . . .	<i>Selections</i> . . . . .	11
Thackeray . . . . .	<i>Henry Esmond</i> . . . . .	22
	<i>Vanity Fair</i> . . . . .	5
Webster . . . . .	<i>Bunker Hill</i> . . . . .	11
Whittier . . . . .	<i>Snow Bound</i> . . . . .	10
Wordsworth . . . . .	<i>Selections</i> . . . . .	28

This was the nearest to a substitute list that could be gained. As a conclusion, the principles adopted by the committee were those with which many of you are already familiar through the publication of the report which was made public in the newspapers and then in separate leaflets. It begins:

NOTE.—No candidate will be accepted in English whose work is notably defective in point of spelling, punctuation, idiom, or division into paragraphs.

Following the principles of the old division into two parts, a brief list of books for study and practice, a longer list, numbering now fifty books, as follows:

a) *Reading and practice*.—A certain number of books will be recommended for reading, ten of which, selected as prescribed below, are to be offered for examination. The form of examination will usually be the writing of a paragraph or two on each of several topics, to be chosen by the candidate from a considerable number—perhaps ten or fifteen—set before him in the examination paper. The treatment of these topics is designed to test the candidate's power of clear and accurate expression, and will call for only a general knowledge of the substance of the books. In every case knowledge of the book will be regarded as less important than the ability to write good English. In place of a part or

the whole of this test, the candidate may present an exercise book, properly certified to by his instructor, containing compositions or other written work done in connection with the reading of the books. In preparation for this part of the requirement, it is important that the candidate shall have been instructed in the fundamental principles of rhetoric.

1909, 1910, 1911—Group I (two to be selected): Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, *Henry V*, *Julius Cæsar*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Twelfth Night*.

Group II (one to be selected): Bacon's *Essays*; Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Part I; *The Sir Roger de Coverley Papers* in the *Spectator*; Franklin's *Autobiography*.

Group III (one to be selected): Chaucer's *Prologue*; Selections from Spenser's *Faerie Queene*; Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*; Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*; Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* (First Series), Books II and III, with especial attention to Dryden, Collins, Gray, Cowper, and Burns.

Group IV (two to be selected): Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*; Scott's *Ivanhoe* and *Quentin Durward*; Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables*; Thackeray's *Henry Esmond*; Mrs. Gaskell's *Cranford*; Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*; George Eliot's *Silas Marner*; Blackmore's *Lorna Doone*.

Group V (two to be selected): Irving's *Sketch Book*; Lamb's *Essays of Elia*; De Quincey's *Joan of Arc* and *The English Mail Coach*; Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship*; Emerson's *Essays* (selected); Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies*.

Group VI (two to be selected): Coleridge's *The Ancient Mariner*; Scott's *The Lady of the Lake*; Byron's *Mazeppa* and *The Prisoner of Chillon*; Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* (First Series), Book IV, with special attention to Wordsworth, Keats, and Shelley; Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*; Poe's *Poems*; Lowell's *The Vision of Sir Launfal*; Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*; Longfellow's *The Courtship of Miles Standish*; Tennyson's *Gareth and Lynette*, *Lancelot and Elaine*, and *The Passing of Arthur*; Browning's *Cavalier Tunes*, *The Lost Leader*, *How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix*, *Evelyn Hope*, *Home Thoughts from Abroad*, *Home Thoughts from the Sea*, *Incident of the French Camp*, *The Boy and the Angel*, *One Word More*, *Herve Riel*, *Pheidippides*.

b) *Study and practice*.—This part of the examination presupposes the thorough study of each of the works named below. The examination will be upon subject-matter, form, and structure. In addition, the candidate may be required to answer questions involving the essentials of English grammar, and questions on the leading facts in those periods of English literary history to which the prescribed works belong.

The books set for this part of the examination will be:

1909, 1910, 1911—Shakespeare's *Macbeth*; Milton's *Lycidas*, *Comus*, *L'Allegro*, and *Il Penseroso*; Burke's *Speech on Conciliation with America*, or Washington's *Farewell Address*, and Webster's *First Bunker Hill Oration*; Macaulay's *Life of Johnson*, or Carlyle's *Essay on Burns*.

The order in which these two parts are presented leaves the emphasis,

of course, on the books for study and practice, and the interpretation of the series of groups would, if it were possible to carry it out logically, depend upon the character of these books, illustrating substance, subject-matter, form and structure, and the literary history of periods to which the prescribed works belong. The effort was in the elaboration of the groups to carry through that principle, but certain well-known practical considerations, learned by experience with the schools, prevented the complete accomplishment of this desire. There are certain periods which, although they may be earlier, are more difficult. There are certain forms which are too expensive, in the opinion of schools, for analysis or elaboration, and there is therefore a lack of practical balance and proportion in the lists.

A committee was appointed, consisting of four—Professor Stoddard, Professor Scott, Professor Trent, and Mr. Peck—to consider the advisability of using selections from the Bible in the requirement, to consult with leading educators on the subject, and to report at the next conference.

It is also my duty to call the attention of this body to the fact that measures should be taken to provide for a meeting of the conference on February 22, 1908, to insure concerted action with regard to uniform entrance requirements in English for 1912 and the years immediately following.

This, I believe, is the substance of what I have the honor to report.