PELMANISM

Lesson XI

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LESSON XI

BOOKS AND READING

HOW TO ORGANIZE YOUR MENTAL LIFE

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LESSON XI

BOOKS AND READING

HOW TO ORGANIZE YOUR MENTAL LIFE

I—INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

First, a word of explanation. This lesson is rather different from the preceding ones mainly because it deals with an entirely different subject. You will find it to be a *quiet* book, a book which invites the student to a series of sober reflections on Reading and Study. Do not say you have no time for such things. You have time, if you will but organize your spare moments. Besides, the Pelmanist ideal includes the life of thought as well as the life of action, and therefore the course of instruction would not be complete without a lesson on the meaning and value of books.

We receive ideas from several sources: observation, conversation, reflection; but many of our ideas come from reading. It is, therefore, a concern of no little importance that we should know how to make the best use of the time devoted to reading; and this lesson is an effort to aid the student's attainment of that goal.

THE "KNOW HOW" OF BOOKS

If you have already formed sound habits in this respect you are to be congratulated; but, from many years of experience we can say, positively, that even the skilled student is often discovered wasting energy. With the unpracticed man this defect is, of course, still more pronounced. If he wants facts on which to build a speech or an address, he does not know where to find them; if he is compelled to consult six books in a hurry, he has no idea how to use the index for this purpose; if he desires to know who are the authorities on a specified subject, he is like a mariner without chart or compass; and if he wishes to keep a record of his reading, he writes at unnecessary length, because he is a stranger to the art of note-taking.

THE POWER OF AN IDEA

It would prove of great advantage to you to betake yourself to some quiet corner, free from interruptions, and follow us step by step as we try to disclose what are to us the secrets of efficiency in the use of books. One great book, thoroughly mastered, may become a turning point in your life. One single idea may transform your existence. It is often said, "Thoughts are things." They are, in the sense that they become those invisible realities which drive us forward and move us to finer issues, or else

poison the springs of our being. To be able to appreciate the thoughts found in literature is to have an ability which will give us the best reflections of the ages in their true perspective; and it will also prevent us from accepting the inaccuracies of the past and present, however charmingly they may be embodied in language.

Truly, this lesson is one that all of us may learn and relearn with profit.

II—THE VASTNESS OF KNOWLEDGE

One of the hindrances of many students is a sense of the endlessness of knowledge. To take up a subject for investigation and to see its innumerable ramifications as evidenced by the library catalog compels one to heave a sigh, and exclaim: "I shall never know anything about it." Such an attitude is a mistaken one. The field of knowledge, no doubt, is vast beyond conception, and one can specialize in no more than a small sphere of it, but the meanings of whole spheres of knowledge in relation to other spheres may be comprehended in part, even though the mass of detail may defy us.

Spencer on Knowledge-Masses—In this connection it is interesting to recall a confession made by the late Herbert Spencer. He says: "My acquaintance with things might have been called superficial, if measured by the *number* of

facts known; it might have been called the reverse of superficial if measured by the *quality* of facts. A friend who possessed extensive botanic knowledge once remarked to me that had I known as much about the details of plant structure as botanists did, I should never have reached those generalizations concerning plant morphology which I have reached."[1]

Balfour on Superficiality—We see, then, that a knowledge of detail, usually spoken of as encyclopedic, is not always an advantage; indeed, it may be a positive disadvantage, hampering mental movements and preventing fertility of imagination. The real secret is to know well what we do know and to be able to put it to the best use. One need not then be afraid of being charged with superficiality, and in this connection Lord Balfour has spoken some very apposite words. "Knowledge of the general principle may be obtained by those who have neither the time nor the ability to master all the details of any particular branch of science; but to say that a smaller modicum of knowledge is therefore superficial, and therefore useless, is wholly to mistake what superficial knowledge consists in and what education aims at. You may know very little and not be superficial; you may know a great deal, and be thoroughly superficial. Su-

[1] *Autobiography, p.* 335.

perficiality is a quality of yourselves, not of the knowledge you acquire."[1]

III—THE DIFFICULT QUESTION OF TIME

We often hear it said that "Time is Money," but after all, money will not buy time. Time is one of the most precious things we have, and as life becomes increasingly complex, it is increasingly difficult to find sufficient time for all that we have to do and all that we would like to do.

Very few people organize their leisure, and use it to the best advantage. In the second lesson we gave some hints on the formation of a Time-table, and perhaps, ere this, you have succeeded in arranging your spare-time hours efficiently. Nevertheless, there is often room for slight improvements, and every economy in the disposal of time is valuable in the highest degree.

SYSTEMATIZE YOUR LEISURE

Pelman students embrace every type of leisured and non-leisured individual. There is the man or woman who has an hour or two in the evening; there are some who have leisure in the morning only, and a few who never know whether it will be morning, mid-day, or evening. There is the married woman who hardly

[1] *The Mind of A. J. Balfour*, p. 109.

knows when there may be an hour to spare; there is the man who has nothing to do, and the schoolboy who says he never has a moment he can call his own! How are these individuals to organize their mental life in such a way as to conserve health and happiness, and at the same time make the best use of their opportunities for intellectual and social culture? The answer is this; only by re-casting a time-table already in use and adapting it to changing circumstances.

For instance, a time-table that has been in use for some months may be found to be defective because it assigns more time to less important subjects, or because of some need which has only recently manifested itself. It is possible, also, that the order of the subjects is not the best, and that instead of taking recreation at the end of a two hours' period, the individual should so arrange his schedule that he takes it between these two hours.

Fatigue—Then there is the question of fatigue. Occasionally you may find you cannot complete your evening program; you are too tired, and yet you strongly desire to continue. In such circumstances it is wisdom to desist. A time-table should not be too rigid. When real fatigue (as distinct from mere disinclination) overtakes you, go out into the open air, or have a game of billiards or romp with the children. If, when you sit down to your evening's work your inclination is to take up the

last subject on the list instead of the first, *take up the last;* for a mood is a state of mental fitness, the advantage of which must not be lost.

IV—"BEST" BOOKS

Advice on reading used to be a good deal more prolific in the past than it is to-day. In a book published in 1896, we find a bibliography of no less than 52 "Guides to Reading," but nobody seems to pay any attention to them nowadays. Why? Because the selection of books is largely a matter of personal preference. No doubt there are books which every well-educated person is presumed to have read until he confesses that he has not read them, and there is also a truly scientific method of gaining knowledge from books. Nevertheless, no man can successfully prescribe another man's reading in its entirety. Our literary heritage is so vast that no man can read all that he would like to; and ample scope is left for the indulgence of individual taste and for the pursuit of culture along the lines of temperament.

WORD STUDY

The enjoyment of literature is enhanced by careful attention to the nature, meanings and uses of *words.* But the average reader says he has no time for this detailed investigation, and we agree with him. Nevertheless, he has time to look up new or difficult words when he meets

them, and he should make it a habit to consult the dictionary at every opportunity.

Correct Spelling—English spelling is notoriously difficult to master. Even men to whom literature is a matter of lifelong interest are now and then at a loss; R. L. Stevenson confesses that he was one of this class. The difficulty arises from the conflict of two principles: the phonetic and the etymological. Confronted with the obstacles which etymology presents, we have to do our best to master the anomalous standard orthography, and the free use of a dictionary is recommended. The dictionary does more than make arbitrary decisions on the definitions and accentuations of words. Any dictionary of greater than pocket size gives something of the history of a word and tells of cognate words in other languages. It is by reading and appreciating this information that, in nine cases out of ten, we may most easily fix the right spelling in our memory. At the same time the image of the word correctly spelled should be vividly impressed and should be frequently recalled. To write it several times enlists the aid of "motor imagery": the hand comes at last almost automatically to form the right letters.

Dictionaries that are at once popular and scholarly are plentiful, and the more voluminous dictionaries can generally be consulted at a library. A reader who masters the word

"Law," as explained and illustrated in the *Oxford* or any other considerable dictionary, would never be guilty of using so important a word inaccurately, whether in speaking, writing, or thinking. Dictionaries of Synonyms and Antonyms can be purchased at any book store.

Introductions to Science—Let us suppose the reader of these pages has been advised to study the record of science. How ought he to carry out this recommendation? He should first choose a good book which will induct him into the whole subject. Thomson's *Introduction to Science* or his more recent *Outline of Science* will give him an interesting survey of the discoveries and principles and methods of science in general. Slosson's *Creative Chemistry* is alive with interest for every student. Libby's *Introduction to the History of Science,* (Heath) for an account of the development of these principles from the earliest times to the present day. An excellent description of all the important sciences may be found in Newman's *The Nature of the World and of Man.* Thus equipped, he can easily select from books dealing with Botany, Physics, Chemistry, or any other branch in which he happens to be interested.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

The same method is employed in *Literature.* He might begin with any good *Introduction to English Literature,* like Halleck's, an element-

ary text, or *A First View of English Literature* by Moody and Lovett. If a close acquaintance with a specific period of English Literature is desired, the only effective plan is to study the actual books of that period, not summaries or analyses written by historians and critics. But no period can be isolated from those which go before and come after it; consequently the comprehensive survey should be undertaken first. Such a survey may be found in Pancoast's *Manual of English Literature*, or in either of the two aforementioned texts. These volumes give the student a sense of perspective; he is less likely to estimate falsely the importance of any special period he has chosen, and more likely to interpret its authors in the light of the influence which then prevailed.

PHILOSOPHY

The subject may be *Philosophy*. Having read a book on Platonism, a reader whose curiosity has been aroused may desire to know what other philosophers have thought. How ought he to proceed? He should first read a general history, say, Weber's *History of Philosophy*, Durant's *Story of Philosophy*, or a brief treatise by Meiklejohn called *Philosophy*. Along with this an introduction to the problems of philosophy should be taken in hand. Bertrand Russell's *Problems of Philosophy* and Sellar's *Essentials of Philosophy*, give modern and very

competent accounts of matters as they stand at present. After this the student will be in a position to appreciate William James's *Pragmatism* or Henri Bergson's *Creative Evolution* or any other of the more specialized works in Philosophy.

THE FINE ARTS

In Art, one should begin with Baldwin Brown's *The Fine Arts*, or Elie Faure's *History of Art*, translated by Walter Pach (Harper's). Ludwig Lewisohn's *Creative Life* is highly interesting. *Appreciation of Art* by Neuhaus will take one into the more specific arts, e.g.; Painting, Poetry, Architecture. You will find in any public library text books which give a bird's-eye view of the whole subject. But we shall not burden our pages with numerous titles, authors, and publishers, for new and better books are continually appearing, and the members of the Instruction Staff of the Institute are always ready to advise you on any branch of study you may wish to take up. What is of consequence here is an apprehension of the correct method of approaching all reading.

V—HOW TO READ

ASSUME AN ATTITUDE OF EXPECTATION

It is presumed that the author of whatever work is before you has given a good deal of

time and reflection to the matter and form of his expression. Consequently you are justified in your expectant attitude. To approach the book in a spirit of prejudice, or antagonism, may result in your losing much that is good and beneficial. Some authors have a difficult style and they may be secretly proud of it; but their thoughts are often worth the labor of digging out. You will never reap the full reading harvest if you are hostile to the author's viewpoint.

A certain measure of sympathy is necessary for the interpretation of any author; we must sit by his side, so to speak, and see and feel with him, in order to understand his intention, and evaluate his results. Prejudice and antagonism prevent us from getting close to him. They compel us, as it were, to confront the author as an enemy. In that position it is hardly possible to look through his eyes and feel with his heart.

A FRIENDLY CHALLENGE TO AUTHORS

The publication of a book is really an invitation by the author to share his reflections, and we cannot do that with success unless we line up with him and momentarily look at things from the same standpoint. To preserve our own individuality we must put his views to the test. Are they true? Are they expedient? Are they useful? Are they well expressed? That is, we must exercise the spirit of friendly challenge. But this attitude is very different from that of

the reader who, with a fixed bayonet, fights against the entrance into his mind of other men's ideas. It is infinitely better to display the spirit of the Greeks on Mars Hill and give a ready ear to every new teacher, not to accept all he has to say, but simply to exercise an open mind.

Unfair Verdicts—The man who is perpetually challenging authors and speakers often attains a false reputation for acuteness, and his influence is in excess of his worth or his services to truth. No man gets into the limelight more easily than the iconoclast. A man picked up a book from the drawing-room table, saying, "What's this fool writing about?" He opened the book, and happened to fall on a rather weak sentence, which, divorced from its context, seemed the very apex of absurdity. Everybody was amused—and misled; for that book—a novel—was written by a distinguished author who is held in the highest esteem, by all competent critics.

You may say: "But this was a joke, not a serious attitude toward a well-known novel." It was a joke which affected the judgment of more than one person in that company, and it is symptomatic of the manner in which many readers have formed their literary opinions. They are guided too much by the dogmatic assertions of men and women with nimble minds and acid tongues.

CREATIVE READING

We must also read Creatively. This means that we have to compare and contrast what the writer says with our previous information or ideas on the same subject; it is another method of unifying our knowledge, except that in this case we bring the past and the present together with the express purpose of evolving a new idea. Let us take an illustration. At school you learned something about the Gulf Stream, and you were quite satisfied to know that its source was the Gulf of Mexico, the direction of its northward course, and its effect on the climate of Western Europe.

In later years you were curious to know more about the origin of this stream of warm water, and on looking into the subject, you found that scientists and geographers believed "the chief cause of its existence is the heating up of the waters of the warm equatorial current." You say, "Oh! that's the cause, is it?" and if you are not too critical, you accept the explanation at once; if you are closely critical, you may harbor a doubt that the alleged cause is sufficient to account for the result.

The Process of "New Ideas"—Some months pass and you happen upon an article describing the earthquake at Martinique. Your interest in the Gulf of Mexico and the islands adjacent is deepened. At this point you bring your past

knowledge into line with your more recently acquired information. Here you have an immense stream of warm water pursuing a northward course from the Mexican Gulf, and in the same region you have volcanic islands. Have these volcanic islands no connection with the origin of the Gulf Stream? Is not the ocean bed rather thin in these parts, so that the internal fires increase the temperature of the sea? Should the answer be in the affirmative, it will not necessarily destroy the theory of "Equatorial currents."

Both theories may be in some measure true, although we may not know the degree of truth each contains. Your present conception of the volcanic origin of the Gulf Stream may be neither true nor new; indeed, the conception which you probably think original may prove to be an old and long discarded one. But that is not the point. True or not, the *mental process* which brought together your past and present reading into a creative union, and whereby you arrived at your conclusion, *is the right one, is the important thing!*

UNIFY YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Let us take another illustration which brings out the value of direct interrogation. If you are studying Geography, Economics, or Political History you do not study them from text-books as though they were bundles of disconnected

facts; you study their inter-relationships. It is one thing to know where to find the Mississippi River on a map; it is another thing to know the significance of that stretch of water in the economic development of America.

Geography and History—What has been the influence of mountains on the growth of Thought? How have the Alps affected History and Commerce? Did the position of Greece in the Mediterranean Sea, or its broken coast line, favor the development of her genius? These, and a hundred other questions, may be asked by an inquiring mind. Even though no satisfactory answer be forthcoming there is usually answer enough to demonstrate the unity of all human interests; and, mark well, this unity is not merely for the philosopher; it is for you, too, for every life is affected by it.

The Solidarity of Existence—All things sublime and lowly, hang together in the scheme of existence. A shortage of some commodity in the East is the cause of suffering in the West; the bankruptcy of certain firms in Europe may have its origin in Kentucky or Louisiana. The drought in Australia may take money out of the pockets of men all the way from Seattle to Brooklyn, from Rome to Irkutsk. The solidarity of material things has its analogy in the studious contemplation of other and more spiritual phenomena. Sociologists tell us that in many civilizations the number of marriages was often

dependent on the price of corn; and it may chance that some private investigator, acting upon Professor Jevons' belief that commercial crises are caused by sunspots, will discover some hitherto hidden law of the solar system, not a law relating to a tangible phenomenon, like matter, but one that deals with what we call mind.

THE VALUE OF COMPARATIVE STUDY

Books which belong to the "comparatives," are helpful. We can recall, for instance, the pleasure and illumination of reading, years ago, Bascom's *Comparative Psychology*. Structualistic psychology is presented by the late Professor Titchener of Cornell, in his *Primer of Psychology*. An opposing school's attitude is described in its leader John B. Watson's *Psychology from the Point of View of a Behaviorist*. A very popular *Psychology* has been written, separately by Angell, Martin and Woodworth. Dewey's *How We Think* and *Human Nature and Conduct* are excellent. For the student of words there is the *Comparative Philology* of Sayce, Jesperson's *Language*, his *Mankind, Nature and Individual*, or *Philologica*, a journal of comparative philology (Oxford). The medical student has Bell's *Comparative Anatomy:* Indeed, every science and art has its manuals of the comparative method. But if the reader can secure treatises which trace an idea or a fact throughout many different

spheres, as, for example, Sir T. Andrea Cook's, *Curves of Life,* he will have an additional gain. This text will not only unify his knowledge and introduce him to an excellent method of inquiry, but help him to memorize on a logical basis, by comparison and contrast. Needless to say, we do not necessarily recommend the purchase and study of these books: we simply cite them to illustrate an idea.

The Philosophy of "Lines"—Dr. William Main, a practicing physician, was reading a book on Art and came across these words: "Uptending lines indicate progress and power; downtending lines suggest weakness and sadness; horizontal lines indicate repose and peace." He asked himself the question whether this was a rule that applied to the human face, to Nature, to everything that was capable of having lines in it. His book entitled *Expression in Nature* is a result of his inquiries, and although some of his conclusions are not convincing, many of them are significant. We refer to the matter here because it offers an illustration of an attempt to trace a law in those spheres to which it did not originally belong.

THE VALUE OF THE FORMULA

The formula method of reading and study, judiciously practiced, often produces excellent results. An illustration is found in the work of Henri Taine. In a letter (1855) to DeWitt,

he said: "The difficulty which I experience in an investigation is to discover a characteristic and dominant feature, from which everything can be geometrically deduced; in a word, what I need is to have the formula of my subject." He then gives an illustration. The formula for Livy is; "*An orator who becomes a historian.* All his faults, his qualities, his influence . . . may be traced to that." Similarly Shakespeare has been described as "a poet whom circumstances made a dramatist."

Walter Pater—The ingenuity of this idea will not be denied. Evidently it appealed to Walter Pater, for we find him adopting the same method. His biographer says of him that before writing on any subject, he invariably asked himself, "What is this man's or that object's unique self? What is the peculiar sensation or quality of pleasure which his work has the property of exciting in us? In short, what is the formula?"

Thus after analyzing Mérimée, Pater decided that the French writer's formula was, "delight in the crude naked form of man." Similarly Botticelli's formula was "neutrality;" that of Leonardo was "clairvoyance." It is not for us to agree or disagree with these findings, but we simply desire to know in what sense the method employed is sound. It is sound in this sense: that every mind which has impressed itself on the world must have had an inward urge

towards some specific idea. There was a purpose, and the formula is an attempt to define this purpose in language.

Limitations of the Method—The danger lies in attempting to employ the method in all provinces. Taine wanted to deduce everything *geometrically*, but in spite of his brilliance he did not succeed. We cannot fully identify a personality by a formula, but we can often find one which will greatly assist in the interpretation of that individual. There is doubtless a formula for Plato, for Herbert Spencer, for Dreiser and for Shaw. No one supposes, however, that such a formula embodies the whole man; we know it can do no more than indicate the significance of that side of him which is expressed in his work. This, of course, may be an advantage of considerable importance, and we can think of no exercise more intellectually fascinating than the attempt to discover the formula of writers in whom one is interested.

Fiction—Should one's interests be more exclusively modern, attention can be given to the prominent novelists of the day. Most people have read H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, John Galsworthy and Joseph Conrad. Make a list of their works, and write down a few distinctive impressions of each. Then seek, for each writer separately, the one quality that is common to all his novels. The result of this search ought to bring you near to the predominating concep-

tions, and you can begin to think of phrasing the formula. When the investigation is complete, you will find it interesting to compare your conclusions with those of other investigators. The similarities will confirm themselves, but the differences may require a good deal of harmonizing. Anyhow, in the final issue, you will know the works of these novelists as you never knew them before; you will know not only the plot of *Ann Veronica* or the scheme of the *Old Wives' Tale*, or *The Forsythe Saga*, or the story of *Nostromo*, but the various philosophies of life which, in their unity, the four novels disclose.

Every Man Has His Formula—Remember that every man's "unique quality," as Pater calls it, may be formulated. Sometimes it is a shoddy affair, although picturesque, like Micawber's. Sometimes it is vague, as in the case of the dark horse politician who poses as a statesman and causes on-lookers to ask; "What's his game?" It means that he refuses to disclose his formula. On the other hand, the assignment of a formula for the purpose of discrediting a particular statesman is a malicious device which has caused many a prominent man to suffer.

THE CLASSIC AUTHORS

There is a right way, just as there is a wrong way of approaching the study of a classic. Suppose, for instance, you have selected Spencer's

Faerie Queene. After reading a stanza or two, you turn to the notes to learn the meaning of this and that allusion; or you consult a classical dictionary or an English History. Meanwhile the analysis of the poem itself, which is the one reality, is held up until these details have been mastered. This is the wrong way to study a classic. Avoid delving into the mysteries of details until the second reading. The first reading should be devoted to the enjoyment and appreciation of the poet's music and message. He is speaking to the whole man rather than appealing to pure intellect.

A Shakespeare Illustration—When Shakespeare says:

"That memory, the warden of the brain
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason a
limbeck only,"

he does not desire us to interrupt the flow of thought and feeling by asking him what a "limbeck"[1] is; he intends the reader to keep pace with him, and thus to share his feeling and his flights of imagination. Obsolete words, definitions, and classical allusions can be considered when we give the classics a more leisurely study. Unfortunately, the edited editions of the classics, ancient and modern, have set up the habit of mastering details during the first reading, with the result that a class of students reading *Ham-*

[1] A contraction of *alembic,* which is a glass or copper vessel formerly used in distillation.

let or *Macbeth* will spend weeks over a single Act. The study of literature must not be allowed to degenerate into drudgery, for literature is a thing of joy.

Shakespeare did not write to furnish scholars with employment, nor did he write to provide unpleasant hours for schoolboys and students; he wrote for all mankind; and he wrote not to puzzle but to inspire them. As Dean Inge in his *England* (Modern World Series) remarks: "He has been half buried under a Talmud of commentary, over which no one would have laughed so heartily as himself." It is true that Shakespeare's English and his allusions often need some explanation; but they should be quite subordinate to the message of the work itself.

In this manner study the great utterances of the past and present. Breathe their spirit; divine their intention; absorb their philosophy. Afterward, with more leisurely steps, turn aside to investigate their obscurities and to discover their hidden beauties.

Topical Reading—This implies search in many quarters for ideas bearing upon some matter in which one is interested. Perhaps a man is anxious to write a letter to the newspapers, or an article, on a certain subject. It may be a point of history, a famous trial, a moot point of currency, of economics, of engineering, a political imbroglio, or the private life of a historical figure. Perhaps he has an idea which he desires to

investigate with a view to making an important change. From an article in an encyclopedia to the authors referred to by the encyclopedist in his bibliography, from book to book, from magazine article to magazine article, the hunter pursues his way, collating, comparing, contrasting; noting coincidences and discrepancies; filling up, from information supplied by one, the gaps left by another; checking, adjusting, harmonizing. Apart from its primary purpose, the gathering of information and its orderly presentment are admirable training in analysis and synthesis. It provides, in fact, a unifying mental discipline.

PERSONAL PREFERENCES

Follow your Inclinations is a sound rule for reading. It may be good sometimes, as we have said already, to read a book which has no attraction for you. The book may create an interest where one did not exist. Whatever be your line, accept it. If you wish to study poltergeists (mischievous ghosts), study them; if you are interested in Comparative Religion or in the historical development of Christian doctrine, make the search; if you feel you would like to see the pictures of the dolls which amused little girls hundreds of years ago, pursue your inclinations. If your neighbor, on the other hand, is keen on antique furniture, he has no right to impose the same subject on you. You are *you*, not another.

Books to Read—So choose your sphere and rejoice in it. *But do not forget that there are books which it is a duty to read. There are, for instance, the books of the moment which everybody is talking about, particularly biographies which in recent years have been so prolific.* Every publishing season, amid a multitude of novels, produces one or two which may win a permanent place in literature. Then there are English and other classics, every one of which, in its day, was a new book. Unless you have read some of the books upon which generation after generation has set the seal of approval, you will remain ignorant of the various standards of criticism. Indeed, all through one's life, whatever else one may read, one should always be increasing one's knowledge of the standard literature of the world and particularly of one's own people and tongue. Happily, we live in an age in which the best of this is accessible in cheap and good reprints. You cannot well afford to ignore the English Bible and Shakespeare, in the first place; and in addition you would be wise to make a survey of the authors included in the Everyman Library and the World's Classics. Among those you may indulge your personal preference to the full.

WRITTEN EXPRESSION

Read with a due regard for the claims of Self-Expression. This is a point to which refer-

ence has already been made in a previous lesson. We now desire to enlarge more fully on the relationship between reading and one of the arts of self-expression, namely, *writing*. The other arts belonging to the group will be treated in Lesson XII, on Personality.

When you have finished a good book take up your pen and write in your note-book a summary of your impressions, and, if possible, a few of the criticisms which have occurred to you. At first the task may be rather difficult, for although you appear to have a definite idea of the argument of the author, you may experience a considerable amount of hesitation when the moment arrives for expressing your conception in words. Why is this? Because, as yet, you have not learned how to organize ideas received from a printed page.

Writing Clarifies Ideas—Further, some of the ideas are far more vague than you had imagined. You thought they were clear, definite, and forceful; nevertheless, when you came to *write* them, you realized how vague some of them were. This is not necessarily a serious fault; it means only that your impressions exist more as *feelings* than as rationalized conclusions. Indeed, unless a book is read with deliberation, it is not possible to systematize one's reflections.

Memory and Sequence—We advise you now

to recall the title of some book which you have read with close attention, and then try to give an account of it. You will succeed to some extent, but the chances are that the recall will be somewhat fragmentary. Had the book been studied by the method here advised, you would have been able to recall its contents logically, and your written commentary would probably have been rich in associations.

ON NOTE-TAKING

Read with a Note-Book handy. There is generally something in a good book which one desires to make a note of, and we now propose to discuss the various methods by which the results of your reading may be recorded. Usually, passages are copied verbatim; the paragraph or page is transferred literally to the note-book. This is often strictly necessary, for if the quotation is to be used argumentatively it is important that the writer's exact words should be used. But to adopt this method all the time, that is, for every kind of printed opinion, tends to destroy initiative and originality. Besides, the amount of time consumed in literal copying is often unjustifiable. It is better for ordinary purposes to make an abstract of the chapter or paragraph concerned together with the exact reference; by this means you condense the words but preserve the ideas.

LITERARY INDICES

Then there is the *Literary Index*, the object of which is merely to preserve a reference to some book or magazine, e.g.,

1. "The American Indian," article clearing up popular misconceptions. *American Mercury*. Volume 5, No. 49.
2. "Thomas Hardy," article explaining that the poet's alleged pessimism was "in truth only questionings in the exploration of reality." *The Nation*, January 25, 1928.
3. "Auto-Culture," humorous account of achievement of self-culture by auto travel. *American Magazine*, Vol. 22, October.

So far as these entries are necessary for one's own work, they must be made, but it should not be forgotten that in every large public library such indices can be found, notably Poole's *Periodical Index*, wherein are given references to every important magazine article for many years back.

The Ideal Method—The ideal method is to make the kind of record required plus a critical opinion of your own. For instance, if you have just finished reading the *Maxims of Rochefoucauld*, and wish to record that "Gravity is a mysterious carriage of the body, invented to cover the defects of the mind," you naturally make an exact copy, but you add some critical remarks,

e.g., "Is there no gravity, then, which is perfectly natural and undesigned? The essence of gravity is seriousness. May not a man be serious without being a hypocrite? Is not the Frenchman's maxim a good illustration of reasoning from the particular to the general? Darwin was a man of gravity, but his gravity was not invented to cover the 'defects' of his mind."

Notes Alphabetically Filed—Such then are the methods of note-taking. Now a word as to the form in which this work should be carried out. If an Exercise book is used, every page should be numbered, and its contents entered in a separate Index book. This book may be of the "Where is it?" kind, with certain pages alphabetically cut. The index serves as a guide to the record of your reading of books, magazines, and also of the written quotations or abstracts in your note-books. In this way it is a focus of all your intellectual activity.

Envelope Cases—The use of large envelopes, with flaps removed, is recommended for separate cuttings from newspapers and journals. On the front of the envelope every new addition can be indexed and numbered. Suppose, for instance, you are interested in Utopias, schemes to perfect the race. Get a large envelope, and as you collect items one by one, index them in the manner suggested.

Detachable Notes vs. Fixed—To have all your cuttings for detachable use is much better

than to have them pasted in a book; the fixed position is very inconvenient when two or more cuttings have to be used at the same time. Naturally, every cutting inserted in the open envelope is entered in the index book. The entries on the outside of the envelope are intended to facilitate the finding of a particular cutting, each one being numbered.

For private purposes the system thus outlined is sufficiently exact, but for large schemes, with great masses of data, a more intricate scheme involving a card index would be necessary. These paragraphs on note-taking illustrate the principles of classification, and the *Pelman* laws of *Mental Connection* should be held therefore steadily in view.

You will find a review of Lessons I and VII, of great value at this point in your study.

VI—HOW TO USE A PUBLIC LIBRARY

Let us suppose you have decided to write an article on "Unused Sources of Energy." Your own collected information is soon put into shape, and you repair to the local library for a further supply. What do you do when you get there? That depends a good deal on whether or not you have a clear idea of what you want. There will be no obscurity in this respect if you have already thought out your own scheme. To go to the reference room with merely a general no-

tion is to waste a lot of time in groping; but if on your slip of paper, or in a note-book, you have definite points to look up, you can direct your attention to the most probable sources.

INDEX TO PERIODICALS

Let us imagine your notes contain the following:

1. Article in Magazine some years ago on "Harnessing the Sun."
2. Article on "Using the Tides," by a man of science

You have other entries, but these are articles you can remember reading at the time they appeared. The problem is to find them and read them again. You therefore ask for Poole's *Periodical Index*, and when you have found the references you ask for the bound volumes of the journals concerned. Prosecuting your search in other directions, you ask for the *Reader's Guide*, which is the monthly supplement of *Poole's*. The *Cumulative Book Index*, a weekly, catalogues all books of many countries which are published in America. *The Magazine Subject-Index* is a yearly which catalogues the titles of various magazine articles. Finally there are the Encyclopedias, of which the more important, such as the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and the *International* contain more or less complete information, on the various phases of your subject.

This may be supplemented by reference to the catalog of your own library.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY

In order to use the wealth of a Reference Library in an advantageous manner, you should have a knowledge of its contents; know the names of the books on its shelves; only then will you be able to know where to find your facts. Most reference rooms will contain a copy of Kroeger and Mudge's *Reference Books;* and a perusal of it, or some equivalent book, will tell you just those things about dictionaries, guides, text-books, and so forth, which you can discover in no other way except by long and hard-earned experience. Thus equipped, a reader who is anxious to understand political science, with a view to taking an active part in a local society of politicians, does not look through the leading catalog, "hoping to find something that will help me;" he goes to Baker's *Guide to the Best Fiction in English* or his *Guide to Historical Fiction,* which includes translations. *The Standard Catalog* may be consulted for the best books of recent times, which ultimately find their way in Baker. Sonnenschein's *Best Books* tabulates all subjects, not fiction alone. The *A. L. A. Catalog* lists the ten thousand best books in every field of knowledge. A fourth source is Graham's *Bookman's Manual.* There is a right way of doing everything, and hence, a right way of us-

ing a Public Library. If you do not know it already, it will pay you to learn.

VII—RÉSUMÉ

As previously indicated the true Pelmanist is an idealist as well as a realist. He must be able to value ideas as he would value an article of furniture or any other commercial commodity. Life is more than the meat that sustains it, the body more than the raiment with which it is clothed.

The chief points of the Lesson may be stated as follows:

(1) Superficiality is not synonymous with ignorance. The field of knowledge is so vast that we cannot expect to assimilate more than a small portion of it. But while we should determine to master some such small province, we should not neglect altogether to make at least a superficial survey of a wider field, else we shall fail to grasp the unity of the whole and the coherent significance of human knowledge.

(2) To do this, it is necessary to organize our time-table of leisure hours, and to follow discreetly the direction of our moods.

(3) A study of our mother tongue should occupy a premier position in the program. Many of our disputes and differences on vital subjects centre in the meaning of words; often, when these meanings are cleared up, we find we are much nearer harmony than we had supposed we

were. A discussion of the meanings and applications of the word *Right* is full of surprises, even to those who think they always use the word in its true connotation. If a special subject like Science, Literature, Philosophy, or the Fine Arts be selected for study, one must first understand what is the scope of the subject; then read its history. In this way one is able to separate the subject from allied subjects, and see it in its true relations.

(4) So far as is possible, the advice to the student as to how he should read is given on progressive lines; that is, the more elementary rules have been given a primary position.

(5) Of all the methods discussed, that of the formula is probably the most difficult. It has rare advantages, however, for it develops insight, and teaches one how to get at the soul of things.

(6) If there is one rule to which we would finally draw attention more than another, it is that every impression (reading, in this case) should be followed by some form of expression —writing preferred. Too much of our reading is superficial. We get the *feeling*, but we never crystallize it into exact phraseology. Probably not every book should be treated in this manner, but all books of serious purport should be so read that we can discuss the ideas with some exactitude of language.

(7) The suggestions for note-taking and re-

search in a Public Library snould be carried out scrupulously. We do not mean that you have to purchase an elaborate note-taking and filing apparatus, but that the devices chosen should be so used that the books you read will provide you with a harvest that you will be able to reap at any time you desire.

Finally, we are persuaded that no student can pursue the counsels of this Lesson without great profit to his cultural life, and incidentally to his general well-being.

VIII—DON'TS

1. Don't *rely* on books altogether; *use* them.

2. Don't forget, in any dispute, to examine the chief words *critically*.

3. Don't keep your knowledge in water-tight compartments. *Unify it.*

4. Don't fail to go through your note-books occasionally. Revision means recollection and new ideas.

5. Don't neglect the Public Library. Even a small one contains much of great value.

6. Don't lose courage when you enter a great library. You are not the only man who realizes the vastness of human knowledge and the littleness of his own share of it.

IX—THIS DO

1. Realize that good books reveal the personalities of great writers, and that *you* can get into touch with these personalities by reading.

2. Always try to get ideas which are superior to those which the author offers you.

3. Read critically, and satisfy yourself that the author makes his points.

4. Secure the best results of your reading by a proper system of note-making.

5. Learn to distinguish between sincere emotion and cheap sentimentality.

6. Always make a point of discussing, as you have opportunity, the good books that you read.

7. Know how to find facts. Knowing how is equivalent to analyzing a situation and represents thinking of a very high degree.

X—MENTAL EXERCISES

EXERCISE XL

A Pelman student with keen literary interests is enjoying a day in town, and of course must find time to look at the second-hand book shops. Being attracted by the chapter headings, the fame of the writer, and the modest sum asked for the book, he picks up a copy of *Questions at Issue* by Sir Edmund Gosse. One of the chapters is entitled: "What is a Great Poet?" The student is not prepared to answer the question himself; if pressed for an opinion he would take refuge in a declaration of his incompetence. He avers that he bought the book in order to learn. Well and good. But he will learn all the more truly if he tries, first of all, to answer the question himself. Let him divide it into two:

(a) What is a *poet?*
(b) What constitutes *greatness* in a poet?

The first question alone affords much room for an exercise in concentration, in comparison and contrast, in memory, in judgment, and valuation; it unifies all the impressions and ideas of all the poetry the student has ever read. He may not be satisfied with his tentative answers to the question, but that is a secondary affair; he did not set out to be satisfied, but to conduct a critical inquiry. When he has done his best

to answer both questions, he may profitably turn to Gosse's illuminating essay. Why profitably? Because he has formed his own opinions, and is not prepared to accept every statement made by another, unless it is supported by real evidence; because, having made some attempt to probe the subject, he can appreciate all the more deeply the critical valuations of other readers and critics.

EXERCISE XLI

In testing the value of any book you may read, use the following list of Reviewer's questions:

1. Title of the book? Publisher? Date?
2. Who is the author? What are his qualifications?
3. What is his aim in this book?
4. Has he succeeded?
5. If not, where has he failed?
6. How does this effort stand in relation to similar efforts by other authors?

EXERCISE XLII

Choose a dozen books from your shelves, any kind of books will do, and classify them according to the branch of knowledge to which they belong. Here for instance is a list of recent books:

1. Hibben's *Henry Ward Beecher.*
2. Clendening's *The Human Body.*

3. Sullivan's *Our Times.*
4. Dewey's *How We Think.*
5. Spencer's *Education.*
6. Lindsey's *Companionate Marriage.*
7. Reiss' *How to Produce Amateur Plays.*
8. Magee's *Materials of Banking.*
9. Chase and Schlink's *Your Money's Worth.*
10. Woodworth's *Psychology.*
11. Beard's *Rise of American Civilization.*
12. Burrow's *Social Basis of Consciousness.*
13. Peffer's *The White Man's Dilemma.*

The work of classification is not as easy as it might at first sight appear. Books can be included under two headings. For instance, Number 9 would come in the class of financial works, but it is also classifiable as belonging to the literature of the psychology of advertising, or large scale graft, and so on. Number 11 would have to appear under History, but it has also a claim to be included in Sociology. The aim of the exercise is not to teach library classification, as a science, but to train yourself to characterize and identify individual books according to genus and differentia. Every bookman should be able to put his books into groups. It shows that he possesses an acquaintance with the areas and borderlines of the great provinces of knowledge.

EXERCISE XLIII

Not every business man is acquainted with the literature of his calling, and it is desirable for

several reasons which are patent that he should remedy this defect. To rely on experience solely may not be unwise altogether, but nowadays the newspaper, the trade journal, and the book provide material of such importance that no man can afford to neglect it. Look around and see whether or not you are missing real opportunities. We do not refer so much to the large spheres of enterprises and activity, like Finance, but to the narrower spheres of specialized industries, such as seen in the production of leather, special foods, articles of clothing, and so forth. The chief sources of information are, as already suggested, the newspaper, the trade journal, and books written by competent authors. Ask yourself whether you draw upon these sources, and if so, whether you utilize the information to your advantage. We have known men who performed this exercise and made vast strides in consequence. You pay for the upkeep of a public library, but have you made your payments yield a return by way of information-dividends? If not, get busy and make some use of your Government taxes, and regard a Press cutting agency as possibly a good paying investment. (Our attention has just been called to an Article on "How to make your Public Library a Business Asset," by Alfred Greenberg, in the *American Magazine*, May, 1919.)

XI—HEALTH EXERCISES

ELEVENTH LESSON

For a great many years many of us have entertained the false notion that a standard weight chart was an infallible creation of the medical profession. Insurance companies, scale manufacturing concerns and many advertisements for reducing concerns have attempted to convince us that we can standardize weight per height. These people are not entirely wrong because they are simply speaking half the truth. How often the expression, "One man's meat is another man's poison," has been quoted in connection with some statement regarding the danger of a too liberal acceptance of any one doctrine of weight reduction and how little attention is paid to the quotation! A well known Professor of Medicine has recently restated the same quotation in this way: "What is a normal weight for one individual may be an abnormal weight for another." In other words, it is by no means sound logic to try and standardize your weight according to your height. Temperament, personal habits, method of living, nature of one's work and many other factors must be considered before it is safe to assume that you are under or over weight. There is nothing in this short series of suggested exercises that will of itself prove harmful to any individual. We make no pretense of assuring the Pelmanist that these ex-

ercises are certain to reduce weight. We present them simply as natural and enjoyable forms of activity that have as their purpose the development of muscular co-ordination and attendant efficiently functioning body.

While still in bed practice the Scissor movement for a few seconds, and then, rolling out of bed, continue the stretching by Standing Straight. Strive to add another inch to your height by extending the spine. Just try to grow tall and expend just a little more effort to make the extra inch.



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CHEST LIFT

Slowly raise the arms sideward upward over the head. As you look up, clasp the fingers over your head, at the same time keeping the arms straight. You are looking up and into the palms of your hands (Fig. 99). Now turn the palms upward so that the backs of your hands are facing down. Try to push the hands about six inches higher. Hold this position for about ten seconds then slowly turn the palms down and lower the arms sideward and downward to your side. This is a very slow and deliberate motion. Don't hurry it or you will nullify the value of the exercise. You can combine breathing with this movement. As you raise the arms, inhale slowly, and see to it that the lungs are completely filled only when the arms are at the top of the arc. As you lower the arms to the sides, exhale.



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RUNNING IN PLACE—DISTANCE

In Lesson X we tried the Running-in-place, using the sprinter's method of handling the legs and feet. In this lesson we will run in place for our Warming Up, but we will use the long distance style of running. As you bring the feet up from the floor, raise the knees only slightly in front and bring your heels up behind you instead of under you. The arm work is the same. Alternate forward and backward using the left arm forward as the right leg comes up and the right arm forward as the left leg is used. One hundred to one hundred twenty times to the minute is the best time for all running exercises.

WORSHIP

You have all seen photographs of the prayer ceremonials at Mecca. The exercise that follows is suggestive of the position assumed by all Mohammedans at prayer. You may place a pillow under your knees instead of resting them on the floor for this exercise. Kneel down with the knees and feet together. Now sit back on the heels and hold the hands out straight in front of you at about the level of the eyes, palms down (Fig. 100). Lean well forward and at the same time extend the arms in front of you in an effort to touch the floor as far away from you as you can without losing your balance. Do not press the floor (Fig. 101). Return to the starting position with the arms raised



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slightly higher than the head. Repeat about ten times.

While you are still sitting on your knees it will be an easy position to practice the Hoochy-Koochy exercise of the previous lesson.

HORIZONTAL

One of the hardest exercises for the average person to master is that of balancing on one foot and moving the body while in the balance position. This exercise calls for considerable amount of co-ordination but with a little practice it can be mastered. Its accomplishment is sure to give one a very satisfying feeling of muscular control. Stand with the feet together in the Stand Straight position and raise the arms, fully extended, sideward-upward over the head (Fig. 102). Now, maintaining this straight position and bending only at the waist, gradually bend forward. As the body goes forward raise the left foot upward and backward. Keep the knee stiff and the toes pointed, and balance on the right foot (Fig. 103). The idea is to see how nearly horizontal with the floor you can get your leg and body. Return to the starting position and repeat the movement using the left leg as the balance and raising the right leg from the floor. Do this ten times on each foot. The main purpose should be to keep the body as straight as possible at all times. Slightly bending the knee will help you to balance.



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DISCUS

One of the most popular events in the old Grecian Games was the discus throw. The discus throw has for many years been a regular event in our own athletic meets. The modern method of throwing or hurling the discus is far more difficult, but it has lost the charm of the ancient style. Today the throw is made from a circle; in olden days, it was thrown from a small wooden pedestal. For our purpose we will take the old style and use it as a form of exercise. You will need about five feet of space in front of you. Stand with your left foot about eighteen inches in front of the right, both feet facing the front. Raise your hands over your head and clasp the fingers of the right hand over those of the left, making a sort of cup of the left (Fig. 104). Now bend forward and at the same time swing both arms downward and upward to the left of the body. The right hand will stop when it comes into contact with the left knee; the left arm continues on up until it is approximately horizontal to the floor and the palm of the hand is facing the body (Fig. 105). Now we are ready to throw. Swing the left arm downward and forward and upward with a sudden movement. The right arm is carried downward and backward to the right. At the same time you jump forward from both feet and land with the left foot three feet in front of the right, with a slight turn of the body to



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the left. The chest should be well arched and the head held high. This exercise is also taken on the right, using the right foot in front and the right hand as the throwing one. Repeat five times on each side.

STRIDE JUMP

As a circulatory stimulant we will try the Stride jumping steps. With hands on hips and feet together, jump to a stride stand, the right foot moving to the right and the left foot to the left (Fig. 106). The distance between the feet after the jump should be about eighteen inches. Now jump and bring the feet together. Jump feet apart again. This time the right foot goes forward and the left foot goes backward, each foot covering about nine inches (Fig. 107). Jump feet together, and at the same time that you jump, turn to the left. The jump and the turn are so timed that when the feet come together you have completed your turn and are facing toward the left. Repeat the jumping again and the turn on the fourth count will find you facing the opposite direction from which you started. Repeat for two more turns and you will be facing as you were in the first place. Now we will repeat counts 1 and 2 as before but this time on count 3 the left foot goes forward, and the right foot goes back. Inasmuch as the left foot is forward, the natural way to turn would be to the right; so this time, on the fourth

count, we turn right. Repeat on the left side for three more turns. That makes 16 counts left and 16 counts right. Thirty-two left and the same number right will be sufficient.

SUGGESTION

Alcohol is not the only stimulant that is the cause of digestive disturbances. While alcohol may have its value as a medicine, there seems to be no excuse for its use under any other guise than that of conviviality. The person who has the best interests of his body at heart will find that total abstinence will be to his advantage. Alcohol is not a stimulant; it is a depressant that simulates the feeling of actual stimulants. Its secondary action lowers vitality and is especially harmful to the digestive apparatus. Tea and coffee, whose active ingredients are tannin and caffein, also produce an artificial stimulation. Extremely nervous conditions are often traced to excessive use of tea and coffee. It would be much better to refrain from all these beverages. One should, at least, drink coffee and tea only in moderation if he cannot tolerate total abstinence.

References:

STAND STRAIGHT.
SCISSORS.
HOOCHY-KOOCHY.
BICYCLE RIDING.
HIGH KICK.
JUMPING JACK.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS AS TO PROGRESS SHEETS AND TEXT BOOKS

1. Write your name and address legibly on every Progress Sheet.
2. Your number should appear on all your communications, otherwise much unnecessary labor devolves on the staff.
3. Do not think that your answer must be confined always to the space beneath the question; use additional sheets if you desire.
4. The Text Books should be kept by the student for future reference. Remember you will want to use these attractive and durably bound books for years to come. They will be a library of practical value for you.
5. From seven to ten days are usually sufficient for the mastery of a Text Book and the completion of the Progress Sheet, but it is possible to do these things in a briefer period. Everything depends on the student's leisure. There is no fixed time for the return of Progress Sheets.

PELMAN LESSON XII

Lesson XII shows the true relation between self-assertiveness that is bad and that which is good. The development of personality is the chief aim of this lesson.

This final lesson of the Course also endeavors to make you realize the value of the vital truths of Pelmanism.