

Classroom Material R.B. Appleton

I **Obiter Dicta**

Just as we all have our own little idiosyncracies of manner and gesture, so we must all have various stock phrases and gibes which we use in the class-room. I remember that Dr. Rouse used to be fond of ending his sixth-form lessons with

Claudite iam rivos, pueri; sat prata biberunt

Other tags from the Eclogues might be so used. I don't know whether our pupils would approve of

Ite domum saturaе, venit Hesperus, ite capellae (more suitable perhaps for girls' schools)

But no one could object to

Desine plura, puer, et quod nunc instat agamus.

Such literary references can, of course, only be appreciated by top forms; but I have found that even with little boys of thirteen "tags" quoted from their reader never fail to please. (They are especially delighted when they think of them before you do). And there are plenty of stock phrases other than quotations which we must all be in the habit of using. It occurred to me that if these were pooled the result might be useful to all. I therefore venture to start a little puddle – not too muddy a one, I hope – with the following phrases, etc., which I have found myself able to teach in this incidental way: -

Sero venientibus ossa. (When a boy is late)

Ex ventre laborare, etc. (When a boy returns from absence)

Gravedo (Cold in the nose)

Melior fieri valetudine; meliusculus fio

Sternumentum. ("Salvus sis." Whenever a boy sneezes)

Ceris et stilo incumbamus (Let us get on with our work)

Litus aras. (When a boy laboriously does something useless.)

Parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. (Inadequate piece of home work.)

Favete linguis.

Pedis suppositio

Stipendia mereri. (To be in the school corps.)

Explorator; speculator.

Sus Minervam! (When a boy corrects you, and you happen to be right. If you were wrong, then – Quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus.)

Nares emungere; emunctae naris homo

Caput aperire. (raise the cap.)

Vox praeconis.

Acta diurna. (Newspaper.)

Naufragium in portu facis. (When a boy makes a mistake only at the end of a piece of work.)

Et nos manum ferulae subduximus. (I was once at school myself.)

Neque nature neque litteras novit. (of a fool.)

Legere et non intellegere neglegere est. (When a boy doesn't ask for an explanation of what he doesn't understand.)

Ab ovo usque ad mala.

Lupus in fabula. (If someone of whom you have been speaking enters the room.)