A HANDBOOK
OF
PRÉCIS-WRITING
A HANDBOOK OF PRÉCIS-WRITING WITH GRADUATED EXERCISES

by

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PREFACE

SEVERAL universities and examining boards have lately recognised the utility of Précis-writing, and the present volume has been compiled to meet what the writer considers is a long-felt want.

For several years, it has been a part of his duty to prepare candidates in English for the London Matriculation and the Senior Certificate of the Central Welsh Board, and as no suitable text-book appeared for a considerable time to meet the requirements of these examinations, it became necessary to select appropriate passages for this purpose from a wide range of English authors. The book is therefore the outcome of a long experience in teaching Précis-writing, and the majority of the pieces selected have been worked as exercises in a Matriculation form. While the book is intended mainly for candidates preparing for the above-mentioned Examinations, the author considers that this valuable exercise may with advantage be taken up earlier in the school-course, e.g., by forms preparing for the Junior Certificate of the Central Welsh Board, and all the passages in Part I have been carefully graded to make them suitable for pupils beginning the subject. It will be clear therefore that the present volume is not expressly
intended for candidates preparing for such Examinations as those of the Civil Service and the Army, in which a large mass of official correspondence has to be summarised. At the same time, it is hoped that this handbook will afford the pupil such a sound training in the principles of précis-writing as will enable him to proceed to the more difficult branches of the subject with comparative ease.

It remains for me to acknowledge my obligations to various authorities for permission to print certain of the selections: to Sir John Stirling-Maxwell and to Messrs Blackie and Son, Ltd., for the extract from the late Sir William Stirling-Maxwell's speech; to the University of London for Nos. 54, 58; to the Central Welsh Board for Nos. 9, 11, 15, 47; to the Controller of H. M. Stationery Office for the extract from the Poor Law Commission Minority Report; to the editor of the Manchester Guardian for extract No. 60; to the Walter Scott Publishing Co. for the extract from their edition of Lowell's My Study Windows; and to Messrs Macmillan & Co. for extract No. 59 taken from Davies and Vaughan's translation of Plato's Republic.

I am also indebted to my friend and colleague Mr E. Morgan Williams, B.A., for several valuable suggestions.

E. D. E.

TOWYN,
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