PREFACE

Life has its little paradoxes. The study of English is retained in India for enrichment - personal and national; in effect, however, it has impoverished a number of people by making them expend their time and energy without ever earning dividends, and, in the process, imbibe a feeling of frustration. Hardly anyone associated with it has been spared by this impoverishing process; but 'the most unkindest cut of all' has been sustained by students.

This study was primarily inspired by curiosity - curiosity to know the factors causing the problem of teaching English and to know whether the problem could be solved. The spirit of inquiry, the investigator feels, has been richly rewarded. As he looks back in retrospect, he realizes how his own grasp of the problem grew firmer as he got on with his study. This and many a study it might kindle would, it is hoped, lead to a better understanding of the problem.

After an hare had made a beautiful speech on equality, so goes one of Aesop's fables, a lion answered, "A good speech, Hairy-Feet, but it lacks claws and teeth such as we have." The investigator's is but a short speech lacking 'claws and teeth'. He is too junior a teacher to be in a
position to directly influence course designs of English at various stages. However, he feels he has an advantage over Aesop's hare in that the powers that be in the field of English teaching, especially at the college level, have the grace and magnanimity to accept an objective analysis of the situation. What is expected is nothing more than the consideration, the findings and recommendations deserve. That consideration is anticipated for the good of (to use a line quoted by Dr. Ramesh Mohan) the 'hungry sheep' which 'look up and are not fed.'

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