



Latin in Secondary Schools

Rufus C. Bentley

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LATIN IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

By RUFUS C. BENTLEY.

It is fair to state at the outset that my thesis in regard to the study of Latin in secondary schools is not that such study should be increased, nor yet that it should be slighted because such study is not desirable, but, for reasons which it is my purpose to bring forward, that its use as a secondary subject should be among the last rather than the first language subjects afforded by the ordinary school. If it were my main purpose to discuss the relative merits of language subjects as material for secondary instruction, I could, consistently with the ground I shall take, support the thesis that the vernacular ought to take precedence over every other language, that the field should be broadened in the modern languages, and that the study of Latin and Greek are justified in secondary instruction only when the school can afford luxuries.

I mean to imply that there is a valid case in court against Latin, at least so far as the nature of the claims made for it go; that those claims are much too ambitious and made upon false premises (arguments lodged against Latin are pretty sure to attack Greek upon the same ground); and that, in a word, the advocates of the wide use of Latin in secondary schools seem inclined to defend the last ditch on the ground of the *formal training* value of the subject. The skirmishes of this defence are seen scattered thickly through the periodical educational literature back to the days of the Committee of Ten, many numbers being largely devoted to symposia or debate upon the subject.

Three phases of the subject must be noticed: (1) the historical facts of secondary instruction in Latin, (2) the present status of the teaching of Latin in the public high schools is to be compared with the actual needs of modern American communities, and (3) the arguments for Latin as now presented are to be weighed.

Following—or in fact published with—the Report of the Committee of Ten came President Baker's minority report which pointed out the fallacy of the vain assumptions of the several committees, viz.: that subjects of study were mere instruments of education, and that the work of education began by a mere choice of almost equally efficient tools. Then there

was the remonstrance made by President Schurman against the same thing; and, as if to point the subject with all its glaring and bristling defiances of the laws of an accepted psychology, Professor Hindeale published "The Dogma of Formal Discipline." In this paper the author set forth clearly the limitations which psychology sets to the dogma so confidently used by the committee. An analysis of the extravagant claims made by each several sub-committee leaves them devoid of psychological support. But the value of the paper as suggestion for investigation is even greater than its theoretical value. Arguments *pro* and *con* may make appeal where minds are open, and even some headway against prejudice; but the field is fallow for the more fruitful cultivation which experiment can give it.

In the face of the rebuke which these protests have made against the anachronism of the Committee of Ten, a work recently published, *The Teaching of Latin and Greek*, by Professors Bennett and Bristol, of Cornell University, has taken a stand upon "the dogma" as if nothing had ever happened to its underpinning. The bold appearance of Professor Bennett's opening chapter on *The Justification of Latin*, gathering up into itself all the most ultra arguments of the formal training literature, so fully represents that whole line of argument for the study of Latin that a review of it in some detail will serve the purposes of my main point.

No one contends that Latin was deliberately introduced into the schools of modern times; but remaining as it has from a time when it was, though not the vernacular, still the medium of all literary expression, it has had to present its own justification for remaining into the time when schools and society are inclined to test everything, to hold fast only that which is good. The philosophy of the history of education makes no fact connected therewith more clear than that each age has consciously or unconsciously expressed its hopes and its needs in its education; through all the mistakes of its theorists always finding, nevertheless, some part of the truth and doing little violence to the rest, except perhaps as the theorists themselves over-expressed the truth in their over-enthusiasm. In accordance with this principle our own time will eventually find its way out to clearer light upon some of the vexed questions of "educational values." Indeed it is the sheer demand for the credentials of each subject of study, whether already in the curriculum or seeking entrance, that has driven them, not only to sharp competition for places, but even to extravagant representations of peculiar merits.

It is perhaps not an unfair explanation of the extreme ground taken by the apologists and advocates of classical studies, to

contend that their ultimate reliance upon the validity of the dogma of formal training is itself an indication of the straits of the case. The anachronism of the Report of the Committee of Ten appears in almost every separate report, where the 'faculties' are virtually parceled out to the various subjects, each faculty labeled with its needs and the subject which is, as it were, its specific. There is a strange significance in the appearance of this report just at the moment when psychology gave the cue for an outspoken repudiation of the whole doctrine of formal discipline. If the ground of that repudiation is well taken a heavy burden of proof is thrown back upon the advocates of any subject, a burden heavy in proportion as the subject has confidently thrown aside all other credentials. The case against Latin must at least stay in court till the charges which have been brought by a reputable psychology are either proved or withdrawn.

In mediæval schools the study of Latin groped its way through a period of mechanical use, which was flagrant enough to be no stumbling block to any one in modern times. The difficulty which really stands in the way of an unbiased judgment of its present worth enters with the later humanistic movement, through which Latin came to its own, and, in theory at least, presided at the feast which was to serve up to humanity the best of human history, all of which then lay in antiquity. If Latin—as a subject of study for the ordinary student—could fulfill this promise, and as a language *usable* by the student put him into communication with that life of the ancient society of Rome, and of Greece behind her, there would still be a chance to take the case out of court without relying upon the sanction of a hopeless dogma.

The history of Christianity is a record of the successive exaltations of mediators. The history of language study is a worthy analogue. The next step after recognition of what the language could unfold was the canonization of Saint Cicero; and the modern humanist has not yet ceased to bask in the light of his halo. We are said to be still living in the days of the best humanism. "The number of students in Latin in our secondary schools has in recent years been increasing out of all proportion to the number of students who go to college. Unless this phenomenon be attributed to an unaccountable infatuation it admits to my mind," says Professor Bennett, "of but a single interpretation. Latin is now recognized as an important element of secondary education for the average pupil whether he be intending to go to college or not. Yet," he continues, "it is perhaps unfortunate that the present tendency towards a larger study of Latin in our schools cannot be traced to any recent sober discussions of the value of Latin; in fact it

is not a little surprising that this rapidly increased recognition has occurred in the face of the most vigorous assaults upon the classics which this country has ever experienced. Is it too bold to say that the experience of those who have studied Latin and of those who have seen the positive results of the study upon others, is after all the ultimate reason which is at present so potent in winning increased recognition of Latin?"

For the purposes of our argument we could have made no better statement of the case, although it would have been too harsh a comment upon the articles which have been written, and which doubtless have been influential in increasing the study of Latin, to have dismissed them as not 'serious.' From the best point of view they are perhaps not the most serious because they are all expressions of opinion, and produce no more convincing proof than ought mere opinion backed only by the writer's 'experience.' When we shall have had instead of opinion, *evidence*, and instead of experience, *experiment*, it will be time to give arguments upon the subject of teaching Latin in the public high school *serious* consideration. That the phenomenon is not to be attributed to an 'infatuation' (at least of spontaneous origin), nor to a deliberate consideration of the prime importance of Latin, nor even to a recognition of it "as an important element of secondary education" by the great majority of those who have been induced to expand its study or adopt it; but that this great increase in the secondary study of Latin is due directly to the zealous efforts of a few able partisans of the subject must, upon careful thought, be evident to any one who will give it that thought.

The public high school, not the whole secondary field, and that public high school modified by the character of the community in which it is located, is the proper field for the consideration of Latin teaching. For, on the one hand the public high school is the only one about which any generalizations may be made with reference to aims, since it is the individual prerogative of each private school to state for itself what its purposes shall be; while on the other hand the public high school is, in the first place, probably the known quantity which the theorist in secondary education has in mind in his discussions, and is, in the second place, peculiar above other public schools, especially in this, that its aim may be greatly modified to types which will suit the actual conditions and needs of the community where it is located. At least such will be the contention of this paper in defining the aims of the high school as related to the subject of Latin; maintaining that it is first of all the duty of the school to adapt itself without prejudice to the actual needs of the community. It is true that in recent years high schools have taken a wide divergence in types, as seen in city

manual training schools, but it needs only a second thought to see that the establishment of different sorts of high schools in the same city is an abortive attempt at the best, if it be an attempt at all, to adapt the school to the actual needs of the community. While the problems of large city high schools are peculiar to themselves, and not particularly in mind in this discussion, we need but to notice this differentiation into separate classical and technical schools to see that it is, whether consciously or unconsciously, an effort to adapt to different classes of society rather than to different communities. When this question shall have been reduced to terms in which we shall be able to express our own peculiar national conditions without resorting to an entirely foreign terminology like that of Prussia we shall have much help in handling the subject of high schools in large cities.

For present purposes I am chiefly interested in smaller communities, smaller in individual population, but as communities many times greater in number than the cities. In these smaller towns the high school idea is really only just earning its right to exist, and in these communities there are problems of organization which they will never be able, unaided, to fish out for themselves from the floods of tradition. It will not do to leave it to time to straighten out crooked lines of action. If this is an age of conscious adaptation why not give serious attention to the difficulties which the future will unearth if we let things drift, and relieve the future of the incubus of long standing mistakes? What are the needs of the smaller communities which are nevertheless large enough to graft on the high school to the elementary system? Is it possible to adapt that school to the needs of the community at the beginning? If so what stands in the way of such adaptation? And are we willing to face the issue when the needs are proved?

In commenting upon the sweeping claims made by Professor Bennett, for the use of Latin as an almost indispensable means of discipline, I have in mind, then, not the high schools of cities, not even those of smaller cities, which by sheer force of numbers have advantages in organization and administration over the smaller schools, and are afforded an equipment which makes it possible for them to offer a great variety of subject matter. Throughout the smaller cities and country towns there are hundreds of high schools whose actual conditions, it is safe to say, do not arise into the thought of the theorist when he generalizes upon the needs and possibilities of secondary schools. The gross statistics of such schools certainly demand a much larger recognition for their type. Yet still more than the statistics which would show the *present* membership, the fact that it is small as compared with the school census, and

that it could, and ought to, be greatly increased by legitimate means, is a fact which, though negative in character, makes a loud call for consideration.

If it were possible really to determine with such assurance as that of Professor Bennett and the Committee of Ten on Latin that Latin (and for that matter any of the subjects of convention), which they find must enter into the minimal curriculum of the secondary schools, were the ones without which secondary instruction would be an empty name, then it would follow at once that the problems of curriculum for small schools would all be solved, and the like problems of larger schools would be simply one of choice as to what electives they should offer. The truth of the matter, if plainly told, is that while a group of men who are teachers of a particular subject are pre-eminently fitted to show *how* that subject should be taught, there is no evidence of their willingness to throw the question open for debate as to whether the subject is as necessary as they have always considered it, much less to enter the debate as an open field and present the arguments on both sides.

Professor Bennett dismisses at the outset the subject of Latin in college, and thus simplifies the problem of criticism as well as his own, except—and the exception is a pivotal matter with the criticism—except that the prevailing notion of the relations existing between the high school and the college makes a difficulty which is an obstacle to innovation while it entrenches the advocate of Latin behind a barricade heaped up out of ages of tradition. Shall the fact that Latin is taught in college have anything to do in deciding the question as to whether Latin ought to be taught in the high school? Whatever may be the power of the professor of Latin or Greek to forget, when he is discussing its use in the high school, that it means everything to the success of his department whether it is taught in secondary schools or not; or whatever may be his power of placing himself in the position of the high school principal, or better yet in the place of the community under discussion, the fact remains that the ideal hitherto set has been that of the ultimate purposes of the college and university, and the ideal comity has been that of absolute dictation from the higher schools. The college professor of Latin or Greek has the same right to demand a part of the work in his subject as preparation for work in that subject that any other college professor has; and that is, in any case, *no right whatever*. This is the real logic of the statement Professor Bennett makes that the value of Latin as a college study is a question entirely distinct from the question as to the value of Latin in the secondary school. That is to say, we cannot properly discuss the value at all, until we forsake the notion upon which relations are now

so largely organized, namely, that what any teacher of a higher school wants to be able to accomplish has anything whatever to do with what the teacher of the lower school shall be expected to teach. Until this change of attitude comes about in the men who want students more than they care what students need, the prospects of the high schools will fare badly at the hands of committees made up of such men.

It is no easy task to keep the craft called "the function of education" well out into mid stream and free from the snags of formal training which lie just beneath the surface of such expressions as "Latin (or mathematics, or history or what not) as an *instrument* of education." Yet it is by using such an expression as the terms of his theme, and by starting upon Laurie's statement that language is the chief instrument of education, that Professor Bennett bases his whole justification of the secondary study of Latin. Less radical replies to this statement would go far toward covering the whole ground, but why not meet the statement with the fact? The fact is that language as language is not an 'instrument' of education. Education is not a process that is effected by the use of instruments—as if it were a surgical operation,—but it is really as different from the operation of instruments as is the process of physical growth from the surgical operation which checks or stops growth. One requires *food*, the other *instruments*. Language is one vehicle of expression and nothing more, be that which is expressed, an idea, a group of ideas, a thought, or a logical concept. I do no violence to Professor Bennett's thought in this refinement, for it is just such a mistaking of the sign for the thing signified that he dwells upon in this connection. "It [language] promotes intellectual discipline and brings intellectual power, because the study of language brings us at every turn face to face, as nothing else does, with subjects and questions of intellectual concern and intellectual interest." If the thing were put in exactly the converse way it would express more truthfully facts of education. "Subjects and questions of intellectual concern and intellectual interest bring us face to face at every turn with language as the means of their expression." There are some places in our educational practice where we need to turn our expressions inside out to get a truthful statement of what we are—or should be—after. Do we breathe because our lungs enjoy the process as an end? or is it because air is the food of the blood and the body while the process of breathing is the means of bringing the blood and its food into contact? Is breathing or life the desired end? Language comprises the instrumental signs of a process, and no process, not to say its mere signs, is an end in itself. The question might well be raised whether language, even the English

language itself, merely as such, is ever a legitimate object of study before the time comes to study its science in grammar and logic. If this be true of the vernacular where does the classical language stand? The correct use of the mother tongue, whatever conjuring may be done with it, will only be learned by correct use in expression. Those who wish to express or receive through foreign tongues should study those tongues for this same good reason which holds for the vernacular. But here the argument for the study of language breaks down, when the effort is made to apply the same principle to the study of the ancient classical languages. That earlier mediæval reason for the study of Latin was identical with the one just mentioned. And here is the weakest point of all in the argument for a wide study of the Latin language to-day. If it be maintained that our civilization is but an outgrowth of the ancient, not yet fully grown through the rough shell of mediæval barbarism, the contention cannot be gainsaid; but if it be further maintained, as is so often done, that the way to a knowledge of that civilization is through a knowledge of the languages of that time, it may be as confidently re-asserted that their knowledge, for people who really do know much of that civilization in a sympathetic way, did not come largely through direct reading. It is even true of many college professors of the classics that at most they cannot have read more than a few hundred pages of the language itself, nor would they know essentially more of the ancient civilization if they had read all its extant literature in its native form. How many of them spend quiet hours of literary enjoyment in the perusal of uncial unseparated into words, or even in deciphering palimpsests? If this be true of expert scholars of the classic tongues, it were folly to urge it too strongly as the reason why the ordinary layman should ground himself in the classics. Granted that the ancient civilization lives in its literature, pure and not altered as we see it in the history of intervening time, it cannot be proved that any considerable part of it contributes directly to modern civilization because there are many people who can labor through a few pages of Cæsar, Cicero and Vergil. The language, with all there is left in it, we shall always have, and have as abundantly as now, if no public school should teach another line of Latin.

This gone, there is practically no argument left but the training value of the subject; and this is the ground upon which Professor Bennett makes his whole plea for the teaching of Latin in the secondary school, insisting first of all upon the power of translation to react beneficially upon the use of the mother tongue: "The mastery over the resources of one's mother tongue . . . comes as a direct and necessary

result of careful daily translation. . . . " Strange and perverse as must seem the contention to those who hold this belief—for it is only a belief, and remains to be supported by evidence—I must contend that for very many pupils the mere process of the translation of Latin is as foreign to the production of good and adequate English as any exercise in language could possibly be. No one will deny the necessity for a careful analysis and comparison of forms of expression in the process, but I maintain that as an exercise in attaining good expression in English it is at best a roundabout and ineffective process; because, while the fundamental qualities of thought process are universal, there is to each language a genius of idiom which, taken altogether, makes up its completed frame of thought. In translation, which is done sentence by sentence, the effort is made to think in two languages at once. As an achievement in English the immediate translation will be poor, while the mind is upon the Latin expression. The value of the exercise is strictly not in the translation at all. Let the pupil read the Latin and think the sentence in Latin, unhampered by an effort to put it into English, and he is undergoing a profitable process in language, but let him try to express it in English while he is reading it in Latin, and the English thus produced by the pupil of ordinary power is such an execrable haggling of his native speech as even that pupil would be incapable of under any other circumstances. What else do the urgent warnings against "translation English" imply than that translation, as translation, has a bad effect upon the native speech of the ordinary pupil? But let him now perfect the English expression and you have had the performance of two exercises in language, which are distinct, but neither of which is really translation, and neither of which is really expression. The translation, as such, may be a good lesson in logic, but it is not a lesson in expression, and the mother tongue has been subjected to a test which has by no means contributed to its spontaneity; not to mention the torture it has suffered to make it express the Latin writer's thought in passages which answer sentence to sentence, even phrase to phrase, doing violence to the unhampered freedom of each language, worst of all to the language one is supposed to be improving. This problem is very different from that of translating French. In the case of translating Latin into English, the translation is from a language of synthesis to one of analysis, from one in which arrangement of words depends directly upon the emphasis intended, to one in which the arrangement of words in clauses is practically limited to a fixed order, although both admit of periodic structure. And this inherent difference in structure is not likely to elucidate the novice's conception of

the genius of his own language, but rather to befog and confuse it with a form of expression wholly foreign to it. All that is said about the inherent difficulties of the task as recommending it I must pass over as unworthy of modern conceptions of education. But, even admitted to consideration, a knotty problem in logic is not necessarily an exercise in the expression of thought.

If from a different point of view it be maintained, with regard to the pupil's language profit from the study of Latin, that the philology of English derivation from Latin is profitable to the pupil, it must in truth and candor be admitted that the pupil who takes an active interest in the etymologies when pointed out, not to say the one who delights in making their discovery, is a *rara avis*. And even if it were otherwise, the fact that its vocabulary is basal to that of English would be a doubtful reason for enforcing the general study of Latin.

With regard to the ground taken by Professor Bennett upon the matter of struggling directly with language itself when the pupil has no thought to express, and is, as he admits gaining no positive knowledge, but "is learning to differentiate related concepts," a more reckless disregard of the facts of educational process could scarcely be taken. Not even the Committee of Ten will bear out the theory here maintained, which aims to equip a boy with contentless words and turns of phrase that when he grows up and learns to think he may have "that indispensable equipment of the educated man, the capacity to say what he says with directness, clearness, precision and effect." It is as idle as the remark itself, perhaps, simply to deny it, for both the remark and the denial should be brought to trial in experiment. But neither is without a burden of proof, and nothing could be much harder than to put the finger upon an iota of acceptable offhand evidence that exercise in the niceties of translation really contributes to facility and perfection of expression when the thoughts mature toward which the phrases in translation may be supposed to look. If it be maintained that the power to phrase with precision is being learned in a general way the burden of proof upon the statement is but the heavier, for investigations of the spread and efficacy of general ability throw constantly increasing doubt upon there being any such thing.

Translations are even proposed by Professor Bennett to take the place of much of the composition work of the secondary school, urging that it is better to reproduce the lofty thoughts of a Cicero than to try to express thoughts of our own where they scarcely exist. A case may easily be weakened by pushing it too far. Urge for Latin the magic power of storing away in the youthful mind profitable means of expres-

sion when thoughts shall finally come that need those means ! but do not push the point to the absurdity of making expression such an external, artificial thing that it may even be supplanted by something that is not expression. Expression is not mere re-presentation, if so, a typewriter or a printing press might be said to express. But it involves assimilation, a stage of thought digestion that translation may entirely avoid. If it be true that good composition is hard to get from the secondary pupil, the case is but the stronger against closing the many rich avenues of approach to a modern world full of things to be known and expressed, by an endless drill of the contentless mind upon little daily portions of an all but contentless foreign matter. The world is full of living matter for real expression, but the Latinist who is bent on training an empty mind to be ready to hold a content when it gets it is certainly not even making the most of his inherently weak case. Such doctrine, if it were not so well overwrought with plausible appeals to the dogma of formal discipline, would be forthwith incontinently drummed out of the pedagogical camp.

Professor Bennett could not have done better in choosing a statement of this dogma than to take, as he has, that of President Eliot. No subject of the curriculum could fail to present an equally strong case. Yet Latin is shown to furnish the best training in "observing accurately, recording correctly, comparing, grouping and inferring justly, and in expressing the result of these operations with clearness and force;" which is President Eliot's formula. It is amusing to see how the generalization of one who undoubtedly has natural science in view as fulfilling the conditions of the recipe, serves perfectly the purposes of another when standing for a subject which the maker of the prescription would probably say least fulfilled its conditions. The instructive feature of the episode is that one has set a blunder as a model to the other, and the other has gravely elaborated the most indefensible feature of the blunder. President Eliot's formula is the test applied by the several committees on secondary subjects, each to its particular subject, resulting in reports which clearly pointed out the intellectual ability which each subject by its magic alchemy had the power to produce. Certainly the only hope of effective truce in the warfare between science and humanism (so called) can come when both sides refuse to be betrayed into a sophistic defence upon claims so untenable as those of formal training.

No branch of knowledge may justly be declaimed against as knowledge, but no branch of knowledge can in justice be accorded an unproved right to pose as the gatekeeper to other worlds of knowledge; and less still the right to represent itself as a necessary means of producing the capacity for other

knowledge. When these distinctions shall have been done away with as they deserve, all subjects of education will, as they deserve, have a fair field and no favor.

This is not hopelessly forsaking the persistence of the principle mentioned at the outset that each generation gravitates toward an adequate conception of its educational needs. The fact that Latin and Greek remain strongly entrenched on an eminence which tradition has fortified for them, and are even now making successful sallies and raids with acquisition of territory is but proof of two things: first, that they have the strongest men in their camp as might be expected, and second, that the gravity of time is a longer process than can be appreciated by each generation which sees only a section of its course. Out of discussion will come an appreciation of the grounds of defence, with a better measure of the opponent and his ground; and better yet there will come in time, when the futility of mere argument has made itself felt, a willingness to submit educational theories to the same ordeal of scientific test to which other theories are submitted. Whatever canons of reasoning men hold themselves to in other matters, partisanship, to some extent in educational matters even as in religion, will again and again compel them to desert.

Principal MacKenzie is quoted as comparing the status of a school before and after an interval of twenty-three years. Twenty-three years ago, when *he* was a boy, the academy he attended had "brilliant achievements in developing mental power with Latin as the staff of the pupil's mental life." After twenty-three years during which the only change of which any note is made, in pupils, teachers, aims of parents and conditions of home life, character of the community, ideals set by society, etc., etc., is the fact that this academy, like others, has meanwhile "established an English side without Latin," which has resulted in "an unfavorable change in the intellectual tone and character of the institution." The same witness says he has not met one teacher (among those of the *Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools* in the Middle States and Maryland—then in session) who, administering courses of study both with and without one or two of the classical languages, does not affirm that satisfactory scholarship is found only on the so-called classical side, and that therefore, no satisfactory substitute for Greek and Latin has yet been found. It would be fair to know whether the teachers interviewed were "taken as they came," as well as whether they had any actual evidence upon which to base such sweeping statements, and it would not come amiss in giving due weight to their judgments to know what their standards of "satisfactory scholarship" were. These points must be insisted upon before we frame

into our educational creed the remark quoted from President Benjamin Ide Wheeler that French and German cannot compare with the classics as *effective instruments* of secondary education "simply because they don't."

Professor Bennett makes a comparison between Latin and modern languages, but as the comparison is on the relative disciplinary merits of the two it could have no part in my purpose. His conclusion of the valuation of subjects is: "Latin I should insist upon as the basal study for all pupils of the secondary school who are capable of pursuing it. More than two languages (Latin for four years, and Greek, German or French for three years) I should not suggest for an individual pupil, though I am well aware that the colleges are enforcing demands in this direction. With all the advantages and allurements of language study I feel that we can easily go too far, and may do damage by neglecting *other sides* of the pupil's intellect." One might have supposed that he had completely boxed the compass of the pupil's intellect in the application of President Eliot's formula. His conclusion is that the primary ends of Latin study in the secondary school are "the power of accurate observation, the development of the reasoning faculties, and the superior facilities it affords for training in our own language. . . . Incidentally, too, we considered," he says, "the fact that the study of Latin gives us the needed insight into the precise meaning of a vast number of English words derived from Latin, and that by taking us out of ourselves the study of Roman life and thought gives us a broader view of the significance of ideas and institutions." Beyond this there are claims of less importance of historical training and æsthetic training which are ascribed to the study of Latin.

Very naturally in dealing with the objections which have been made to the study of the classics, Professor Bennett deals first with those of Herbert Spencer. It is interesting to notice that neither Mr. Spencer nor Professor Bain, who is next quoted, affords any satisfaction to his critic by giving attention to the formal training claims of the subjects under discussion. Mr. Spencer's insistence upon the meaning and paramount value of content in a subject of study finds no point of contact with Professor Bennett's line of reasoning. So also with respect to Professor Bain's arguments. There is a refutation of such objections as these: "(1) The cost of classical study is great. (2) The mixture of conflicting studies distracts the learner. (3) The study is devoid of interest. (4) The classics inculcate the evil of pandering to authority." As to his own argument for the study of Latin he complains that "Bain practically ignores the transcendent value of the increased intellectual power derived from the study of the classics, and the

mastery acquired over the resources of one's mother tongue, *i. e.*, over the ideas which form the highest intellectual elements of our national life—the very things which we set down above as constituting the prime reason for studying Latin."

All would agree with Professor Bennett that Professor Frederick Paulsen's critique of Latin in German schools would have a much modified application to American schools where it would have any; but in its estimate of the results of an exclusive adherence to the classics in the German schools in times past and in their failure to produce the character and attainments claimed as their natural fruit, it is much more instructive and far reaching than the briefer history of our own secondary instruction can illustrate. Yet there is a fact in our own secondary education which is strikingly called to mind by Prof. Bennett's comment on Professor Paulsen's argument that men who have enjoyed the classical training in the *gymnasien* are a unit for its retention; so favor it, not because they are moved to do so by an appreciation of the value of the training they received, but because they wish to perpetuate the caste to which this education preserves them. Certainly it is true, as Professor Bennett says, that "in this country no one will charge the existence of such sentiments as a factor in the adjustment of educational problems." Not *such* sentiments, but sentiments which bear a close relation to them because they are produced by the same cause. As I have already suggested the leading men in the last few decades during which secondary education has been receiving anything like adequate attention in America, have been, by reason of the very nature of secondary instruction hitherto, men of classical leanings, because the best education had been—and I am inclined to think, in point of efficiency, still is—in the classical courses. The prestige of classical instruction is ancient in its reputation compared with other courses. It is men who are the product of these courses who have hitherto, and still, largely set the standards for secondary schools' ambitions. If ever a sentiment had an opportunity to maintain itself by inbreeding, the ideals of classical scholarship have had that opportunity. What else could there be if the mere force of human conservatism has held out successfully with a good thing against the innovations of a better? What wonder if this American aristocracy of culture has made the most of its European exemplars and has cultivated successfully the sentiment Professor Bennett finally descends to in a further comment upon Professor Paulsen's arguments? The latter is quoted: "All the fine phrases about discipline and culture supposed to result from language study are likely to make no appeal to sturdy common sense." Then the comment: "If by sturdy common sense is meant," says Professor Bennett, "the

instinctive conclusion of the common man who has given no serious thought to the problems of education, Paulsen is probably right, but can we safely entrust the interests of our higher education to such hands?"

I could not find a better concrete illustration of the straits of our public secondary education. The best men in secondary education, or who evince a special interest in its problems, are in private, or college preparatory schools, or colleges and universities. These men never have been, and probably never will be, able to appreciate just the educational needs of the ordinary, small, local public high school of limited resources. *Secondary education has never come to mean to them anything but college preparation.* If it is true that the "instinctive conclusion of the common man" is not to be relied upon for establishing the criteria of education, it is nevertheless such men that make up the communities in which these schools are located; directly or indirectly they will, at least, choose their leadership, and sad is the plight of the communities of common men whose instinctive conclusions are supplemented only by the leadership of blind guides!

As a matter of fact the assumption of such leadership has been made by the universities, and sorry work they have made of some of the vital educational interests of the common man. When the atmosphere has cleared in spots from the smoke of prejudice which has blinded the common man to some of the fallacies he has been led to adhere to, there will be a chance to make some real adjustment of schools to the needs of communities in which they are located. Whatever may be the triviality of Herbert Spencer's claims that people want to study Greek and Latin because other people do,—and the instinct of rivalry and personal pride is strong,—or whatever may be the truth of Professor Paulsen's claim that a German aristocracy is jealous of its classical prestige, there is no gainsaying the fact that many and many a poor community in the United States is blindly jealous of the reputation of its high school. This seems a common-place remark, but it gets its significance from this fact, that that community has learned from higher educational authorities than its own circle boasts that a *high school means Latin*, whatever else the poverty of the community may make it mean. If this is the legacy of an earlier age when Latin was synonymous with culture let us make the most of our knowledge of that historical fact; but whatever else we do about it let the leaders of educational thought see to it that they know the needs of their own times as well as they know those times of which they read in written history.

Just what is the meaning of the demand now made for Latin in this type of school? What does it mean to say that pupils

need it for admission to college? It is true that a comparatively small percentage of these pupils go to college. And it is also true that a rather small percentage of the pupils of the high school persist to finish its course. But neither of these is the most significant fact. The fact which calls for a reckoning with the leaders of educational thought who have made those schools what they are, is that what they have made them is expensive luxuries, maintained by the community and yet not justly participated in by the whole community. Nor are the members of those communities prepared to make a protest which will reach the case. It is not the fashion for public spirited men to complain of taxation which maintains so salutary an institution as the public school. Their good nature and long suffering are an element of delay as well as of ultimate hope. Such a citizen is more than half persuaded that he might be a patron of the public high school, as he is a contributor to its maintenance, if he chose to *force* his boy to attend. Or he is perhaps a patron so far as his daughters are concerned; they are doing well in the high school and share with most of their girl friends in the school the expectation of teaching a while after their high school course, and perhaps a few months away at the normal school. In fact this citizen sees, if he has an eye for comparisons, that his neighbors' boys are also not in school and that, whatever the reason may be, the community is practically maintaining a high school for its girls. Perhaps it is true that the school he supports does not owe his boy educational advantages unless he chooses to conform to the course his sisters are taking. Certain it is that the girls are pursuing the course with all docility, and seem content that there is nothing in their school work which reminds them of their mother's work at home. Probably the boy is naturally rebellious against school and study as the father remembers that he himself was, before him, and if he does not like to "buckle down" to what they give him to do at school it is his loss, and he may as well quit school and go to work. The complacent State seconds his soliloquy and bestirs itself no whit to keep the boy in school by giving him what he would be not only willing but eager to do.

It would take the sophistry of the scholastics to find any contact between the life that boy is leading and is destined to lead, and the subject of Latin. No more wholesome lesson could be given to the theorizer upon the 'power' that Latin produces in his pupils—the theorizer who has in charge a large preparatory school whose constituency is the select of many communities, with only such boys as share the traditions and ambitions of classically trained parents, having collegiate ambitions which come to them as much a matter of course as their

change of voice—no more wholesome hesitation in the customary readiness with which he pronounced the term “secondary education” could come to such a teacher, than to put him in charge of a public high school in such a community as I have described. It has a satisfying sound to say that the chief mission of the secondary school is ‘selective,’ satisfying when one keeps one’s eyes on the elect who constitute the hopeful group. But what ought the term to mean to the citizen who has sons and supports public secondary schools? What ought to be to him the value of the selection that drops his boy out of the educational race at the most critical time in the development of his life’s tastes and ambitions? He seems now to be in want of an advocate who shall raise emphatic protest in the interest of a saner educational ideal. The “common man” has more than “sturdy common sense;” he has modesty in which he has sat silent to take the prescription of the educational dose-maker. Why indeed should he gainsay the professional dictum of the pedagogical doctors? They certainly ought to know what they are feeding him. The trouble is that their potion is a scholastic panacea which needs the chemical analysis of modern doubt. Latin will do this and that and the other thing for the youth, they say. Even if he choose to take it the burden of proof is upon them. Educational science demands that they prove their assertions or withdraw them. Meanwhile it is the right of every citizen, parent of sane and healthy children, that the State which assumes to educate those children furnish them with the knowledge that lives and functions in their daily lives, skill in the performance of the active interests of vocation, and practice of the principles which live in every civilized community in its economic and political institutions.