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## A CRITIQUE OF HIGH SCHOOL LATIN

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### I

THE PSYCHOLOGY AND THE EDUCATIONAL IDEAL OF THE  
SCHOOL TEXT BOOK.

“Books are the Means, not the End.”

Words transmit perceptions to the mind visualizing scene, conversation and scientific exposition. Down the printed page, scanning successively line after line, the eye makes its habitual series of jumps from the right hand end of the visioned line to the left hand beginning of the next line. Ofttimes in a veritable twinkling the eye moves—left to right and twitches back—till the whole printed gridiron of the lettered page is felt as sensation, recognized as perception, and assimilated as apperception; that is, a new page of imaginative description or scientific fact is associated with the content of previous knowledge. In a nutshell, this is the mechanical psychology of the school text book.

From the point of view of anatomy books train only this jerky movement of the eyes following the printed lines down the page. Hence it requires not so much the collegiate knowledge of the trained psychologist but rather only the common sense of the man or woman in every day life to feel sure that the better subject of instruction in school for the needs of the growing child is a subject which employs not only the book-jerk motions of the eyes in reading down the printed page but also many of the other natural adjustments of the eyes, as well as movements of arms, legs, body and the entire muscular system; feelings of heat, cold; impressions of touch, weight, lightness, smell, pleasure, pain; and so on through all the other processes by which knowledge of the outside world is gained.

Such a subject of instruction is better than the mere book because it is more than the mere book; it is all the knowledge of the mere book plus something else, plus some other facts of observation, or some other practical training. In this respect the study of the piano affords more liberal training than the study of Latin; for the latter trains only the brain and a special series of eye muscles, while the former includes

training of the ear, hands, arms, feet and body with the result of a social accomplishment and a possible future vocation. The monopoly of the printed book by prohibiting change and variety in the visual range is undoubtedly one of the main causes of eye glasses on school children.

The ideal study is the book plus the stereopticon, the book plus the laboratory, the book plus the auditorium, the book plus the excursion, the book plus activity in life. Ideal school books presenting facts of the past must throw a direct, intense, practical, useful light on affairs of to-day; they must teach not only "To know" but also "To do;" they must point to possible vocations.

## II

THE FAILURE OF HIGH SCHOOL LATIN TO BE READJUSTED  
TO THE PROGRESSIVE EDUCATIONAL IDEAL.

"Studies are like Leaves  
Some Wither Every Year."

The progressive educational ideal for the evaluation of studies today in the twelfth year of the civilization of the twentieth century has now been defined. Teachers and professors of Greek have given no heed to this ideal, and so Greek has practically departed from the high school curriculum, never to return. As yet no tendency has appeared among colleges or high schools to readjust the study of Latin to modern life in accordance with the educational ideal. The natural consequence is that Latin is fast following in the vanishing footsteps of Greek and deservedly so.

Any teacher who maintains by magazine article or private conversation that the study of Latin is not rapidly dying in the American public high school is either blind to the drift of educational tendencies or is like the small politician always verbally sure of election during his campaign speeches. He is a mere mouthpiece for educational white lies. Latin unless usefully readjusted to the needs of the twentieth century will be removed from the high school curriculum in the immediate future by the process of the survival of the fittest, just as the similar subject Greek, and just as deservedly.

Teachers and professors of History have been far more provident and progressive. They have adapted history in accordance with the changed relations of modern society. Not many years ago history was almost entirely a chronological recital of wars, kings and conquests. Today history occupies itself with commerce, law, business, social conditions, natural resources, art, literature and religion. The history of past events is looked at in the mirror of present relations of

society. History has been readjusted so that it is useful, illuminating present problems with light from the scenes of the past. History in the crowded lecture hall is popular, receiving honor properly due.

Contrast with this flourishing condition of history the impoverished status of Latin study. Observe the decadent condition of Latin in a large New York City high school in the business section, enrollment 1,800 boys. Latin is an elective study. One year satisfies the great majority of high school boys that Latin will not benefit them in life; for 66% drop Latin after one year, and 98% of all who elect Latin the first year drop the subject after two years, that is, after reading Caesar.

Such is the impression and opinion which many students get of Latin even while in the high school course. And a single high school or college graduate in the actual pursuits of life who reads Latin either for profit or pleasure can scarcely be found today. The English book or the botany, the chemistry book or the history, the French book or the physiology is not infrequently picked up after graduation for reference. But the Latin book reposing in the dust of the book shelf is treated as a text book to be used during the high school days alone. Especially from college graduates is heard the declaration that Latin is a dead language, of no real good to a live boy or girl, a mere study of words, and words too that do not convey any content of useful information for modern life, a fossilized memory drill of dead bones!

### III

#### THE STOCK ARGUMENTS OF THE STAND-PAT HIGH SCHOOL LATINISTS—DISCIPLINE AND CULTURE.

“A Stern Discipline pervades All Nature”

“Culture reaches from the North Pole to the South”

The arguments of the advocates of the present High School Latin course may be summarized as follows: 1, Discipline; 2, Culture; 3, Latin for English Words; 4, Latin for Use in the professions of Law, Medicine, Theology and the Sciences.

The first argument, that of discipline, is too broad to be treated in any discussion less comprehensive than that contained in a separate volume. In order to discuss the discipline conferred by the study of Latin—and it does give a peculiar literary discipline just as every duty or business in life casts upon us the peculiar discipline of that particular pursuit—we must first define, describe and determine the exact meaning of the word, “discipline” when applied to the studies

of the high school, a task knotty and difficult for even the most learned of American educators; so difficult, in fact, that no comprehensive, thoro-going and satisfactory discussion of the meaning of the word "discipline" as used so glibly in private conversation by American teachers with regard to high school studies has yet been written.

When a high school teacher tells you that the value of his subject of instruction is discipline, he is hiding behind a vague generality. Ask him to explain what he means by discipline. Request him to enumerate the details out of which the discipline of his subject of instruction is made. A professor or teacher who tries to estimate the value of any school subject as discipline within the narrow limits of one page of a magazine article or within the confines of an hour's private conversation may be likened to an imaginary teacher who should try to convey the idea of an elephant to a small child by holding up one square inch of the elephant's ear.

Latin is but one subject in a great educational book of the future comparable to Bryce's *American Commonwealth* in politics, and entitled: *Language Discipline in Education*, in which Greek, French, German and English each occupy a lengthy section of detailed and technical argument. Discipline is a general effect of all studies and is not gained through any one study alone. Latin gives one quality of foreign language discipline; French another, and German yet a third.

All that the most advanced educational thought of the present day will allow us to say in reference to discipline is that Latin does not give any general discipline at all; for no one subject can give us general discipline. Each subject gives us the peculiar quality of discipline inherent in that one subject; and Latin being one of the foreign languages taught in the high school gives a peculiar quality, one particular quality of foreign language discipline. Just what that quality of discipline is has not yet been ascertained. That is all we really know about the value of Latin as educational discipline in the high school.

The second argument, that of culture, is as broad as the first, that of discipline, and also needs a separate volume for its adequate description. Culture, too, is an abstract word and like discipline pervades the entire massive and complicated machinery of education, from the kindergarten to the professional school. Does culture reside in a word or phrase or sentence or paragraph, or even in an entire book? Or is not culture something altogether external of which printed books are but the footprints on the sand? Certain persons are called cultured. Is the culture of a person

identical with or similar to the culture of a book? If so, which is the fountain head or source from which true culture springs? Finally, what is the peculiar quality of culture that resides in languages as a whole and how does that quality of culture conferred by Latin discipline differ from the culture conferred by the other high school languages of French, German and English?

Any discussion of the value of Latin culture that is to be either of any real use or of any marked influence on education must be as broad-minded, many-sided, and practical as was Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. Latin culture as well as Latin discipline is a small spoke of peculiar grain in the great wheel of universal culture found in the choicest books, discourse, peoples and lives of all nations; culture and discipline are not confined to the Latin language or the Latin literature; culture and discipline are obtained from the study of every subject in the high school course.

All that can truthfully be said of the value of culture in high school education today is that each subject of instruction gives a special culture; and that educators in general have reached no agreement as to what grouping of subjects will tend to turn out the greatest percentage of cultured high school graduates.

#### IV

A VALID ARGUMENT FOR LATIN STUDY IN THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOLS,—ENGLISH WORDS.

"The English Dictionary is Two-Fifths Latin Words."

The third argument of the advocates of high school Latin study, that the study of Latin words aids in the knowledge of English words, is a sound, practical argument, worthy of attention. The structure of the English vocabulary has not yet been accurately investigated. We do not find any finished comparative view of its component parts; by which we mean, on the one hand, those words derived from the Saxon, German and French and, on the other hand, those words derived from Greek and Latin.

The contributions of the Latin language to the English are next in importance and amount to those of the Anglo-Saxon and these Latin-English words came in the beginning chiefly through the Norman-French in consequence of the capture of England by William the Conqueror in the year 1066 A. D. These words while appearing much less in proportion on a page of an English book than in an English dictionary are highly important, entering extensively into the derivation of our English words. The Latin has served not only to refine

and polish the English speech but also to enrich the English vocabulary. It has furnished duplicates or synonyms of many words, adding much to fine shades of meaning and harmony of expression. Latin has furnished a large portion of the abstract and general terms in politics, ethics, theology and philosophy; the number of Latin words introduced into the English language during the last fifty years in consequence of the extension of such sciences as chemistry, mineralogy, geology and botany has been very great.

A year's study of that mass of Latin words common to English cannot fail to be a valuable help as an auxiliary course to the study of English in the first year of the high school; for one-fifth of all the words in the English dictionary came into our language through Norman-French and another fifth of all the words in the English dictionary represents pure Latin words borrowed into our English tongue from the Latin.

## V

### A CRITIQUE OF THE PRESENT HIGH SCHOOL LATIN VOCABULARY—OF VERY LITTLE USE.

“Latin words fly up, English thoughts remain below,  
Words without thoughts never to Heaven go!”

Acknowledging, then, that the only sound basal argument for the study of Latin in the high school, the fundamental argument upon which all arguments of discipline and culture must rest, is that the student may improve his knowledge of English words by making a special study of those Latin words which are most common and useful in English speech, let us examine the present high school Latin course to see whether the Latin words studied in the American high school are the most important and useful Latin words which have become incorporated in the English language.

In 1909 appeared the revised edition of the “Vocabulary of High School Latin” from the press of one of the greatest universities of America. This collection of 2,000 Latin words, which was at once received with great favor and today is the recognized standard of Latin vocabulary for high schools, may well be the list from which we can form a judgment as to the kind of Latin words our boys and girls are studying in American high schools.

In 1912 at another large American university appeared a parallel list entitled the “Vocabulary of Practical Latin,” being the 2,000 most important, scientific, professional Latin words in the English dictionary. These two lists are the sources from which we may come to a decision as to the value of the Latin words studied in the American high school.

The Practical-Latin list in the introduction announces as its purpose the publication of the 2,000 most practical, scientific Latin words appearing in the English dictionary.

Let us now read the preface of the Vocabulary of High-School Latin. I quote as follows: "The trend of thought during the last thirty years with regard to the teaching of Latin has been . . . . The beginners' books have become more and more books introductory to the study of Caesar. The vocabulary, likewise, has been taken almost entirely from Caesar . . . . the practice of beginners' books in confining their vocabulary mainly to Caesar is abundantly justified . . . . I have divided this list into three parts of approximately 1,000, 500 and 500 words. The 1,000 words printed in bold-faced type contain the words of most frequent occurrence in Caesar. They should be learned by the end of the Caesar year, 500 having probably been learned the first year."

Such is the ideal of Latin study announced by one of the greatest American universities. Think of it! Can it be that 1,800 years after the death of Caesar the 500 words of most common occurrence in the four books of his Gallic Wars are the most useful, cultural, disciplinary, the most important Latin words for American boys and girls to learn in the first year of the high school? Certainly not, unless by a miraculous coincidence of fate. Could that great general and practical statesman realize that the 500 words which appear mathematically most often in his first four Gallic Commentaries, regardless of their use or worth to the English language, are set up as the standard vocabulary of beginners' Latin books in America in 1912, the very ghost of Julius Caesar would condemn such a narrow educational policy for the study of Latin.

Would that a chime of clarion bells ringing down the whole gamut of the musical scale would resound the astounding fact that the vocabulary of first year Latin in the American high school is an antiquated list 1,800 years old of the 500 words mathematically appearing most often in Caesar's Gallic War. O senseless collection! And shame to American scholarship because so unthinking!

Conversation, criticism and public opinion of American fathers and mothers should compel the vocabulary of Latin in the first year high school to be a new list of the 500 Latin words of greatest value in present-day English grammar, science and profession.

What are the causes, forsooth, that have produced this perverted method of vocabulary selection in first year Latin? Undoubtedly the prime cause is the examinational system. Now examinations properly employed standardize teaching



throughout a state. But when the examination paper is made the chief aim, it means that the educational value of a subject is being neglected. This is what has happened in first year Latin. By drilling first year pupils exclusively on the 500 words in Caesar they read that author more easily the next year, passing better examinations. The examination in Caesar is the only goal that American educators seem to have in mind when selecting the vocabulary of first year Latin.

When reading in the history of education—a subject that should be taught in every American high school, since public education is confessedly the foundation of true democracy—that such questions were discussed in the Middle Ages as: (1) “How many angels can stand on the point of a needle?” (2) “Can God make two hills without the intervening valley?” (3) “What happens when a mouse eats the consecrated host?” we laugh with derision. But truly the method by which American professors and teachers today select the Latin vocabulary of the first year high school is 350 times more examination-hide-bound, sordid and stupid.

Next consider the character of Regents’ Latin examinations of New York, the 204th high school papers in First Year. Caesar, Cicero and Vergil, with reference to the meaning or derivation of English words. It seems incredible to state that not one question from all four papers can be found in regard to the derivation or meaning of English words. Yet such is the fact! When New York, which has without question the best system of examinations in the country, fails utterly to lay any emphasis on English derivation, the Latin teacher cannot be expected except incidentally to teach his class the meaning of Latin-English words. Strange to say, however, there are questions on the force of the terminations of Latin words.

This educational error is revealed in the introduction to the Vocabulary of High School Latin where twelve pages are devoted to the composition and formation of Latin words and not one page is devoted to the composition and formation of English words derived from Latin. In passing it should be said that the derivation of Latin words is useful only during the four years of the high school course while the composition and formation of English words from their Latin ancestors would be of great service all through life. This is but another glaring defect in the present, perverted conception of Latin study and only goes to substantiate the statement that Latin is taught blindly today. The aim and goal of the present method of Latin instruction in American high schools is not Latin for the sake of English but Latin for

the sake of Latin—and that Latin, too, which existed in the days of Caesar, Cicero and Vergil, almost 2,000 years ago.

Let us next examine the quality of Latin words appearing on those four high school examination papers of the Regents of New York. A careful analysis shows that only 16% of the Latin words represents words of use in English while 84% are concerned with the unrelated language fabric of the Latin tongue. This wretchedly low percentage of useful Latin words in the examination papers is proved to be a fair index of the present high school Latin course by an analysis of the words in the Vocabulary of High School Latin. Among the 2,000 Latin words recognized today as the standard vocabulary for high schools only 246 are useful to understand the meaning of English words and science.

And that is not the entire story. Many Latin words taught in the high school are a decided detriment because the meanings they originally possessed in Latin are far different from the meanings they now possess in modern science. Consider the following examples. The English word "opera" denotes a drama of which music forms an essential part, while the student in the American high school learns the meaning of the word "opera" only in the old Latin sense of "work or labor." The word "focus" in physics today means the point at which reflected rays of light meet; "focus" in high school Latin means only a "fireplace" or "hearth." "Ratio" in algebra today means the proportion of one thing to another, as  $\frac{A}{B}$  or A:B, while in high school Latin today "ratio" means only "thinking or reasoning." "Impetus" in physics today means the momentum a body acquires in motion, while "impetus" in high school Latin today means only a "charge or attack of soldiers." The study of such Latin words in high school does not improve our knowledge of English words because the antiquated meanings have to be discarded and the vastly different modern meanings must be learned when these words occur in physics, algebra, music and business life.

Allowance being granted for even this group, an analysis of the words in the Vocabulary of High School Latin classifies only 12% in modern, scientific Latin-English and 88% in the unrelated Latin tongue. In brief, our boys and girls in the high schools are studying Latin 88% of the time for the sake of Latin words and only 12% of the time for the sake of English words. American fathers and mothers, when you are called upon to decide whether or not your son or daughter shall study Latin in the high school, remember that of all the 2,000 Latin words they will learn only 246 will be of any possible use to them.

The original sin of this educational evil in the selection of Latin vocabulary was probably imported from Germany. American educators have learned much from German education. Yet it would be well to adopt only superiorities, not slavishly to copy German educational methods in their entirety without adaptation to American educational conditions. In the preface to the Vocabulary of High School Latin may be found these words: "Nearly a century ago Prof. Fleck-eisen prepared a Latin vocabulary arranged in five groups according to frequency of occurrence, and that book is still used in Germany and elsewhere." Whether this purely mathematical method of choosing Latin vocabulary is best for Germany, can be answered only by Germans conversant with the conditions of German schools and society. But to transplant such a system to America without readjustment to the needs of the English language is rank educational folly.

Let us now look at the vocabulary of the present high school Latin course from the point of view of content or information. The most valuable characteristic of every subject of instruction in school and college should be the amount of knowledge the subject gives the student. In the present vocabulary of high school Latin the words really of value from the point of view of information are in the ridiculously small proportion indicated below: medicine, architecture and mathematics, 1 each; physiology and botany, 3 each; zoology and anatomy, 4 each; chemistry, 6; law, 7; astronomy, 9. Less than 50 words out of the entire 2,000 of the present high school Latin course are of real use to the boy intending to select a professional vocation! When a total of only 8 words appear from the vocabulary of anatomy, physiology and materia medica, does a boy need to study Latin in order to enter upon the study of medicine? Certainly not. When only 7 useful words appear from the vocabulary of law, does a boy need to study Latin in order to become a lawyer? Most assuredly not. When only 6 useful words appear from the vocabulary of chemistry, and only 9 from the vocabulary of astronomy, a boy does not need to study Latin for these professions.

Finally, let us compare the two lists entitled the Vocabulary of High School Latin, the present course, and the Vocabulary of Practical Latin, those really useful words found in Webster's dictionary. The amazing fact is revealed that out of the entire 4,000 Latin words of the two combined lists only 99 are common to both lists! American educators and teachers, just think of the fact that only 99 words out of the entire 2,000 Latin words in the present high school course are

useful from the point of view of conveying to the student any valuable scientific or professional knowledge.

Such is the remote relation that exists between the vocabulary of high school Latin taught in America and the vocabulary of scientific Latin appearing in the English dictionary. There is but one conclusion; the Latin words studied in the American high schools are of comparatively little use either as regards understanding English words or as a preparation for the study of the sciences or professions.

To sum up, if it is true that the fundamental reason for studying Latin in the high school, the foundation stone upon which all arguments of discipline and culture must rest, is the study of that large mass of important English words which have come into our language from the Latin, and if it is also true, as the statistics of this essay show, that only about 100 of the 2,000 Latin words studied in American high schools are worth studying because they throw light and information upon English words,—the inevitable conclusion must be that one now emphatically declared entirely in accordance with the present drift and tendency of educational thought; namely, that the Four Years Latin Course of the American High School is today of very little comparative use: fundamentally because the 2,000 Latin words studied in the American high school do not at all fairly represent the Latin element in English speech, and secondarily because any considerations of discipline and culture reared on such a false foundation are altogether artificial—an indication of the decay of sound learning.

## VI

COLLEGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS ARE UNJUSTLY CRITICIZED.

“One High School principal is a Disciplinarian,  
Another is a compiler of Dead Statistics,  
A third might be the scholarly author of Practical Text-Books.”

The American High School next to the college is acknowledged the greatest force in this country for the upbuilding of better men and women. Yet the high school may be likened to a great manufacturing plant in which the greater part of the work is flourishing while some methods and some machines are working badly because not readjusted and remodeled, with modern devices of the last fifty years. When the condition of these machines is made clear to him, the manufacturer does not order them to be thrown out and that line of goods to be abandoned. Instead he institutes the most

modern equipment and continues to manufacture as long as there is a demand.

An exact parallel is found in education in the American high school. There are several subjects, a half dozen at least, which fairly resemble the worn-out, unrepaired, badly-working machines of some great manufacturing plant. Of these Latin is without question the most rusty, unproductive, and least adapted to modern life. But this antique machine, the present high school Latin course, cannot be thrown out of the educational plant entirely, and all at once. There is still a demand on a small part of public opinion.

In education even more than in a great business it is necessary that all change should be gradual. Great bodies, public opinion and especially action in educational affairs move slowly. It is well that such is the case. Thus fads do not become established since innovations must begin by a one year or even a half-year course. In this way Physics and Chemistry as well as all other modern subjects have attained their standing and in this way all future subjects must win their place in the high school curriculum. Yet in perfect frankness the undoubted fact may be stated that the American high school has erred rather in being the last to lay the old aside than in being the first by whom the new was tried.

At the present time the American college is receiving from educational discussion among principals, high school teachers and superintendents cannonade after cannonade of hostile criticism alleging that the college entrance requirements have a baneful influence. The failure of American high school teachers to adapt the subjects of instruction to the needs of non-collegiate students is laid entirely at the door of the college through its admission requirements. General criticisms of great educational systems and extensive commercial enterprises are both easy to make and difficult to refute because involved in such a complexity of social organization. Rather let us examine the specific case of Latin alone, determining whether the college professor or the high school teacher is blamable for the educational waste caused today by the maintenance of the antiquated four year Latin course.

Sound is the principle that any new subject introduced into the high school must begin with a one year course and after having proved to the public its usefulness may be extended to two years or even more. Sound also is the principle that any out-going subject of high school instruction must be diminished only a year at a time over an extended period until there is no further demand. Moreover, as only a small percentage of American parents are financially able to send their sons and daughters to college—the greatest defect of

American education and society today—at least 80% of all high school students are in the general courses fitting for business life. It is unreasonable to expect the college professor of Latin, occupied with the enormous field of his subject and the many duties of his college office, to devote any considerable, constructive attention to the 80% of students in the high school, usually remote both from his lecture hall and library. Any such expectation is absurd. The present time in education is a period of gradual transition for Latin just as every period has always been and always will be a gradual transition period for some one subject.

The progressive attitude of American colleges should not pass unnoticed. It may almost be said that no college today requires Greek for admission while some of the more progressive colleges are wisely and providently cutting down the Latin requirements. Bowdoin College in Maine no longer requires four years Latin for admission to the B. A. course. Three years through Cicero admit, though a year's work is required after admission. And who would not prefer a year of college Latin to a year of high school Latin? Harvard College with the foresight of sound learning requires only three years of Latin through Cicero for admission to the B. A. course and no Latin is compulsory after entrance.

Thus it is evident that the colleges are not backward, for they are readjusting their requirements as fast as is wise for the good of the schools. What, on the other hand, have principals and teachers done to readjust Latin for the 80% of high school students in the so-called general and English courses? It is sad to relate that they have done nothing but condemn college entrance requirements. If certain high school principals in addition to writing copious and caustic magazine articles and denouncing the American high school educational system in general would take some one subject in their own school and by conference with the special teacher adjust that study to the needs of the 80%, teaching only those facts of the subject directly serviceable in life, much more good would accrue to the American high school than by criticism alone and much educational waste would be eliminated.

There is no substantial reason why American college requirements should control the teaching for 80% of the high school students. Yet no one ever heard of a high school principal who selecting algebra, plane geometry or Latin, and having decided in conference with the department teacher how much of the study would prove of real use to the non-collegiate students, taught only those parts of the subject avowedly of practical value throughout a man's life.

American high school principals are concerned too much with dead statistics and the discussion of what subjects as wholes shall be taught in the schools and far too little with what parts of the various subjects shall be taught because useful. Even the subjects in best repute have undoubtedly much useless and time-consuming material in them. This is true of the subject that is so unanimously approved, the study of our own English language. If American high school principals would study and discuss in educational associations and meetings the subjects of instruction in their own particular schools not only as wholes but also in the various parts, sections and groupings in which each subject of high school instruction may be easily divided, much waste material would not appear in the school recitation and the next edition of the text book would be greatly improved.

The American high school principal and his department teachers, not the college professor nor college requirements, are responsible for the gap and lack of connection between the high school and its direct application to the business of life. The people look up to and respect the high school principals; in return the principals by scholarly activity among themselves and by working in common with the department teachers should, like family physicians, diagnose the symptoms of the various text books used in their respective schools, purge whole paragraphs, pages and even chapters of useless matter, to the end that the recitations in the rooms of the high school shall discuss nothing save that which is live, practical and useful in its bearing on real life after the days of school life are no more. When the American high school principals shall become proof-readers, if not the actual authors of the high school text books, a new light of progress will dawn on that foundation bulwark of true American democracy, the free public high school.

## VII

### A NEW FIELD FOR THE GENEROSITY OF EDUCATIONAL PHILANTHROPISTS.

“A teacher on one end of a log,  
And a pupil on the other,  
May constitute a school.  
But a teacher on one end of a log  
And forty pupils on the other  
Need a good text-book.”

Libraries, retirement funds, and buildings are a very necessary part of any educational system. The fact is, however,

that the backbone of secondary education consists largely in text books, that is, in printed knowledge of the past and present. In the last analysis the school text books wield an influence in education at least equal to that of teacher in classroom and laboratory. Furthermore it is universally agreed among almost all high school principals and teachers that present day text books are written more largely for the teacher than the student, from the point of view of the specialist rather than that of the schoolboy, from the abstract theoretical arrangement rather than the practical application to modern life. American high school text books need spring house cleaning.

No more valuable service could at present be conferred upon American secondary education, kindergarten, primary, grammar and high school, than the establishment of half a dozen "Traveling Professorships for the Improvement of School Text Books and Methods in Classroom, Recitation, Laboratory and Field Work." Each Professor selected because of broad, many-sided educational training and considerable actual teaching experience, as well as having accomplished work in educational research at some of the greater universities, should be assigned to a definite section of the United States, personally to visit the classroom recitations in that subject upon which the traveling board is working and to write articles for the magazines and educational periodicals of that section informing the public at large of the actual work of the classrooms as he sees it from personal observation. A record of text books used, the actual assignment of the number of pages per lesson, the methods of instruction employed and a copy of the examination papers should be carefully kept by each traveling professor.

At the end of nine months the board should convene for a month to discuss and debate the actual present day conditions of education in that particular subject, to compile and publish a report of the status of one subject of instruction throughout the secondary schools in all sections of the country, to point out defects and excellencies and by personal lecture and through the newspapers to thoroughly acquaint the public of what is actually being taught in the actual classrooms of the American secondary school. Finally that member elected by the board as best fitted for the task should be appointed to spend the following year in writing a text book or books embodying the ideas and recommendations of the board while at the same time visiting classes in that subject and soliciting advice from the leading teachers throughout the country. A thousand copies of this text book when copy-



righted should be mailed to some teachers of the subject in every state. Any school accepting the board's text book should be furnished it at the nominal cost of printing. No profit should accrue to the board from the publication of its text books.

If educational philanthropists could be convinced that the real value of American secondary education consists essentially in the school text books, discussions, debates, recitations, black board work and written work of the classroom; if a permanent endowment of \$500,000 could be given for six Traveling Professorships for the Improvement of American Public School Text Books and Methods, the secondary schools of America, great and uplifting as is their mission today, would become a still greater force for truer democracy, higher character and larger truth.

## VIII

### A ONE YEAR LATIN COURSE IN THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL.

"One short year of Latin words  
That breathe in English speech.  
Then three long years so saved  
To further drink the cup of High School Knowledge."

The statistics and arguments presented above show that the study of professional-scientific-useful Latin should have a place in the high school curriculum. Not only the large percentage of pupils to be benefited, which in one large high school has been shown to be two-thirds of all students electing Latin, but also the low percentage of professional Latin in the present course, only about a sixth part of high school Latin vocabulary being scientific, warrant the establishment of a parallel one year course in Applied Latin.

The first requisite in the preparation of a new educational method in scientific Latin is the collection of vocabulary. The most prolific source immediately suggested to the mind is the professional dictionary, e. g., of law, medicine, pharmacy, botany and anatomy. But a consideration of the vocations which nine-tenths of the students will adopt, namely, the various business callings, prevents the adoption of the professional dictionary as the chief source. The works would afford, however, valuable supplementary material.

The relation of Latin to that large mass of high school students soon to enter business pursuits finds its most direct

application as an aid to a more thorough knowledge of their own English language and to the sciences and professions only in a secondary but nevertheless in a very useful degree, to wit, in so far as the nomenclature of these sciences have passed from their limited technical sphere into the common ground of English speech and general knowledge.

The English dictionary, it is contended, is the proper first source for general educational purposes. That body of words common to Latin and English naturally forms the point of contact between the ancient and the modern. Not Latin for the sake of discipline and culture but Latin words in so far as they throw light on English speech and knowledge is the goal.

In this connection the following general proposition of permanent educational method is maintained; that not only the vocabulary of first year Latin but also the beginners' vocabulary of every other foreign language—French, German, Spanish, Italian and Anglo-Saxon—in both the American high school and college should include the common element of foreign words incorporated in English and some special study from the point of view of their derivation and use in English should be taught.

However, more and more is a general knowledge of all the sciences being given in the high school. Therefore, a first year drill, in an all-science Latin vocabulary cannot fail to be helpful. Such a parallel course would tend to exert greater intensity of interest in the students preparing for college because of their common purpose. And that far larger mass of students for whom the high school is the last institution of formal training would profit

- (1) by a Latin course better suited to their practical needs
- (2) by a year's preparation for the study of the modern inflected languages
- (3) by valuable training in the foundations of English grammar and word-derivation, and finally,
- (4) by a direct knowledge of scientific Latin most intimately related to practical life.

Whether or not this educational method of adaptation finds approval, the principle that every important subject of high school instruction must serve the interests of the many as well as the few is today generally accepted. And the belief is entertained that there is nothing inherent in either the ideals or the material of Latin study to prevent its adaptation to the most utilitarian needs of the twentieth century. The problem of adjustment is a hard one to solve and deserves the attention of all Latin teachers through-

out the country. It is up to the principal and the high school Latin teachers to prepare a one year course in Applied Latin. After several years of experiment if a reputable one year book should be written, treating efficiently that element of Latin which has become incorporated in the English language, it is probable that Harvard and Bowdoin, as well as other important American colleges, would be willing to grant some credit for admission to college to such a one year course in useful Applied Latin.