

IN DEFENCE OF LATIN

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IT is said of some eminent man (I think it is of Emerson) that, in reply to the question asked by his daughter, which subjects she should study in the school she was just entering, he answered: "Find out who are the best teachers, and take their subjects." In marked contrast to this philosopher's estimate of the relative value of teacher and subject taught is the attitude of those who dispute at such undue length over school curricula, and who appear to think that, when once they have decided upon the one perfect curriculum out of the many contained in the pigeon-holes of their desks, they have at that very moment attained to the perfect school. Between these two extreme views—between that of the too paradoxical philosopher on the one hand, and that of the too meddling experimenters in courses of study on the other, it is, I suppose, the part of a wise man to hold a middle course. He will conclude that while the character, the personality, of the teacher is, indeed, though exercised it may be indirectly, the main influence in education considered in its higher meaning, yet the subject of study through the direct means of which he seeks to train the minds of his pupils is also a matter of very great importance. Thus if we imagine a school to exist where the teachers are of equal efficiency, discussion might very properly be had, even with Emerson's consent, upon this: From which of the several subjects by means of which these teachers of equal ability are exercising their powers will the highest degree of mental discipline be secured for the pupils committed to their charge? And further, since it is not knowledge which we seek to impart so much as the means of gaining knowledge, and since it may be supposed that a course of study, if it resemble an ill-pruned tree in the multitude of its branches, will resemble it also in producing more leaves than fruit, discussion might also no less properly follow upon this: whether there are not a few subjects which experience has shown to be of such supreme importance in training to habits of study that they must form the main part, if not the whole, of a wisely selected school curriculum.

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Goethe has said that the man who knows only his own language cannot truly be said to know even that. To no people

can this saying be more justly applied than to those whose vernacular is the English tongue. This language, as far as its choice of words is concerned, is a *mixed* language. Our vocabulary comes in the main, as is well known, partly from Teutonic sources, partly from Norman-French or Gallicised Latin, while a large proportion—an increasingly large proportion—is derived from Latin and Greek. There are twice as many words of Latin and Greek origin in our language as there are from all other sources combined. In order that we may have in any degree a scholar's appreciation of the meaning of the words we hear and speak, read and write, we must know something of their history. Philology, the science which concerns itself with this history, cannot be taught through the medium of one's own language alone. An English student, however, cannot help picking up some scraps of knowledge in this science through the medium of Latin, and to acquire this habit of word-study to however slight an extent is of some use. Let this last sentence be said particularly to persons who never tire of reminding us that very few of those who take Latin as a high school subject ever continue it beyond that stage, and that most of them can therefore gain little or no advantage from such a slight knowledge of this very difficult study. Let those who urge this objection be asked to consider whether even a "bowing acquaintance" with Latin will not often be a great help to the right use of the words that have enriched our language from that ancient source. A certain poet, we believe, once said that a little learning was a dangerous thing. But it has since been said in answer to this oft-quoted dictum, (and the retort does not seem to miss the mark), that a little learning may indeed be a dangerous thing in the hands of full-grown fools, but that it cannot fail of being a very useful thing in the hands of persons, whether young or old, who know how to use it. The possession of no very vast amount of Latin, for instance, would have sufficed to show a man that his language was unpardonably redundant when he enquired the other day, "What are the given data?" and might have prevented him from saying a little later: "This conclusion, therefore, is inevitable, and cannot be avoided." He need not have continued his study of Latin into the second conjugation, because *do*, which is Latin for *I give*, and from which the English language in its usual cool fashion has stolen the neat little participle *datum*, belongs to the first, as also does *vito*, *I avoid*, which is lurking, not beyond the recognition of the merest tyro in Latin, in the word "inevitable." One who had persevered in the study of that language until he finished the four conjugations would not have been so likely to say

allude when he meant *refer*, and it would have been no burden to his memory to remember (if he wished to remember) that an *exploded* theory is not one which has burst, and so come to destruction, but one which has been clapped (we should say hissed) off the world's stage.

So much, then, briefly (lest one appear pedantic) for the value of Latin so far as the accurate use of words is concerned. Consider, further, if translation from Latin authors will not be a great aid to the very difficult art of putting words together skilfully so as to form good sentences. Never, surely, was there sorer need than there is now for some influence to be exerted in the direction of making the students who leave our schools and colleges write better English than is common now-a-days, or, which would be infinitely better still, in the direction of leading them to the study of such perfect models in composition that they would not wish to write at all. The hasty and careless writing of our newspapers does much to corrupt the standard of good English, and a high school curriculum should certainly contain something which would go some way toward developing critical faculty enough to distinguish between the pure "gold and silver of a refined style"—to borrow a metaphor from De Quincey—and the Brummagem ware of journalese. "This list," one of our dailies informed us the other day, "contains the names and dates of the citizens who have died during the year." But examples are unnecessary. A paragraph not containing some violation of the ordinary principles of English composition is the exception and not the rule in many of our newspapers. Constant practice in original composition under the eye of a severe master might do a great deal to prevent such slovenly work. But I venture to maintain this, that under the same master the labour of translation, written and oral, from a language so scrupulously exact and logical in its syntax, so intolerant of ambiguity, so clear in its arrangement of related words as Latin is, would do a great deal more.

The *Republic* of Plato opens with four Greek words, which mean "I went down yesterday to the Piraeus". It is said that these four words containing this simple statement were found among Plato's manuscripts arranged in a great variety of orders. With such patient labour did Demosthenes strive for a mastery of a correct style that he transcribed the History of Thucydides eight times. But Latin authors, we know, were more exact in their style than the Greeks, and believed still less in "felicitous scribbling." There are many golden maxims of Horace upon this subject, and we know how severe Vergil was in revising his lines. He used to

compare himself to a bear licking her cubs into shape. No one with any genius to admire that which is "fair and shapely" can pore over such perfect models of composition, as the Latin student if he is honest has to do, without finding that they are exerting some influence upon the way in which he will try to express his own thoughts. This influence coming from the study of Latin, and along with it other influences more indirect indeed and in-explicit, but not the less powerful, are so well described by Marmontel that I shall quote a few sentences. You will find them in Prof. Payne's translation of Compayre's *History of Pedagogy*:

The choice and use of words, in translating from one language to another, and even then some degree of elegance in the construction of sentences, began to interest me; and this work, which did not proceed without the analysis of ideas, fortified my memory. I perceived that it was the idea attached to the word which made it take root, and reflection soon made me feel that the study of the languages was also the study of the art of distinguishing shades of thought, of decomposing it, of forming its texture, of catching with precision its spirit and its relations, and that along with words an equal number of new ideas were introduced and developed in the heads of the young, and that in this way the early classes were a course in elementary philosophy much more rich, more extended and of greater real utility than we think.

There are, then, these liberal and humanizing influences at work upon the susceptible mind of the youthful student as he cons even his earliest lessons; habits of perseverance and industry are acquired as he wrestles with the long periods of Caesar's narrative, or grasps the often recondite sense of Vergil's lines, and as I have tried briefly to point out, improvement in expressing his thought in accurate English as he tries under the eye of the teacher to express the idea as clearly in English as he sees it is expressed in Latin. But there is another part of Latin teaching which should go on side by side with translation, and upon which I should like to dwell at greater length, because there, I believe, the results in the gaining of a mastery of the essentials of good English are still greater; I mean the practice of Latin prose composition. Let me begin by quoting a sentence from Dean Bradley, an English Latin scholar to whom Canadian teachers, and I think teachers in all parts of the Empire, are indebted for his text-book on Latin Composition, nominally a revision of Arnold's, but in reality an original work. In an introduction to a more advanced work on the same subject, after guarding against misconception by saying that the art of composing Latin sentences is not so much an end

as a means, and that if not valuable as an educational process it can be of little value as an educational result, he goes on to say:

The task of reproducing in the form of an ancient language the thoughts and expressions of modern speech and literature is one that calls for the constant exercise not only of special linguistic and imitative gifts, but of the faculties of memory, observation, accuracy of thought and expression, concentrated attention, a clear perception of the precise meaning of language, a power of going below the surface, of grasping firmly its essence as distinguished from its accessories or its accidental form, a nice discrimination of the real and relative force of apparently synonymous expressions, and even some exertion of the higher qualities of reflection and imagination.

Are not these, O guardians of courses of study, faculties which we should have your sanction for seeking to arouse and develop? Are you not afraid that, in seeking to find a substitute for that difficult discipline which is fitted to accomplish these results, you have been guilty of the folly of trying to find better bread than has been made of wheat?

But someone may say: "Cannot the same results be obtained through the means of French or German, where there will remain besides a more immediately useful end, viz., a knowledge of these languages?" It must always be borne in mind, as a partial answer to this question, that wherever the merits of other languages are held to be equal in educational value, there may always be brought forward to incline the balance in favour of Latin that advantage which claimed for it at the outset, viz., that it aids in giving a firmer grasp of the meaning of the large number of words which are derived directly or indirectly from Latin. Though doubtless we must admit that modern languages may have a certain value as a means of training in English, yet experience has clearly shown that they are far from being equal to Latin in this respect. The form of the Latin syntax is so different from that of any modern language, such an "exquisitely artificial mould" is it, as De Quincey says, that the student is forced at the very beginning to think more deeply upon the real meaning of the English sentence, the idea of which he is seeking to convey in so altered a form. The determination of the rich and copious inflexions of the Latin language of the classical period, and the clear setting forth of its most subtle yet exact syntax, have engaged the labours of the world's foremost scholars for two thousand years, more especially since the revival of learning in the fifteenth century, with the attainment of as near perfection therein as has been reached in any branch of human knowledge. Here, now, there can be no shifting standard of

authority, so that in no other language can less apparent progress be made with imperfect knowledge. No other language constitutes so true a touchstone upon application to which the pretensions of obscure thought and the elaborate trifling of superficial work are detected and put to shame.

An incidental benefit which will accrue from diligence in the practice of this exercise will be the freeing of the student's English from the use of mixed metaphors, that dangerous and deadly snare into which the writers of modern English so often fall. Prose literature in no other language is so rich in metaphor as English, and mixed metaphors result from the fact that the writer does not perceive that he is using metaphorical language at all. No form of writing is more simple and direct, more chary in the use of metaphors than Latin prose, between which and Latin poetry there is a much wider gulf fixed than there is between English poetry and English prose. Now the habit which the practice of doing English into Latin cannot but form will be that of a critical discernment between plain and figurative language, and the desire always when studying a sentence to get a grip of the plain, unvarnished sense of the English words.

Another useful lesson which the practice of writing Latin sentences ought to teach is that of conciseness in writing English. The student finds often that the meaning of an English sentence can be put into a Latin sentence of half the number of words. This will tend to form the habit of conciseness in his original sentences. He will try, for example, not to say, "The individual proceeded to his residence," when he means "the man went home;" not to say "the electric fluid penetrated the body of the sutorial artist as he was pursuing his vocation," when he means "the shoemaker while at work was struck by lightning."

A most hearty and unsolicited testimonial in favour of the value of Latin as a means of training in English has been received from Dalhousie's Professor of English, Dr. McMechan. His knowledge of Latin literature had lain dormant for some time, when he was by a chance circumstance, he tells us, led again to the study of Vergil. Throughout a great part of his long summer vacation he lay beneath the strong spell of this "lord of language," and the result was an article which appeared soon after the term began, and two succeeding articles on the same subject in the *Dalhousie Gazette*. The author, be it remembered, who evoked this most enthusiastic praise from the English professor, is Vergil, of the delights of whose poetry I have ventured to think that even high school pupils may have some experience. I wish the limits

of the present article would permit my making a few quotations from the grand encomiums which he has heaped upon this ancient writer—quotations to which the emphasis of repetition might be given with all the more effect because they are not the words of a “pedantic schoolmaster whose stock-in-trade is a little knowledge of Latin and Greek, and who seeks by advertisement to enhance the value of the wares which he possesses,” a charge which opponents of classical training sometimes make against its advocates. Dr. MacMechan’s words must be considered as the confession of a converted modern, who had in his early years the advantages of a classical education, who forsook the fold, “threw up his cap at college for the moderns,” as he tells us, “with the impetuosity of the undergraduate,” strayed widely over the fields of modern literature with the fullest appreciation of all the delights which they can yield, but now after his many wanderings returns in deep penitence to his first, best love. In the course of some reminiscences of his high school days, he takes occasion to pay a debt of gratitude to his old classical master, a very exacting and thorough teacher, who drilled his class preparatory to an examination in seventy exercises of Latin Composition, the result of which was, as he now sees, besides other advantages, “a certain feeling for sentence structure.” It is most gratifying to see one who has acquired such skill in writing English rise to pay a tardy, it may be, yet most hearty tribute to the faithful drill of his old teacher, and to the value of the subject through the means of which that drill was exercised.

One other piece of testimony on this point may be added, this time from within the range of my own experience. Many still remember Prof. Johnson, who occupied the chair in classics at Dalhousie for so many years—a man whom fine scholarly instincts and a keen sense of justice, little tempered, we used to think, with mercy, made very chary of his praises. They also rendered any word of praise he might be able to give a thing of considerable value. On one occasion which I distinctly remember, I saw a reflection of kindly light from the professor’s eyes overcome the usually cold glitter of his critical glasses. It was when he handed back to a student of my class an exercise in Latin prose with the remark that the reading of it had given him very great pleasure. A few years afterward I heard that student say that to the increased study of Latin Composition to which those words of praise stimulated him he owed in a great measure, if not any very marked proficiency in the art of writing English, at least a correction of his previous slipshod manner, and some appreciation of the prime quality of accuracy in style.

Another argument in favour of studying Latin, and of beginning that study at an early age, is that with the vocabulary thereby acquired and the linguistic training gained by that severe discipline the acquisition of modern languages, especially of French, is made very easy. John Stuart Mill, in his rectorial address at the University of St. Andrews, advocated this view very strongly. The first twenty pages of this address would form very wholesome reading for the opponents of classical training. The classics men are sometimes accused of being unpractical enthusiasts. John Stuart Mill, speaking from the point of view of the higher utilitarianism which has kept itself singularly free from that accusation, argued most strongly on the great importance of the so-called dead languages both in school and in college. He said:

It by no means follows that every branch of general as distinct from professional knowledge should be included in the curriculum of school or university studies. There are things which are better learnt out of school or when the school years and even those usually passed in a Scottish university are over. I do not agree with those reformers who would give a regular and prominent place in the school or university curriculum to modern languages. This is not because I attach small importance to the knowledge of them. No one can in our age be considered a well instructed person who is not familiar with the French language so as to read French books with ease, and there is great use in cultivating a familiarity with German. But living languages are so much more easily acquired by intercourse with those who use them in daily life. . . . Universities do enough to facilitate the study of modern languages if they give a mastery over that ancient language which is the foundation of most of them, and the possession of which makes it easier to learn four or five of the continental languages than it is to learn one of them without it.

Our adoption of the continental vowel sounds in teaching Latin has made the transition from Latin to the Romance languages still easier than it was in Mill's day. Into many of the high schools in Canada, as a concession to the modern spirit, and in consideration of the fact that more enter mercantile life from the high school than from the college, French and German have been admitted; but I think it has been clearly enough shown that these modern languages can never be made a substitute for Latin in a system of education making the slightest claim to be thorough or liberal, and that a careful "grounding" in Latin should precede all modern language study in the school course.

I should like to add to this testimony of John Stuart Mill another bit of still stronger evidence and of more recent date. It is from the Rev. J. M. Wilson, once Head Master of Clifton College.

This school is one of the foremost in England, enrolling over 600 boys, and has included on its teaching staff such eminent men as Hall and Stevens, whose mathematical text books have justly attained so wide a celebrity. Mr. Wilson himself, it should be stated, gave his attention chiefly to mathematics and science at Cambridge, and graduated senior wrangler in those subjects at that university. In answer to the question why he put so much stress on Latin in the case of those not going up to the universities, and whose studies lay chiefly on the modern side of the course, he said: "As to your question about Latin, I am afraid I cannot give my reasons very briefly, but these are the chief. First of all, experience shows us here, and the observation is abundantly confirmed elsewhere, that boys who learn Latin acquire a faculty for learning other subjects. Some years ago, Latin was very imperfectly taught on our modern side. More time was given to modern subjects. But the result was that the modern side was almost invariably beaten by the classical side even in their own subjects. For instance, a classical boy began German in the fifth form at sixteen, and before he was eighteen he was far better than a modern boy who began at fourteen, and gave quite as long a time to it every week. Again, modern boys gave twice the time to science and considerably more to mathematics, and were almost invariably beaten by the classical boys. And in English, in which the modern boys got far more teaching, they could not compete with the classical boys for a moment." If there are any who think that English classics, as they like to call them, can take the place of Latin in our secondary schools, they should lay this last sentence well to heart. It must not for one moment be supposed that I am maintaining that the main part of a student's education in literary taste and in the cultivation of his aesthetic perception comes to him from the study of any foreign language. Of course this culture comes to him mainly from his own—to the English student from the storing of his mind in early youth with the masterpieces, especially in poetry, of the English literature which is his inalienable birth-right. Let *this*, rather than the forcing of the mind in too difficult mathematical and scientific reasoning, be encouraged in the early years of public school and junior high school life, when the memory is so retentive and the mind so open to the refining and ennobling influences of poetry. But here the teacher who considers scholarship worth anything is reminded of the saying of Goethe, which was quoted at the outset: "No man who knows only his own language can be truly said to know even that," and this applies to the English language if looked upon from a purely literary point of view as

truly as when it is when considered from the standpoint of the philologist—the student of the science of language. It is by the student's comparing his own language with another (and the more that other language differs in syntactical forms from his own, the more will he be compelled to do this), it is by noting similarities and contrasts that greater clearness, fulness and richness are given to his knowledge, and therefore to his appreciation of his own. Words are more clearly shown to him in their true character as thought-symbols. They become less his master, but he rather theirs.

To those, if there be any at this late day remaining, who think that any of the substantial advantages claimed for the study of Latin can be gained by the study of translations, a few words will suffice. The thought in any really great and abiding work of literature is indissolubly joined to the style, the language, nay, to the very words themselves in which that thought was first enshrined. There is this difference between a business letter and an ode of Horace, that the former can be written equally well in any language, the latter never adequately in any other language than Latin. Those who from accident or design have missed the reading of the classics in the original might do a great deal, if they were so disposed, by the reading of translations to acquaint themselves with the substance of the wisdom of these "grand old heathen"—to borrow the vivid phrase of Dalhousie's former mathematics professor; but to argue, as some "arid utilitarians" have argued, that these translations have any place on a course of study, high school or other, is only to try to rescue the "salt which has lost its savour" from the due execution of the sentence long ago pronounced upon it.

It is nothing to the point to say, as we sometimes hear it said, that no lasting benefit can come from the study of a dead language, because not one in a hundred "keeps up" his Latin after his school or college days are over. M. Thiers once said that it was not so much advantage to a statesman to *be* as to *have been* a minister, and it has been said, adapting this maxim, that what a man wants is not to *know* Latin but to *have known* it. Prof. J. S. Blackie, speaking in the last year of his life of the mastery he attained over Latin in his school days, and of how his studies had lain afterwards more in Greek, said: "Although I have lost my hold upon Latin, Latin has never lost its hold upon me." A man's physical endurance at forty may be much the better for his having played cricket or football at school or college, even though he may feel that he would be a doubtful source of strength to a team of players: even so a man at the same age may enjoy his reading more, have to refer to his dictionary less frequently, and—when he does refer to it—do so

with more pleasure and profit, and feel himself in other ways a better man intellectually for having mastered Latin at school, even though the list of verbs which govern the dative be a part of his long-forgotten knowledge.

Many wise men in this age advocate the teaching of Latin in school as a corrective influence to the narrowing tendencies of exclusive minute scientific research, caused often by an impatient haste to "specialize" before a good foundation in the elements of an arts education is "well and truly laid." Such specialists surely "draw a circle premature, heedless of far gain," and so it sometimes comes about that, as Tennyson says—

The man of science himself is fonder of glory and vain,
An eye well practised in Nature, a spirit bounded and poor.

The later years of Darwin's life furnish us with an example of this. Far be it from me to say a word in depreciation of this great man. No one has laboured longer, with greater industry and patience, and with greater gain to the sum of human knowledge, than he did. I shall quote his own words. You will find them, and something more to the same effect, in the latter part of an autobiographical sketch prefixed to the *Life of Darwin*, written by his son Francis, while Lecturer in Botany at Cambridge. "Lately," he says, "I tried to read Shakespeare, and found it nauseating to me. My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws out of large collections of facts."

Some men who have the cause of liberal education at heart are anxious to see Latin retained as a subject of study in our schools for the very reason which parents sometimes give us for wishing their boys and girls to have nothing to do with it. "My boy is going into my office," a father says to the Latin teacher, "after he has finished his academy course. It is all very well for one who intends to be a lawyer, a doctor, a minister or a teacher to learn Latin, but there is no use in my boy bothering his head with such useless stuff." "Just the very reason why your boy should study it as long as you can afford to keep him at it," say those who, after all, are taking the highest ground which can be taken in the defence of any subject in a high school or college curriculum, *viz.*—that it is studied purely for its own sake, not with any eye to the value it has as a ware in the world's market. Some may be reminded here of the arguments against the study of Greek which the author of *The Vicar of Wakefield* puts into the mouth of the Principal of the University of Louvain. "You see, me, young man," says the Principal, "I never learned Greek, and

don't find that I have ever missed it. I have had a doctor's cap and gown without Greek. I have 10,000 florins a year without Greek. I eat heartily without Greek: and in short, as I don't know Greek, I don't believe there is any good in it." This is the *reductio ad absurdum* of a good many of the arguments we hear against Latin. How utterly subversive of the very idea of the word *school* the bread and butter argument is! That word *school* may be traced back (and it might do us some good to dwell upon this) to a Greek word which means *leisure*. Not leisure as opposed to work, for a school is no place for idlers, but leisure from business life, where the higher work of training the mind might be carried on. "There," as Plato said, "arithmetic may be studied, but not as a training for shopkeepers." Let us retain a few subjects which will justify us in applying this fine old word *school* in its true sense, even to what we call our secondary academic institutions. A boy may justly feel some pride in the fact that he is devoting his time, with some exercise of self-denial, to that which he knows will be of no use to him in the common acceptation of the word *use* after he has entered mercantile life. He may think that he is more truly at school than his teacher, who gets a little money for not forgetting his Latin. This feeling will help to keep from his free unbent neck for a little longer the "inevitable yoke" of custom and utility.

But in Nova Scotia, however it may be in other provinces of the Dominion, the full benefit to be gained from the study of anything is hindered to a great extent by the dissipation of the pupil's energies on too great a variety of subjects. All of the subjects at present included are useful as knowledge, also to some extent as a training to the acquisition of knowledge, and we seem for this reason not to have had the courage to deny access to the curriculum to any of them. To justify this wide selection, the mind has been compared to a room with windows opening in all directions, through all of which light should come streaming in. Accepting the justice of the metaphor, might we not suggest the propriety of drawing the curtains over some of these windows lest the mind be dazed by excess of light? Or to come down to safer, plainer English, we maintain that a great deal of wholesome ignorance would be no cause for shame on the part of our high school boys and girls, so long as their minds were acquiring habits of thought and study which could be turned to account in any direction in which a healthy, living interest might lead. Such is the opinion held long ago in the United States by leading educationists, where attention was specially directed to the subject

of secondary education. At the annual meeting of the National Educational Association in 1892, a committee of ten was appointed to consider the question of high school study. Ninety leading men in the educational world were added by this committee to their number, to widen still further the range of their observation. A year and a half was devoted to the receiving of reports, and to a thorough study of the whole question. The results of their labours are accessible in their report issued by the United States Bureau of Education. This report contains a very important lesson for us if we would but heed it. Commissioner Harris pronounced it "the most important educational document ever published in the United States." By the teachers of Canada, and by those whose duty it is to prescribe what they shall teach, it ought to be considered of no less importance. With regard to the proper scope of a high school course of study, the committee report: "Selection for the individual is necessary to thoroughness and to the imparting of power as distinguished from information, for any large subject whatever to yield its training value must be pursued through several years, and be studied from three to five times a week; and if each subject studied is thus to claim a considerable fraction of the pupil's school time, then clearly the individual pupil can give attention to only a moderate number of subjects. If, in a secondary school, Latin is steadily pursued for four years with four or five hours a week devoted to it, that subject will be worth more to the pupil than the sum of half a dozen other subjects, each of which has one-sixth of the time allotted to Latin." "Surely," one exclaims, "there needs no ghost come from the grave to tell us that axiom of pedagogy!" Simple as the lesson seems, we do not appear to have learned it. Four model time-tables are included in this committee's report, a study of which will bring out clearly the two leading conclusions to which the committee has been forced: First, that only a few subjects should be included, and, second, that the claims of Latin to a place of supremacy are admitted with the heartiest unanimity. One time-table is given including neither Latin nor Greek, and another in which these are optional; but with regard to these the report says:—"Although the committee thought it expedient to include among the four programmes one which included neither Latin nor Greek, and one which included only one foreign language (which might be either ancient or modern), they desire to affirm explicitly their unanimous opinion that under existing conditions the two programmes called respectively Modern Languages and English must in practice be distinctly inferior to the other two, the Classical

and the Latin-Scientific, both for pupils going to college and for those whose education terminates with the high school." Could the most enthusiastic advocate of the advantages of concentrated study and the importance of Latin as a factor in education wish any more authoritative and emphatic judgment upon the subject than this?

In case a document issued about thirty years ago may seem to some of my readers in this rapidly moving age like ancient history, I may mention that the same conviction has found expression in many more recent reports. Here are a few sentences which caught my eye in a bulletin just come to hand, published in 1930 by the Carnegie Foundation for the advancement of teaching. "Many of the subjects taught are out of place in the school curricula, and the effort to carry through the enormously increased number of pupils has resulted in a softening of the whole process of education. The teacher has impaired the quality of his own teaching by his willingness to recommend new subjects, new courses, and more teachers. In proportion as our schools become more sincere and thorough, they will limit the number of the subjects they undertake to teach, but they will give a far better education to the children and to the youth who attend them."

Sir Henry Thornton, speaking the other day to the Canadian Manufacturers' Association in Toronto, said: "I venture to say that a knowledge of the Classics, and of those historical movements which swayed the destinies of Empires, is essential for the man who is going to administer from a human point of view enterprises employing thousands of people."

The minister begins with his text: let me end with mine. *Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.*