

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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SMALL LATIN AND THE CLASSICS

By C. O. BRINK

'O' LEVEL Latin is small Latin. It is very small Latin indeed. Why should a classical scholar be exercised by its problems? Why should a schoolmaster be exercised by them if his heart is in sixth-form Classics? Why indeed should anyone be interested?

During the recent controversy on entrance requirements for Oxford and Cambridge a curious but unmistakable reluctance could be observed among classical scholars in the universities. I mean the reluctance to defend or even pay attention to the precarious position of Latin as an entrance requirement. Those teaching Classics at provincial universities felt that this was a matter for the ancient universities since they themselves had no such requirements. And to many in the ancient universities small Latin seemed altogether too small to engage their attention. Hence the feeling, *nihil ad nos*. In any case, Latin, they argued, was firmly entrenched in the bigger schools, and faculty demands in all universities would do the rest.

It seemed to me then, as it seems to me now, that such talk misses the point. If we judge the subject by the numbers of pupils and teachers engaged on it, and indeed by the hours spent by them, we must conclude that small Latin is an important subject at an important stage of school education. If it is so important, it should have been kept as an entrance requirement. But no agreement could be reached on its educational virtues. What are its benefits for education at large and for Classics? In order to determine what benefits are now possible, we should remember that small Latin and large Classics have got out of step. Small Latin no longer leads to large Latin or Classics, at any rate for a majority of those who learn it. What it does lead to should be of concern to all.

How many of the young learn Latin up to Ordinary level? The numbers are in the published reports of the Ministry of Education. In 1958 (the year marked by the public agitation which finally brought the Latin requirement down) entries for 'O' level Latin in England and Wales numbered more than 44,000. This is almost one-third of the whole grammar-school population at the age of *c.* 15—surely a figure large enough to attract some attention. But it is also a rather bulky figure and much depends on its component parts. I put some of the questions thus suggested to the experts of the Ministry of Education. I was grateful

to them for allowing me to draw on their answers when I addressed the annual meeting of the Classical Association at Southampton in 1960. Once again I make bold to draw on their information. It is pleasing to see these large numbers. It would be uncritical not to analyse them.

Anyone attempting a guess at the numerical peak in the learning of grammar-school Latin would presumably put it at 15+, at 'O' level. That answer, however, would be erroneous. The peak, in both maintained and direct-grant schools (not of course in independent public schools), is at 13+. There is an appreciable loss of numbers after the third year of Latin, and another after the fourth. Here the percentages of 1958 are not without interest. In the third year, at 13+, more than 50 per cent. of the children were learning Latin; in the fourth year, at 14+, the figure dropped to about 35 per cent.; and in the 'O' level year, at 15+, there was a further drop to about 27 per cent. of all. This, I am given to understand, is the usual ratio. Clearly, then, every year there are thousands of children who abandon Latin before reaching the Ordinary level. Out of the four or five years most usually spent on this subject they spend only three years or less. Are these years well spent? This is the large question posed by the Latin course below 'O' level. This will remain a question even if numbers should now fall.

The character of the group entering for the 'O' level examination raises another problem. In fact there is not one group, but one plus several. In 1958 there were *c.* 33,580 Latinists aged 15-16. But the number entering for 'O' level was much larger: it exceeded the former by more than 10,500. All of these had obviously been working for an 'O' level pass to enter a university. How this large group was composed cannot be determined. Some must have interrupted their Latin courses only to resume them later. Others must have started the language to satisfy a university demand at Oxford or Cambridge, or a faculty demand elsewhere. Finally there were the unfortunates who had failed their 'O' level examination after a full course and were now trying again. One is moved to query the content of 'O' level courses for older candidates.

Here, then, are some formidable problems, some of them, no doubt, well known to those who teach and examine Latin at 'O' level. The number of 'O' level Latinists is large and likely to remain large for some time. Does the subject give them the benefit that they could receive from it? Are the courses lasting four to five years reasonable entities? Are the four to five years used to best advantage? Next, the three-year courses that never reach a level described as 'O'. What do they teach? What can they teach? Here again large numbers are involved. Finally,

'O' level teaching for the older candidates. Is the approach sufficiently mature for sixth-form boys or girls?

These were the questions that some of us raised when the Classical Association held its annual meeting at Southampton in 1960. The meeting, of over 200, did an unusual thing for the Classical Association. It voted on a resolution. It resolved 'that this meeting recommends a general reconsideration of the aims and syllabus of the Ordinary Level Latin Examination, with special reference to the requirements of the non-specialists'. With gratifying dispatch the Council of the Association and its Education Sub-Committee acted on the resolution. They compiled a questionnaire reflecting our discussion, and sent it to the Branches. The answers to the questionnaire are considered below. The present Supplement also debates the issues inherent in the teaching of small Latin today. Other steps have been mooted and should be welcomed. Teachers, headmasters, and examination boards may well wish to take stock of the situation.

This situation will be assessed differently by different observers. Its most characteristic feature seems to me to be the relation between small Latin and Classics, or rather the increasing lack of a relationship. Historically, small Latin ('O' level, and its predecessor, the school certificate) inherited the claim to be a preliminary to a full classical education. That happened at a time when education and classical education were more synonymous than they are believed to be now.

At present small Latin greatly outnumbers large. 'O' level Latinists learn something of the language; but this is the preliminary to a classical education which never follows. Small Latin appears to have become what it was clearly not designed to be—a mainstay of a general education at the middle stage of the grammar schools.

There is plenty of life in small Latin. The course may survive if it fulfils two functions which it can fulfil. One is general. Along with mathematics (or the remnant of mathematics not replaced by 'nature study') it resists those planners who want to push specialization back into the middle school. Small Latin and mathematics together will make it more difficult to produce 'little scientists' and 'little arts children' at that stage. Grammar-school education needs all the small Latin it can get. The other function seems to me more specific. If small Latin is to be more than the preliminary to a classical education which never follows, then it ought to make some sense on its own. It ought to *be* a classical education, however lamentable and limited. For many, small Latin will be the only Latin—or Classics—they will ever get. Moreover, within one generation or two, the small Latinists will be likely to possess the only

kind of Latinity, albeit a modicum, to be found outside the ranks of scholars and teachers. I prefer a modicum of Latinity to its complete absence outside our subject.

My conclusion is simple. Small Latin, if it is to survive, must learn to live in a house of its own. The course as a whole calls for consideration. What 'O' level Latin lacks is a clearly defined purpose. The course can either be, *chiefly*, an exercise in elementary prose composition, English into Latin. Or it can be, *chiefly*, an exercise in translation and reading, Latin into English. Personally I believe the latter to be the natural choice for this course. Far too little Latin is now read, partly because the Latin which is attempted is often too hard, and partly because too much time is spent (to cite a classical headmaster's recent letter to me), 'slogging away at English-Latin sentences if the boys are ever to reach 'O' level standard as things are now'. But whether it is English into Latin, or Latin into English, I suggest that it should be *chiefly* a one-way road. The sophisticated dual carriage-way of the classical tradition asks too much of the small Latinist, and offers him too little.

These suggestions are made merely *ambulando*. I certainly cannot suggest solutions, and would not if I could. There is plenty of experiment, both in the teaching and the examining of elementary Latin. There are large areas where opinions can and must legitimately differ. But on one proposition, I hope, agreement should not be impossible. I mean the proposition that 'O' level Latin needs to be scrutinized as a whole and on its own merits.

CLASSICS IN THE SCHOOLS

A Survey of the Position and Prospects

By C. W. BATY

AMONG those who have little direct experience of grammar schools, whose opinions are formed by chatty articles and cranky correspondence in the more light-hearted newspapers, it is an accepted view—a dogma in the proper sense of the word—that Latin is on its rapid way out of the schools and that Greek is already virtually extinct. If I explain to the curious outsider that, besides a general interest in schools, I have a special concern for the Latin and Greek taught in them, the almost invariable response is, ‘I shouldn’t think you have much to do, then, nowadays’. Whether my own time is properly filled or not, it would be inappropriate to discuss in public; but the implication is worth considering. A few facts may be given, for without them opinions are of little value.

First, then, the numbers of entrants in the public examinations. If we consider the Advanced level of the General Certificate of Education as the successor, and roughly the equivalent, of the former Higher Certificate, let us see how numbers of candidates in Latin and in Greek compare with (1) numbers in past years and (2) numbers in some other principal subjects.

(1) In 1938 (which we may regard as the last ‘normal’ pre-war year) 2,589 candidates entered in Latin; in 1948 (which for various reasons may be held to be the first ‘normal’ post-war year) there were 3,790; from then on the rise is continuous and rapid until 1956, when there were 6,483 of them. After that the curve flattens out, until in 1959 for the first time there was actually a small drop, in Latin as in some other subjects, and the total was 6,313, which was followed by a fresh rise in 1960. Greek has followed much the same pattern though, naturally enough, it was a year later in recovering from its war-time drop, and numbers have always been much smaller. The comparable figures are: 1938, 881; 1948, 776; 1949, 915; and so up to 1957, 1,578; from then there was a slight decline, to 1,413 in 1959, with a rise in 1960. In short, then, Latin figures at this level are up by 143 per cent. and Greek by 60 per cent. compared with before the war.

(2) What of other subjects in the same period? The number of candidates in English at Advanced level has gone up to almost four times the pre-war figure and in 1959 stood at 17,550. In French, it has multiplied

by less than three, in German by almost four, though the total in German is still not much more than half that in Latin. It is in Chemistry and even more in Physics that the growth of sixth forms shows itself most spectacularly. In Chemistry there were just under 4,000 entrants in 1938 and over 22,000 in 1959; in Physics just over 4,000 in 1938, and 27,450 in 1959—increases of about 450 and 600 per cent. respectively.

Similarly, if we look at the Ordinary level (formerly School Certificate) and ignore the drop caused by the age-bar in 1950, the number has gone up steadily from 28,735 in Latin before the war to 47,571 in 1959 (a rise of 65 per cent.), and from 2,049 to 2,601 in Greek (a rise of nearly 27 per cent.). Here, for a variety of reasons including ‘by-passing’, comparison of figures in Greek and Latin in different years is not very informative, and comparison with other subjects is almost meaningless.

But, besides those who reach the modest heights represented by the public examination at its different levels, what is the number of other pupils who begin Latin but never get far? (For Latin has, for some reason, almost alone the ambivalent privilege of discarding its most unsuccessful followers, and does so to a disturbing extent.) It is very hard to ascertain the facts, for no form of return officially made gives any information, and the Minister of Education in England and Wales, unlike his counterpart in almost all other countries, exercises no control of curriculum; and a similar policy is normal among local education authorities. By a process of sampling, however, fairly reliable information has been got from inspection reports (which are not themselves available to the public). These figures show that, among all grammar-school pupils, over 27 per cent. learn Latin in their first year (almost all of them in boys’ or mixed schools, for girls habitually begin in the second year) and over 60 per cent. in the second school year; and that thereafter there is a decline to almost 52 per cent., 35·4 per cent., and 27·3 per cent. in the following three years successively. Among post-‘O’-level pupils the percentage taking Latin in some form—much of it reworked ‘O’ level, some of it ‘keeping up unseens’ for College entrance—is 12·55. Put in terms of actual numbers, it is fair to say that in the largest years—the second and third years of grammar-school life—something over 73,000 pupils a year are learning Latin; and in grammar schools of England and Wales altogether well over a quarter of a million pupils have some Latin in their curriculum. To this formidable number should be added something over 30,000 pupils, mostly boys between 9 and 13 years of age, learning Latin in independent preparatory schools. This gives a total just under 300,000.

All this sounds encouraging, and at least shows that courses of Latin at

school have not wholly depended on the artificial bolstering of university entrance requirements. There is, in fact, every sign that the change in those requirements is having little or no effect in schools. But when we consider quality instead of quantity, there is much less ground for satisfaction. To start with, the numbers of pupils who, as we have said, are at various stages discarded from Latin forms or sets should give us pause. Ought they to have begun Latin at all? Have they got from their two or three years of Latin a benefit proportionate to the time spent on it? And are they, in those two or three years, taking up the time of Latin teachers whose services are urgently wanted elsewhere? Then there is the question of the Ordinary level itself: does it represent a stage at which pupils may be supposed to be able to read straightforward Latin for themselves? Could we say of most of those who pass that they are in a position to keep up some Latin reading on their own? Could they read an historical document in Latin? Could they even make sense of the Latin monuments which confront them in churches and public buildings at home or abroad? A perusal of the scripts of 'narrow passes' is not reassuring. It is often contended that, since candidates in Latin are a select company compared with, for instance, those in French, the percentage of passes should be much higher, if corresponding standards are to be maintained; this sounds reasonable, but few who saw the work of candidates just below the pass-line could seriously wish for that line to be lowered. If a better standard is to be expected more time must be given. Curtailment has often gone beyond the limit of safety.

There is much sound, and some very good, teaching. It is only necessary to move among teachers of Classics to realize that enthusiasm is widespread and conscientious zeal is almost everywhere apparent. But we have spoken of the strain imposed on well-qualified man-power by the large number of short-term Latin courses; and that strain has unfortunate results. No one will deny the value of the help given to Latin by some teachers whose main activity is in other fields: the modern linguist has techniques at his command which can contribute notably to the linguistic facility which ought to be mastered in early stages; the historian often brings enthusiasm and a fresh point of view; and in general it is good for pupils to see that non-specialists have a use for Latin. But Latin studies will not long flourish unless they are guided and largely conducted by people with substantial reserves of scholarship and, in particular, with a knowledge of Greek to support and enrich their Latin. Of such people it can truthfully be said that there is a shortage.

There is another point to consider. Nowadays, below the sixth form Latin is one subject of many, very lucky if it gets five periods a week for

five years; and Greek is another subject, begun generally much later, in competition, it may be, with German or with one or more branches of natural science. Even in the sixth form we rightly expect that the more specialized studies shall be varied, or relieved, or balanced, by other subjects in different fields. This affects the position in two main ways. First, there is less time for reading Latin, or Greek, authors than there was, and because there is less time, teachers and pupils become anxious, hasten prematurely to set books, confine their work to the syntax required for the composition papers, and turn what should be an orderly, if not leisurely, process into a competitive scramble. And all the while they only too often use books designed in the 1870's or 1880's for a course which lasted twice as many years and had at least twice as many lessons a week. Secondly, as generations pass, the teachers of today are more generally people themselves taught in these cramping conditions and disposed to take them for granted; more than that, we are often now in the third school generation of such limited Latinists. Examinations can be passed in this way, but there comes a point at which humane letters lose their humanity and the 'grand old fortifying curriculum' degenerates into an illiberal ritual, the vestigial relic of traditional *grammatike*. Just so did the grammatical and rhetorical schools of the fifth century A.D. linger self-consciously among the advancing barbarians, offering little but membership of an exclusive mutual-admiration society.

We are far from that state, and it may sound like undue despondency even to suggest the comparison. But if we are convinced of the intrinsic merits of what we purvey, we must be at pains to ensure that our Latin and Greek courses are designed to give effect to those merits. To read and understand what the best ancient authors wrote must be the main aim set before our pupils. Methods still need adapting to ends and to conditions. For instance, the grammar-school class of thirty-odd boys or girls, or both, demands techniques different from those that would have passed in a preparatory school form of fourteen boys. Brisker oral work, a curtailment of the endless sentence-composition, more memorization, especially of memorable verse-passages, stimulated out-of-school reading in ancient history and mythology—these are some of the obvious devices which in fact bring results in examinations no less than in what we may call, without pomposity, the growth of individual culture. But, however modest our aims, it requires time to achieve them. Perhaps more Latin for fewer pupils is a fair demand.

On vacation courses, at local conferences, at meetings of the Classical Association, and in gatherings organized by Institutes of Education, it is a pleasure to see the active and keen participation of young teachers.

Newly started courses in Greek are quite numerous, especially in girls' schools. But there are many teachers who work in isolation, some of them out of touch with books, journals, and the tools of scholarship generally. There is a danger that, dutifully though we pass on what we have inherited, some of it may lose its vitality and its meaning in the transmission. Our pupils are entitled, in Classics as in all other subjects, to the best we can give them in terms of contemporary interpretation as well as in exactness of scholarship. In order to give it them we really need to shorten our lines and to re-deploy our resources. The task is not too great for men and women of good will, but it should be undertaken while there is yet time.

TWO YEARS OF LATIN

By T. H. ROWLAND

IT is not easy to give a satisfactory answer to boys and girls who rightly want to know why they should embark on the study of Latin if they are to drop it after two years. The solution seemed to be to make the question unnecessary, and so a break was made at Mirfield Grammar School with the traditional approach to Latin for those pupils who were unable to pursue the normal 'O' level course. Previous policy had been to follow a parallel course in the two streams for the first two years. A very real fault in the system was that certain pupils parted with Latin at the end of their second year with no sense of achievement and with considerable relief. The challenge to provide a course to meet their special needs was obvious and needed to be met.

There were a few problems connected with individual children which had to be resolved. No attempt was made in the first year to grade the children into the more and less able. At the end of the year I had to ensure that any child I thought capable of doing the full course went into the 'A' stream. Other subjects had to be considered; and it was quite possible that at the end of the second year a pupil's all-round performance might justify a transfer to the 'A' form. Such a pupil would then be involved in the normal Latin course. This particular problem has largely been solved at my present school by adopting the principle of sets.

I tried to keep firmly in mind that my main purpose was to teach Latin, and that in no circumstances was the second year of the two-year course to be regarded as a soft option. We started Latin with all pupils in the first form, and for that year all did similar work. I had the foundations for a two-year course; but I must say how much both my pupils and I are indebted to Mr. W. B. Thompson of Leeds University, who encouraged me to embark on this venture and gave me invaluable assistance.

Many of us connected with the teaching of Latin find that the time allotted to us for our subject is all too little for the 'O' level requirements. Much that we would like to teach has to be omitted, although we try to include those aspects which are part of our everyday life. Here was our beginning. After a year of formal Latin we began in our second year to inquire into those things which are at hand and which I have always found to be of very great interest to pupils.

We examined what our language owed to Latin. We noted and learned the use of Latin words and phrases which are in everyday use. We found out what the various abbreviations stood for, and how to handle them. We looked at the calendar and discovered something of Roman chronology. Mottoes and inscriptions came under our survey, and we learned to compile our own. Accordingly the Latin that we had to learn necessarily included one of the uses of the subjunctive. Latin in the Church claimed our attention. This was timed so that towards the end of the autumn term we committed to memory the Latin version of some of the carols which, with the co-operation of my colleague in charge of Music, were sung at the School Carol Concert. Sources of material were at hand and unlimited. The daily newspaper provided much. Towns, regiments, and schools gave us their mottoes. Memorial plaques in churches and cathedrals were another fruitful source. Some of my more satisfying moments came when I found pupils who had completed the course still carefully listing and translating with commendable skill pieces of Latin they found on their travels. We did not feel restricted to Latin, and the explanation of the well-known monogram IHS and of the significance of the early Christian use of the fish symbol provided an opportunity to introduce a little Greek, even if it was nothing more than the alphabet. A very useful book was Johnson's *Latin Words of Common English*, but I found that once given the lead the pupils themselves proved both capable and eager to find the material.

Continuing with the theme of the present-day application of Latin we found it quite natural that we should proceed to unveil some of the mysteries of medical Latin. All new pupils tell me, when I ask them 'Why Latin?', that it is necessary for doctors and lawyers. We learned some of the art of prescription writing, and we practised it, getting to know some of the more common abbreviations and the Latin for which they stood. My colleague in charge of Biology provided us with a drawing of a skeleton which we duplicated and so became familiar with the names of the bones of the body. He assured me of its practical use to him in teaching the pupils of the third year. A book from the library of Leeds University, published in 1658, provided useful extracts, as one section dealt with *Membra Hominis Externa*. I mention the date of publication as I remember the reaction of the pupils when I gave them a selection from this work, and their delight when they realized they understood much of what it was saying. They pursued this section eagerly, partly, I think, because they thought they were being allowed an understanding of things normally outside the scope of the school course.

I have yet to find a young pupil not interested in mythology, and we

were able to devote part of the year to a study of some of the ancient myths and legends. Here again was an excellent opportunity for them to use their initiative and find out for themselves some of the stories they wanted to know. It was easy to stir their curiosity, and incredible to find how readily and fully they satisfied it. I wanted them to enjoy their Latin, and I believe they did. It is hard to get pupils to pursue the study of Latin because 'it is good for them', especially if they are not mentally equipped for the rigours of the traditional course. We cannot remove the work, but perhaps we can lessen the drudgery.

Pupils very soon know that they are doing something which has no real purpose, and ask why. A defence of a parallel two-year course in two forms might be made on the grounds that no one can tell after one year of Latin whether a really just selection has been made. But is it right to neglect the interests of thirty or more children lest any one of that number has been overlooked? The possibility of a child being able to continue Latin was never forgotten. I have always believed that reading a language is the best way to begin to learn it. We continued our reading of Latin, using the myths and legends as our subject-matter. When a pupil, as happened on several occasions, was transferred to the 'A' stream because of a good all-round performance, although some work had to be made up it was quite possible to do this with a little extra tuition and an extra effort on the part of the person concerned.

Our third term's work was devoted to the Roman way of life. We learned something of their achievements in the different fields of activity, and what has been called 'The Legacy of Rome'. Their faults as well as their virtues were examined, and had time allowed more would have been said of Greece. A little time was spent on Roman coins, and I found Professor Grant's book on the subject most useful.

I have tried to indicate the approach we adopted. No doubt much else that is worth while could be included. I do not make claims for myself, but I do for the course. Is it possible that one day it may be extended to cover three or four years, when it could be examined at 'O' level? My own experience on these particular lines has been limited to boys and girls in the second form. I have often wondered whether some modification of the 'O' level syllabus might be made, or an alternative devised. Of the boys and girls who sit for 'O' level examinations and are successful only a small proportion carry on to advanced work. An 'O' level course by itself leaves a pupil ill-equipped to cope with the Latin he finds around him, although I try to include as much of the above material as time allows. Even the best would have difficulty in reading texts unaided. This particular two-year course has been operated with four

different forms, which I think is enough to allow some assessment to be made. With a few exceptions the children involved were the less able pupils of their year, and the level of attainment was good.

I am not advocating a diluted course; but these boys and girls of moderate ability encouraged me to hope that two years of Latin could be profitable and enjoyable and might lead on to other things. I do not believe that Latin or any other subject can be mastered without effort, but I do think that our task would be lightened if the pupils could more readily see the relevance of their goal.

READING THE CLASSICS—ALLOUD

By WILLIAM B. THOMPSON

‘READING’ is one of those unfortunate words whose meaning is not immediately clear. In order to specify what I mean on this particular occasion I have to add the word ‘aloud’, because what I want to write about is not the silent reading of Greek and Latin, but the reading of Greek and Latin so as to be heard—as indeed they were intended to be read.

We are so used to the notion of a literature that is silent, as silent as the printed word, that we have no word for what preceded it, the oral poetry which illiterates such as Homer created. My own students, who are all going to be Classics masters or mistresses, are too often as much taken aback at being asked to read Latin or Greek aloud as St. Augustine was in the latter part of the fourth century at seeing a man, no other than St. Ambrose indeed, reading silently. ‘When he was reading, his eye glided over the pages, and his heart searched out the sense, but his voice and tongue were at rest’—‘sed cum legebat, oculi ducebantur per paginas et cor intellectum rimabatur, uox autem et lingua quiescebant.’¹

We have reached such a state of dependence on the printed word that we are no longer in the habit of turning most of what we read with the eye into sounds which can be heard with the ear. The written language is a convenience for representing the sounds visually, but we seldom translate these signs and symbols back audibly into their sound-values. To read silently is our normal habit.

This may not be objectionable if what we are reading was never created in audible sound; and I suppose it would be generally true that most of the literature in English of the past two or three hundred years was not primarily conceived or created in audible sound. The same would be largely true of other modern literatures. The more literate we become, the less we seem to create in sound—or for that matter, the less we tell our stories in any medium but the printed word. When the great god Literacy was not so loftily enthroned, we used to tell our tales—as well as teach our doctrines—in stained glass and mosaic, in mural paintings, and in the carving or sculpting of wood or stone. Will the radio and television eventually free us from the shackles of literacy and restore to us a proper appreciation of creation through the spoken word, or even of the audible interpretation of the spoken word?

¹ *Confessions*, vi. 3.

If only to remind ourselves that such things are possible I want to mention two examples of the attitude of creative artists today in this country. First there is John Masefield. He believes that poetry, unlike Victorian children, should be heard and not seen. In 1959, therefore, he published his new poem, *The Story of Ossian*, on a fifty-minute long-playing record. And so this poem has joined those others of earlier ages which have gone into men's ears before they have appeared in print. The other artist is Geoffrey Bridson. He creates for the radio and believes that, as television grows and kills the habit of reading, radio and television will matter more and print will matter less. In due course new poetry will be broadcast, and that will be poetry as it should be, poetry for performance. 'Homer', says Bridson, 'would have had a whale of a time nowadays.'

If then we turn to Greek or Latin literature, we find ourselves dealing with literature which, though indeed it was written down, was created to be received through the ear by a true *audience*. An author today, unless he is a playwright, practically never has an audience. The whole business of poetic creation tends to lack something of that essential third person of the writer's trinity, 'the thing which flows back to the writer from his own activity', as Dorothy Sayers has put it.¹

The ancients were more fortunate: they had their real living audience—whether it was Homer reciting the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*, or Herodotos reading his *History* in Athens, or of course, Aeschylus, Sophokles, and Euripides transmitting the message of their tragedies to the folk sitting in the theatre of Dionysos, or Isokrates and the other Attic orators pleading in the courts and councils of the State. Above all there was Sokrates creating a philosophy without ever, so far as we know, committing a word to paper. The same is largely true of Latin, but with the difference that we are dealing here with a literary language which was not the everyday speech of the people of Rome or of anywhere else.

How does all this affect our teaching of Classics? One of the first things we must do is to rid our pupils (and ourselves, if necessary) of the notion that language is something distinct from literature and that its study is pedantic and even inhumane. To treat the Classics as humane studies does not mean we must throw overboard all attention to linguistic and philological phenomena. Linguistic and philological studies are essential handmaids to the study of literature—ancillary but essential.

This demands that we as teachers insist on the utmost accuracy in pronunciation (both for ourselves and for our pupils) as being of vital

¹ *The Mind of the Maker* (London, 1941), 30.

importance if the full literary value of Greek and Latin verse and prose is to be gained by the boys and girls we teach. This insistence on accuracy must not become a sort of witch-hunt after false quantities: indeed, if there is to be a witch-hunt, we had better pursue the Witch of False Stress rather than her sister of False Quantity. Surely *rēgīs* is a more serious error than *mōnēs*, *āmāt* than *auidīs*. Books such as Westaway's *Latin Quantity and Accent* and Cooper's *Latin Hexameter* should be obligatory possessions of all of us who teach Latin.

As things are at present a man or woman may get a First in Classics without being able to read (in the sense in which I am using the word) a line of Virgil or of Homer. But once a Classics graduate becomes a teacher of Classics, it immediately becomes incumbent on him to be able to read Greek and Latin aloud. Otherwise he cannot possibly be an adequate teacher. I would go so far as to say that no Classics graduate should be allowed to gain a Certificate in Education if he fails in this respect.

How in practice can we set about preparing ourselves to remedy this deficiency (where it exists), a deficiency for which teachers are not generally themselves to blame? Firstly, of course, by making ourselves fluent in reading aloud simple Latin and Greek. Simple it must be in the early stages. Something like Alice Croft's *Fabulae Antiquae* is excellent or perhaps the new reader of Harrison and Wilson, *Latine Legamus*, just published. In Greek there is, for example, Sidgwick's *First Greek Reading Book*, or, if you can get hold of a copy of it, Rouse's *A Greek Boy at Home*. Translating the text is not important: rapid comprehension is. And let us not forget that the Vulgate and the Greek Testament are excellent for the purpose: fluency will come more easily because there should be no problem of comprehension.

From the reading of simple prose we come to the reading of verse. Here again what we may have had to practise ourselves in our own struggle to read satisfyingly and correctly often provides an indication of what should be our method in teaching our pupils. Many a teacher has begun at a grave disadvantage because he was introduced to Latin quantitative verse by way of a corresponding metre in English based on stress. Worse than this, the Latin verse may have been given a large dose of English stress in an attempt to make the metre the easier to grasp. This seems to me a disastrous introduction: an English stressed hexameter, for example, gives a very largely false notion of the feel of the classical hexameter.

Then again he may have been taught scansion before reading, that is, he may have *started* from scansion—a mechanical device which by such

usage has succeeded in obscuring for many a boy and girl the poetry of Greek or Latin. If only the realization of the scansion had come naturally from correct reading of the Latin, many of our difficulties would have been removed. I suggest, therefore, that we should leave the process of mechanical scansion until the boys and girls have by experience sensed both the metre and the rhythm. Scansion, unless it is taught along with a realization of the contrapuntal effects of quantity and natural word-stress which are continually being achieved by Roman poets, is a somewhat barren pursuit. Only by correct reading of stress and quantity can we really hope to get the feel of the poetry and the metre. Nor is this indeed relevant only to the reading of verse, but it applies also to the reading of the cadences of the Ciceronian *clausulae*.

I cannot leave this subject of reading the classics aloud without making an urgent plea for a revival of the practice of speaking passages of Greek and Latin verse and prose *memoriter*. It is a great pity that this excellent (though sometimes abused) habit has fallen into desuetude. It must surely be revived. It can hardly be begun too early in the teaching of Latin and Greek: let the child commit lines of Homer and Virgil to memory even before he can understand them. Let the feel of them seep into his very being. (Is not this the real way of 'teaching' scansion?) Every child who has learned Latin even for a couple of years should have a small *corpus* of lines and short passages committed to memory—in terms of sound, not sight, of course. As the pupil moves up the school longer passages, sometimes incorporating earlier and shorter ones, may be learned, so that he will eventually have built up a stock of some of the most significant passages of the classics, which will in a very real way belong to him as a κτήμα ἐς αἰεὶ without the intrusion of any text.

What has been written here does little more than put forward briefly a strong claim for much greater attention to be paid to an aspect of classical teaching which has been neglected and which is at the same time, I firmly believe, an inescapable part of the work of the Classics teacher. We cannot be really satisfied until we are presenting to our pupils as spoken literature the heritage we have received from Greece and Rome.

The picture is not one of unrelieved gloom. Something *is* being done to help restore the spoken word in Greek and Latin to its proper place of importance. The increasing use of oral methods (particularly for composition) in a good many schools is a hopeful sign; so too are the well-supported Reading Competitions organized by many local branches of the Classical Association up and down the country. Dictation is an

exercise which could well be used more frequently than it is to bring home to Classics pupils the need to listen carefully. More work remains to be done in finding how far reading aloud can provide a more efficient method of testing comprehension of Greek and Latin literature than the currently accepted method of translation into English. We still await experiments in this field by the Examination Boards for the General Certificate of Education.

For all this the first requirement is a realization by the ordinary teacher of the importance of reading aloud in the study of classical literature, then a willingness to make himself competent to employ it, and finally a determination to use it himself and to get its importance generally accepted. The indications given in the earlier part of this paper offer hope that the present time, with radio and television in almost every home, may be providing our opportunity for a great advance in this much-needed direction. We must give up being pen-conscious and print-minded folk when we are dealing with the literature of people who were neither.

THE CLASSICS AND HISTORY

By D. S. COLMAN

IN May 1862 one of the members of the Public Schools Commission asked Dr. Moberly, the Headmaster of Winchester, whether it was the habit in his school to teach modern or ancient history by set lessons, and he got the frank reply, 'No; I should not know how to do it.' And C. E. Graves, in the course of his evidence before the same Commissioners, said of the Greek history that he had studied a few years earlier at Shrewsbury, 'We used to get it up from a small book by a German, written in Latin.' The century that has passed since then has seen astonishing changes both in the content and in the methods of education, and in particular the promotion of historical studies to a place of central importance has made considerable alterations in the frontiers even if it has not been the result of deliberate 're-drawing the map of learning', and it certainly constitutes one of the main factors which the contemporary cartographers of education must take into account.

'For students to be asked to integrate their subjects is a challenge to a difficult task', wrote Mr. John Fulton recently as he contemplated the future work of the University of Sussex; and any teacher who has had experience of trying to lead his pupils to do so will warmly assent. Schoolboys especially seem to delight in keeping their knowledge in compartments even within the limits of a single so-called 'subject', perhaps because, at least in the earlier stages, their working day is so much chopped up into arbitrary slices of time marked by the striking of clocks or the ringing of bells to proclaim the passage of school periods. But something can be done, and it may be that the study of the ancient world as a single whole—its life and literature, its history and its material remains, its languages and its religions—has still a useful part to play in this process.

It was a distinguished Professor of Modern History at Oxford, H. W. C. Davis, who remarked that Ancient History supplies the finest discipline that can be offered to the historical beginner. I suppose he may have had Greats in mind, but after all the historical beginner has to start earlier than that, and it is fair to claim that he may make a modest approach to his trade even at the humble level of school studies. When we read Caesar or Livy, Herodotus or Thucydides, with our pupils, we are no doubt studying language and literature primarily, and the difficulties

that language presents are formidable enough; but we are studying history too, and some at least of the lessons that the future student of history must learn can be mastered at that stage and in that medium. Here is the history that is common ground for all Europeans and for all who have shared in the European tradition. The sheer bulk of the sources is not so overwhelmingly large as it is for much of more recent history, and we can approach it with some degree of detachment and freedom from prejudice. Moreover it is conveyed to us in works of literature that have been judged by many generations to be worth studying in their own right. They are classical in the best, untechnical sense of the word; they have stood the test of time, even if they are still ready to submit to scrutiny and research and to be enriched by the discovery of new documents or by the findings of the archaeologists.

The danger is that we may expect too much at this stage, that we may encourage our pupils to pass judgement upon problems which they are not mature enough to handle adequately, or, worse still, to pretend to knowledge which they do not genuinely possess. We should do well to remember Professor Herbert Butterfield's words:

If our Western civilization were to collapse even more completely than it has done, and I were asked to say upon which of the sins of the world the judgement of God had come in so signal a manner, I should specify, as the most general of existing evils and the most terrifying in its results, human presumption and particularly intellectual arrogance. . . . But it is the besetting disease of historians, and the effect of an historical education seems very often actually to encourage the evil. The mind sweeps like the mind of God over centuries and continents, churches and cities, Shakespeares and Aristotles, curtly putting everything in its place. Any schoolboy thinks that he can show that Napoleon was foolish as a statesman, and I have seen Bismarck condemned as a mere simpleton in diplomacy by undergraduates who would not have had sufficient diplomacy to wheedle sixpence out of a college porter.

There was wisdom too in the words of another Professor of Modern History, Richard Pares, when he observed that the right age to start reading history is about twenty-five, and that those who have to study it at fifteen must obviously be studying something which is not in the full sense history at all.

For my part I accept and even welcome these limitations and these warnings, and I look to classical studies to give a boy a few basic lessons in the gathering of evidence and the search for truth which will not tempt him to suppose that he now knows all the answers. Rightly guided, a boy can learn to think historically without knowing that he is doing so, and I doubt if any training can do this as well as a classical education, in

which every lesson is in one sense a lesson in history, and even an exercise in composition means an effort to enter the thought-world and to share the mental experience of men of another age whose intellectual processes were indeed other than our own, but not so wholly alien that we cannot to some extent appropriate them or at least appreciate them. We think of Theodor Mommsen as a great historian rather than as a philologist. Yet it was he who said, 'A people's language is always its greatest, most enduring, and most multifarious monument.' It was the Roman people and the Latin language that concerned him immediately, but we may feel the justice of his words more readily when we think of the Greeks. Who can doubt that, even historically, the *Antigone* is more significant than the *Anabasis*? Mommsen was arguing against the tendency to suppose that in history a refuge could be found from the hardships of rigorous philology and that what he called systematic historical pragmatism could serve as a substitute for scholarship. The warning is not without its relevance in our day. For the nemesis of the soft option is, as he tells us, that the historical sense vanishes. The old classical scholars who never had a formal history lesson had something more fruitful; they read their way into the mind and life of the ancient world, and got to know it as undergraduates get to know medieval architecture by living in a medieval college building.

Indeed, the transmission of the classical literature itself from antiquity to the present time is part of the total historical process that can be made to open up new horizons in a boy's mind, as it certainly did in mine when some fortunate impulse led me to read the introduction to H. A. J. Munro's edition of Lucretius. I think I had usually skipped the introductions to the school editions of classical authors that I had been given hitherto, but something prompted me to begin Munro at the first page, and I was fascinated from the start. There I met *Oblongus* and *Quadratus*; by page 2 I was among the Renaissance scholars ransacking the monasteries for classical literature, and made the acquaintance of people like Poggio and Niccoli, who borrowed Poggio's precious manuscript and kept it for fourteen years. Then I was carried on to the invention of printing, and heard of an *editio princeps* for the first time in my life. Then followed Munro's magisterial survey of all the subsequent editions and their editors as nation after nation took up the study of Lucretius—the Italians first, with the Aldine edition and Marullus, then the French with Lambinus, then the Dutch, then the English, then the Germans. No doubt this is not history in the examination-syllabus sense of the word, but it is the kind of thing that leads to historical thinking and historical sympathy. Already I was beginning to be made free of the *respublica*

litterarum, and even to be introduced to its quarrels and deceits, to characters such as 'the well-known scholar and jurisconsult Obertus Gifanius of Buren', who pillaged and converted to his own purposes the first edition of Lambinus with what Munro described as 'systematical and unprincipled cunning'. I was beginning to see in scholarship a point of entry into wider fields of history, and it aroused in me a desire to know more, to penetrate farther.

Such points of entry can be found in many parts of classical studies. Some may pass in through the material remains of the ancient world, through the art and archaeology that are being so admirably put before this generation by modern museum-technique, by modern book-illustration, or by experience in the field itself. For others it could be through the history of the book, the actual *format* of the classics down the centuries, from the manuscripts to the early printed editions that so closely resemble them, then on to the sumptuous folios and quartos of a Bodoni or a Baskerville, and so to the more 'professional' volumes of the nineteenth century and the familiar texts of our own day. Others again may find their bridge in the study of Renaissance painting and architecture, or in the rise of the Romance languages or in the unfolding of a subject such as that of Professor Stanford's *The Ulysses Theme*. The one essential is that all the windows should be kept open, so that when we look up from our texts we are aware of what lies beyond, 'cum studia praestent ut, quantum ad cognitionem pertinet rerum, etiam praeteritis saeculis uixisse uideamur'.

Perhaps after all Dr. Moberly was not so far from the truth. 'Set lessons' are apt to vanish with very little trace, or at best to leave a deposit in one compartment of the memory, a dry little handful of more or less useful information. But if we are to 'integrate our studies' we must somehow recapture more of the spirit of the ancient Ionian ἵστορίη, not allowing ourselves to be unduly daunted by the knowledge of our own ignorance and not keeping too wary an eye upon the demands of our examination-syllabus (though everyone knows that the syllabus is there and will make its demands, however largely we may talk about educational values). For one of the most fascinating things about teaching is that you never know when or where you have been sowing the seeds that were destined to germinate. Surely almost every teacher must have had the experience of meeting in later life a former pupil who declares that he has always warmly cherished some dictum of the teacher's which the latter cannot in conscience recognize or recall as his own. And no teacher has had a more enviable tribute than he of whom it was said:

When removed furthest in body from the scene of his labours, when your spirit has passed into regions of thought and fields of study far beyond the bounds of study pursued here, have you not in your utmost pride and range of thought been brought hither by something which reminded you that his master hand had shaped your mind?

TEACHING LATIN

By P. H. VELLACOTT

YOU know, sir—you're absolutely right!' This heartening remark, accompanied by the ingenuous smile of intellectual discovery (or was it just kindly encouragement?) came from a member of the Classical Sixth in response to a five-minute impromptu discourse of mine in which I had said something like this:

In the Fourth Form we show you, two or three times a week, how to set about translating a complex Latin period. We ask you, 'What verb is introduced by *ut*?' You say, '*Esset*'. We say, 'Look again'; and you say, 'Oh, no, *esset* is introduced by *quod*; *ut* goes with *perciperent*'. 'Right; then what clause comes before the *ut*-clause?' 'An Ablative Absolute.' 'Read it aloud.' Then for the fortieth time we teach you how to translate a Present Participle in Ablative Absolute. Then we say: 'Now, stepping carefully over all the dependent clauses, read aloud the main clause, the framework of the sentence'. After four or five shots you get it. Within ten minutes you have successfully translated the whole sentence, including two words you'd never seen before, without being told a single thing, only asked questions—and not leading questions. Then we say, 'Work on that system when you are doing translation alone'. We say this to you for two years. But do you work on that system? As Eliza Doolittle said . . . No.

Why not? Because all the time it is being taught you, you are saying to yourselves under your breath, in your inmost frightened soul, with the desperation of drowning men, 'That's a schoolmaster's way of doing it, that's not for us, we couldn't if we tried, it's against our nature, we don't believe it and we won't try it'. All through the Fourth and Fifth you go on saying this to yourselves; until one day you suddenly take your feet off the bottom and swim.

'You know, sir—you're right!'

This I take to be the central problem. It is not difficult to teach Latin—that is the easy part. It is more difficult to teach the English necessary for learning Latin. But the really hard thing is to teach pupils how to study and how to learn; because this process is moral as well as mental: it involves courage.

A boy of 13, 14, 15, 16, and even older, will struggle with a blind tenacity to avoid being pushed in at the deep end—being made to learn rules and apply them to examples. In any *particular* problem he may see some hope of a solution; what he hates to do is to leave the particular and launch into the general, to find the right rule and apply it.

The process of understanding a rule and learning to apply it to examples is fundamental in any type of study. For the practice of this process

Latin is especially important and useful, coming as it does somewhere between Mathematics and History. In Mathematics the process is carried out with (at 'O' level) fairly simple symbols. In History it has to be applied to characters and situations, which are never simple. In Latin it is applied to words, which are more alive than symbols and less complex than characters and situations. In learning Latin this process is exemplified in almost every sentence, and in all inflected words. But to attempt this process requires courage. And I think there are several ways of bolstering up the courage of a Latin class which have not yet been sufficiently tried.

I begin by assuming that our primary aim is to teach translation from Latin into English; and that translation from English into Latin is a means to that end, perhaps indispensable, certainly enjoyable, but always secondary. I shall return to this point presently in connexion with some practical suggestions.

First, it is only fair to pupils that before the various constructions are even looked at in another language, each of them should be thoroughly grasped in English. The relations of tenses in indirect speech; the difference between the present participle and the gerund; the proper use of 'may' and 'might'; the eight or nine common different meanings expressed by the English infinitive; the different types of open and applied conditions: all these, and other more elementary points, are still often explained in a Latin context, with Latin examples, and are thus presented as if they were complexities which existed only in Latin; instead of being, as they are in fact, complexities with which most grammar-school children deal fairly successfully all day and every day in their own conversation.

Let us look at indirect speech. Some twelve-year-old children, suddenly confronted with the two sentences, 'I know what he wanted' and 'I knew what he wanted', and asked to say what the direct question was, would become confused. But all of them would on occasion use both those sentences correctly, and know exactly what they meant. By presenting carefully arranged examples a teacher should be able to get children of that age to explore and analyse usages which they already practise. Similarly the connexion of such sentences as 'He is known to have left the country', 'He was thought to be in Paris', with sentences of the same meaning which begin impersonally, 'It is known . . .', 'It was thought . . .', can be studied and grasped in English without inducing terror or despair; and the construction can be presented as something already understood and familiar. The important thing is to have ready enough examples to cover the whole scope of whatever construction is

being studied, and to show how the various uses fall into symmetrical patterns, with primary or historic main verbs, and present or past direct speech.

Another group of Latin constructions which can profitably be studied together on the English side of the fence comprises all those which English expresses by the infinitive. Naturally a number of these (indirect statement after 'promise', relative with subjunctive, indirect command, supine) must be taught separately in their proper order; but this is only half the job. The wide scope of the English infinitive should be a chapter in itself, to which items are added as they are met. There is much to be said for teaching pupils at an early stage to identify and name in English the four uses just mentioned, and all the others which they know how to use in their own tongue, *before* reaching the point where they learn to put them into Latin; so that, as each construction is reached, the introduction to it can be recapitulated as a thing already familiar.

This is as much as to say that an important point of Latin teaching is the 'two-way' approach. Pupils should be encouraged always to think, 'What is the Latin for "He told me not to speak"?' and 'What is the English for *Me loqui vetuit*?' at the same time. My own experience is that many boys can be taught to put six sentences or even a short prose piece into fairly correct Latin, while they shrivel into hopeless incompetence when confronted with an 'unseen'. Translation is, in fact, a harder thing to teach than composition, because it begins with the unknown instead of with the known. Latin 'courses', moreover, give plenty of help with composition; while those Readers which provide 'hints on translating', however good the hints may be, unavoidably leave the pupil to step forward alone into the deep water of a Latin passage, full of dangerous currents and lurking crabs. What is needed, in addition to hints, is step-by-step guidance, and constant two-way practice.

I can see only one answer to this need; and that is, that every 'exercitae' done by the learner should be a two-way exercise; that the right way to put an English sentence into Latin should be discovered by first studying a comparable Latin sentence. In fact it should be recognized that the thing of first importance is to study a Latin sentence, and the thing of second importance (practised only as a means to achieving the first) is to turn a similar sentence from English into Latin.

1. Duos pueros reliquimus qui ianuam custodirent.
Send some of them to bring food.
2. Libros ad te mittam quos legas.
There was no one for me to trust.

3. Cicero perfecta epistola Arpinum profectus est.
After hiding the money the soldier called his wife.
4. Cave ne, qui te semel decepit, ei iterum credas.
I didn't want to neglect now one who had formerly helped me.

Pairs of sentences like these have several advantages. They accustom a pupil to looking closely at what he translates, and to working from analogy. They teach translation at the same time as composition, and keep the two in the right perspective. They encourage the turning of idiomatic Latin into idiomatic English and vice versa, since in each case the parallel sentence acts as a guide. To compose a thousand or more such pairs to cover an entire 'O' level course is a lengthy but quite possible task.

There are a number of other ways in which Latin teaching could probably be made easier and more rapid in the early stages. First, in the teaching of nouns, why must we always begin with *mensa* and *nauta*, and go on to *annus*, *ager*, *puer*, and *bellum*? After learning these four or five types (including possibly the irregularities of *filius*, *filia*, *vir*, *deus*) the pupil has still a rather restricted collection of pawns to move about on the board of language; and when he has more or less mastered them he is introduced to the third declension, which (perhaps because of Kennedy's twenty-seven types printed out in full) bears the reputation of being the really hard declension. Surely it is easier and more natural to begin with the third declension, which at once makes available, without involving any irregularities, more than a third of the nouns in the language? Two words such as *princeps* (for masculine and feminine nouns) and *corpus* (for neuters) will serve as patterns for nine-tenths of the nouns in the third declension. In these two nouns, as in scores of others, pupils can discover for themselves, without reference to a vocabulary, how to form the stem and attach to it the oblique case-endings, by thinking of English derivatives of, and removing the obvious suffixes from, for example, 'princip-al', 'corpor-al', 'nomin-ate', 'tempor-ary'. *Civis* and *mare*, which together give the pattern for less than a score of useful nouns, may be left until later.

With such a beginning a pupil should feel himself at once able to translate and to use a wide range of words which he has not yet memorized but can find in a dictionary. When the use of these regular nouns in their various cases has made him begin to feel at home in the language, he can pass on with more confidence to the less regular types of the first and second declensions.

In the teaching of the verb, it would be hard to find a more daunting presentation than that with which Dr. Kennedy, in the Golden Age of public school Latin, toughened the mental fibres of the teachers of our

teachers, and broke the hearts of the less resolute among our fellow-pupils. (His printing in full of about a hundred tenses has greatly encouraged the disastrous tendency referred to in my first paragraphs—to look up the particular on every occasion rather than learn the general.) No one denies that there are ten tenses. Boys and girls use them all, and many use most of them correctly—in English. In English, then, let their meanings be studied and familiarized, together with the relation between their active and passive forms. Then let it be made clear that irregularity in Latin verbs is extremely rare; and that, of these ten tenses, seven are uniform in their inflexions in all verbs. Then let the four varieties of the present indicative be examined, compared, and learnt all together. The notion of four conjugations should not be mentioned as a thing applying to the whole verb.

After that, the commonest of all tenses should be learnt—the past historic. (The perfect, the least common of all tenses, should be introduced later, when the distinction of primary and historic is firmly established.) It should be emphasized that the tense-endings of the past historic are invariable for *all* verbs. Next, the imperfect, pluperfect, and future perfect—all uniform. The future and the present subjunctive—two types of each—should be learnt together, and their differences memorized.

The distinction of the four conjugations is relevant only to (a) the present indicative, (b) the future and the present subjunctive, and (c) the principal parts. What should be emphasized all the time is the miraculous regularity and uniformity of the Latin verb. Passives should be taught through their relation, in English, to the corresponding active part, and not memorized as if they were different tenses. Irregular verbs should be dealt with as summarily as possible. Seven verbs (besides *sum*) have some irregularities in the present indicative; besides these, the learning of less than twenty words will cover what is needed.

Some admirable textbooks, which present Latin in a clear and orderly manner, seem to forget at one critical point the actual way in which they are going to be used. The teacher explains a construction; the class have the book open before them. The explanations in the book are read, and enlarged upon. The book gives an English sentence as an example, and then gives the Latin for it. The class all glance at this example, but don't need to think about it—in fact, most of them *cannot* think about it simply because the answer is printed in front of them. Then the teacher turns his back on the class and writes an improvised example, English or Latin, on the board. Now the answer is not provided; so the more active pupils exert their minds and try to provide it; while the rest, because the

teacher has turned his back or because the light on the board is poor, or because Jones always answers first, sit and wait. Surely the mistake lies in printing the answer in the text book. The example ought to be printed, in either language, without the translation. Then each pupil would have the question put straight to him on the page, before the teacher broke the spell by turning to the blackboard; and he would be more likely to make a real attempt to find the answer for himself.

The same argument applies to the vocabularies often placed at the end of a chapter, to be used in the exercise following. The printing of the answers is almost a physical check on the mental effort required for learning. If each word is printed only in one language, half the pupil's problem in study-technique is solved; and at the same time he gains experience in another skill—the looking up of words in a vocabulary or dictionary.

I come last to what I feel to be the most important point of all. The feature of Latin which more than any other embodies the whole character of the language is the combination of subtlety, variety, and logical clarity which dictates the order of words in a sentence. It is word-order that operates the principle of logical analysis which gave this language its lasting strength, and constituted its deepest influence on English prose style. Unfortunately every teacher knows the alacrity with which pupils seize on the notion that proper word-order is an optional extra grace added to the plain framework; not to be attempted by the modest student; and used by Latin writers out of an innate perversity which it is useless to try to explain. This attitude stands as a final barrier to ease in translation. More than this, the neglect of word-order is one of the things which reduce Latin from the status of a great and dramatic language to that of a barren exercise.

Admittedly we cannot go very far in teaching 'O' level pupils the logical principle which underlies Latin word-order; but we can certainly teach them to observe its effect in Latin sentences, to pick up its rhythms, and to practise it in a simple way by imitation. This is the way all children learn their own language; and the full understanding of what they have learnt comes later. It is perhaps unavoidable that in the 'O' level examination pupils should be able to pass without showing any knowledge of word-order; but it is none the less regrettable. I make no apology for saying that an appreciation of Latin word-order is an essential for a Latin teacher; and that from the first term he should strive to inculcate a sense of style with every lesson and every exercise.

THE FIG-TREE

By DORA PYM

IN recent discussions among classical teachers about the advisability of alterations in the 'O' level Latin syllabus the deepest division of opinion seemed to be on the comparative value of set books and unseen translation. Many are reluctant to abandon set books, declaring that, even for those pupils who make a poor examination showing, the careful attempt to master some portion of Latin literature has been of value. On the other hand, it is said that set books may lead to parrot-like memorizing of inferior translations and that the direct experience of Latin literature which they give is generally very limited. It is possible to exaggerate the danger from poor translations. It can be assumed nowadays that boys and girls approaching an examination will use some translation or other; time might usefully be spent in the classroom comparing their accuracy and quality. Versions of a passage of Virgil by Conington, Day Lewis, Jackson Knight, and the modern equivalent of Kelly's *Key* might at any rate set a standard.

Some teachers prefer the translation paper, since it allows wider scope in reading and the use of time. It is said, however, that the passages set are too complicated and that, compared with the numbers passing in other subjects, too many Latin candidates fail; anyhow, it is added, the supply of suitable verse unseens is becoming exhausted. From some quarters comes the suggestion that special 'straightforward' passages should be written for the examination. Classical writers did not, of course, foresee or provide for these contingencies; nor do the stages of mastering the elements of the Latin language correspond neatly to 'levels' or comparative percentages in school examinations.

Between this Scylla and Charybdis, like the fig-tree for Odysseus, another suggestion has sprung up, namely that harder unseens should be set and a dictionary allowed in the examination room. Representative pieces of real Latin authors could then be set. The idea is not new, and various objections to it have been advanced. Dictionaries are said to be too heavy for children to carry, too large and difficult for them to handle. This objection is no longer valid, for excellent pocket dictionaries, clearly printed, easy to handle, and of moderate price are now available. Children of eight and nine are taught in primary schools to use English

dictionaries and other books of reference; if they ever reach a beginners' Latin class, they are not likely to find much difficulty in manipulating small Latin dictionaries.

There is also the objection that translation depending on help from a dictionary would 'let down the standard' of the 'O' Level examination. Would success in such a test be worth having? Only experiment and experience can give the answer. To use a dictionary in a translation paper is a different kind of test from the customary idea of unseens, but not necessarily an inferior one. Intelligent use of a dictionary is essential to the study of any language by specialist and non-specialist alike. If, after four years' work at Latin, a boy or girl could adequately translate unprepared passages of Latin literature aided solely by a dictionary, not only would something worth while have been achieved but the way would have been opened to future reading of Latin for those whose school study of the language was over. It would not be necessary to set specially written unseens, nor need the candidate hand in pages of rubbish as the only possible interpretation of what the ancient writers had to say.

A four-year course in the Main School, however it be examined, must be an end in itself, neither a foundation for something which will never be built nor an inferior version of specialist's Latin. Its aim and justification can only be an introduction to Latin literature; this experience must have quality and depth even if the amount of Latin read is not large. To provide means for experience and achievement so different from their own is a challenge to classical teachers. It may well be that the possibility of an examination in unprepared translation with the help of a little dictionary would give scope for experiment in such a four-year course. Every moment spent on reading Latin and discovering its meaning would be worth while, not only as linguistic practice, but as a demonstration that something of interest is being said. It is vital that the 'made-up' Latin of the early terms should be interesting and vigorously expressed. 'We read story-books in childhood', wrote Robert Louis Stevenson, 'not for eloquence or character or thought, but for some quality of the brute incident.'¹ He was speaking of his own tastes at twelve or thirteen. It is the story that is important, and it must not be swamped in grammar. This does not mean, however, that such stories are difficult to write. I have constantly seen classes of not particularly gifted children concentrate with the greatest attention on a simple story composed for them by their teacher. They were eager to find out what was being said, and seemed able to make an effort to possess it. There are some stories in published textbooks which are capable of arousing a like interest and

¹ *Memories and Portraits*, ch. xv.

effort. Can it be that they were originally composed for real children? Certainly many teachers do recognize in practice the principle of teaching language in a significant context by composing serial stories as a vehicle for new grammar and syntax. The heroes of these stories are always the same, and the new work is encountered in a familiar setting; there is a motive for following their adventures and finding out what happens. So the story, whatever it may be, becomes part of a child's life; expressed in a Latin language-pattern it must convey some personal understanding. If this living experience can be provided, it is the germ from which understanding of Latin literature will later grow. The choice of stories must inevitably be very varied to suit different teachers and schools. However, when the question is asked, 'Does this story bring the language to life?', much 'made-up' Latin has to be discarded. An enthusiastic response cannot, of course, always be expected from every child to every story, but four lessons a week for four years are not so spacious that time can be wasted on anything dull or dead.

It is for individual teachers to decide, according to their circumstances, which textbook suits them best and when first to introduce the pocket dictionary. It ought eventually to abolish the flapping of pages and the losing both of the place and the thread of the story, which reference to the end of the book occasions. The idea that Latin and English words can be exchanged like counters must go; for, naturally, in the dictionary a choice of meanings and shades of meaning is offered. Advice will be needed on the selection of the best English word in any given Latin context. Discrimination and intelligent choice of words could give useful training in both languages just at the age when English vocabulary needs extension and precision.

Word study of different kinds could be focused on the dictionary. Derivatives are conveniently sought under the alphabetical arrangement of a dictionary, whether or not comparison with French and the other Romance languages is made. Groups of words could be studied: for example, verbs compounded with prepositions, or words which illuminate Roman life and government. The plan of a Roman house, found in many beginners' books, could be enlivened by a careful examination of such words as *paterfamilias*, *patria potestas*, *liberi*, *servus*, and *pietas*; the words for the different kinds of marriage at Rome would also help to reveal the power of Roman family life in the shaping of Roman society. Such words as *respublica*, *pax*, *imperium*, *municipium*, *colonia*, and *ius* could throw light on the Romans abroad. Much knowledge, often reserved for the sixth form, could be acquired and is more likely to come alive, if

connected with Latin words accessible in a dictionary, than if read in an English book about the Romans.

Most teachers read some fragments of 'real Latin' in the first year. Excellent for use with the dictionary would be Lucretius' grand list of nouns to which Miss Woodward called attention many years ago:

in caeloque deum sedis et templa locarunt,
per caelum volvi quia nox et luna videtur,
luna dies et nox et noctis signa severa
noctivagaeque faces caeli flammaeque volantes,
nubila sol imbres nix venti fulmina grando
et rapidi fremitus et murmura magna minarum.

(*De Rerum Natura*, v. 1188-93.)

If the first two lines were translated for them, most beginners' classes could find their way through the rest before the end of the first year. They would find the subject relevant and alive. These lines would be worth discussion and learning by heart; everyone could master them, though they would mean much more to some than to others.

By the third year the dictionary should be a friend, a useful tool in the reading of real Latin. Constant practice in reading aloud both before and after translation should have emphasized order and shape in a passage. The general pattern of sentences can indicate the relative importance of words and enable some meaning to appear before all individual words are known. Familiarity with the dictionary ought to make less frequent the remark, 'I looked up all the words but couldn't make sense'.

In the last few terms of the course the study of Latin must yield some reward of permanent value which may be renewed when school days are over. Direct contact with Latin literature ought to be this reward. The same principle holds as for the early reading. The language must bring the subject home to each individual with enlivening vigour. Probably both rapid reading and concentrated study of chosen passages will be necessary. To 'understand' literature with intelligence and imagination is an individual act, not necessarily allied to grammatical gifts or a good verbal memory. Some of us who have survived most of the twentieth century may now 'understand' in a way we could never have known when young the words

sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.

Yet we knew, as far as our experience then reached, what the Latin words meant in English. Now Virgil's words say something to us which English words cannot say.

Only time and life can bring the experience which makes literature live in this way; such understanding cannot be forced, and all the teacher

can do is to take the horses to the water. Latin literature is remarkably free from the dangers of second-hand literary sentiment. Latin is difficult, and the attempt to reach the author's meaning and to express it in English can lead to a personal mastery which does not call for 'appreciation' or a premature expression of literary judgement. There are many ways in which this personal mastery can come. A passage well translated or even just the felicitous matching of words and phrases in the two languages, a passage learned carefully by heart or studied and practised for reading aloud can bring genuine understanding and possession of literature. This happens every year in some of the study given to some set books; and, though the scope is not wide, the quality of the experience should not be undervalued. Those 'second sets', who, after struggling through their appointed portion of Virgil, ask to finish the book, have not learned Latin in vain.

On the other hand, with the use of a dictionary allowed and examination candidates asked simply to do what they have been doing week in, week out, for years, it would be possible for teachers to feel unhampered in their choice of authors. A wider range might be studied. There could be rapid reading and also concentration on certain passages. An example of what might be read is the story of Saguntum in Livy xxi. This is fairly short and provides a fine picture of the Romans abroad and their government in action, as well as an exciting, tragic story, full of people who can be vividly known. In the telling of this story Livy reveals his way with history and also his dramatic use of language in description. A literary masterpiece can be shown to be inextricably interwoven with the language in which it is written. The following sentence is an example; there are many others.

cum diu anceps fuisset certamen et Saguntinis quia praeter spem resisterent crevisset animi, Poenus quia non vicisset pro victo esset, clamorem repente oppidani tollunt hostemque in ruinas muri expellunt, inde impeditum trepidantemque exturbant, postremo fuscum fugatumque in castra redigunt. (xxi. 9. 1 f.)

There are many ways of studying such a sentence. One way would be to abandon the preliminary reading in Latin and to write it 'unseen' on the blackboard, word by word, phrase by phrase, or clause by clause. The English translation may be written under the Latin words as they stand. The account of the Saguntine rally is unfolded in logical, and pictorial, order; a film could be made from this description. It is impossible to displace a word without blurring the picture. Examined in detail, the syntax both sets the scene and brings it to life. The subordinate subjunctive clauses show the outcome of a struggle in the balance and the

state of mind of the opposing forces; then the townsfolk in their rapid rally sweep the enemy out of Saguntum and send them flying back to camp. The dramatic use of the present tense helps to show the speed of the movement, while the perfect passive participles, describing the state of the enemy, emphasize their powerlessness to resist. There are other points, such as the emphatic position of *animi* at the end of the *Saguntinis* clause, but there is no need to deal with all details so long as the general picture is clear. When the sentence has been read aloud and translated into adequate English most classes will in varying degree have had contact with literature through their study of Latin. It is not necessary to analyse such an experience or seek to record 'enjoyment'. If anyone fails to go all the way no harm is likely to have been done.

It may be said that this kind of reading could be scrappy. It need not be. Mr. S. S. Sopwith, sometime Senior English Master at Shrewsbury School, where he had many unliterary pupils, made for his own use in school an anthology called *English Sampler*. It contains 'essential' passages of English literature for careful study and reading aloud. Mr. Sopwith apologized in his introduction for his 'fragments', saying he was unwilling to interrupt the reading of complete works for detailed study. He found that the preparation of any of his fragments for reading aloud was the best way to 'lead to a new understanding of what literature really is. . . . The task of the student of literature is like that of the pianist who must practise over and over again some passage of the composer whom he wishes to interpret as perfectly as possible.' The method of study is described in the following passage, included in the anthology:

The metal you are in search of being the author's mind or meaning, his words are as the rock which you have to crush and smelt in order to get at it. And your pickaxes are your own care, wit, and learning; your smelting furnace is your own thoughtful soul. Do not hope to get at any good author's meaning without these tools and this fire; often you will need sharpest, finest chiselling, and patientest fusing, before you can gather one grain of metal.¹

In such a search the dictionary can be a valuable tool, which, used under guidance, may mine gold from a language which has proved itself resilient, concise, and disciplined, adaptable to speech, thought, emotion, and religion through a thousand years of the history of Europe.

There are undoubtedly those who wish to experiment and adventure by way of the fig-tree. They should not set out on such an experiment in any but a positive spirit, desiring to make something new for the four-year Latinists. I cannot believe that the minority of classical specialists and the larger minority of those who will still 'need Latin' for Arts

¹ John Ruskin, 'Of Kings' Treasures', *Sesame and Lilies*, § 1.

courses at the university can suffer from access to more Latin authors at an earlier stage. They need not take the 'O' Level examination in Latin, and if they arrive in the Sixth Form able to use a dictionary and to read rapidly, they can quickly be taught how to 'do' unseens against time.

There are, of course, plenty who manage to sail past Scylla without loss of crew and others who do not fear being sucked down by Charybdis. Both, however, may confidently invest a few shillings in a pocket dictionary. Such a book slips easily into pocket or handbag, so that scholarship in a nutshell is always at hand for reference.

LATIN INQUIRY

By T. W. MELLUISH

LATIN is a wedding-garment no longer *de rigueur* for those entering Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Utility English jeans will in future be permissible wear. Whether this will herald a uniform change throughout the schools of the country it is early yet to say. The Crowther Committee was sure that Latin was taught in many cases merely as an insurance against possible debarment from the older universities. Whatever the truth of that, Latin will stand or continue to stand in the future by its own merits. Like Justice in the early part of the *Republic*, stripped of its adventitious rewards it may now lend itself to an impartial reappraisal. This seems to be the occasion for another stock-taking. Hard as it is to love gadflies, we perhaps should be grateful to those who stung us into these agonies of self-examination, so essential a condition of the good life. Stirrings indeed there have been. An impartial observer might comment that if Latin is a dead language, like Virgil's ox it appears to be the centre of a good deal of activity.

The Classical Association therefore decided to test the feelings of its members with a questionnaire. This was the underlying thought. Ever since Latin, instead of having the time-table as a royal residence, was obliged by reduced circumstances to move into one or two rooms, such curtailments of the Latin syllabus as there had been had all resolved themselves into progressive abbreviations of the original schedule. Had the time now come to take stock of the entire situation and plan accordingly? Was some qualitative change now called for in contrast with the inch-by-inch surrender that had resulted from past encroachments on the Latinist's time? It was clear that if some such change were desired the Examining Boards should be informed, so that the examination syllabuses could be attuned to the new pattern. Some questions were therefore devised as a stimulus to discussion, to cover all aspects of possible reform, and to allow for the expression of any widely felt sentiment. Now if the public image of the classical master bore any relation to reality, this questionnaire would scarcely have caused the tiniest pebble's ripple on the surface of the Dead Sea of Classical Pedagogy. Alas for public illusions! There is probably more active discussion of teaching method in Classics than in any other subject of the curriculum. Well-attended meetings were held all over the country, numerous and lengthy

postal replies were received, and the upshot may truly be said to be representative of the liveliest classical opinion in the country.

The first question was an artless introduction, asking if it was believed that the course had some value even for those who would drop it at Ordinary level. The result was a thunderous and all-but-unanimous affirmative. And if critics should inquire whether the question were not both *nonne?* and 'phoney', this at least might be said, that had the Crowther Committee been a little more interested in obtaining the opinions of classical teachers about their subject, it might have paused before passing some of its more cynical observations on the reason why Latin is taught. In the second place it is quite obvious that many Latin teachers regard themselves as dedicated persons: rightly or wrongly they believe that they are the only ones left in the educational field who are carrying out the inescapably necessary task of teaching the young some of the more important and fundamental concepts of language. The question therefore was by no means superfluous. The teacher who does not believe in the Latin he teaches, and the man who bites the dog, may make a better newspaper story, but as guides to the truth they are fallible.

A comparable unanimity smiled on Questions 2 and 3, as a result of which we are entitled to believe that in the main teachers agree that the Latin of the future will depend more and more on its own merits to commend itself to the architects of our time-tables than on any external support, and that if any modifications were required to make the course up to Ordinary Level a complete entity in itself, the Examining Boards should be asked to accept such modifications. True, many pointed out that Latin would remain necessary for an Arts course, many maintained that the altered regulations would in no way affect their own or their pupils' attitude to Latin, and there was some suspicion that 'modification' meant 'simplification'; nevertheless the reply to these two questions was all but unanimous. Rather surprisingly perhaps, the dichotomy between the mediocre performer in Latin and the future classical scholar seemed to some to be obvious and predetermined from the very outset. So certain did some appear about this that Nature might have provided the future Greats scholar with some peculiar pigmentation to mark him out from birth. To others not unfamiliar with the browning-off of enthusiasm in the middle years and the shameless shanghai-ing of potential classical scholars to the chemistry laboratory such predestination will seem incredible. Still—*autres écoles, autres mœurs*.

At this point the posers of these questions, feeling that they might be fortified with a fair measure of general agreement, took heart to get down to brass tacks. Should the examination at 'O' level in the future so

condition the teaching in the classroom that more emphasis was laid on translation from Latin into English, less on English into Latin, or even none at all on English into Latin? Doubtless behind these questions lay the feeling that Composition was the luxury of the richer years, that it was an exercise that continental countries felt they could drop without great loss, and that it was rather the pursuit of the potential scholar than of the generality, a skill perhaps to be acquired in later years. But although opinion was ready to go some way with these questions, and although continuous prose composition was felt to be a task of supererogation where sentences were also set, there was an emphatic and almost unanimous refusal to abandon English into Latin altogether. It would seem that most teachers feel they must test knowledge of syntax by requiring the pupil to imitate in Latin the construction he has learnt. Only so can they be sure it has been understood. Moreover they insist that a correct grip on the grammar of what has been read is essential to its proper understanding. Others add that to cut out the written as well as the spoken word in Latin is to make of Latin a dead language indeed, and the familiar question 'What is the *use* of it?' might in these circumstances acquire a new and sinister significance. Yet there was no sympathy with the tortuous subtleties of the multiple-construction sentence, whose coils wind themselves round the helpless candidate like the serpents round Laocoon's sons. 'Straightforward sentences', was the universal demand, 'each demanding but one construction. More of them if need be, as long as they are kept simple.'

That there is some dissatisfaction with the existing state of affairs is evident from the next question, asking if a wider reading of considerable portions of authors is desirable and practicable. The fact is that whatever the time that is being spent on composition, the standard of translation from simple Latin to English at Ordinary level is pitifully inadequate. It may be that the aim up to this stage is to give pupils such proficiency in translating Latin at sight that they should be able without mental convulsions to make something of the few phrases of lapidary Latin that a man is likely to meet in the course of a not particularly academic life. Yet the scripts of candidates struggling with the simple Latin of the Ordinary level Unseen suggest that few are likely to be capable of even that. Does our course, therefore, contain insufficient Latin? Do our pupils get enough practice in translating the language? Is the subject-matter of what they do read, or the rate at which they read it, so repellent to them that they would never dream of revisiting the territory through which at one time wild horses could scarcely drag them? Caesar, as we know, is distasteful to young ladies. Must the bounds of their

reading be set so narrowly? It may be that for purposes of instruction the non-classical author that your class likes is better than the classical author that the class does not like. However, the contrast in this question between 'desirable' and 'practicable' was seized on almost everywhere. For so many teachers, teaching with one eye on the calendar and the other on the unfinished portion of the syllabus, the relentless tick of the clock haunts the lesson like the tap of the deathwatch beetle.

Up to this point a large area of material agreement had been evinced, with marginal fringes of individual opinion. Set books, however, are an apple of discord to ensure schism in any gathering of teachers. Perhaps the question as to whether the *intensive* study of set books at this stage was appropriate was slightly coloured. At any rate set books have their supporters as well as their detractors, and it is difficult not to sympathize with the contentions of either side. Division largely runs between those who believe their first task to be that of teaching Latin as a language, and on the other hand those who feel that the learning of that language is not in itself justifiable unless it is employed in reading some small portion of the best Latin literature. The former point to the lavish expenditure of time in revising set books, and in some bad cases even learning translations off by heart; the latter refer to the evil of reading only 'snippets' of Latin, and point to the sense of solid achievement, often genuinely felt by those who have really mastered some few hundred lines, say, of Virgil, and sometimes considered to be sadly lacking in those Modern Language courses which concern themselves less with the quality of literature studied before 'O' level. Within the camp of the set book supporters there was quite a strong demand for the type of anthology that gave a representative sample from the works of a number of better-known writers, rather than a single excerpt from the work of one author. This is clearly dictated by a desire that pupils who may not pursue the subject any further shall at least before they finish have had a glimpse of a mountain range rather than a solitary peak. Perhaps it would be best to allow for a difference of opinion in this matter, and from a four-section paper allow a choice of two set books, verse and prose unseens, or a combination of both. There were some pleas for a reduction in the length of set books, and for experiment in testing comprehension by other means than translation.

Should the Ordinary level examination test a knowledge of the Greek world, Roman History, Roman Civilization, the Classical element in the modern world, or Roman Britain? If our pupils are going to leave at Ordinary level without any tincture of the ancient world, is this to be laid at the door of the Latin teacher as a betrayal of a sacred trust? To

some teachers, husbanding jealously every minute of their four-year course of four periods a week, the suggestion may seem an impertinence. Yet few would have it thought that such themes never come within their purview, even if not examined. They prefer to treat of background subjects as occasion arises, as their enthusiasms direct, to the measure that their circumstances allow. There is no clamant demand, therefore, for these topics to be tested, although there is agreement that those Examining Boards which do so examine perform their task efficiently and well. One gathers that there is a solid hump of resistance, doggedly reiterating 'First things first: Latin is a language, and ours is primarily a linguistic task'. Perhaps there is more than verbal niggling in the purist's objection that this background knowledge, eminently desirable though it may be, cannot be described as 'Latin'. Such 'Latin' may indeed be taught by a Latinless teacher—a dangerous path to set foot on. On the other hand, it may be just as well that something is left for the teacher to teach, free from the relentless scrutiny of the examiner's microscope.

Asked whether the modified syllabus could be made to suit both the future specialist and those who would be giving up Latin at 'O' level, some teachers may have been reminded of Carlyle who, on being told of Harriet Martineau's remark, 'I accept the universe', was said to have observed, 'Egad! She'd better!' For realism in the smaller grammar school leaves little room for daydreams about fast-moving sets of potential university scholarship winners. Some schools could afford to consider candidates for whom alternative questions, more difficult unseens, and the like would be suitable, but they were a minority. It was frequently pointed out that a large and important *tertium quid* in our consideration of Latin scholars consisted of those who took Latin to 'A' level not as their main interest but as a supporting subject to a group of modern studies. Years ago these were given a subsidiary paper which catered specifically for their needs, until the reformers came along with a new examination which did not. Not every innovation is an improvement.

Nearly a score of years ago the present writer remarked that two sepulchral voices, as if of malignant fairies, haunt the Latin cradle. One whispered, 'It is two to one that you will never get to the end of this course'; and the other chimed in antiphonally, 'And it is two to one that if you do, you will get no Credit for it.' The situation has hardly changed at all in the last two decades; and the complaint is still bitter that although pupils in Latin are at the outset passed through a fine hair-sieve, they fare even worse than wholly unselected candidates in comparable subjects—often an alternative option in the school syllabus. Although it is difficult to see how the pass standard could be lowered, and

most teachers revolt against the thought of lowering standards, it seems wrong that when there is more freedom of choice in subjects Latin should be at this permanent disadvantage. The examiners' retort, 'You should see the papers of the border-line cases!', seems irrefragable. And we regretfully suppose that it is not for us to suggest that the standard of the pass in other comparable languages should be raised to that of Latin.

Yet one conclusion there is. You cannot teach Latin on a shoe-string. Too many schools in too many parts of the country are attempting to have Latin on the cheap, with an inadequate time-allowance. The Head who expects Latin to be taught in two double portions of two periods, because this squares up neatly with the alternative of Domestic Science or Woodwork, is a Head that wants seeing to. The future of Latin, in fact, is by no means unhealthy in this country. In spite of uninformed opinion and the *dicta* of interested parties more Latin is being studied today than ever before. Given the prospect that with reasonable application, on a satisfactory time-allowance, even the 'B' boy may not despair of a pass, the skies would be fairer still.