There was a time when Latin held a place in our schools that nothing else could fill. It was a required subject; and whether the student liked it or not he must apply himself to the study of it with a will to dig and get what he could. Nothing was done to make him like it; nothing was done to make it interesting. Many times it was actually distasteful to him. A certain amount was assigned and he must learn it as best he might.

In recent years a more liberal tendency has come into the schools, and the student has been allowed to decide for himself whether or not he should take Latin. Such unaccustomed liberty has sent the high school pupils to the other extreme and very few have elected Latin. Can we wonder at this when Latin had been such a grind and the experience of others before them bade them beware? But as is usual when there is a very radical departure in one direction, a reaction has set in and there seems to be dawning a revival of classical study. Latin will have its share in this revival, and as a result will occupy a larger place in future courses of study.

There are several good reasons why this should be true. The educational world is tired of the faddist who would banish every-thing classical and substitute something vocational, no matter what. We have been deluged with this propaganda until it is a relief to hear the voice of warning above the flood—a warning that such an extreme is Prussian and not American in its tendency; that we cannot afford to pay the price which Prussia paid and is paying for her mistake.

Aside from its cultural value Latin has certain definite practical values in education; these may be more fully realized by correlating it with other subjects, such as history, English, or the Romance languages.

Latin vitalizes history. A familiar acquaintance with the writers of ancient Rome will make the student a citizen of the centuries; it cannot fail to give him a broader view of the older civilization. The story of a people with such a background as the Romans, who have exerted such an influence all through the ages upon law, religion, science, and education, affords a wealth of knowledge to the one who reads it first-hand. And yet there are those who say that Latin is a dead language!

Latin by its close relationship to English helps greatly in the study of syntax, rhetoric, and literature. No doubt all are weary of hearing the statement that Latin enlarges the English vocabulary. But is not this true? And where could we look to find better examples of what is best in literature? Vergil’s mystic enchantment, Cicero’s faultless rhetoric, and Livy’s skillful crystallization of facts, have stood the acid test of time with undimmed luster.

Again, Latin is an aid to the study of French, Spanish, and Italian. All three, basically Latin, have preserved through the centuries their similarity to the mother tongue; and while they can be mastered without a knowledge of Latin, a knowledge of it is a decided advantage.

Above all of these benefits derived from the study of Latin stands the great value of the discipline involved. It teaches one to study. As Dr. Henry Louis Smith of Washington and Lee University once said in a commencement address, “It is the grindstone upon which we sharpen our tools—our mental faculties—to perform all the tasks of life.”

Granted that Latin should remain in the schools, it should still be elective and the teacher should do her part in helping those who choose it to get the best from their study. The great questions now are, when should the study of it begin? and how should it be taught?

Heretofore it has been reserved as a high school subject and usually begun in the first year; but there is such a gap between the grades and the high school, why not offer an introductory course to help bridge this gap? In schools where there is no eighth grade the need for this is even greater. Then it may be offered in the seventh grade. Ordinarily, it should come in the eighth year. Care should be taken that the work be not too difficult for the class so that they will become discouraged.

The aim of the introductory course in Latin in the eighth grade is not to prepare the pupils for more advanced work in the
first year of high school, but merely to give them a taste of Latin, better study habits, and thorough drill in the fundamental forms and constructions. The teacher in high school Latin should not expect to begin where the eighth grade left off, but with the prescribed text should review vocabularies, forms, and constructions before taking up new work. Then Latin will not be such drudgery for the first-year high school pupil, for whom so many of the subjects are new and the methods so different from those of the grade work.

On the other hand, if Latin be introduced in the seventh grade and continue through the eighth, in all probability the pupil will be prepared for second-year work on entering high school, although that is not the main point to be made.

It is better to use a text if a suitable one can be found. The students will want a book and even clamor for it. Then, too, the teacher will find it more satisfactory to use a text, one that is well organized and covers a whole year of definitely planned work. It should also be interesting and contain as many English source-words as possible. But if the teacher means to adhere so closely to the text as to use nothing else with the class, it is better not to have a textbook.

It is advised that Collar and Daniel be not used for this purpose, if that is to be the text for the high school; as by using a different book the material will be different, although the forms are the same, and this variety appeals to young people of this age. The following textbooks, recently published, are suggested for use in an introductory course:

_A Year in Latin_, by W. A. Montgomery; Row, Peterson & Company, New York.

_Introduction to Latin_, by H. S. Lu-pold; D. C. Heath & Company, New York.

If neither of these is satisfactory, the teacher may make her own text. Probably she could meet the needs of her class and get better results by planning the course herself. She might follow an outline such, as the one below, or change it as she sees fit:

**Outline for Introductory Latin Course**

I. Brief history of the people who spoke Latin

II. Comparison of Latin with English
   A. Alphabet and pronunciation
   B. Parts of speech
   C. Inflection
      1. Declension
         a. case
         b. number
         c. gender
      2. Conjugation
         a. mood
         b. tense
         c. person
         d. number

III. Study of forms
   A. Nouns
      1. Five declensions
   B. Verbs
      1. Four conjugations
      2. Verb “sum”
   C. Adjectives
      1. First and second declensions
      2. Third declension

IV. Agreement
   A. Verb with its subject
   B. Adjective with its noun

V. Constructions
   A. Nominative case—subject of the verb
   B. Accusative of direct object
   D. Dative of indirect object
   E. Ablative of means
   F. Ablative of place where
   G. Ablative of manner
   H. Ablative of personal agent

A brief history of the Romans is placed first so that the student may be made to feel that real people spoke Latin and thus may find it more vital. The teacher may use pictures, myths, and all available outside reading that time will permit.

A comparison of Latin with English will increase interest and help with English grammar. A study of English words derived from the Latin may be worked in from time to time.

The remaining material may be organized as the teacher may think best. It is well to master one declension and one conjugation thoroughly before going on with new subject matter. If the work is definitely planned for the year, as it should be, the teacher will know how much time to allow for each topic. Much depends upon drill, and the teacher should vary her method as much as possible.
so that the class does not become tired of the repetition.

Latin was introduced in the eighth grade of the Harrisonburg school in the session of 1918-19 by the practise teachers of the Normal School, and is being continued this year. There are always two sections because of the mid-year promotions. The average number of pupils in these classes is about twenty.

Although in many respects an easy text is desirable, no text has been used, except with one section, but the work has been planned as a whole and in detail by the student teacher before beginning her work. This plan has served as her text, and because the plan of last year was preserved in eighty-three well-organized typewritten lessons, it is being used again this year. The children have notebooks in which they keep their vocabularies, declensions, conjugations, rules, sentences, and any other material, such as mottoes, songs, pictures, etc.

Beginning with the nominative case, the declension is built up by teaching one case at a time. The same is true of the conjugations; the first declension and the first conjugation are drilled thoroughly before new work is assigned. New words are given every day, and the drill lessons are interspersed with short, simple reading lessons.

In vocabulary study especial attention is given to English source-words; about ten such words are given each day. A Latin word is sometimes given as the hub of a wheel, and the child is asked to see how many spokes he can fill in with English words derived from it. To arouse interest, the teacher often has vocabulary matches conducted like a spelling match.

If taught by a live teacher, Latin need not be to any degree a "dead" language.

Above all, the great task of the teacher of an introductory Latin class is to work for thoroughness, accuracy, and correct habits of study. If the pupil gains these, even though he may not keep up the study of Latin, the time given to it will by no means be wasted.

MARGARET V. HOFFMAN

(The result of the combined efforts of the class in advanced Latin, to whom was assigned the project of making a course of study for Introductory Latin.)

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