

position to learn something more about the people of the Latin nations than they can get from conventional histories and from the newspapers. We submit that even if we were to agree (which, of course, we are not going to do) that there are no cultural or historical advantages whatever to be gained by studying the Romanic languages, the state of the world today—the realities of such things as France's dominant position in the world of thought, Italy's astounding renaissance and equally astounding ambitions, and the growing power of the Latin American nations—give us serious grounds for believing that it is imperative for us to study the languages of these nations. Such, at least, is our opinion. We are doing all we can to act in accordance with it, and we are heartened in our efforts by the knowledge that the far-seeing Jefferson—whom no one can accuse of anti-Americanism, surely—advocated doing the very things that we believe should be done.

JAMES C. BARDIN

W. P. GRAHAM

ORESTE RINETTI

GERMAN AS A FACTOR IN EDUCATION

A DISTINGUISHED leader in the educational world, himself not a language man, has said that a good course in a foreign language is worth more to straight thinking than a good course in logic. He feels that all students should be required to master thoroughly at least one foreign language, because "language is clotted thought, the congealed result of centuries of thinking on each particular object which is represented by a word. The essential part of an education is the mastery of language, of words, of concepts, which are the result of the thinking and discrimination of many generations." If that opinion is correct—and there seems no good reason to question its correctness—we may

well ask what language or languages should have first claim on our consideration. The great English scientist, Thomas Huxley, advised: "If the time given to education permits, add Latin and German. Latin because it is the key to nearly one-half of the English and to all the Romance languages; and German because it is the key to almost all the remainder of the English and helps you to understand a race from whom most of us have sprung, and who have a character and a literature of a fateful force in the history of the world."

The propositions laid down by these two leaders in educational thought challenge our attention and make us seek further reasons for their attitudes.

If "the chief benefit derived from modern foreign language study is its liberating, humanizing influence, the broadening of the student's outlook upon world-problems, the deeper understanding of his obligations to humanity at large, and a more just appraisal of his duties as an American citizen in relationship to mankind in general," it must be regretfully conceded that the vast majority of our modern foreign language students have not received that benefit. We can gain a knowledge of a foreign country and its people only through the ability to understand the language which is used by that people and is colored and limited by the country in which it lives.

Antoine Meillet, a professor of philology in the College of France, recently wrote: "The knowledge of German is a necessity to all who would be men of culture. There is no branch of human knowledge to which the Germans of the nineteenth century have not made an important contribution. German books are indispensable to anyone who studies any branch whatsoever of human knowledge. To be ignorant of German signifies almost invariably to fail to reach the level of the science and the technique of one's time."

To understand the close kinship of the

two peoples and of the languages they speak, to gain access to one of the world's richest and most varied literatures, to have a better understanding of the best elements of German life, to appreciate the great cultural contributions of the German-speaking countries in the fields of art, architecture, music, science, religion, philosophy, and education, to open up the vast storehouse of German folklore, poetry, and proverbs so rich in content, to see the German home-life with its examples of patience and thrift and industry, to keep in touch with the latest findings in science or the latest works in literature or the most advanced movements in the arts, to know the thoughts and feelings of a great nation so closely akin to our own and destined to play so important a part in the future of the world—these and many more would appear to be strong reasons for a hearty welcome to the advice, "Study German."

When we pause to appreciate the importance, nay necessity, of knowing German if we would pursue advanced work in practically any one of the fields of medicine, chemistry, physics, economics, history, philosophy, psychology, or mathematics, we will see how utterly unintelligent it is to abridge for American youth an opportunity to study and master the language.

Editors, lawyers, clergymen, college presidents, statesmen, scientists, physicians, military leaders—in short, leaders in all lines who are competent to advise—have within the past year, in response to a query, given as their deliberate and enthusiastic opinion that German literature, German art, German science, German industrial and commercial activity are a part of the world's best possessions.

The study of German never stopped in France. It went right on during the war, as did the study of French in Germany. Indeed France urged America not to take the step she did take. One result of the unwise let-up in the study of German dur-

ing the war will be an unnecessary gap in American scholarship, which it will require a whole generation to repair. The worst blunder a people can make is to close the gates of knowledge. We did not hurt the German armies by boycotting Goethe, Beethoven, Schiller, and Wagner and shutting out a whole generation of our young scholars from a great mine of scientific knowledge. We injured only ourselves and our own young people. Languages do not make war, but a thorough mastery of them conduces to good will and understanding. It is high time that the study of German, for which the professional men throughout the country are so insistent, should more speedily reach its former state of usefulness and thus serve international understanding by serving the youth of America.

THOMAS J. FARRAR

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF FRENCH

THE American Association of Teachers of French was organized in New York in January, 1927, in order to carry out the following aims:

1. To promote and improve the teaching, study, and appreciation of French in the United States.
2. To serve as interpreters (a) to the United States of the best in French civilization; (b) to France of the best in our civilization.
3. To develop good fellowship among the teachers of French through the chapters of the American Association of Teachers of French.
4. To further the interests of teachers of French and to improve teaching conditions.
5. To encourage the exchange of students and teachers between France and America.
6. To encourage research in the peda-