

practice of rote-learning has nowhere found such favor as with teachers of Latin. Not only is the student taught to conjugate the verbs of this language by rote, but he is made to decline its nouns and adjectives in the same way. Propositions, too, are run together and similarly learned, and in many grammars the rules are even put into rhyme. In schools, in colleges, and in fact wherever the Latin language is taught, students are made to decline a noun somewhat after the following fashion: "Mensa, mensæ, mensæ, mensam, etc." When, therefore, they require any particular case, they must repeat to themselves the case-table, just as some people are obliged to repeat a rhyme in order to tell the number of days in any month. Adjectives are similarly learned, and their forms being more numerous, give the student more difficulty, for he is obliged to sing a longer song in order to find the form he may want. A song too has to be sung to determine whether a preposition governs the accusative or ablative, and thus the whole language, instead of being mastered by the intellect, is only written in the motor nerves, to be read on each new occasion by the intellect as from an ordinary book, with the slight difference that the leaves of the motor records may perhaps be a little more easily turned than those of a clumsy grammar.

The evil effects of this method of teaching can hardly be over-estimated. The student, finding himself unable to get at anything he has learned without some round-about process, thinks that his mind works in a strange, fixed order, different from that of the rest of mankind. If he continues the study of Latin, it is with little hope of ever being able to read or write it to any extent. Years of study and such