

English department of the primary grades of the Cincinnati schools and see the excellence with which the course is taught in the less than  $2\frac{1}{4}$  hours per day. Yes, let the Board of Education of some of our large Western cities who give from twenty minutes to a half-hour a day to teaching the German language come with them and examine the progress of the pupils in both English and German. I know that they would return home and give to the study of the German language a reasonable amount of time, for they would then be convinced that they could do so without injury to the English branches.

### *Why Select the German Language.*

The introduction of the German language into the public schools of our country has, unfortunately for the interests of education, met with much prejudicial opposition, and is, even among educators, somewhat of a vexed question.

One of the most common objections raised is, that if you admit one foreign language into the curriculum of our common schools, every foreign community in our midst has an equal claim to special teaching for their children in their mother tongue. The Jew has by induction a right to a class in Hebrew, the Irishman to instruction in Erse, and so on; and that to meet the requirements of the polyglot people in our midst, a staff of special teachers should by justice be maintained by our city. Such an argument is based upon fallacious reasoning. To say nothing of the vast number of tax-paying Germans among us, the German language is, side by side with the English, the language of the commerce of the world. As the French was for centuries the court-language of Europe, ours and the German tongue are, from the vast ramifications of the people the media of international trade among modern civilized races.

It is not the means of communication of an individual nation merely, but it is a tongue common to educated persons of all nations. Its close-alliance with our Anglo-Saxon speech makes its study to the cultivated American an especial necessity. True, Italian and Hebrew are beautiful languages, and their study must give a higher tone to the minds of those who master them; but they are too restricted in their cosmopolitan usefulness to demand their introduction into our schools. But it is said: "why teach any foreign language?" Because the study of a language is so essential to the training of the mind. There is no discipline so perfect, no means so effective in inducing thought, as the study of a foreign tongue. Lord Brougham said that a man was not half educated who did not know two languages, that he had better learn Choctaw than to be without the mental discipline of the study of a foreign tongue. Besides, it gives the pupils through the derivation of words, a more thorough knowledge of the English language, and as each lesson in translation is an exercise in English composition it makes them more accurate and fluent writers of English. If then this course of instruction is so essential, what can be said against selecting for our children a language that is so comprehensive as the German, that is interwoven with the elements of the English tongue and is so intensely practically useful in our transactions with thousands of our citizens in every State of our Union. Besides, our German-fellow citizens are among the strongest supporters of our public schools, and that support is worth a hundred times more than the cost of German instruction, and if no other reason could be advanced for its study, this alone would amply justify its introduction into the schools of our country. But, fortunately, its advocates do not have to base their support upon any such ground. The German language, the mother tongue of the most enlightened nation of the Continent of Europe, is, next to the English, the language, as I have said, of the commerce of the world. It has a grand literature. It is of great practical value in the every-day life of our people. Besides, I repeat again, the study of two languages assists the pupils in acquiring a knowledge of each, and does not retard the progress in either. Yes, ladies and gentleman, the advantages derived from studying two languages at the same time would amply justify the introduction of a foreign language into the curriculum of the schools of our country even if there were no citizens of foreign birth within our borders.

If there were not a German or a Frenchman in this country I would advocate on educational grounds, the introduction of the one or the other of these languages into the