

teaching a proper pronunciation to his pupils. This vicious pronunciation having become rampant and complete master of the situation on entering college, no more than a feeble attempt is ever made by the professor to correct it, for he knows that the habit, having become inveterate, cannot be eradicated, and, even if it could, the professor has not a *sufficient* amount of time to devote to even the most necessary requirements of his class; those are, we submit, conversation as well as pronunciation.\* The student, therefore retains his pronunciation, and returns of course to occupy the place as "modern language master" of his predecessor in the Collegiate Institute or High School.

Then, again, the modern language master is expected to teach his pupils to read and translate the works prescribed, and therefore the poor jaded pupil, not having learned the language by commencing at the first principles of a systematic, conversational method, and proceeding thus through all the main difficulties, has to worry his way through a translation of those works by means of a diligent leafing of the dictionary, with the steady use of the grammar as a hand book of instructions. The operation of translating, at this stage of the pupils progress, reminds us of the manipulation of a type writing machine. For in working it the operator selects a letter here, another there, to form the desired word, and in the former operation the pupil chooses a word here, another there, from the foreign text to form the corresponding English sentence. But alas! for the poor pupil, the resemblance does not long continue, for the first opera-

tion is rapid and agreeable, the second slow, tiresome and disgusting. The pupil has to hunt up every word in his dictionary, and continually refer to his hand-book of directions, arranging and re-arranging the words until they yield as near an approach to good sense as possible, when the sentence is pronounced complete, and he proceeds to make another in the same way. Thus the pupil apprehends at last the meaning of all the words of the passage, not as sounds expressing the thoughts, desires, feelings and passions of the soul, but only as mere signs presenting an outline or image corresponding, in a certain sense, to their meaning in the vernacular speech. Therefore the modern languages are as dead, in every essential respect, to the large majority of the graduates of our Collegiate Institutes as are Greek and Latin. The teachers of those schools are, no doubt, disposed to claim for their pupils a much better acquaintance with French and German than this, and we wish they could; but in nineteen cases out of twenty the comment here made could, we think, be proven to be strictly true, for they have no time to give systematic instruction to their pupils in French and German conversation. What little they do teach consists only in the use of a few sentences in conversation about authors, and, possibly, a few phrases made to apply to the lesson being read, because we are not aware that any systematic text book of common conversation is made use of in any High School or Collegiate Institute in this country. Consequently the sum of what is known by the ordinary graduate of those schools about conversation in French or German very seldom exceeds the stock of quotations which many Latin scholars have from that language in

\*The number of works prescribed to be read is too great.