

mistaken. Our young man graduates from College with apparently little more knowledge of Latin than when he entered four years before. It is true he has read Virgil, Horace and several other Latin authors, and if examined on them, will read Latin almost like a Roman ; but take him on a passage from an author he has not read ; or even on a passage from an author he has read, but not recently, and his utter ignorance of Latin will be immediately evident. Of course, if given time, a dictionary and a grammar, after puzzling over the passage, as though it were a mathematical problem, he may manage to make some sense of it—but he will consider himself clever if he even can do this.

I do not mean to say that an occasional student cannot be found to make more progress than that just described ; but speaking generally, the knowledge of Latin possessed by a young man on leaving College is a very insignificant matter, when we take into consideration the years of toil and study spent in order to obtain that knowledge. Indeed, there is no other subject—excepting, perhaps, Greek (1)—upon which so much time and labor are placed by the student, with such discouraging results, and it is but natural that parents should come to the conclusion that their boys and girls in studying Latin are wasting time.

Now, why is it that so little progress is made with this language ? Either the language itself must be very difficult, or else the method of teaching it must be unsound.

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(1) Much that has been said and will be said here about Latin applies equally to Greek.