

into and report on the trade openings in new or distant countries. I heard at Antwerp that a young man, who has recently passed through the Institute, is distinguishing himself by his management of a newspaper which pays special attention to commercial questions and to the development of new markets for Belgian goods.

Besides those who are undertaking the full course, other students are allowed on what is called "*Inscription Spéciale*," to take one or more of the various courses of instruction offered in the programme. These "occasional students" are not required to pass any examination, nor of course are they entitled to sit for the diploma. They pay for each course, with the exception mentioned below, a fee of 30 francs, reduced to 15 francs in case of renewal. These students are admitted at any period of the course. For the "*Bureau Commercial*"—the course of instruction in business knowledge which is the pivot of the educational work of the Institute—they pay £4 a year. But no student may enter for the "*Bureau Commercial*" unless he takes at least four other courses of either year.

The courses begin in the second week of October in each year. There are three vacations—the first from 24th December to 5th or 6th January, the second extending from the Monday in Holy Week to the Tuesday sen'night after Easter, and the "long" from August 15th to the second Tuesday in October. The lectures are given in French. The work of the *Bureau Commercial* is conducted in the principal modern languages. It will thus be seen that a good knowledge of foreign tongues is an indispensable qualification for the courses. Without it a student would get little advantage from the Institution. I was told by

one of the professors that an ordinary English boy would fail in the entrance examination in foreign languages. Not that my informant thought by any means that the Englishman is naturally ill-fitted for the study of living languages. There is indeed abundant proof to the contrary. But he maintained, and doubtless with good reason, that the ordinary methods of teaching foreign languages in use in most English schools are behind the time. Happily there are many signs of reform, and the Modern Language Association is helping forward a movement which may revolutionize the position of modern language teaching in our schools. There is great and urgent need for this reform. It is the foundation of the best preparation for modern commercial life. Without it, much other commercial teaching will be comparatively fruitless. Belgium, Germany, and Scandinavia have much to teach us in this matter. What is really wanted is the training of a much larger number of highly skilled and highly educated English teachers of modern languages. Many such are already working in our schools—but we need far more, and we also need a higher standard of public expectation in the matter of foreign-language teaching. Other countries have shot ahead of us in this branch of education. They have found that foreigners cannot do the work so well as their own people can, if the latter are properly trained. But the training is an arduous and costly business, and it requires, as an essential pre-condition, a high standard of general culture in the teacher. An ill-educated man cannot master the principles on which all good language-teaching depends. Of the bearing of the good teaching of modern languages on our commercial interests