

only severe and regular discipline can eradicate; but for this they have neither time nor patience. If the teachers were to insist on every translation from Latin, Greek, or French being presented in correct, idiomatic English, the requisite amount of these languages could never be crammed into such pupil's heads.

The result is what might be expected. In a large class of schools, English is taught as a thing by itself, in the hours assigned to it, and the other languages are taught as if English did not exist; and large numbers of their pupils come to college every year badly prepared in most of the elementary learning which is required of them, and with no solid foundations of scholarship in any branch. Perhaps none of our schools are entirely free from this class of pupils. Besides the large class of belated and hurrying pupils, who suffer from want of early training through no fault of their own, every school has its share of the stupid and the lazy, who cannot or will not use even the advantages which are offered them. These would, of course, be a drag on scholarship under any system. The original compositions published by the committee seem to come from both of these classes of students. The worst translations must come from the class of idlers and dunces, as they generally show no better knowledge of the classics than of English. They are simply trying to translate from one unknown tongue into another. It is hopeless to attempt to improve these by any change in system or by any better instruction. Other translations, which show a better knowledge of Latin or Greek, but the same slovenly and ungrammatical English, must come from the other class, whose want of elementary training in youth obliged them to omit the "humanities" in their preparation for college. These

victims of a bad system can be helped, and it is our duty to help them, or at least their successors.—*The Nation*.

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ARGON AND HELIUM.—Free argon and helium have now been found in the sulphurous waters of springs in the Pyrennees at La Raillère and Bois; introduced either into a Plücker tube containing magnesium wire and subjected to the silent discharge of electricity they combined with the magnesium. They also combine with platinum in the same way.—*The School Journal*

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THE FUTURE OF THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.—Recent improvements in the perforating machine, transmitter, and receiving instrument for automatic chemical telegraphy have at last brought this ideal plan of rapid communication to a degree of perfection which cannot fail to bring about sweeping changes in transmission of correspondence in general. Between New York and Philadelphia over a copper wire weighing 300 lbs. to the mile 3,000 words per minute can be recorded perfectly, and, with a copper wire weighing 850 lbs. to the mile, 1,000 words per minute can be carried from New York to Chicago. It is between such large centers and over such long distances that the importance of such an achievement can be appreciated. The field for such a system lies between the present telegraph rate of, for example, 40 cents for ten words from New York to Chicago, and the letter by rail, occupying nearly 30 hours, for two cents. At a speed of 1,000 words per minute over one wire, it is estimated that a 50-word message can be perforated in New York, transmitted automatically, type-written, and dropped in the post-office in Chicago at an actual labor cost of three cents, to which the cost of the stamp must be added. Two