

The Degradation of Scholarship

"sight reading." Is he really prepared for such work at the end of the second year? It is quite true that "sight reading," or translation without preparation, is excellent practice in the study of any language, but does it not presuppose a solid grounding in the grammar and a wide vocabulary? The boy's teacher, fresh from the academy of his alma mater, has pathetically said farewell to his "crib" or "pony," and now goes out into the cold classical world alone to teach "sight reading" to his class, that have been tiptoed into Latin. What is the result? In most instances the work is worthless—a loss of time which could have been far better devoted to the Latin grammar or the extension of his vocabulary. But it looks well, you know, in a High School curriculum.

In the department of modern languages—that is to say, French and German—a still worse condition exists. After a three or four years' course in those languages in an Ontario High School, what does the student carry away? The ability, think you, to converse in those languages, to write them and read them easily? Not at all. Though in many cases the students have been taught by so-called specialists, their accent in reading French or German is in most instances unlike that of either "Christian, pagan or man." They have