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The Foreign Language Teachers' Bulletin

(Vol. II, No. 2, April 5, 1915)

The Foreign Language Teachers' Bulletin, edited by the Foreign
Language Schools of The University of Texas

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The foreign language teachers of Texas are urged to consider the Foreign Language Teachers' Bulletin as their own, and to help make it as practical and useful as possible by contributing articles, suggestions, criticisms, questions, personal items and local news concerning educational matters in general.

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Classical Weekly, edited by Prof. Charles Knapp of Columbia University, N. Y., and the Classical Journal, issued by the University of Chicago Press, Prof. H. J. Barton, Champaign, Ill., business manager. Both are good and very helpful. One of the greatest advantages which accrues from a reading of these magazines is the touch which one experiences with the classical world. The Weekly referred to is especially helpful along this line. It keeps constantly before its readers the value of the classics and refers to many books and papers that will keep one's spirits up and encourage to more definite and persistent efforts. For example, in the current volume, VIII, No. 12, p. 96; No. 15, p. 113; No. 16, p. 125; No. 17, p. 129, there are excellent articles, editorials, or reviews that give up-to-date expressions of the value of the classics, suggestions that will help you inspire your students and will instill new life and vigor into you as teachers. In Vol. VIII, No. 12, p. 95, is a list of contributions found in periodicals other than classical journals. These will be found inspirational and instructive to a high degree. Among the periodicals mentioned are the Athenaeum, Dial, The Educational Review, Modern Language Notes, Modern Language Review, The Nation, Outlook, School Review, London Spectator. The Classical Journal will help you more in the line of pedagogy. Both of them will cost you only \$3.

Latin Plays.

Have you ever seen the little book, "Two Latin Plays," by Paxson, Ginn & Co.? If you haven't, send for it and look it over with a view to using it in your school. These plays are being produced all over the country, Texas included. One of them, "The Roman School," was given at San Marcos in Coronal Institute last year, and at Buda last March. It was my privilege to be present on that occasion, and I was carried back to 90 B. C. with a degree of realism that will give me a fresh hold on my Latin and a new inspiration for teaching it. These plays help to hold the interest of the students and to arouse the attention of the

public. All are impressed with the fact that Latin is a spoken language just as much as any modern language, that real people talked in that tongue. They also help to fix Latin customs and beliefs. Try one of them, or some other.

Read Latin.

So saith the preacher. It is much easier to preach than to practice. I have taught in public schools and know something of the work that you have to do; in fact, I still have a little to do. But it is a fact that we cannot grow very much in our work unless we read more than we have to teach. Especially is that true in the case of those who have to teach the same things over year after year. You will soon go to seed unless you read some other Latin. Start on 15 minutes a day and increase it to 30; you will be surprised to find how much you get over in a year. Some days read very slowly and carefully; for a diversion, skim along rapidly without stopping to look up words and constructions, but be sure that you do not let this grip you as a habit. Accuracy must be at all hazards.

Take Stock.

Why are you teaching Latin? What is it worth to you? How can you make it more attractive to your students? How can you give the greatest value on the investment? Where is your Latin knowledge weakest? Where is your Latin instruction weakest? What do you stress too much? What do you stress too little? Do you make the Romans live before your students? Do you give them more than the dry bones of the subject? Do you appreciate the beauty of the language as such, apart from the literature? What do you know about the refining and cultural value of the Latin language, and how much of it do you pass on to the class? Do you insist upon one of the most valuable things connected with the study, exactness? Are you exact yourself? Excuse me if I seem a bit personal, but, as I said, I have taught in the public schools

and I am still teaching in them. Having passed through the whole course, I am only warning you to start out right. If some of you want to take this as a questionnaire and send in answers or comments or questions, they will be welcomed. Correspondence is solicited here also. I will be glad to send to any address free of charge a copy of a little pamphlet entitled, "What the Classicists Think of the Classics."

THE CLASSIC SECTION OF THE TEXAS STATE
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION: SOME IMPRESSIONS
AND SUGGESTIONS.

R. A. SMITH

Principal Abilene High School.

I have been asked by those preparing this series of bulletins to give some impressions received from the meetings of the Classic Section of the State Teachers' Association and to suggest further possibilities for good from the meetings, and what the teachers of the State can do for the Section. Some of the suggestions I shall make will be made with considerable diffidence, as by one who realizes the wide diversity of opinion that prevails in regard to contents of courses and methods of teaching in the classics.*

Perhaps the most general impression one receives is that a slightly pessimistic tone prevails among the teachers of Latin in the secondary schools of the State. In too many schools the study of Latin seems to be a bugbear; but few want to take it and they are hard to hold and make good students. There also seems to be a sort of defensive attitude towards the public. No doubt there is some ground for these complaints, but much may be done to relieve the situation. In regard to the public, I should say that I believe the public holds Latin in higher esteem than is sometimes supposed.

A second impression is that teachers in other schools than the public schools are taking the most active interest in the meetings. Not many teachers from the high schools attend with any degree of regularity. Miss Forsgard, of the Waco High School and Miss McLeod of the Houston High School have been regular and useful members. Dr. Jones of the Thomas Arnold High School at Salado has been a constant and valuable member, unwavering in his devotion to the beauty and usefulness of the classics, and uncompromising in regard to shoddy teaching. To the State University belongs the palm both for the

*(Note: In this paper Latin will be meant when the term Classics is used.)

size and the loyalty of its representation. Dr. Penick, Dr. Battle, Dr. Fay, and Miss Lavender have been familiar figures in the meetings and have done valiant service in bringing the secondary and higher schools into closer touch. By their wise counsels they have also helped the teachers of preparatory Latin to do more efficient work.

One of the general suggestions that might be ventured is that the meetings would, perhaps, be improved by a stricter observance of the time limits for papers and discussions. In recent years the papers of vast area once in vogue have almost disappeared, but the discussions are yet sometimes wandering and tedious.

Let us now turn to some of the problems arising directly from the teaching of Latin. One much discussed but far from settled is the question of aims. What is the student expected to derive from his work? Is the end of teaching to be readiness in translation, or is it general linguistic development, with the stress on grammar and composition and correlation with English? A special point in this connection is the amount of advisable collateral work in geography, manners and customs, etc. Inasmuch as the work in its barest outlines is very heavy, the amount of this extra work becomes a matter of serious consideration.

Attention is here called to the report of the Ancient Language Committee of the Southern Commission. Their report favored the present unit requirement as to quantity, but suggested greater variety in the text read. The Commission, however, voted that better results would be secured if the unit value for careful study was reduced to any three books of Caesar, any four orations of Cicero, and four books of Virgil, as constituting the first four units of Latin. This would leave a margin for considerable sight reading. The Commission asked this committee to stress this matter before the Conference Committee on Ancient Languages. The Commission further voted that if these requirements could not be secured, the col-

leges should consider requiring only three units. (See *High School Quarterly*, January, 1915.)

Another question that might furnish profitable discussion is whether a school with only eight or ten teachers should offer two foreign languages, as German and Latin. Except in special cases most of the good coming from the study of both languages is found in Latin alone, with some unique advantages to be found only in Latin. By confining the work to one language in such schools a saving would be made, as one teacher could frequently do the work now done by two. Prestige would also be secured for the language studied by reason of its enlisting the language talent of the school in one line of effort.

These are only a few of the points that seem to call for attention and discussion. I want now to speak of one, perhaps the most important of all, in the teaching of Latin, namely, the personality and preparation of the teacher. Good students can hardly come from poor teachers, and especially is this true of Latin. Some one has said that a great Latin scholar always presupposes a great teacher. So comprehensive a knowledge is required, even for elementary work, that a college course of four years is the barest minimum of preparation; yet I have known very indifferent high school graduates to be assigned to this subject. I am sure that no one can teach Latin well who has not studied it for years with both diligence and love. The fearful mortality in the earlier years of the high school course is not altogether unavoidable, but it is too much a dismal testimonial of uninspired teaching. No doubt a satisfactory definite standard of preparation and qualifications cannot be set, but the Classic Section can do its part by urging teachers to continue their work, both in school and privately; to read books and journals connected with their subject, and to pursue the practice of reading daily other Latin than that in their regular work.

Under the heading of "What the teachers can do for the Section" I have one suggestion. The members of a certain

church, when joining, promise to attend upon the "means of grace," one of the means being the assembling of themselves together in public meetings. Surely the teachers of Latin owe it to their subject, themselves, and their students, to gather with their fellow workers for new ideas and new enthusiasm. It may be granted that the teachers of Latin have less tangible arguments for their subject than others, but a genuinely triumphant faith and practice are sometimes more convincing than categorical arguments. Let the teachers of the classics show their faith and loyalty by taking advantage of all the means of arousing interest, not the least of which is the Classic Section.

CO-OPERATION OF COLLEGES AND HIGH SCHOOLS.

PROFESSOR J. M. GORDON

Trinity University.

If one could say that the results obtained by teachers of Latin were all that could be desired, the necessity for discussing the subject named above would be very small. But if, on the other hand, there is a feeling that better results should be had from our instruction, both in high schools and colleges, then an inquiry as to how these results may be obtained will certainly not be out of place.

It is agreed, to begin with, that the first and fundamental prerequisite to good teaching of Latin is a good knowledge of Latin. No amount of enthusiasm and so-called inborn teaching ability can be substituted for the technical knowledge of the subject. It may be that a teacher who has had algebra sufficient to pass the examination for a certificate will get fairly good results from a class in algebra. But the same thing cannot be said with reference to the person who would do beginning Latin, or any other language, for that matter. And too many people are trying to teach Latin who are not prepared to do it. That the same argument may be used with reference to teach-

ers of other subjects may give some consolation to such people, but it does not change the fact.

But however well teachers may be prepared, technically speaking, they need to co-operate very closely and to mingle with each other that they may do even more efficient work and certainly not go backwards. And teachers who are poorly prepared ought to seek every opportunity of better preparing themselves for their work.

To my mind, one of the most effective ways of co-operation would be a system of regular visiting where the teacher could be seen at work, where his pronunciation and articulation could be observed, and his method of drill, his handling of classes of various sizes, etc., etc. And then at some vacant period various questions could be raised as to what should constitute good teaching in Latin, what results should one strive to reach in the first year's work, what principles ought to be stressed most in Caesar and Cicero and Virgil. If it were one high school teacher visiting another, even if the educational advantages of each had been the same, the result ought to be very helpful, as one might have a happy solution to the prose composition difficulty and the other to the good English rendering, for example. And especially helpful would it be if a teacher of limited advantages were visiting one who had enjoyed good advantages. And if a successful college teacher could visit regularly with the two high school teachers just mentioned, and if a bond of sympathy had already been formed among the three so that the visits could be absolutely informal and natural, and if these days or periods of visitation could be had at least monthly, this, it seems to me, would be practically an ideal method of co-operation.

But in the very nature of things this is impracticable. No teacher can leave his classes one day out of each month without inviting disaster to his classes and his tenure of office. But if this cannot be done, why the discussion and what next? The next best thing, it seems to me, and an effective substitute, is to form a local classical association in the town or city in which

the college is located and to invite, urgently, the classical teachers in the schools of the near-by towns to join this association. Within a radius of forty to fifty miles from each college town in Texas a very large per cent of the classical teachers are located. The train schedules I have not examined carefully, but it is likely that the trip could be made in one day in each case. The meetings could be held on Saturdays and the local teachers be hosts to the visitors. The expense to the individual teachers would be very small and certainly insignificant compared with the good resulting from such co-operation. This association could have a constitution and by-laws, which need not be printed nor even divided into sections. Four letters would be sufficient. And these four letters, when properly placed, would spell *work*.

To discuss all the good results to be had from such an organization would take too much time and space even if these results could be named on paper. Not the least of these would be a closer bond of sympathy not only between college and high school teachers, but between high school teachers themselves. And this would certainly be worth while, particularly between college and high school teachers. It has been charged, and perhaps somewhat truly, that the college expects too much of the high school and appreciates too few of its difficulties. On the other hand, the colleges will testify, practically unanimously, to the poor preparation of some pupils at least who come from affiliated schools. A closer insight into the work of each one would tend mutually to allay suspicions and adverse criticisms.

Another valuable advantage, especially to the high school teacher, would be a more definite determining of essentials. It is not easy for a teacher to know always just what results should be gotten from his work with the beginning class and how these results are to be had. The same can be said with reference to each of the other high school classes. How many teachers are there who, although they are comparatively well prepared to do high school Latin, do not find some difficulty

in one or more of the high school years? And this difficulty oftentimes hinders very largely their effective teaching. It may be only a careless habit into which they have fallen resulting in poor pronunciation or the placing of a low valuation upon the subject which they are teaching. Nothing will so quickly and effectually cure such defects as to have them brought to one's attention by his sympathetic fellow-teachers. And if such co-operation by interchange of ideas and methods be so helpful to those technically prepared to do the work, how much more helpful would such discussions be to the inexperienced or poorly prepared teacher.

The good results socially need simple mention only. It may be argued that in some cities schools are numerous enough to have their own local organization. It is a fact that some are large enough and do have their meetings. However, it would be very helpful to "get away from home" and come to know the difficulties as well as the aspirations of our neighbor. Furthermore, a very small per cent of the towns have their own classical associations.

The State Teachers' Association is inspirational and helpful, but it cannot meet the needs of the great majority of the classical teachers. We need a number of organizations more limited in their area and indeed in their scope of work, holding their meetings monthly throughout the school year. If such organizations could be properly directed and carried out, the results would be far-reaching. I appreciate the fact that the protasis of the last sentence means much, that such organizations would need wise direction. And perhaps this very fact has prevented our working out some such plans before this time. On the other hand, are we not definitely agreed that there is abundant need for better teaching and a better understanding of the Latin language? And if we are true craftsmen we will spare no effort to make our work effective.

"THE FIRST YEAR OF LATIN."

EDMUND LEE NUNNALLY

Professor of Latin, San Angelo High School.

If anyone should take the trouble to ask a successful business man the cause of his success, he would in all probability say that it was attributable to two things: a good start plus constant attention to details, big and little. If that be the case with the business man, may it not be equally the case with the Latin teacher? Certainly, and even more so, it would seem, for the business man is not concerned with the mental attitude of his customer to the extent that the teacher is, and therefore has a better chance to rectify his wrong, but when once the teacher alienates the mind of his pupils from the subject he is trying to teach, the loss is a permanent one. Now the purpose of this paper is not to offer any panacea for all the ills that Latin, or the teaching of Latin, is heir to, but it is rather the hope that something may be said or suggested that will help those of us who are sufficiently interested in the perpetuation of the classics in the common schools of our country, to aim higher and work harder.

The first year is taken, not because the other three are any the less important, but because it is there that we enlist our recruits. Get the boy in, and get him well located and liking his surroundings, and he will stay in the service, but if you put him to scrubbing the decks the first thing, as soon as his time is up, he'll quit you and stay quit. Do not mistake me to mean that Latin can be made easy, for it cannot be, yet there is such a thing as doing the most difficult things in a smiling way. Most schools in this country, if they have Latin at all, begin it with the eighth grade or the first year of high school, that is to say, the average child begins Latin at the age of twelve. He has heard nothing but the darker side of it all of his school life, and has dreaded for the awful day to come when he shall have to study it. He has heard that a knowledge of it would be of no profit to him in after life, that nobody speaks it now, or cares to speak it, that it has been the cause of driving many a boy with mind as good as his own from school, thus

depriving him of the education that rightly belonged to him, and so on "ad infinitum." It does not rest with me to explain the reason for such a state of mind on the part of the boy, but suffice it to say that it exists, and that it is incumbent upon us teachers of Latin to overcome this prejudice and ignorance. How are we doing it?

First of all we hold the text-book before them, and pronounce a few of the words in a scholarly way, and inform them, as if they did not know it already, that they are "up against it," that they must finish the book by a certain time, and that in order to do that they must get busy and memorize the paradigms and be able to mark all the vowels, and repeat the vocabulary. We might just as well confess and be done with it: the trouble all along has not been with the children or the Latin, entirely, but with the teachers. We have been, and still are, to a large degree, as dead and as fossilized as the children think the Latin is that we so poorly try to teach. Teachers of other subjects, such as English, Mathematics, Chemistry and the like, think it incumbent upon themselves to keep abreast of the times by reading and by travel, by getting acquainted with the best and most modern ways and means of presenting their respective subjects, but we self-satisfied teachers of Latin are perfectly contented to follow the footsteps of our esteemed forefathers, confidently believing that they had a monopoly on ideas, and that to suggest a new one would be an infringement upon ancestral rights. As a consequence, other studies have crept in and forced Latin to fight for its existence simply because they claimed to be less dead and more practical.

Latin can be made as entertaining and as practical as most any commercial course, or vocational course, for that matter. But one needs not to be told that it is not being made so, else its ranks would not be so thin. By being such sticklers for the letter of the law, we have all but lost its spirit completely. We are purely automatic, placed before our classes to turn out so much Latin by such and such a time at so much per day, and when we get through storming towns and fortifying towns, we and the pupils feel that it were better to have been defeated than to have suffered such agony.

In the San Angelo High School, I am glad to say, no such antipathy to Latin is felt. It is made compulsory in the eighth grade for boys and girls alike, but optional in the ninth, the substitutes being Spanish, Domestic Economy, and Manual Training. In this first year of Latin we find plenty of time to complete the seventy-five lessons and then have all the way from four to six weeks, and sometimes more, for review before the end of the year. The pupils, almost without exception, say that they like the work, and statistics show that between 65 and 70 per cent of them continue their Latin in the ninth. The beginners make haste slowly for the first few months, spending their time in learning how to pronounce clearly and distinctly by being requested to follow the teacher before a single rule is taught. Is this not a logical method? This is the way you learned to pronounce your first words in English, and you did not have to put on the diacritical marks, either. My pupils are never requested to mark any vowels whatsoever, and my observation has been that they handle the Latin metre about as well as those who have had to undergo the drudgery of marking all vowels for three years before. As much drudgery is removed from their work as possible. They do most of their work with the book. They are taught the system involved in forming the cases of the different declensions and the verbs. They practice much on sight translations, and on English into Latin, almost all of which is done in the class and with the help of the book. This has the appearance of making it easy, and at the same time serves the end in view far better than having them memorize the sentences, for then it is not the one who has the best memory but the one who has the best understanding of the subject matter in-hand that wins. This is as it should be. Latin is not solely a feat of the memory, as many teachers would have the pupils believe. It is a logical, clearly defined process, and the sooner the pupil sees that fact the sooner he will become interested in it. Get him interested, and the battle is won. You have done your part when you have made what he thought was dead, a live and vital subject, and when the test comes he will not desert the colors to enlist with those who seek the banner of the General of Least Resistance.

FIRST-YEAR LATIN.

L. C. PROCTOR

Principal Temple High School.

My realization of the importance of the foundation work in the Latin course leads me to write a paper on first-year Latin. To be sure, I cannot hope to make an exhaustive study of the first-year course within the space allotted me, but I do hope to make a few suggestions pertinent thereto that may prove helpful to those interested in Latin in our secondary schools. Before writing more, however, I wish to say that I do not claim to know all that is to be known about the first-year work. Neither do I know all that I hope to learn about it. The self-satisfied teacher has already lost his usefulness.

Assuming that the beginner's book is to be completed in one year, I am of the opinion that the course should comprise, first of all, thorough preparation in form. Enough syntax should be mastered to render translation from the one language to the other sufficiently easy to insure the pupil's interest in his work. Vocabularily should receive due attention and should consist principally of words that recur frequently in courses to follow. Translation should be emphasized. Assuredly as much reading matter should be required as will aid in mastery of forms and as will not result in sacrifice of thoroughness in the same. Sight translation should be begun during the first year. To wait until the study of Caesar's Gallic Wars is taken up is doubtless a mistake.

One method of drill that has been employed with much success in the Temple High School in connection with the study of forms, syntax, and vocabulary, is that of the "quiz" or written work. Our custom has been to tell the members of our beginning classes one day just what they will be expected to write the next day. For example, when the declension of *serva* is presented for study we have it recited orally one day and forewarn the members of the class to be prepared to write it, say within three minutes, the following day. We make it clear that their papers will be graded, that their grades will be read aloud in the presence of the class and that their papers will be returned with errors, if there be any, pointed out. Publicity is

wonderfully effective. This method stimulates interest as no other that we have tried does and can be used in the study of syntax and vocabulary in like manner and with equal success. An eminent psychologist has said: "Our memory for controlling the vocal cords in uttering the word is different from the memory for directing the fingers in writing the word. Hence we see that many complex processes go to form an idea of a thing. Napoleon was not content with only hearing a name. He wrote it down, and having satisfied his eye memory as well as his ear memory, threw the paper away." Our inaccuracy resulting from merely looking at a word arises from the fact that we see it in bulk, not in detail. In order to reproduce the word on paper we must see it in detail.

The text-book, too, is of sufficient importance to merit careful consideration. It should be an aid rather than a hindrance to instruction. The text, just as devices, should be a tool in the hands of the teacher. When I examine a first-year book I notice particularly the arrangement of subject matter and the emphasis given thereto. If, for illustration, I find the indirect statement, the ablative absolute and other principles of syntax that recur frequently in Caesar, introduced in the final pages of the book, I consider the arrangement poor, because neither space nor time can be given for sufficient application of these rules. Again, why should the imperative mood be given much attention during the first year if Caesar is to be studied during the second year? In the first three books of Caesar, if I have been correct in my examination, not a command in second person is to be found and only once is such a command used in the fourth book. Certainly the time to be devoted to intensive study of the imperative is just prior to entering upon the study of Cicero's orations, for in these the imperative frequently recurs and, too, at that stage of development the pupil will master forms more readily than during the first year. Two pages are all that should be given to the imperative in the beginner's book. These suggestions are made with a view to inspiring others relative to arrangement and emphasis. They also remind us that the teacher must remedy the shortcomings of the book, if there be any, and that, in order to do this, he should and must have a well-developed sense of proportion—must know

when to introduce certain subject matter and how much drill should be given to the same, if he is to succeed. In short, the teacher should, in large measure, be emancipated from the text, not enslaved by it. This reference prompts me to further consideration of the teacher.

Believing, as I verily do, that the success or non-success of the child entering upon the study of the Latin language will depend in large measure upon his work during the first year, I am of the opinion that the most inspiring and resourceful teacher in the school system should be given charge of the introductory work. This period in the school life of the individual pupil is transitional and crucial and therefore demands the most expert and skillful guidance to be had. It is of great importance that a genuine desire for knowledge be awakened. Someone has given expression to the thought that the art of teaching must be at its best to make the foundation work both ample and sound. It is too true, however, as well as deplorable that many teachers look upon the initiatory work as mere drudgery and regard such an assignment a reflection. Especially does this idea prevail among those new in the teaching profession. Not until the notion that the beginning work is of minor importance disappears will the first-year pupil be given sufficient consideration. The good of the student is paramount. Make his chance of success the most flattering possible. "The ripest experience, the most painstaking guidance are necessary if he is to blossom into a well-balanced, independent thinker."

THE RELIGION OF THE COMMON PEOPLE OF ANCIENT ROME.

JUDSON ALLEN TOLMAN

Simmons College.

The fifteen hundred sepulchral inscriptions in the *Carmina Epigraphica*, published by the late Franz Buecheler, Leipzig, 1895, present an opportunity to study the life, character and beliefs of the ancient Roman in everyday life that the student does not gain from Cicero, Virgil, or even Horace. As Dr.

Abbott in his admirable book, "The Common People of Ancient Rome," says: "They remind us of the epitaphs in the old village churchyard where we read on the crumbling monuments the life histories of those who have passed away so long before that no feeling of sadness comes over us." In the same manner these inscriptions of people who lived two thousand years ago come to us with unusual freshness. They tell us of their lives, their aspirations, their disappointments, the sorrow they had when they lost their loved ones, and the consolation they received from their philosophy, religion, and belief in life beyond the grave.

Since the publication of this collection a number of articles and dissertations have appeared upon various subjects suggested by their contents. Among them are: "Topica Carminum Sepulcralium Latinorum," by Bruno Lier in *Philologus* LXII and LXIII, "Roman Scepticism and Fatalism," by Albert G. Harkness, in *Transactions of American Philological Association*, Vol. XXX, pages 56-58. A Dutch scholar, G. W. Van Bleek, has written a dissertation on "The Belief in Immortality of the Romans," as shown by the sepulchral inscriptions. The writer of this article, in a doctor's dissertation entitled "A Study of the Sepulchral Inscriptions in Buecheler's *Carmina Epigraphica*," Chicago, 1911, has attempted to make a comprehensive study of the epitaphs and to discuss their origin and composition, the influence of the popular Latin poets upon the authors and also the religion, philosophy and belief in immortality of the Romans as evidenced by the statements in the epitaphs.

The purpose of this paper will be to discuss, somewhat briefly, what the religion of the Roman people was in the everyday walks of life. It is interesting to see what they believed about the power that rules the universe. We know what the poet, the philosopher and statesman thought from the works they have left us. But students have not paid as much attention to what the average Roman believed.

From the evidence we have, it is not easy to tell exactly what the common people believed. People do not always believe the same nor can we always rely absolutely on their statements. However, from the inscriptions as a whole we can safely class

their references to a presiding Deity under three heads: first, those to the gods by name, as Jupiter, or Juno; second, evidence of faith in a supreme being by use of such terms as *superi*, those above, or *dei*, gods, and third, the belief in a ruling destiny called Fate or Fortuna.

The epitaphs prove one thing as absolutely certain, namely, the middle class had very little faith in the old patron gods of Rome. The deities that occupy so prominent a place in Roman literature are rarely named and then usually for poetical effect. No especial love or reverence is manifested.

Even Jupiter, the patron god of Rome, the ruler of the sky, the giver of light and darkness and the fatherly guardian of mankind, is mentioned but six times. One of these, No. 911, is a Christian inscription and is not interesting in this connection. In No. 8, the well-known Scipio epitaph, and 191, except the statement that the deceased were *flamines Diales*, priests of Jupiter, there is nothing further regarding belief in the god. No. 1238 simply mentions that the deceased sought the altars of Jupiter.

That leaves two that are worthy of notice.

In No. 429 the wife and mother is represented as speaking.

"Whoever, whoever you are, stranger, I beg of you to read this that you may prosper—who I was and in what condition envious death brought me. I lived twice ten years, three and a half. It was always my pleasure to yield to the desire of my husband. The hurrying course of fates took me from him. Nevertheless in such a way that I paid as a pledge a body for a body. A son was born to us. May Jupiter on high cherish him and order him to be the father of future sons."

No. 1530 is of interest. In the second part a son, speaking to his father, says:

"You will go to the desired resting place, Festus. For bright Jupiter opens the heaven to you that you may come.

Now you come and the chorus of gods stretch out their hands and behold applause sounds for you throughout entire heaven."

If anything, the inscriptions where the gods are named show less actual belief. Juno, the patron goddess of women, is mentioned but five times and none of these instances evidence any

actual belief or affection. She is named for poetical embellishment.

We are surprised to find that Mars, the god who was once esteemed in worship next to Jupiter, the most characteristic and interesting deity of the Roman state, is found but twice, and that each time his name is but a synonym for war.

In spite of the fact that the worship of Apollo had been introduced into Rome as early as the sixth century B. C. and Augustus had made unusual efforts to restore interest in that god, the metrical inscriptions attest that the common people thought very little of him. His name is found four times. Twice the name Phoebus is used and appears to be a synonym for the sun. See 1385 and 1066. Of the other two references inscription 1109 is of highly figurative character. Several deities are referred to, one of whom it is probable the deceased will become. Phoebus is among these. Only once is the name Apollo used. In No. 411 the one for whom the inscription was made states that he was a parasite of Apollo, which means nothing more than an actor.

There is no need to discuss the references to the other deities. Pallas or Minerva is but a term for art; Venus is the personification of love or beauty, and Bacchus is a synonym for wine. In like manner the names of the Muses, Graces, Nymphs, Cupid, Hercules and even the Roman household gods, the Lares and Penates, are used without any feeling of reverence, but only for poetic effect.

Of the deities that are mentioned by name there seems to have been some affection for Mother Earth and a moderate amount of faith in the gods of the nether world.

Belief in Mother Earth survived even well into the Empire. This is doubtless due to the animistic character of Roman religion. The earth gave forth nourishment and was the means of man's existence. At death she received his body back into her embrace and took care of his spirit. Hence it is but natural that she was considered a deity, and that belief in her survived long after the other gods had become nothing but names. She is called upon in thirty epitaphs. Usually she is invoked in a prayer and asked to deal kindly with the one committed to her care.

1029: "Earth, may you not wish to be heavy upon this mound."

1043: "I pray you, Earth, and you sacred shades, that you may be propitious and that you may lightly touch the bones."

The epitaphs contain many references to the gods of the world peopled by the spirits of the departed. The Greek deities Pluto, or Dis, and his queen, Proserpine, are frequently mentioned, and we may infer from the character and tone of the references as well as the context that the writer actually believed in their existence.

See 393: "I pray that thou mayst be able to approach the fields of Elysium and that thou mayst honor the wife of Dis and pray to Dis."

501: "In these places rest buried the bones of Florus, hurried away in the prime of life by wretched death to the resting place of Dis beneath the earth and the groves of the pious."

Inscription 492, which contains a prayer by a husband for his wife to the queen of Dis, is worthy of attention. It is too long to quote. The husband asks Proserpine that she may allow his beloved wife in return for her pure life on earth to delay in the Elysian fields, having her hair crowned with myrtle and her brow with flowers.

The Di Manes, the deified spirits of the dead, are named in over one hundred and twenty-five inscriptions. There is no doubt whatsoever but that there existed a very distinct belief in the power of these deities, as they may be called. They are thought of as living in the tomb or world of the dead. They receive and look after the spirit of the one who has departed from this life.

See 215. "By this sepulchre and the Manes which you honor, be careful about often stepping on this mound."

383. "And you, O Manes, spare these; unless you do believe me, no one will perform sacred rites to you."

592. "I pay this sacred rite to the Manes with certain piety."

The Romans also had some belief in a divine power which they designated by the terms *superi*, those above, and *dei*, the gods. There are a few uses of *deus*, god. The use of the plural number does not necessarily mean a belief in many gods.

It is very likely that it was not clear to the composers of the epitaphs whether there was one God or many. As Dr. Fowler points out in his "Roman Ideas of Deity," the use of the plural seems to be the very essence of animism. This feeling survived the individualization of the god and was manifest in the tendency to pluralize the supernatural which we find throughout Roman literature. Religion is extremely conservative, and although the Romans had lost sight of the gods called by their specific names and the monotheistic conception of deity was developing, some traces of polytheism still remained which prevented them from giving up the use of the plural.

Consequently we have over sixty inscriptions which contain mention of a supreme power under the terms *superi* or *dei*. Lack of space prevents the quotation of but a few.

402. "A youth content with little, filled with reverence, pleasing to us, and filled with devotion to the gods."

435. "These conscientiously honored the gods and lived becomingly that after death they could see the Elysian fields."

1257. "Wherefore, on account of what remains, I pray the gods above and below, since they have snatched away the years from my life that they spare my brother."

1058. "Although my mother and father prayed the gods in my behalf, cruel Pluto hurried me to the places of the lower world."

The gods are often thought of as responsible for death.

603. "The supreme god took away the fragile life."

1057. "Pompeia, with the cognomen Fleutheris, indeed a youth is in this tomb, whom the merciless gods snatched away."

1060. "Thy prayers, parent, have harmed thee. The cruel powers have given many blessings that they might snatch more away."

54. "A mother was not permitted to enjoy her son because some god was envious."

In a few inscriptions the departed ones are represented as going to the gods and living with them.

See 94: "Ephesia Rufria, a mother and excellent wife, rests here because she perished of an evil fever which the doctors brought on beyond their expectation. I think so charming a

woman died because she seemed more worthy the assembly of the gods."

418. "I, Attica, am given to the gods."

277. "I who have lived through an honored old age and full of days am called to the gods."

By far the most conspicuous element in Roman religion is the belief in fate. This appears to have been more than simply blind chance or destiny. The Romans had a way of looking at all life and force and action as in some way associated with, and the result of divine or spiritual agency. Dr. Fowler in the work we have mentioned above states that there was the growing habit among all states of society in that age so full of uncertainty for human life and property to look away from the old idea of protecting power to recognize and eventually to adore a principle of blind chance or irresistible fate. But due to the influence of Stoicism, belief in fate seems to some more than the adoration of a principle of blind chance. It represented, indistinctly to be sure, as we saw in the case of the gods, the divine power that was responsible for the government of the universe as well as for man's life and death. In a word, it was what we now call Providence.

The metrical inscriptions contain two hundred and thirty-two references to Fate under the names *Fatum* or *Fata* and fifty to it personified as the Parcae or by the Greek names of the individual goddesses, Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos.

In seventy places the terms mean nothing more than chance or lot. As in 82, line 6: "Behold the inscription written, by what fate I have fallen."

1081. "For the same fate overhangs all of us."

1434. "If I unhappy had not had contrary fates."

More often, however, when Fate is mentioned it seems to indicate some guiding agency.

967. "Thou shouldst know, traveler, the fates do not spare the good."

377. "The fates gave twice ten years to Proculus."

475. "But if the fates had given me to see the light I would not have done these things to them before they did." (Meaning that the child would have performed rites for parents.

1041. "The fates gave life and the same ones took it away."

974. "Envious lot of Fate, thou hast snatched away Vitales a chaste maiden of twice five years. Nor hast thou pitied the prayers of father or mother."

1160. "But the Parcae by destiny prepare the cruel law that a son should lie here first."

1552, line 69: "There is a certain path for the fates, nor does Atropos change in her spinning."

In a few inscriptions both the gods and the fates are named. In these instances fate either works in harmony with the gods or is superior to them.

The last deity that we shall consider as occupying a conspicuous place in the belief of the Roman in the everyday walks of life is Fortuna, the goddess of fortune. She is named in over thirty inscriptions. Belief in her seems to be closely linked with that of fate. Sometimes she represents Providence in the capacity of directing the affairs of men and determining the time of death. She is thought of as responsible for man's success and prosperity. At other times she represents chance, a blind and reckless force, capricious and undependable, the worst enemy that man can have.

See 422: "O Fortuna, how evilly hast thou changed thy word."

588. "Envious Fortuna took away this one by sudden death."

515. "Now we take our rest where Fortuna has sent us."

185. "Fortuna promises many things to many, she gives to none."

409.8. "It has been accomplished. Hope and Fortuna, farewell."

544. "Behold how Fortuna torments an unhappy parent."

It was my intention to discuss the belief in immortality of the Romans and their philosophy of life as evidenced by the various consolations used for those who are left. But I have already trespassed too freely upon the generosity of the editor. I have tried to show, as far as the allotted space would permit, that the common people of ancient Rome certainly believed in some presiding Power. They were like the people that the Apostle Paul tells us of who had erected an altar to an unknown god. Their ideas of deity were dim and imperfectly under-

stood. They had revolted from the anthropomorphic conception of gods, though traces of animism still remained, and it seemed difficult for them to get away from polytheism. It is certain that the inscriptions show the inherent desire of man to find God, to give expression to the religious instinct that is within him. They are well worth studying, especially in relation to modern investigation in the fields of anthropology, psychology and comparative religion.

