GWYNNE'S LATIN

THE *ULTIMATE* INTRODUCTION TO

LATIN

INCLUDING THE

LATIN IN EVERYDAY ENGLISH

N. M. GWYNNE

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ABOUT THE BOOK

This very special little book contains everything you need to learn Latin.

Whatever your age or ability, Mr Gwynne will guide you through this most important language – teaching you Latin efficiently and rapidly.

He also pays special attention to the Latin words that we already use every day, how to use them correctly and what they really mean.

Mr Gwynne strongly believes that being good at Latin will improve your English and also make you better at everything else. And Mr Gwynne is *never* wrong.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Formerly a successful businessman, N. M. Gwynne has for many years been teaching just about every sort of subject to just about every sort of pupil in just about every sort of circumstance – English, Latin, Greek, French, German, mathematics, history, classical philosophy, natural medicine, the elements of music and ‘How to start up and run your own business’ – in lecture-halls, large classrooms, small classrooms and homes – to pupils aged from three years old to over seventy – of many different nationalities and in several different countries – and since 2007 ‘face to face’ over the Internet.

His teaching methods are very much in accordance with the traditional, common-sense ones, refined over the centuries, that were used almost everywhere until they were abolished worldwide in the 1960s and subsequently. His teaching has been considered sufficiently remarkable – both in its unusualness in today’s world and in its genuinely speedy effectiveness – to have featured in newspaper and magazine articles and on television and radio programmes.

GWYNNE'S LATIN

THE *ULTIMATE* INTRODUCTION TO LATIN
INCLUDING THE LATIN IN EVERYDAY ENGLISH

For its own sake, to improve your English,
and to make you better at everything else.

N. M. Gwynne, M.A. (Oxon)

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To the pupils, of all ages from youngest to oldest, to whom I have taught Latin in many parts of the world, and especially to those whose difficulties in learning Latin have contributed significantly to what is in this book.

PREFACE

WHAT CAN YOU reasonably hope to have achieved by the time you come to the end of this small volume, assuming that you use it throughout as I urge you to?

One answer is: you could know about as much Latin as a reasonably intelligent eleven- or twelve-year-old would have known in the days when I was at school. To know as much as that would have been the result of a considerable amount of exposure to Latin – for instance, at one of the best-known preparatory schools there were ninety minutes a day six days a week of Latin lessons during the eight months per annum of school time.

Another answer is: *many* times more Latin than will be known, in almost all cases, by highly intelligent scholars of today who have passed all their Latin exams and are studying Classics at any of the top universities in Britain.

A third answer, carrying the advantage of not varying according to time and circumstance, is that you will be in a position, with some help from a dictionary, to embark with pleasure on some of the greatest and in every way most remarkable works of literature ever written, starting with the traditional first Classical text for schoolboys, Julius Caesar's *Gallic Wars*. What that means is that those who use this book as methodically as I recommend will have learnt a very large amount of Latin, including all the most important grammar – word forms and sentence constructions – and plenty of vocabulary and much else.

One last answer under this heading is that you cannot fail to have improved radically – and I really do mean from the

roots upwards – your grasp and mastery of English, for a number of reasons.

One is the point made by all promoters of Latin, and by me in Chapter One: that Latin is the source of more than half of the English vocabulary, and to know the source of any word is to understand it better. For instance, 'radically', just used in the last sentence, comes from the Latin word **radix** meaning 'root'.

A second is that translating English into Latin always requires one to reorganise in one's mind, sometimes very greatly, the English sentence being translated, in order to put it into a form which will work in Latin; and this cannot be done without a clear understanding of how the English sentence was put together.

A third reason is that, when translating from Latin into English, one must first do a translation that merely makes sense, and sometimes only just, and then revise it thoroughly into what reads well in English.

Surely not to be ignored is that the English language includes hundreds of words and idioms which are in untranslated Latin. By the end of this book you will be able to translate them, in most cases effortlessly, and this will make their meaning very much clearer than if you were to rely solely on what a dictionary says as to their meaning. This book indeed devotes exercises to the practice of dealing with everyday 'Latin–English', from **affidavit** to **e.g.** to **status quo** to **vice versa** and **vox populi**, and you cannot fail to find this a useful feature.

IT IS NOW worth making mention of what I believe to be the single gap in what this book has to offer you if used in isolation.

In one respect, this book is complete as far as it goes. It includes all the information needed in order to learn Latin up to a much more advanced level than, as just mentioned, ordinary students specialising in Classics will have reached

by the time they have arrived at any of the leading universities.

In another respect, however, the book is incomplete. Nor could it be otherwise, other than at about three times its present length.

The reason is this.

If you use this book as I recommend, you can acquire a knowledge of Latin vocabulary and grammar that is so extensive that plucking out of your memory the words you want and declining or conjugating them is effortless and enjoyable. You can also gain a clear *understanding* of how to use them.

That, however, is far from the same as being able to use them accurately and reliably in sentences, whether translating from English into Latin or from Latin into English. For that you need *practice*, and much of it. Every single syntactical construction you learn must be practised – and practised and practised – until putting clauses and sentences together is, at least at this stage of reasonably elementary Latin, so easy as to be all but instinctive, virtually like a reflex action. You need to be able to see at a glance, without having to puzzle it out, that the Latin for 'The good slaves love their country's Queen' is '**Servi boni patriae reginam amant**', and vice versa if translating from Latin into English.

In this book you will find enough exercises to help you *understand* the various constructions and words, but not for the extensive practice needed for them to *become part of you*, which, as I say, is beyond the reach of a book of this convenient size. For that purpose, therefore, a website has been set up, where you will find as much practice material as you could need for developing a real mastery of what this book covers, and to give you the confidence that you are on top of the subject.

IT IS PERHAPS worth highlighting here that I believe there to be two chapters in this book that include much material which, although important, will not be found in any other Latin textbook written within the living memory of even the oldest of us, at least in the thoroughness that it is given here. These are the chapters (a) on the techniques and skills of translating Latin into English, and (b) on Latin word order and how variations in word order can dramatically change the meaning of clauses and sentences.

FINALLY, IT IS as well that, for the sake of good order, I make reference to two conventions used in this book, which had always been all but universal but recently have been largely and unsatisfactorily replaced.

The first is the now-contentious problem of how to express what for the entire history of English literature until the last few decades was the all-embracing ‘he’.

Up till these last few decades, the pronoun ‘he’, when referring to an unnamed person, was uncontentiously used to include both sexes. It was therefore used for two separate purposes: to refer to members of the male sex in particular, and to refer to a member of the human race of either sex. In Britain at least, the second use was never considered remotely inappropriate or uncomfortable – female speakers and female authors routinely used it in this general sense without hesitation or objection. This of course has changed, the use of ‘he’ to embrace both ‘he’ and ‘she’ now being held by some people to be offensive.

The result has been unfortunate, to say the least. Saying ‘he or she’, ‘him or her’ and ‘his or hers’, when speaking about people generally, is often disagreeably clumsy. To overcome this defect, the words ‘they’, ‘them’ and ‘their’ are now often used in place of ‘he or she’ and the rest, even when referring to only one person, as in: ‘Any*one* who considers this modern practice acceptable has lost *their* mind.’

There have been authoritative protests against this practice, even among highly respected authors of today – for example, by the most recent *Economist*'s authoritative *Style Guide* and by Simon Heffer, who in his *Strictly English* labels it 'abominable'.

In principle, I fully agree with the *Economist* and with Heffer. There is, however, a problem with following them completely. This is that the avoidance of the traditional, all-embracing 'he' is now so widely entrenched that this use of 'he' may be genuinely new to some readers and possibly annoying to others.

Since I wish my readers to be able to concentrate their full attention on the *information* I am putting in front of them, without being distracted by the *manner* in which I present it, I have adopted a compromise. On the one hand, I have taken trouble to avoid using 'he' to cover both sexes where I can easily do so. On the other hand, when it happens that artificially avoiding the traditional 'he' would result in awkwardness in the wording of a sentence, I have followed the traditional means of avoiding that awkwardness. Please be assured, therefore, on the few occasions that you see the all-embracing 'he' or equivalent, that it is occurring without any offence being intended.

The other convention under this heading that seems worth my making reference to is the practice, used in all the many Latin textbooks published in the last few decades that I have come across, of starting Latin sentences without a capital letter for the first word, while, however, still using capital letters at the start of proper nouns such as **Roma** and **Caesar**. I am certainly not opposed to change when change results in improvement, but in this instance I can see only very good reason for staying with tradition.

The impression given by textbooks which start Latin sentences in the modern way without initial capital letters is that the sentences are being written as the classical authors wrote them. That, however, is far from being so.

Yes, in classical Latin there were no capital letters with which to start sentences. It is, however, equally true that capital letters, non-existent as they were, did not come at the beginnings of proper nouns, and also that there were no full stops at the ends of sentences, nor any punctuation inside sentences, nor spaces between words, nor even spaces to show where one sentence ended and another began.

Thus the modern convention by no means represents tradition. Rather, it creates an illusion that classical practice is being used when in fact it is not. In my view, this is scarcely an acceptable reason to adopt a practice that until recently was *never* used in *any* form of book in which any Latin was reproduced.

IT REMAINS FOR me to draw to the close of this Preface by saying that, if you would ever like further advice on how to make the best use of this book, or in any other way to further your mastery of Latin beyond where this book goes, you are very welcome to contact me direct, where indicated below. I made a similar offer in this book's immediate predecessor, *Gwynne's Grammar*, and I have had no cause to regret it. Communications from people who have contacted me as a result have often been full of interest.

NOW, ALONG WITH reminding you of the claims I have made as to how the subject matter of this book cannot fail to benefit you, I bid you welcome to what follows.

N. M. Gwynne
nmgwynne@eircom.net
www.gwynneteaching.com
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PART ONE

INTRODUCTORY

CHAPTER ONE

About Latin

LATIN IS, QUITE simply, the most utterly wonderful … *thing*. Please believe that it is not because of mental laziness that I have chosen that most all-embracing of abstract nouns, ‘thing’.

Rather, a more specific term – ‘language’, ‘subject’, ‘element of education’, ‘cultural feature’ – might exclude one or more valuable aspects of Latin that I should not wish excluded. Here are just some of those aspects of Latin, the ones which spring most readily to mind.

— Latin is an academic subject easy enough for the least intelligent of us to grasp all its basic elements, and yet difficult enough to be demanding for its greatest scholars.

— As an instrument for training mind and character, Latin has no parallel, as we shall be seeing in Chapter Three and elsewhere.

— For well over a thousand years, Latin was the means of communication that united the whole of Europe culturally and in every other significant way.

— Latin is the direct ancestor of, between them, the five so-called Romance languages (Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian) of the largest European language group, and of both of the official South American languages (Spanish and Portuguese).

‘Romance’ comes from the Latin word **Romanicus**, meaning ‘of Roman style’ or ‘Roman-made’.

— Latin is the ancestor and source of the portion – well over half – of the English language which derives partly directly from Latin and partly through the Romance languages, mainly French, which for some centuries was England’s official language. Not only that, but from almost the moment that English began to develop from being the spoken-only language that, in the mid-fifth century, first arrived on the shores of what was then Britain,[fn1] and to take on a written form as well, it did so with the help of Latin, which had been the written language in everyday use since the conversion to Christianity of Britain south of Scotland’s border in the sixth century ad. Right from the beginning, therefore, English grammar was worked out and formalised side by side with Latin, from which our language took even the alphabet that we use today. Indeed, not least remarkably, we even owe the very word ‘alphabet’ to our Latin-speaking forebears, notwithstanding its not being a Latin word. It was they who adopted for the purpose the first two letters, alpha and beta, of the alphabet of the Greek language, which had been the primary influence on Latin and had helped to make it the influential language it became.

— Latin is the language of *both* of arguably the two greatest legal systems in history, Roman law and English Common Law. Even today it is still the language of forensics – technical material used in courts of law – as, for instance, in the phrase **corpus delicti**.

— Latin is the language of most family, school, university, town, city and county mottos and of the mottos of several states in the USA and most of the Canadian provinces. Even the fairly rare exception ‘*Honi soit qui mal y pense*’, which appears on Britain’s royal coat of

arms and those of several military regiments and public buildings in Britain and the Commonwealth, is ultimately derived from Latin, via French.

— Latin is the language of the bi-nomial taxonomy of plants and animals invented by Linnaeus and now used universally.

— Latin is the language used for chemical elements and compounds.

— Latin is the language most used in medical terminology.

— Latin has always been the main official language for the most widespread version of Christianity, the version, centred on Rome, which ruled England religiously, constitutionally, socially and in every other respect of any importance, for 900 years, and continued to rule much of Europe for several centuries after that as well.

— Latin is the language for which much of the greatest sung music of the last 1,500 years or so was written, and of even the occasional modern opera.

— Latin is the language of one of the three greatest literatures of all time (the other two being classical Greek literature and our English literature).

— Untranslated Latin is a quite significant part of present-day English, as we shall be seeing.

— Latin even features, in abbreviated form (**Fid Def** for **Fidei Defensor**), on every single one of the coins in our pockets, and can be expected to continue doing so as long as the pound sterling remains the basis of our currency.

— In the form of '**Helvetia**', the Latin word for 'Switzerland', Latin is the language which appears on all coins and stamps of that country.

— **Et cetera**. I have by no means come to the end.

In short, Latin is an intrinsic part of us. It is to some extent *even at the very heart of us*. This ‘thing’ that is Latin is worth a closer look, is it not?

fn1 The language that Latin replaced was the Celtic language.

CHAPTER TWO

Making the Best Use of This Book

DEAR GRACIOUS READER, as you arrive at this early part of the book that you have in your hands, I have a request to make of you, even an entreaty. It is that you throw yourself into the following pages wholeheartedly and with the utmost diligence. I ask this in the belief that there is no better way that you can spend such time as you are able to make available for this purpose – that is to say, no way you can spend the time more valuably (not merely more usefully), more satisfyingly, or even, other than in the sense of instant and swiftly come-and-gone gratification, more enjoyably.

I really am referring to your tackling Latin. I am doing so, however, to the accompaniment of a stipulation which is also one of the essential factors governing how this book has been put together. By tackling Latin, I mean setting about learning Latin in the way that it was always learnt in the past, century after century, until the revolution in all education that hit England – and indeed most of the Western world – like a bombshell in the 1960s.

Throughout the entire history of education during the last thousand years or so, up until the 1960s, what is said here would have been accepted almost universally – throughout Europe and, until a little earlier, throughout America north and south – as ordinary common sense and would have been acted upon as such. For much of that time, Latin,

together with Greek but with children embarking on learning it before Greek, actually *was* education. So much was this so that, until the 1850s, Latin and Greek were *the only subjects formally taught* at all leading schools in England. Indeed, in some of those schools – as also in Harvard University in America – it was required that *even outside the classroom* only those languages could be spoken.

The reason for this exclusive concentration on Latin and Greek in schools was not, of course, that our ancestors supposed there to be no need to study the other basic subjects – English, mathematics, one or more currently spoken foreign languages, history, geography and what was commonly called Scripture. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, after all, were a period during which Britain shone in every single human endeavour, academic and practical, to such an extent that, 'single-handed', Britain was responsible for the Industrial Revolution and most of the scientific inventions of that period that changed the world, *and*, for better or for worse, actually ruled about a quarter of the world – and, what is more, all this while producing one of the greatest literatures of every kind of all time. No, the reason that the non-classical subjects were not taught in schools was that they were considered to be so easy by comparison with Latin and Greek, especially to people with minds and characters trained by the study of the Classics, that it was not thought worth wasting valuable schoolroom time on them. Picking them up was something that could more appropriately be done during the school holidays and in other spare time.

Even during the ten years or so of my own schooldays from the age of seven onwards, we did not have teachers of English as such. The English we learnt was taught by our Classics teachers, as it always had been. We did not suffer from that. The result, on the contrary, was that the ordinary schoolboy and schoolgirl was able to write English much

better than someone of equivalent intelligence could write today.

Indeed, I believe I can safely say that the very great majority of readers who use this book as I recommend will, by the time they have finished it, have learnt a really enormous amount of valuable English which they had no idea even existed. I intend no exaggeration in saying that.

ALTHOUGH, AS I made clear in the Preface, this book covers a large amount of ground, it concentrates very much more on the early stages of Latin than it does on the more advanced ones. This is for good reason. In the first place, the size of this book dictates it. In the second place, it is making a really good *start* that matters, whether you abandon Latin at that point having even so already benefited greatly, or whether you continue on in the quest for real mastery of it.

May this book help to bring back much that was commonplace and basic in former times.

CHAPTER THREE

The Importance of Learning Latin, Examined in Detail

THIS IS THE most demanding of the chapters in this introductory section of the book. I believe it to be well worth your while to read it with some care; and indeed I hope you will help to propagate its message.

JEAN PAUL GETTY, an American industrialist whose interests were mainly centred on oil, and who up till the time of his death in 1976 was reckoned to be the richest man in the world, used to employ classicists to run his worldwide network of companies. Other industrialists might have considered the first necessary qualification to be a degree from Harvard or Yale Business School or some such, but not he. Once asked why he insisted on employing classicists, his reply was: 'They sell more oil.' They made him more money.

At the other social and economic extreme, an article in the *Independent* newspaper of 4 November 1987 reported that, in some parts of America, the Classics had been revived to help inner-city black youths in particular, and with extraordinary results. In Indianapolis, for example, 400 eleven-year-olds who had been receiving daily Latin teaching were significantly better, not only in reading and spelling but also in maths and science, than a group who followed the normal curriculum. This was of course despite

those who followed the normal curriculum having more time for the other subjects because of the time *not* taken up with Latin.

I ask my readers to take careful note of that. Those who received daily Latin teaching were better at the *other* subjects than the other group, even though they spent significantly less time on those other subjects. We shall be coming across much more evidence to the same effect in the following pages.

Nor were these freak results, as experts on education in the higher reaches of academia have been claiming since those results were first published.[fn1] They are simply confirmations of what has been found whenever the opportunity to compare has arisen again and again in the past. Based certainly on my own experience of teaching, but based also on what has been said in the past by countless people in the best possible position to know,[fn2] it is my firm conviction that an education grounded solidly on the Classics is an education many thousands of times better – once again I intend no exaggeration there – than any education offered today, and would be even if all the subjects taught today were taught as well as they could be. Let us remind ourselves too that the long period of Classics-only education at schools which started gradually to come to an end only in the middle of the nineteenth century was the period of Britain's peak of success in most fields of human endeavour.

It is, however, all very well for me to say that, but simply setting down the facts does not necessarily carry conviction, no matter how true the facts obviously are. Exactly *why* is it and *how* is it, therefore, that Latin has this extraordinary and marvellous effect on everyone, of whatever background or intellectual inheritance?

I pluck you by the sleeve, dear reader, and beg for your closest attention to what now follows. I stress too that I am

by no means only saying this in my own name, but am also passing on the sort of thing that experienced educators have said in the past when challenged on the subject.

In summary, what a well-designed course in Latin provides is a training and development of the mind and character to a degree of excellence that no other mental or physical activity can come anywhere near to bringing about. Specifically, it trains these: the ability to concentrate and focus; the use of the memory; the capacity to analyse, deduce and problem-solve; the powers of attention to detail, of diligence and perseverance, of observation, of imagination, of judgement, of taste. In fact it trains the mind and character to the utmost extent in everything human that is valuable. It does all this as no other academic subject (other than classical Greek), or other activity of any kind at all, can come remotely close to doing.

Once again, it is all very well for me simply to state this. Do you believe it to be even possible? Does what I claim even perhaps seem absurd? It remains, therefore, to show how we can know it to be true.

There is surely no better way of demonstrating the truth of those far-reaching claims than by looking carefully at a representative example of Latin-educating in action. Here, therefore, is such an example, given in the form of showing what is necessary for the purpose of dealing adequately with a reasonably difficult Latin sentence that is part of a reasonably difficult piece of Latin prose written by a highly regarded Latin author.

First of all, you examine the words in the sentence sufficiently to break the sentence down into its various clauses (see here for what a clause is). Then, taking the clauses one at a time, you start with what you had identified as the main clause or one of the main clauses, and examine more closely the individual words in it and, in the case of nouns, pronouns, adjectives and verbs, their

word forms. In doing this, you are cultivating your powers of observation and of attention to detail.

Next, you need to bring your powers of reasoning more strongly into play, in order to see which words belong together and how the various words relate to each other. In Latin, this will sometimes be far from obvious, and you will have the task of weighing up various alternatives before coming up with your first solution.

Even when you have done that with all due care, your first solution, however, may well need to be only a provisional solution. You must therefore now ask yourself: is this solution correct? In the case of a clause, you must look carefully at the clause preceding it or otherwise most closely related it, to see if everything in that clause confirms your solution, or if, rather, you need to try another alternative. In the case of a complete sentence, you must check the previous sentence; and in some cases you may find even that the *subsequent* sentence will force you to change your mind.

By this stage, you have, simply by translating in accordance with the rules of grammar that you have learnt and are able to apply, already called into play your powers of observation, of reasoning, of identifying alternatives and then choosing between them, and of making judgements. You have also learnt the need to make one or more independent checks to ensure that the result at which you have arrived is indeed the correct one.

The process by no means stops there; far from it. By considering various English words available for you to use for the translation of each Latin word in the sentence, and choosing carefully the ones for your translation, you are forcing yourself to gain clearer, fuller and more knowledgeable insights into your own language. Further, you will often find yourself coming across Latin words for which there is no English equivalent; and in consequence you will be made to enlarge on what you can conceive with

your mind and on the ideas you can entertain and make use of.

Next, there is the moral aspect to add to the intellectual aspect that has featured so far. In doing all that you have done so far, you are training not only your mind but your character as well. From the outset – right from when you make your very first efforts of translating either into English or into Latin – you will be running into difficulties which do not exist when you are dealing with English by itself. Addressing these difficulties will not only need a flexibility of mind that was not needed before. It will also need determination and perseverance, so that you are able to continue for as long as is needed until you have earned the deep satisfaction of having triumphed over every obstacle.

There is yet more. If you are to make a really satisfactory translation, you need to aim at reproducing, in an English way, what is there in the Latin that may not be directly translatable. This may involve putting emphasis in the right places and reproducing such features as logical coherence, persuasiveness, heart-stopping emotion, sheer literary beauty, or whatever. You will be developing mental subtlety. You will also be developing good taste.

Furthermore, with practice the stage will be reached when this whole process will have become so customary as to be often relatively effortless for you, sometimes even to the extent of being almost automatic. By then you will have gone a long way towards developing an intellect and a character which will serve you well, faithfully, efficiently and speedily, in *any* problems of *any* kind that you may find yourself faced with in *any* activity of any kind in your life that you find yourself engaging in.

Finally, differing according to whichever great Latin author, admired over many centuries, you are trying to translate, you will, as a ‘side effect’, have made yourself to some extent acquainted with elements of one or more of

history, geography, laws, religion and culture that will have broadened your mind and widened your sympathies.

All this is the sort of thing that you can have gained from translating a single sentence in the right manner.

I should add that I have chosen this particular example – that of what needs to be applied when translating a reasonably difficult Latin sentence in a reasonably difficult piece of Latin prose – for purposes of illustration, rather than to present anything approaching a complete picture of Latin-learning in action and what is to be gained from it. What I have been outlining applies in lesser or greater degree to any other example I might have chosen, whether a translation done by beginners or a translation done by people of such competence in Latin that the kind of sentence I have selected will be undemanding for them.

That is all very well, some readers may respond. Could not, however, one of the modern languages do exactly the same job, in addition to being obviously of more practical use?

My answer, and the answer of great educators of the past, is simply: no. For the purpose of education, as opposed to merely acquiring a valuable skill, all modern languages are far inferior to Latin. First, one of the supreme advantages of Latin is, in the right sort of way, the difficulty of it – even though, by an apparent paradox, it is also easy enough at the outset for even my four-year-old pupils to find it manageable and enjoyable without my in any way compromising how it is taught. No modern language comes close to approaching Latin in difficulty.[fn3] It is the very difficulty of Latin that, however apparently off-putting, is an important part of what makes it such a valuable preparation for life. Secondly, no modern language has a literature that comes close to deserving to be revered as the writings of Latin author after Latin author have deservedly been revered throughout the centuries since

they were written. And I could continue with a ‘thirdly’ and many more.

All in all, it is no wonder that Jean Paul Getty, who knew as much about making money as anyone in his day, insisted on classicists and only classicists being chosen to run his companies, and no wonder that experience has *consistently* shown that, with children, those who are not taught Latin in the correct manner come ‘nowhere’ by comparison with those who are.

I shall close this essay, on the place of Latin in education, with a claim that is most controversial of all; and, because it is so controversial, I ask my readers to make sure that they register *exactly* what I am claiming, as opposed to even the smallest exaggeration of it.

If I were to be faced with the choice – and I stress that it is not a choice that I should like to be faced with – of, on the one hand, giving children for whom I had responsibility an education consisting of a wide variety of useful subjects, or even relatively few useful subjects as was standard in the education of my day, or, on the other hand, giving them an education consisting *only* of Latin and of no other subjects whatever, even in their spare time, I should unhesitatingly opt for the Latin-only alternative, no matter who the children were and no matter what their inborn intellectual abilities were, let alone what their stated preference would be if consulted at any point.

My reason is simply that the benefits to the child and to the future-adult of the second alternative would be so greatly superior as to be, once again, beyond the possibility of comparison, at least in percentage terms. The reality is that true education is only secondarily, and *very much* secondarily, about the amount and variety of knowledge that one picks up during the course of it. Primarily, it is about developing our mind, character and taste so that, once the education is complete, we can pick up effortlessly and quickly whatever knowledge and skills we wish to,

whether for practical use or for enjoyment at any point in our lives. People's capabilities resulting from such an education will be so great by comparison with what those capabilities would have been that they would have reason to be grateful, whether their tasks were running a country on the one hand, or, to descend into bathos, picking up the skills needed to play table tennis on the other hand.

Thus the value of Latin in education and why. Let us recall too, one last time, that historically the choice I have made is *not* eccentric, and that Latin and its classical sister were the exclusive subject matter in leading schools for centuries. Moreover, not only did Britain flourish during much of that time, but complaints by the 'victims' of this education were remarkably few even though a much more varied education was standard in other European countries at the same time.

fn1 Well-known experts on education in the highest reaches of academia today do indeed typically detest the experiment in Indianopolis and elsewhere in America, and maintain that it is nothing but 'anecdotal' evidence and deeply flawed. They typically assert that, for it to be a true experiment, another group of children should have been taught French or German instead of Latin, and doubtless the results would have been similar if not better. A supposition does not become fact simply because the world's leading experts state it to be fact, however. I invite readers to consider this particular supposition in the light of the evidence and reasoning that I shall be including in the rest of this chapter, and also in the knowledge that academia has been in full cry in its attacks on the Classics as part of education since much earlier than the 1960s, indeed since well over a century ago.

fn2 Extensive quotations by some of the most impressive authors on the subject will be found on the website.

fn3 This includes even the more demanding ones, such as present-day Polish, which, although not derived from Latin, resembles classical Latin in a remarkable number of ways – it is characterised by a high degree of inflection; it has relatively free word order; there are no articles; and there is frequent dropping of subject pronouns, with the verb endings being sufficient to make those pronouns 'understood'. Not that, in any case, Polish, or any other modern language fitting that description, is likely to be chosen for English pupils as a language useful enough to include in school syllabuses.