

PEDAGOGY PROGRESS AND THE PROFESSION

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Hateful to me is that man as the Gates of Hades
Who conceals one thing in his mind and says another.

Iliad 9.312-13

As the American Philological Association approaches its centennial and the American Classical League its semicentennial, it seems appropriate to take a look at our profession—the oldest in the American academic world—to assess its present condition, and to shape plans for the future in the light of current and anticipated developments.

I have chosen for a text the familiar words of Achilles to the embassy from Agamemnon for I too have come on a mission and it is a time for plain talk.

We have come a long way since those immediate postbellum days of 1868-69 when our philological founding fathers launched the American Philological Association on a sea of educational uncertainty. To rehearse the various vicissitudes of the voyage from that day to this would be a pleasant task but one made unnecessary, we trust, for this audience by reason of several historical sketches recently published.¹ Some aspects of this history must be mentioned, however, to put the present into proper perspective.

As scholarship in the several fields began to flourish, it soon became

¹ L. R. Shero, "The American Philological Association: An Historical Sketch," in *TAPA* 94 (1963) x-1, and "A Historical Survey of the Classics in the Schools and Universities of the United States," in *Classics in the USA* (JACT Pamphlet/3, London, n.d.). Gertrude Drake, "The Classics in the Secondary Schools of the United States," (*Ibid.*) For the earlier history of A.P.A., cf. Frank Gardner Moore, "A History of the American Philological Association," in *TAPA* 50 (1919) 5-32, and Paul Shorey, "Fifty Years of Classical Studies in America," *op. cit.* 33-61. Cf. J. E. Sandys, *A History of Classical Scholarship* (Hafner Publishing Co., New York 1958) 3.450-70.

clear that A.P.A. could not adequately serve all of the related but separate disciplines brought together under one philological roof. The excavations and reports of Heinrich Schliemann between 1868 and 1875 no doubt gave incentive for founding The Archaeological Institute of America in 1879, with which joint memberships became popular and joint meetings traditional after 1905. This philological delinquency, paradoxically enough, served to strengthen the influence of the classical philologists and thereby to hasten the departure of the English and modern language proponents to form the Modern Language Association of America in 1883. At that point there may have been a temptation to add to the title the term which the founding fathers had avoided. Although it was not done, from then on the thrust of A.P.A. became increasingly classical.

It was not until 1894, however, that A.P.A. paid official attention to Latin and Greek in the secondary schools. In a special session it passed a resolution recommending no less than three years of Greek be required for students preparing to take the classical course in college. It appointed a committee of twelve to publicize the resolution and to determine the "amount of Latin required for various courses in secondary schools." The committee published a preliminary report in 1896 which the National Education Association distributed throughout the country. At the request of the NEA the committee continued to deliberate on the matter, held a special conference of Classics teachers and other educators about it in the spring of 1898, and published a final report in *Transactions* 30 (1899).

The initial A.P.A. actions were taken in response to a report made in 1894 by the famous Committee of Ten appointed by the National Education Association to draw up curricula for all subjects commonly taught in public high schools.² Of four model curricula suggested, one was designated English—four years of Latin or French or German. Another was modern languages—four years of French and three years of German or vice versa. Another was Latin-scientific—four years of Latin and three years of French or German. The fourth was classical—

² *Report of the Committee of Ten on Secondary School Subjects*. Published for the National Education Association by the American Book Company (New York 1894). For a discussion of the report, cf. John F. Latimer, *What's Happened To Our High Schools?* Public Affairs Press (Washington, D.C. 1958), chapters 5 and 6.

four years of Latin, three years of French or German, and two years of Greek.

This last curriculum was obviously intended for students who were preparing for the classical course in college. The A.P.A. Committee of Twelve objected to the provision of two years of Greek; it recommended three instead. Its own report made no reference to the other three curricula but did contain two slightly different five-year programs in Latin and one six-year program, in addition to the three-year program in Greek.³ With this exception its Latin and Greek programs did not differ markedly from those drawn up by the Committee of Ten.

Which of the two reports had the greater impact on secondary schools cannot of course be determined. The two of them together set the pattern for the study of Latin and Greek in the schools until *The Classical Investigation*, published in 1924. Between 1895 and 1910 the proportion of public high school students of Latin increased from 44% to 50%. The actual number increased to over 900,000 in 1934. Until 1928 Latin had more students than French and Spanish combined. It continued to be the leading language until Spanish nosed it out in 1948.

Several different factors contributed to the growth and continued holding power of Latin in the schools during this period. One of the most important was the influence and prestige of the A.P.A. exercised through its various committees. One of these in 1896 was instrumental in getting a uniform spelling of Latin adopted for use in textbooks. Another, appointed at the first meeting in Toronto, just sixty years ago, was the Commission of Fifteen on college entrance requirements in Latin. Its report presented in 1909 and reprinted in *Transactions* 41 (1910) did much to simplify and unify entrance requirements in Latin and Greek as previously set forth in numerous college catalogs. It also served as a guide for Latin examiners of the College Entrance Examination Board in its early years.⁴

Another important factor was the organization of the four regional Classical Associations: CAMWS in 1905, CANE in 1906, CAAS in 1907, and CAPS in 1915. An "official" publication of CAMWS, *The Classical Journal*, began in 1906, and one for CAAS, *The Classical*

³ TAPA 30 (1899) lxxix-cxii.

⁴ Shero, TAPA (1963) xxxi.

Weekly, now *The Classical World*, began in 1907.⁵ These two publications soon became national in scope, *CJ* set up special features to meet the needs of secondary school teachers and by a judicious selection of papers attempted to appeal both to college professors and to high school teachers. *CW*, after making a similar attempt, gradually emphasized more scholarly articles and reviews. Its special series of bibliographical studies of major Classical authors has made it unique in its field in this country.

The regional Associations, in which A.P.A. members were principal organizers, came at a time when Greek was rapidly declining as a high school subject and no longer required for college entrance and Latin was under heavy fire for the same reason. Since A.P.A. was purely national in character and scope, the regional Associations could and did work with state and local organizations and in some cases foster their formation and development, even though the two latter retained their corporate independence.

Each regional Association also was completely independent of the other three. This fact, together with a continuing increase in the number of independent local organizations, made it difficult for those concerned to get a unified picture of Classics in the schools and colleges throughout the country. There seemed to be a need for some coordinating body to bring together all of the numerous individual units, large and small, into a single organization that would act as a collection and distribution agency, keep all parts informed and thus unify and strengthen the whole.

This *e pluribus unum* idea seemed particularly appropriate for bridging the gap that had begun to be noticeable between teachers in secondary school and college. It was possibly conceived at a conference on Classical Studies in liberal education held in Princeton on June 2, 1917.⁶ The immediate impulse for a plan came in connection with a meeting

⁵ Omitted from this list and subsequent discussion are: *The American Journal of Philology* in 1880, *The American Journal of Archaeology* in 1895, *Hesperia* in 1932, and such university publications as *Cornell Studies in Philology* in 1887, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* in 1890, and a number of others. Also omitted from the discussion are such important institutions as the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, founded in 1881, and the American Academy in Rome, founded in 1895.

⁶ The papers read, with quotations about the value of the classics from prominent Americans, and various statistical data were published in a volume, *Value of the Classics*, edited by Andrew F. West *et. al.* (Princeton University Press 1917).

of the National Education Association (founded in 1857), the largest educational organization in the country, with membership comprised largely of public school teachers. Since many of these were Latin and Greek teachers, Classical programs were often presented at NEA annual meetings. Discussion of such a program to be given at the NEA meeting in Pittsburgh in July 1918 resulted in the formation of the American Classical League at Milwaukee in 1919, with Dean Andrew F. West of Princeton as the first president.

The beginning of the new organization could hardly have been more auspicious. Under the aegis of some of the leading Classical scholars and high school teachers in the United States, ACL soon attracted national attention. In June 1920, President West appointed a special committee of ACL to work with the General Education Board (founded by John D. Rockefeller) on plans for a Classical investigation which it agreed to finance. The report which resulted was published in 1924.⁷ It was the most comprehensive, revealing, and influential report ever made on Classics in this country. About 8,600 teachers in more than 2,000 high schools worked with the Advisory Committee of Fifteen and fifty-five members of eight regional committees.⁸

Of this Classical Septuagint one member is still alive. As a member of the Advisory Committee and of a special investigating Committee of Four he contributed more than any other person to the success of the classical investigation. I refer of course to one of the founding fathers of CAMWS and ACL and *Nestor noster* of American Classicists, Dr. W. L. Carr, now in his 94th year. *Salutamus te, omnes!*

The Classical investigation represents the high watermark of co-operation between teachers of the Classics in our schools and colleges. Thirty-three thousand copies of Part One were printed and distributed

⁷ *The Classical Investigation, Part One, General Report* (Princeton University Press, 1924) was edited by the ACL Advisory Committee of which Dean West was chairman. Part II. *Documentary Evidence for the General Report* was never published. Part III. *The Classics in England, France and Germany* was published in 1925. Part IV. *English Word-Count and Latin Word-List* was never published. Attempts to find copies of Parts II and IV have been unsuccessful.

⁸ On the Advisory Committee, of which Dean West was chairman, there were nine from university level, three from public high school, two from private high school, and one layman. Of the sixty-five regional members there were twenty-three from college or university levels, twenty-two from PHS, four from private HS, four laymen, and two from state offices of education.

gratis throughout the country. In July 1928 an abridged edition was published which was reprinted in July 1934, during the great depression.

If the contents of part one, original or abridged, had been studied and known and its recommendations followed by all those engaged in the teaching of Latin since 1934, the chances are good that there would have been no occasion for this paper. The sad truth is that an air of complacency seemed to settle over Classical teachers and scholars in this country after the overwhelming reception given *The Classical Investigation*. After all, although the proportion of Latin students was declining the number was still increasing—almost as many as in French and Spanish as late as 1934. And in 1948 after the depression, the life-adjustment philosophy of education, and the war, there were 420,000 Latin students in public high schools, only 20,000 less than students of Spanish, and nearly 170,000 more than students of French.

By then the mists of euphoria had begun to disappear. Some of the members of CAMWS were the first to sense that the Latin situation demanded corrective action. A committee on educational policies was appointed and two symposia were held in 1947 and 1948.⁹ They were the culmination, so to speak, of a far-reaching plan to introduce Vergil's *Aeneid* as a replacement for Caesar in Latin II, long the terminal point for most students. Miss Lenore Geweke, chairman of the CEP, had been working on the plan for a number of years and had received a grant from the American Council of Learned Societies to put it into operation. Despite the cooperative research efforts of a number of leading classical scholars and the verbal support of the other three regional Associations, of the American Classical League, and of A.P.A., the experiment did not succeed. Several factors were to blame. Chief among them was lack of sufficient funds to carry out all necessary phases of the project.

By 1952, however, it was becoming obvious that despite the activities of CAMWS and other associations, something needed to be done on a national scale. A.P.A. stepped into the breach and appointed a Committee on Educational Policy which was charged with preparing, in cooperation with other Classical organizations, a pamphlet on the study of Latin to be used by guidance counsellors. The ACL edited,

⁹ See the reports in *CJ* 43 (November 1947) and 44 (November 1948).

published, and distributed the pamphlet in 1954. The cost was shared by A.P.A., ACL, and the four regional Associations.

A.P.A. then appointed a Committee on Educational Training and Trends to find ways of cooperating with the Modern Language Association on common problems and to "observe trends in American education affecting Classical Studies." This committee collected information about status of Classical Studies in schools and colleges, supply and preparation of teachers, Classical curriculum, increasing Latin III and IV enrollments, improving relations among Classical Organizations, and establishing contacts with non-Classical organizations. The committee published a three-part report in *The Classical Journal* (1956), and sponsored and distributed many booklets and packets of printed and mimeographed materials.

The CETT was succeeded by or merged with the Joint Committee of American Classical Organizations that performed a wide variety of useful services between 1957 and 1961. Under the auspices of CETT a memorable panel discussion of the topic, "Teaching Latin and Greek: New Approaches," was featured at the A.P.A. meeting in December 1959. The edited discussion was printed in *The Classical Journal* for February 1962 and many reprints were distributed throughout the country in the next few years.

In some respects the panel discussion might be considered the climax of A.P.A. efforts to influence the course of Latin instruction in the secondary schools. The Joint Committee continued to work very effectively for two years but most A.P.A. members were probably unaware of its activities.

After a brief hiatus of a year or two the writer, as president of the American Classical League, began a series of activities that resulted in the establishment of a national office in Washington. With the financial assistance of the A.P.A., the ACL, the national JCL, the regional associations, many state associations and individuals, the office is now in its third year of operation and plans are being made to keep it functioning and solvent.

During the last three or four years progress has been made on several fronts. In April 1965 a planning conference was held under a grant from the Office of Education. Results of the conference were published in what was called the Airlie Report, now out of print. In the

summer of 1966 the first summer institute for Latin teachers sponsored by the Federal Government was held at the University of Minnesota under a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. A second, shorter institute, under another grant was held in the summer of 1967. Another grant was made to the University of Illinois in 1968. Under provisions of the Education Professions Development Act there were two summer institutes for Latin teachers in 1969: a second one at the University of Illinois and one at the University of New York at Albany.

In the summer of 1966 the National Endowment for the Humanities made a grant to the league to "analyze the current situation of Latin instruction in the secondary schools of the United States and to make plans for improving it." A report of the activities carried out under the grant was published in May 1968 with the title, *The Oxford Conference and Related Activities*.

Other plans include enlarging the number of ACL State Consultants in Classics, development of ways and means to meet the increasingly critical shortage of teachers in secondary schools, working out new curricula for undergraduate joint majors in Latin and English, Latin and French, and other desirable combinations.

One of the most important needs facing the profession is the bringing about of closer relations between secondary school and college teachers. This has been done to a marked degree in the fields of Science and Mathematics, History and English. A beginning has been made in Classics but much more needs to be done. Matters of this kind cannot be left solely to the American Classical League.

The regional organizations, with the possible exception of CANE, owe their origin primarily to college professors and members of A.P.A. It is not strange therefore that many if not most of the programs at regional meetings have been modelled somewhat after those of A.P.A., that is, meetings are regarded as opportunities for older scholars to become better known and for younger scholars to become known to their elders. These motives, present from the first and still in vogue, are not reprehensible or wicked per se. Meetings of A.P.A. are annual and the number of papers that can be read and/or published in *Transactions* is limited. How can a young and promising scholar become known beyond the circle of his graduate school and local com-

munity except through publication in various Classical periodicals with national circulation and appearing on programs of national meetings? How indeed can he or she get financial assistance to attend such meetings without taking part in them? How indeed can he or she get that richly deserved promotion without annual evidence of scholarly worth in the dean's dossier?

I do not wish to be or to appear cynical. There are certain facts of academic life that one cannot altogether ignore and many of us know cases where worth has been overlooked and worthlessness rewarded. The point is, however, that when professional meetings and publications become vehicles for professional advancement those meetings and publications tend to lose many of the auditors and readers who need professional encouragement and help from their university colleagues.

It cannot be expected that A.P.A. will or should change the character of its meetings that have served it and Classical scholarship so well during its venerable history. Without in any way denigrating its laudable objective to advance and diffuse philological knowledge, it might be well to keep in mind the dictum pronounced by the first president of A.P.A., the distinguished Sanskritist William Dwight Whitney: "A working society, which we aim to be, is worth in the last analysis what it brings forth for universal use." We have long since passed the time when young lawyers were exhorted by one of their Classical elders to "quote Latin authors because the Supreme Court likes it." But perhaps it would still be useful to remember the revered Paul Shorey's warning to beware of the "divorce which specialization threatens to bring about between Classical study and Classical culture." "The teaching of the Classics," he also said, "is a vicious circle if its only aim is to train up other teachers of the Classics." In his view "... philology, the critical history of the human spirit, disputes with the sciences of nature the primacy in education and the hegemony of modern culture."¹⁰

In a recent article in the New York Times (December 15) the writer made the astounding statement: "The rout of the Classics is complete. Latin and Greek are gone and so are the studies connected with them.

¹⁰ The quotations from Shorey are in sequence: *TAPA* 50 (1919) 38; "Philology and Classical Philology," in *CJ* (May 1906) 194, 179.

But also gone is a body of knowledge that was once considered the heritage of educated man."

As George Ade's Mr. Dooley said, "It's better not to know so much than to know so much that ain't so." The writer of the article was obviously not familiar with A.P.A. or other Classical organizations whose scholarly members have put and maintained American Classical scholarship on a par and in many respects superior to that of any country in the world for many years. He obviously did not know that nearly a million students still study Latin in the public and nonpublic secondary schools in the country. He obviously did not know that more college students are studying Latin and Greek as undergraduates and graduates than at any time since 1925.¹¹

We may forgive him for such ignorance because it is all but impossible, try as we do, to get information of this kind into circulation among the general public. We must agree with the writer, however, when he said: "The literature of the past is so studded with Classical and Biblical allusions that to appreciate it, some knowledge of the Latin, Greek and Biblical world is obligatory. The problem is how to make that knowledge available in a way that the experience of acquiring it is a pleasant and desirable one."

That indeed is our problem. In the parlance of today, "It's not how long you make it but how you make it long." The director of a recent production of the *Clouds* put it conversely but more elegantly by inserting a line at the climax of the Agon: "And sophistry tastes good like philosophy should."

As ACL and A.P.A. celebrate a half century and century of service to America and the western world, let all of our members resolve anew to study and learn and teach and make philology taste good like philosophy should.

¹¹ John F. Latimer (ed.), *The Oxford Conference and Related Activities* (Washington, D.C. 1968) Appendix B.