WILLIAM HENRY DENHAM Rouse was born in 1863 in Calcutta, where his father was a Baptist missionary. His schooling began in Wales and India, but in 1882 he went to Christ's College, Cambridge, where his tutor, John Peile, was a leading Sanskrit scholar. Rouse gained a double first in Classics and a fellowship at his college, which he used to work on Indo-European grammar and on his book on Greek votive offerings, published by CUP in 1902. In that year, having taught at three public schools, the last being Rugby, he became headmaster of the Perse School, Cambridge, then a small and run-down grammar school. Rouse had become convinced that the direct method could revivify not only language teaching but also education in general and through it the nation. For him, virtue was to be found through immersion in 'the living word' (a secularised version of his father's Baptist beliefs), which could bring back the rural-based English ethos which had, in his eyes, been ruined by industrialisation and urbanisation.

In his long reign at the Perse School (he retired in 1928), Rouse built up a remarkable microcosm which functioned in effect as a research project in aid of reform. He recruited teachers, not only in Latin and Greek but also in modern languages and English, who were keen to explore new kinds of teaching. (Science and mathematics were taught, but he never quite understood them.) The school drew its staff from a university city which was well-stocked with bright young graduates. They included R.B.Appleton and W.H.S. Jones, who taught Classics; Louis von Glehn (French), and Caldwell Cook (English). Von Glehn was supported by J.G.Frazer's formidable French wife Lilly, who wrote French plays for acting and gave the school a gramophone. Cook created a school theatre ('the Mummery'), wrote plays and published a manual on teaching through drama, The Play Way, misinterpreted later on as dealing with 'play' rather than 'drama'.

Rouse's colleagues did most of the lower-form teaching, while he dealt with the sixth form. But he visited other classes, for example when he had composed a Latin song and wanted to try it out. It is hard to imagine a head nowadays entering a classroom and singing a song, in any language; but Rouse's lack of embarrassment came from his absolute commitment to 'the living word'. With his sixth form he read classical authors as other headmasters did. Some of his ex-pupils remembered the mingled excitement and alarm with which they began, sitting with boys in the upper sixth and struggling to keep up. Plain texts were used throughout rather than editions: master, pupils and the ancient author came into direct contact. Whether the text being studied was Latin or Greek, it was read aloud, and Rouse fired questions in Latin. He kept notes of clever or witty responses, and in retirement assembled a set of 'Scenes from sixth-
form life', ten in all, each based on the teaching of a Latin or Greek text. I offer two glimpses from this fascinating little book. The first scene concerns Aeneid II:

Magister sero intrat. Puerorum chorus cantat: Sero venientibus ossa! Magister manum protendit, voltu poscens ossa. Discipulis deponit in manu 'Bohn's translation of Homer' (risus). 1

In the fourth scene, entering the room to take a lesson on Virgil's sixth Eclogue, Rouse finds the class talking in English:

Magister: Quidnam vos loquimini lingua barbar? (Why are you taking in a foreign language?)

Boys (chanting in chorus): Tu ne quaesieris, scire nefas. (Don't you ask, it's forbidden to know.)

Magister: Nugas! Tricas! Quisquillas! (Stuff and nonsense!)

First pupil: Dulce est desipere in loco. (It's nice to relax in the right place.)

Magister: Sed non hic est locus. Silentium! (But this isn't it. Silence!)

Second pupil: Locus a non loquendo, scilicet. (Location from not being eloquent, as it were.)

When the master (Rouse) enters, he announces the end of 'ordinary time' by asserting the rule of (in this case) Latin. English is a language foreign to this classroom. The boys counter by quoting Horace's famous plea for indulgence, Dulce est desipere in loco: almost, 'A little of what you fancy does you good.' Rouse dismisses this by seizing on locus (place, situation) and redefining it as a physical setting. This is his classroom, and indulging in English is forbidden. A pupil responds by reworking another famous saying, Varro's notorious etymology of lucus (a grove), lucus a non lucendo (a grove, from its not being light there). He links locus (place, i.e. the classroom) with loquendo (speaking), referring to Rouse's prohibition of English. The remark was even apter than the speaker could have known: this place is a world made of words, marked out and defined by the speaking which takes place there.

Direct Method teaching in Latin, Greek, French and German was developed in the school after Rouse's appointment to such an extent that the Board of Education gave special grants to support staffing, and arranged for reports to be published on the teaching (on Latin in 1910, on Greek in 1914). By this time the word was being spread in other ways. In 1912 Rouse sailed to New York, to give a direct method summer school at Columbia University at the invitation of Gonzalez Lodge, the professor of Latin there. At about the same time, Rouse persuaded Oxford University Press to publish a series of teaching books, Lingua Latina, 14 volumes appearing between 1912 and 1931, including a teacher's book, Praeceptor. (Some of the books were also published in the USA.) Other publishers were also recruited: Appleton published his direct method course Intimum (1916) with CUP, and his Perse Latin Plays (1913) with Heffer. Both books were written with

'scribendo dicimus diligentius, dicendo scribimus facilius'

– Quintilianus
W.H.S. Jones of St Catharine's College, who also published a *First Latin Book* (Macmillan, 1907), and a manual of *The Teaching of Latin* (Blackie, 1904) which discussed other methods but focused largely on the direct method. Thus at a time when new municipal secondary schools were set up in the wake of the 1902 Education Act, teacher training was being expanded, and the traditional teaching of Classics was being challenged, Rouse and his allies had a very strong presence in the textbook market.

Some of those who read these books came to the Perse to see how the Direct Method worked in practice. But from 1911 they could also attend summer schools in which demonstration classes were taught and conversation sessions held in Latin and Greek. The first summer school was held on home ground in Cambridge; the third was in Bangor in 1913, organised with Rouse's colleague Edward Arnold, the professor of Latin. At this school the Association for the Reform of Latin Teaching was formed. The future seemed to be assured, but the Great War had a devastating impact on Rouse's campaign. Some of his protégés, including teachers and authors of Direct Method textbooks, were killed; and it became impossible to maintain the momentum previously built up. In addition, there were some bruising exchanges with the Classical Association (founded in 1903), which as a broad church refused to endorse the method whole-heartedly; most of its members clung to traditional ways of teaching. The ARLT held annual summer schools after the War; it flourished, but its prestige suffered from most of its membership being female. The Direct Method textbooks gradually went out of print, and many of those who had returned enthused from summer schools to use the method in their own schools found it impossible to keep up the virtuoso standards demonstrated by the leading figures of the ARLT. In the 1940s and 1950s, traditional grammar-based methods remained dominant, and were in part responsible for the abolition of compulsory Latin at Oxbridge at the end of the latter decade. Rouse's vision would not have saved the day, but it might have injected life into the sterile debates on the 'grammar grind' and the disciplinary benefits of Latin.

What conclusions can be drawn from this brief account? Rouse's vision was a comprehensive one, of total immersion in language. His position at the Perse enabled him to build a protected microcosm in which that vision could be realised (for example, he was able to ban the taking of external examinations throughout his headmastership). Beyond this magic realm, support for aspiring direct method teachers was provided in two ways. First, the course books published by Rouse and his colleagues provided detailed frameworks for teaching. Second, the ARLT and especially its summer schools offered demonstrations, discussions and solidarity. That these supports were insufficient in many cases suggests that the difficulties of changing to direct method teaching were considerable. They might have been lessened if some of the central features of the method — notably, the use of reading aloud — had been inserted in conventional classical training in schools and universities. As it was, most of the public schools viewed the Direct Method with some disdain, and so critical mass was never achieved. Comparison with the *Cambridge Latin Course* highlights its systematic use of pilot schools; the direct method had established bridgeheads, but only in a handful of schools. Another significant aspect of CLC was the development of a revised edition as a result of feedback from teachers (later on the *Oxford Latin Course* was to offer a compromise between traditional and Cambridge methods). The CLC had to struggle with internal divisions, a dogmatic linguistic basis and with running out of initial development time. It benefited from the support of almost all training lecturers and HMIs, and from the fact that it was seen as the best (and only) hope of saving school Latin after it became optional. Such comparisons are essential if we are to understand the success and failure of Rouse's experiment, which like CLC was a product of its time.

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