

who has worked his way into the heart of the language in which it is written, but he cannot convey to others by any translation the effect which the original produced on him. In this literature—the literature of the heart and the imagination—the songs, the epics, the dramas, the romances, the great histories, the genius of each nation displays itself, and on account of the great variety of national characteristics adds to the capacity of literature for affording enjoyment to the varied tastes of the multitude of readers. Each nation has its own way of looking at truth and its own way of expressing it, and consequently the general stock of ideas is much enriched by each nation's contribution. Furthermore, the tastes and tempers of nations are made more catholic and more mild by knowing the best that the others have written, and so a counterpoise is afforded by literature to national hatred and jealousy. Besides all this, the literature of one country is a constant spur to the writers of neighbouring countries. Prof. Dowden, in *Fortnightly Review* for February, 1889, p. 176, says:—“Every great literary movement of modern Europe has been born from the wedlock of two peoples. So the great Elizabethan literature sprang from the love-making of England with Italy; the poetry of the early part of the nineteenth century from the ardour aroused in England by the opening promise of the French revolution.” Much more to the same effect might be said. It would not be difficult to write a very interesting chapter on the influence exerted by each of the modern languages on the others. How the mediæval epic literature of France was the fountain of inspiration for the literatures of England, Germany and Italy; how the *Fabliaux* of France were the models for the *Decamerone* of Boccaccio, and how it in turn became the model for the Can-

terbury Tales of Chaucer; how the literature of the age of Louis XIV. influenced both German and English literature for near a century; how German literature in the end of the eighteenth century, and through the nineteenth, has moulded and inspired our greatest English writers from Walter Scott to Thomas Carlyle; how Scott in his turn has influenced German and French literature, and how the naturalist writers of France in our own day are setting the fashion in the English and American novel.

These are then in brief some of the important advantages derived from a knowledge of the modern languages. To put it more briefly still we may say that the modern languages of Western Europe are the means of communication between the various regiments in the vanguard of civilization, and every one who makes himself master of them will be better able to fight the battle of light against darkness, of civilization against barbarism. But this is not all. Besides the very definite advantages accruing from the possession of the knowledge of the modern languages, its acquisition is a splendid means of intellectual culture. I can hardly hope that every one will agree with me in this position, so it will be necessary to go somewhat into detail in order to show what mental discipline is afforded by a serious course of study in modern languages.

The study of any modern language may for present purposes be considered as falling into three departments: the study of the language as it is, the study of its literature, and the study of its history. The learning of a strange language, no matter how much it may resemble our own, is a much more difficult matter than many people imagine, for to know a language, in the proper sense of the term, is to be able to express all our thoughts in it. It is folly to suppose that for all words