

writing the language does not simply write Greek, but imitates the diction of Homer or Plato or Thucydides, of Sophocles or of Herodotus. The language, besides being beautiful and musical in itself, full of variety and of diversity of tone, fits the mind of him who uses it as closely as a glove fits the hand. Lord Macaulay said in his later years that he never read Thucydides without a feeling of despair. The construction is often difficult, sometimes impossible. As we read we penetrate without difficulty into the subtle shades of meaning, but we cannot translate intelligibly without a long periphrasis. The exercise of making out an author of this kind gives strength and pliancy to the intellect, which could hardly be gained by reading any number of *Times* leading articles, admirably as they are composed. A similar effect is produced by tracking, throughout their ramifications, the subtle argument of Plato's dialogues. I am myself under deep obligations to this kind of training. My master at school was very fond of reading Thucydides with me. I made it a point of honour never to learn the lesson, and when "put on" had to make out the sense on the spur of the moment. I adopted an ingenious device to gain time. My master was a very able man, of well-filled and discursive mind. At any provocation he would go off into talks on general subjects of a most stimulating and interesting nature, and of different length. I, therefore, treated him as Meilanion treated Atlanta. Keeping my finger on the sentence which I had last construed, I strained every effort to work ahead. If my tutor's discourse was coming to an end I dropped another apple, for I had got to know precisely how much each subject was good for—one, two or three minutes. The valuable breathing space was utilized by me to the utmost, and in the end

I gained far more by not having learned my lesson than I should ever have gained if I had prepared it. The modern plan is, I believe, to put up the crib before you, to compare alternately the crib with the original, and the original with the crib, and to note whether the translator has done his work efficiently. If Greek were to disappear, this training would be lost, but at present how few obtain it, and how seldom is the study of Greek defended on the grounds which I have just advanced!

In order to come to a proper conclusion as to the place which the classical languages should occupy in modern education, we must take a general survey of the present condition of knowledge. All education which is worth the name should conduce to a definite end. But at the present day it would be difficult for a master to pronounce at any given moment what particular end he was aiming at in the education of any particular boy. The education of our public schools, which gives the tone to all other forms of secondary education, has never been subjected to a thorough revision. We have retained the old classical basis, which was once an end in itself, and we have added to it mathematics, modern languages, history and science. We attempt to embrace everything and to surrender nothing. We do not even allow specialization, because in our public schools questions of discipline and even questions of society are quite as pressing as questions of education. There arises therefore an internecine strife between these conflicting claims; each study obtains what it can in the struggle; and, as when thieves fall out honest men come by their own, so, while masters are squabbling as to what they shall teach, athletics and amusements, which have a clear and simple end in view, and which always know their own minds, step in and oc-