

so much is artificial in modern civilization that we learn to entertain fanciful requirements. It is difficult to see how it can be otherwise with the incitements to comfort and ease which science furnishes.

In all the changes in the mode of life during the last seventy years, in the improvements of material comfort in every direction, with the extraordinary effect of the introduction of railways, which have worked a revolution in modern thought scarcely inferior to the impetus given by printing, and with the general dissemination of education in all classes, with all this, I humbly conceive that the student of history will find the main characteristics of humanity to be the same to-day as we read of them in Herodotus. We may trace in the early records the same varied panorama of passion, motive, patriotism, cruelty, self-interest and abnegation, with examples of that indescribable fascination which never fails to attract, and of that ruggedness of manner which so constantly repels, as we to-day experience in the intercourse with our fellows. We meet much in the study of the past to colour the theories we may form of human life. The improvement in morals, manners and attainments visible in our observation of this century cannot be referred to all classes. The imperishable works of ancient literature remain to betoken the highest genius, the most subtle originality, a marvellous knowledge of the human heart, set forth in an energetic and most perfect form of expression; works which have outlived twenty centuries. The improvement most discernible is to be traced in the attainments, the manners, habits and tastes of the humbler classes. The Roman spectators who crowded to the circus to witness the Christian overcome in the struggle with some wild, savage beast, and torn to pieces, or who shrieked out applause during the combat of gladiators when the fate of the vanquished depended on the upturned thumbs of the excited crowd as Byron has written, slaughtered to make a Roman holiday, from their standing point could not recognize that there was hard hearted cruelty or inhumanity in their nature. In their view they were present at a legalized ordinary amusement. In their hard code suicide was looked upon as the legitimate relief from misery. The reader of Livy may recollect the last Macedonian king, Perseus, imploring his conqueror, Æmilius Paulus, not to lead him in triumph, and receiving the reply that the matter was in his own hands.

Now-a-days we look sternly on amusements disgraced by brutality. We legislate against cock-fighting and dog-fights. Bull-baiting has long been forbidden by law. The prize ring, however, although illegal, retains its supporters, who, if not numerous, are certainly noisy.

It seems to me that in the examination I am attempting so imperfectly to make of the results we hope to effect in the education of our children, or as my contemporaries would say of our grandchildren, it is not possible to pass unnoticed the consideration of all that can be effected by home influences. How much lies in the power of the mother, or the female connection who supplies her place! Indeed it is not possible to over-estimate all that can be effected by this wise and fostering care. M. de Quincey in his essay on Shakespeare has speculated on what Shakespeare's mother must have been. Mary, the daughter of Robert Arden, of Wellingcote, of one of the most ancient families of Warwickshire, which Dugdale tells us can be traced for six centuries from the days of Edward the Confessor. Mary Arden! as Charles Knight says, the name breathes poetry. Her position in the county gives an assurance of the worth and station of the Shakespeare family, and sets at naught many of the absurd myths that have entwined themselves around the supreme and universal excellence of her son. To my mind, in the scenes with the Queen in Hamlet, there is a deference shown by the son to the mother, in spite of her vices, which suggests Shakespeare's recollections of the happiness of his own young years.

By these home influences the child's mind can be moulded in the qualities of gentleness, of thoughtfulness of others, and with sympathy with what is good. When we have had the happiness to receive this teaching, the effect never wholly leaves us, whatever follies as we advance in life we may commit.

May I be permitted to express the hope that those present who have responsibilities of this character will ponder over my humble words, and consider the extent that the future of those dependent on them may be moulded to good by their precept and example.

It may be inferred from what I have said that in my poor judgment, neither the study of mathematics nor of the sciences can be recognized as the surest means of training, forming and developing the young mind; that in their extended study they must be regarded as technical, to be followed with the design of fitting a student for a professional career. There will ever be two schools advocating different theories of education; the one the practical; the other, for want of a better word, may be called the philosophical, in the etymological meaning of the word; the love of wisdom. The former assumes that all teaching is preparatory for active intercourse with the world in the state of life to be followed. The second keeps in primary prominence the development of the moral being; the effort to endow it with fixed principles, to create a standard of duty, to impregnate the young mind with sentiments of honour, truth and duty.

It would be absurd, as it would be unjust, to deny that these views have a place in practical education, and that the advocates of this system, when affirming as a primary principle that nothing should be learned but what may prove useful, neglect all moral training. Indeed they contend that it fully finds place in their system; but, that such is the competition in every avenue of progress that in order to fit the youth successfully to struggle with his competitors, it is necessary to gain the ability of doing so at as early a period of his life as possible. This argument is met by the objection that this peculiar training engenders much thought of self, that its tendency may make a man expert in a peculiar walk of life, but is not elevating in a moral point of view.

Nor is there accord among those who adopt the opposite theory that the greater advantage is attainable from the study of languages. The advocates of this view are divided on the expediency of prominence being given to the ancient over modern languages. Here we meet the practical argument that Latin and Greek, in whatever light they may be regarded as accomplishments, are useless in our intercourse with the world, while modern languages really prove of daily utility.

I have spoken of the limit of attainment in the general knowledge which a boy in the ordinary course of education may reach in a few years of his school novitiate. It is the common experience, unless with those endowed with rare ability, to permit of exceptional progress. It is stated of the late Lord Leighton that his father remarked to Powers, the sculptor, that after much hesitation he had at length consented to make his son an artist. Powers at once interrupted him by replying "that, nature has done for you." This illustration sustains the view that those only gifted with genius and great powers can reach the first rank of the calling they embrace. Indeed the most able and conscientious teacher can do little more than trace for us the path we should follow: it depends on our own abnegation and industry how far we advance upon it. I venture to express the opinion that in no one pursuit is the fact more apparent than in the study of a modern language. There is hardly anything so special. So many considerations are embraced, grammar, idiom, the knowledge of the words and phrases in use, the *tournure* of the language, the genders, the pronunciation, both of great importance, for a fault in either direction may lead to a sad *faux pas*. I recollect once remarking to a young girl who, I was given to understand, knew French perfectly, "*Vous parlez donc Français, mademoiselle.*" Her intention was to reply "*un peu.*" she said "*un pou,*" for the meaning of which I refer you to the dictionary.

Necessarily there are degrees of education enforced by circumstances. If the boy, from family exigencies, is destined at an early age to gain his own bread, the time of his disposal will admit only of his learning reading, writing and arithmetic as they are now sometimes spoken of as the three R's. This teaching is all that is possible with what incidental instruction can be given in general history, and in the principles of applied science. Where no such sacrifice is required, in my poor opinion, the study of the ancient languages should form the basis of education: Latin preceding Greek, the cultivation of which must depend on time and opportunity. Even a moderate knowledge of the former language, and I admit such is the general result in ordinary cases, tends more than any other form of knowledge to discipline the mind. From the structure of these languages and the strict laws of grammar a logical habit of thought is called forth, and a key to the grammar of all modern languages.