

tion of their rights, they must demand attention commensurate with their merits.

The peculiar worth of the Greek language, as a study, lies in its dramatic, poetic and historic nature, coupled with originality, beauty of expression and richness of terms, while great stress is laid upon its value as a discipline for the mind. All these attributes may be ascribed to the Latin, which also has an additional use in its practical application to some of the professions; and ably do both of these fulfil their functions. But what may be said of our modern tongues, both in these respects and in others peculiar to themselves? May not a French play, for instance, be as realistic as a Greek one of the same nature, or a tragedy have as terrible an ending? Can we not find as beautiful poetry in the productions of modern minds as in those of ancient thinkers? Are there not in a pure French literature as many words, and terms as rich as in similar works, in the Classics? Do not the historical works of French and German writers give us a view of the events treated as comprehensive, as descriptive, as that gained from the books of either Livy or Xenophon? Investigation, certainly, will furnish grounds for returning an affirmative answer to all these queries.

But perhaps the chief argument in favor of the Greek and the Latin is in their nature as mental fashioners. Their usefulness in this respect is due in a great measure to the intricacies of their verbs, and the dense character of the roots; so dense in some cases as to prove veritable snags in the path of the student. Granted that this is the mission of Greek to us, and that in the original it stands forth as an excellent mind-trainer, we may yet assert that there is as much polish and discipline given to the mind which has been engaged in overcoming a French *idiom*, as has been gained in the same time by one which has been trying to delve to the bottom of the toughest Greek root. But someone may say that the value of the French or the German, as mind-trainers, ceases as soon as the student becomes fairly conversant with the language, because of the easy nature of its construction. True these tongues may be acquired, by even the fair student, so that they become easy reading, and in this fact there rests a very strong point in favor of their being cultivated. If a person has reached a point in his study of French where he can enjoy without restraint the reading of its literature, may he

not be as much benefitted by storing his mind with what is valuable in the works of many writers, as though the same time were spent in examining verbs and compounds? We speak of a man as being "well-read;" and can he be correctly styled thus who has worried through a half dozen books of Latin or Greek, even though he has spent *months* in the operation? No! Knowledge is essentially the resultant of extensive reading. The dead languages are practically useless in this particular, and their votaries will ever be found bending over lexicon and grammar, in the almost hopeless search for terms needed to make clear some abstruse passage.

But there is another phase in which we must consider these languages; one which touches us perhaps more nearly than any other, and that is the practical side of the question. This is a utilitarian age; and while all due deference must be given to the attainment of poetry, and literary gems, yet perhaps that is the truest education which blends the practical with the beautiful, and gives the seeker something he can use when he comes into contact with an unsympathizing world. In some of the professions a use may be found for the ancient tongues, but, separated from the stimulation of class demands, the mind soon loses its grip on Greek terms and a few years from college finds them almost, if not quite, forgotten. It is to the *living*, something in daily use, that the word practical attaches itself, and whatever is acquired of that nature by the student becomes a potent factor in the strife for a successful life. As a result of the extensive immigration of late years, the present requirements of civilized and commercial intercourse make a knowledge of Modern Languages absolutely necessary. Go where we will on this continent we must come into contact with French and German-speaking people and being able to converse with them in their own tongue our pleasure and profit will be materially increased. The value of such a knowledge to one who travels in the Old World is imperative and sufficiently obvious to all.

If then our Modern Languages vie with the Classics in points of beauty and literary merit and in addition possess a use, they are surely worthy of attention. Let them rise to their own plane; let them be placed on the curriculum not as options but as full-course studies, and they will well repay the trouble. In an institution where there is room for both let both remain, and on an equality; where there is not room for both let the *dead* be cast aside and the *live* be received into full honor. "Off with the old, on with the new" will in this case usher in an innovation of unmistakable value.

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