

leisurely into one's mind, till I verily think one would after a time almost give out light in the dark, after having been steeped, as it were, in such an atmosphere of brilliance. And how could this ever be done without having the process of construing as the grosser medium through which alone all the beauty can be transmitted, because else we travel too fast, and more than half of it escapes us?" I will frankly admit that the more I see of the possibilities in the teaching of English the less force I see in this argument. It is strong, but not so strong as many would have us believe.

The conclusion of the whole matter is just this, that the true philological basis of a liberal education for an Englishman is a sound knowledge of the Greek, Latin and English languages and literatures, and that the right expansion of such a culture is the study of moderns. But to the modern men who still harden their hearts we would say, "O friends, be counselled. As the *Saturday Review* hath it, 'Dinna rin oot sarkless on the public without even a classical chiton.'"

Much of the preceding argument tends to prove the necessity of a classical foundation for the higher study of English, but this is capable of formal proof, and I am the more eager to attempt it, that I realize the greatness of our own language and literature, and love them, and that I am conscious I should not have attained this knowledge and love by any other road. And it highly becomes a classical student to vindicate the greatness of this literature of England, seeing that it is her classical scholars who have best known, praised, and written their own tongue. The argument from the evolution of English literature has never been more strongly and clearly stated than by Mr. Collins in the *Edinburgh*

*Review*, when he discharged his old-time broadside into Mr. Gosse's lightly rigged "Seventeenth Century Studies." His argument, greatly abbreviated and given often in his own words, is this: "Two-thirds of our poetry and prose derive their distinctive features from the classics. The whole history of our early literature is little less than the modification of Teutonic and Celtic elements by classical influence. Its later history is the history of the alternate predominance of classicism and romanticism. To begin with our poetry, what might have been a Cædmon's paraphrase or a vision of Langland became a 'Paradise Lost;' and a 'Corydon's Doleful Knell,' a 'Lycidas.' The classics determined the intellectual development, formed the art and imbued the spirit of Milton and Gray. Spenser and Wordsworth require a knowledge of Greek philosophy. Our lyric poetry rises in three springs, from Pindar, the choral odes of the Greek drama and Horace. Not otherwise is it with our prose. Admire, as we justly may, the sweet simplicity and natural grace of Maundeville, Malory and the immortal tinker, the history of English eloquence commences from the moment when the Roman classics moulded or coloured our style, when periodic prose modelled itself on Cicero and Livy, and analytic prose on Sallust and Tacitus. The same influence is at work from Hooker to Milton, from Milton to Bolingbroke, from Bolingbroke to Burke. The evolution of their periods, their rhythm, their colouring, their tone, are, when they rise to eloquence, precisely those of rhetorical Roman prose. It is from Plato that Jeremy Taylor learned the secret of his involved harmonies. Generations of this culture wrought out of the crudities of a Fabian the style of a Gibbon. And in our literary criticism, more than all, is the