

ence, the manifold relations of thinkers, the action and re-action of thought become manifest, and the whole adjusts itself in fitting perspective. But this picture is still incomplete, unless we follow backward and forward the lines of development, see the passing phenomena in their relation to their antecedents and their results. We thus arrive at our final task, as students of English literature at least, the task of tracing out and imaging the development of national thought from the time when it first emerges from the obscurity of an illiterate and pre-historic past to its culmination in the multitudinous streams of literary activity amidst which we ourselves live.

You see then, in brief, what practical course we ought to take. First we must awaken and discipline literary taste by the study of individual works. Next we must widen this taste by a thorough knowledge of the best works of the greatest writers. Thirdly, we are to make the literature of a period our subject, study minutely its leading writers, make our acquaintance with its chief writers more intimate by reading, to some extent, their less important works, and widen our knowledge of the literature of the period by a course of reading among secondary authors. It is impossible and undesirable, however, that the ordinary student should spend much time on books which have merely an historical interest. So that at this point in his course he may profitably make use of abstracts and criticisms of books which he himself is not able to read. These facts and opinions have now a genuine interest for him through the relations which minor works bear to the general course of literary development. Thus, having mastered literature of one or two periods, and knowing something of the great literature of all periods, it would be well, in the fourth place, if time precludes such detailed ex-

amination of the whole of English literature, that the student should have put before him a brief sketch of the entire development of English literature, so that all that he has learned or will learn, may fall into its fitting place in the scheme of the whole.

I have thus completed a brief exposition of the main results which may be expected to spring from the study of literature, and a still briefer indication of the proper method of attaining them. If, in urging its importance, I have maintained its superiority in some respects to other subjects, it is in no spirit of disparagement to these, for I well know that they in their turn afford a discipline which literature cannot give. The place I claim for literature among her sister studies is an high one, and can be filled by none of them; but culture is broader than literature, and, as the curriculum of this University indicates, a truly liberal culture must be many-sided. Again, I have represented the results of literary study in their highest manifestations; have set up an ideal toward which we must strive. But the laws of the universe are mostly realized in tendencies, and if our studies only tend to bring about the results indicated, we must not be discouraged, but work patiently towards a more perfect realization. Nor have I urged the cause of literature in any narrow sense. What I have said is applicable, not merely to English literature, but to all literature. Especially do I acknowledge here the claims of classical literature, which seems to me, if pursued in a proper spirit, especially fitted to produce that openness and flexibility of mind, and soundness of judgment, of which I spoke in the earlier part of this lecture. Valuable, above all, is the literature of Greece, whether we regard its variety, its perfection of form, its wealth of ideas, its unique development, or its abiding force in mould-