

national spirit by one fundamentally different, or the other a retrogression truly immeasurable.

But this divergence of conception, so far from being a disadvantage to the classical student, as many would regard it, is rather quite the contrary, affording as it does abundant material for fruitful comparative study. It seems to be a universal law of mind that a conception gains a full and rounded content only by comparison with other conceptions with which its similarity or contrast may be observed. So a clear comprehension of the age in which we live and of the true significance of existent conditions and principles of life is impossible save by comparison with other ages of different ideals. Perhaps no other nations can afford such abundant and such authentic materials for such a study as do Greece and Rome, especially through the records left us of their golden days.

But many an assertion of the opponent of classical study is broad enough to be fairly taken as a voicing the view that the art of the nineteenth century need know no obligation to the art of the ancient world. Any elaborate scheme of argument to prove the falsity of such a position is superfluous. The very ruins of Grecian art productions show that the art of to-day not seldom lags haltingly behind. The delicately fluted columns of the Parthenon and the works of sculpture which adorned it unmistakably bear the impress of genius, even in their present state of sad delapidation, and proclaim an immortality upon the name of Pheidias, while through him they bear a mute but unqualified tribute to the unerring Hellenic taste for ideal beauty.

In intrinsic poetical qualities, both of form and substance, the verdict of superiority is not one to be hastily rendered. However it may go, the fact is indisputable that many whose ears are not dulled to the music of the modern choir find an inexpressible and lasting charm in Æschylus or Homer. To illustrate the Greek beauty of imagery I give a free translation from *Agamemnon* of a portion of the description of the tempest which destroyed a large part of the Greek fleet, aiming only to reproduce, if possible, some of the spirit of the original,—

Twixt fire and sea, aforetime utter foes, active conspiracy was formed,
For pledge and proof the hapless men of Argos they destroyed.