

who now announces from the platform at Commencement exercises that a prize in classics is the highest possible honour the college can bestow, suggests grave doubts of his infallibility. And the student who has burned his midnight oil over other subjects, may occasionally fail to understand a classical allusion without ruining his reputation as a scholar. It is possible for a young man, even now, to go to a university and learn little more than what was taught a hundred years ago; but he comes out to discover that his knowledge is not marketable. Might we not thus explain the fact, that in the United States, with its hundreds of colleges, graduates are found in plenty, earning their livelihood in the lowest and humblest callings? Why is it that the degree received in applause can often do no more for its possessor than secure him the post of waiter at a summer hotel, or enable him to embark in business as a peddler? Many complain, not that young men are over-much educated, but that so large a portion of the best of their lives is given up to what has no practical bearing on their future work.

Now, we readily admit the claim of Latin and Greek to a place in education as one branch of philological study, but not to the exclusion of other languages; for, as sources of positive knowledge, the modern tongues are far richer. Latin and Greek, we believe, will never be entirely superseded. True, we do not go to them now for authority: but there we find the beginnings of our art, our science, our poetry, and our religion, and if we would understand these, we must know whence they come. Besides, to the student who has spent many years in the study of classical models, is the gain of a taste cultivated and purified, of thought made more vigorous, of imagination fertilized and eloquence displayed everywhere.

Yet what is their advantage to those

who have not been privileged to swell the Honor Classical lists at the University? Outside of the positive information gained, almost none. Usually they find it much more convenient, in their classical reading, to believe what the translator tells them, than to make the investigation themselves. Thus all that discipline of mind, that aid to the formation of a pure and beautiful style, is lost.

It is right that the theological student should be required to know Latin and Greek, for Christianity has a history, much of which is found in these languages. Very desirable would it be did we all possess a minute acquaintance with their classics; but that goal seems to be daily moving farther into the distance, owing largely to the pressure of other subjects, a knowledge of which is demanded by the people of to-day, who ask us to keep pace with the times, to know the interests of the hour, and not to read in one direction whilst they are reading in another.

We would have every preacher of the Gospel a master of Greek and Hebrew; but in the face of the stubborn fact that the proportion of those who are is exceedingly small, we would ask that attention be directed to the modern languages, or at least to some one of them. The difficulty in acquiring them is not great. Macaulay mastered German while travelling from India to England. We have, of course, few Macaulays; yet it is the testimony of those best qualified to give it, that an intelligent student by fair application, may in the leisure hours of two years, read and appreciate it. With such a vehicle of thought as the German language, there is the double advantage, not gained to the ordinary student by classical studies, of an insight into the best current discussions of his own department, and a valuable help in enabling him to wield with power the instrument of his own language.