

their presence a "human" *Femur* in a most disgusting manner. Though the sensibilities of some are not shocked by such sights, all are not alike constituted, and therefore I think that actions so beyond the pale of all decorum should not only be discountenanced but suppressed. Such conduct, I believe, merits the severest censure, and hence it is not for the propagation of a bad repute, but for the justification of a class that I would have you condescend to notice such performances, fully confident that, while you shall do that class no injury, you are powerless to awaken in those whom you may thus criticize the action of the finer sensibilities so indurated by long misuse.

Yours, ANTI-FEMUR.

THE STUDY OF CLASSICS.

Editors McGill Gazette:

DEAR SIRS.—Your contributor in his recent remarks, on the merits and disadvantages of classical education, is, I think, unnecessarily severe, almost bitter. From a classical standpoint I am perhaps as equally, if not better qualified, to enter into its advantages as he, as I understand that his connection with classics terminated with his second year and that then his standing was rather below the average.

He is perfectly justified in asserting the value of science and modern literature, but to his implied statement of the uselessness of classics, I must demur. A ready case in point. There are two courses in the High School of Montreal, one classical, the other science. In the Science Faculty of McGill, in a majority of cases the boy classically trained goes ahead—why? Because the term of scientific usage which the scientifically-trained boy is handicapped in memorizing, the other can both apprehend and comprehend by virtue of his classical knowledge.

Mr. Turner must have but slight acquaintance with the science of medicine, or else to have carefully omitted to remember it, in his writing. One word of purely classical formation often expresses the entire functions, form and structure of a portion of the body, and I should imagine it almost an impossibility to carry on original investigations without some considerable classical knowledge. Discoveries would be lost for want of names to perpetuate them; and how infinitely better that these names should contain the explanation and history of this discovery.

If I may be permitted the liberty, I will take up a few of Mr. Turner's arguments, to attempt to answer them all would be presumption on my part as a mere student. He says that the upholders of classics are professors in danger of losing their situations, I would refer him to the expressions of Canon Farrar, some pages further on in your last week's number, I would also repeat the opinion of an eminent mathematician, a teacher also of classics, expressed to me last spring, "I have found" said he "after forty years of teaching, that a sound classical knowledge is the best basis on which to build a future education." Moreover, the speech of the Vice-Dean two years ago upholds classics, and if these men whose knowledge is so thorough in both lines, deemed the one so eminently superior, they would hardly sustain the other.

I can well understand your contributor's rooted antipathy to classics, if as I have stated his knowledge of them is so superficial. Just the same has it been found with mathematics. When a student has not entered into the subject and done his work thoroughly, he has found it the greatest drudgery, and has derived no benefit from it.

Let it be granted that memory is equally exercised in the study of an Ancient as in a Modern language; that is however not its main point. Surely no one will compare the mental effort and ingenuity called forth in construing a passage of Greek to the translating of one of French, leaving out the beauty and present use of the latter tongue. In a person doing classics thoroughly, the intensity of the application and memory required promotes deep and various thought.

But here again this gentleman can scarcely speak from personal experience.

I find it strange to read his remarks on the superior utility of mathematical study towards promoting reflection, for I presumed him to be the author of the severe criticism of last year's numbers, on the mathematical theory work of our own Science Faculty.

He seems to me to restrict too much the meaning of the term, classical education. It is usually understood to embrace the mental, moral and much of the physical sciences, as well as history.

Were it possible to discern the motives which have actuated the greatest statesmen and generals of modern times we would most surely find them to have formed their plans and drawn their inspirations from similar actions of the great men whose deeds are recorded to us by ancient history.

Science is and yet it is not catholic. Assuredly it is among its own votaries, but bringing it down rather low, who has ever accompanied a scientific friend to view some engineering work, and has not been utterly crushed at his scientific contempt for our unscientific nature.

Mr. Turner affirms the absence of "appreciation of principles in classics." Omitting the fact that much more "shady" principles exist in our own Literature, the question may be asked from what source comes the first principles of all moral, mental and physical science?

In his ideal picture of a classical scholar the writer has rather drawn a pedant. I should have taken as the type of a liberally and classically-educated man, Mr. Gladstone, or nearer home, Mr. Goldwin Smith. Classics after all are not so much set forth as a special study, as a basis on which to found a wider education.

As I do not know Mr. Turner, I hope in these lines, I shall not be thought to have indulged in personality, simply having stated my objections to the arguments as set forth, and what advantages I myself have derived from classical study.

H. M. P.

[Our correspondent's ingenuous disclaimer of indulging in personality is hardly borne out by his previous remarks, but we give his letter, knowing that the writer he criticises is well able to defend himself.—Eds.]