

is a language of most wonderful structure,—more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin and more exquisitely refined than either.”—That its literature treats of astronomy, philosophy, mathematics, medicine, morality, law, religion, and nearly every subject. That it is the one typical scientific language whose structure is a master-key to all languages and whose literature extends in a continuous line for nearly 3000 years, throwing a flood of light on the operation of linguistic laws.

The youth who displays a marked natural capacity for languages, and a taste for the study of antiquities would be led by the professors of Oriental languages to a period long anterior to the golden days of ancient Greece and Rome, and a thousand years before the Homeric age. He would see exhumed from the tomb of time, the thoughts of many of the intellectual giants of the old eastern civilization. He would have laid before him the text books and moral philosophy of Confucius. He would listen to the wise discourses of Buddha. He would hear the noble appeals of Zoroaster, and, carried back by the Vedic Poets nearly 4000 years, he would wander with them amid the grand mountains of Afghanistan and Cashmere, where the rivers of India are cradled. The student of Sanskrit would revel in the classic literature of one of the most highly endowed branches of the human family, and would become acquainted with ancient writings which stand among the most astonishing productions of the human mind.

While literature, language and history, deal with the thoughts and experience of man, if we turn to the physical sciences we find that they bring before our mental vision the wisdom and power, and the wonderful works of God.

The student of Geology will have his mind carried into the ages that lie far behind us, and see the “vital mechanism of perished creations” buried in great ranges of sepulchres ten thousand times more ancient than the earliest works of human hand or the first thoughts of the human mind. He will be privileged dimly to perceive some of the grand conceptions of the Great Unseen, and to trace the effects of the stupendous forces which were employed through countless centuries in shaping and moulding the globe. He will be taught to decipher imperishable inscriptions carved by the instruments of time on the mighty mountains, and will receive an insight into some of the mysterious processes by which the foundations of the earth were laid. He will discover in no classic pages thoughts so grand as in the book of nature; he will not find in the literature of dead empires anything so sublime as in the literature of the rocks. In no mere human history, written by ephemeral man, will he find records to be compared with the sacred chronicles of the by-past eternity, which are engraven on plates of adamant by the Divine hand. In no study, ancient or modern, will he seem to approach nearer the great omnipotent Author, and learn “that the whole universe is set to music, that if there be a want of harmony, the discord is only in man himself.”

But if any studies are to be placed in a position of more importance and to receive more attention than others at this university and at every Canadian seat of learning, I cannot help feeling that the place of honor should be given to the English language and literature, and to those studies that will give an insight into things social, political and moral; that will enable the student to grasp high and broad truths and to deduce correct conclusions from given premises; that will train him to think and express his thoughts clearly and elegantly in the mother tongue. The English language embraces the literature of every age, the triumphs of science of every nation. No language or literature was ever so widely diffused. It is spoken more or less in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, in Australia and in America. The English tongue is heard wherever the Ocean spreads, in every meridian, and in every parallel of latitude. We are part of the English speaking race whose

mission seems to be to spread civilization over the globe, and to beat back barbarism in all climes and on all continents. The late Professor DeMille claimed for our language “a power of absorbing foreign words which distinguishes it from all others, and makes it capable on this account alone of becoming the dominant speech of the world.” Surely this language is sufficiently comprehensive to express all our thoughts which require utterance, whether in respect to knowledge, or patriotism, or purity, or truth.

It is proper that I should mention that, in the foregoing observations, I have submitted merely my individual opinions respecting the general character of the work, which, as it seems to me, the University is called on to perform. Being perfectly new to the office I have been elevated to fill, I have had no opportunity of consulting the Council or Senate; consequently, those bodies can be held in no way responsible for the opinions I have ventured to express. Being equally a stranger to College work and to educational matters, it is not improbable that those who are familiar with them may dissent from my views and may look upon the observations which I have been bold enough to make, as unwisely considered. Be that as it may, I cannot doubt that my remarks will be accepted as the honest utterances of an earnest friend of education; and be my immature ideas right or wrong, I feel assured, from what I know of the gentlemen who compose the governing bodies, that they will individually and collectively leave nothing undone to place Queen's in the foremost rank as a University, and that they will strive to give it a leading position in the country as an advanced modern seat of learning.

It was my purpose to have referred especially to the objects and pleasures and advantages of a scientific education, a topic with which I am perhaps more familiar than the subjects I have attempted to discuss; but as I have already trespassed at too great a length on your time and patience, I shall conclude with a few words, more particularly intended for the students, and by thanking you very cordially for your kind attention and forbearance.

As the great aim is to make the young man all that he is capable of becoming, the scheme of education embraces every process necessary to attain that end. First it is necessary to subdue idleness, inattention, indulgence, luxury and all the evil tendencies, to root out all the intellectual weeds, and remove every hindrance to the proper cultivation of the garden of the mind. Then comes the process of preparing and enriching and refining the mental seed-bed, and the sowing of useful thoughts to germinate in due time, and sooner or later to mature and bear generous fruit.

The characters of men are formed during their youthful years, and it is at institutions like this that minds can be best prepared and characters best moulded during their impressible and plastic state. The position of a country is to be deplored when it has no good means of educating its youth. It is also an unfortunate condition when they are compelled to seek for education at foreign universities, where they may soon cease to regard their native land with patriotic affection, even if they are not led to spend their lives and energies under a foreign flag. We may, therefore, warmly congratulate Canada that she has Queen's and other institutions of learning where her young men may obtain mental and moral nourishment of the highest and purest grade.

I cannot too strongly impress upon you—students of Queen's University, to value highly the privileges to which you are here admitted. The importance of a sound college training is very great. True, there are many instances of men prospering in life without the benefits which flow from it, but these men are very heavily handicapped in the race. Occasional success proves nothing; besides, it cannot be doubted that if men with capacity and industry have made their way in the world against every obstacle without a