

given for their more general use in schools: 1st. It provides a review of work done. 2nd. It cultivates the habits of attention. 3rd. It promotes self-reliance. 4th. It leads to concise thinking and readiness in commanding thought. 5th. It is a test of *teaching* to the teacher and of *learning* to the pupil. 6th. It develops intellectual sturdiness. It gives practice in composition, grammar, spelling, etc.

The excellent papers were discussed very generally by members of the Institute, and it was felt that the meeting was one of the most successful ever held in Northumberland County. After a discussion on Discipline, led by the Rev. Jos. McCoy, the Institute adjourned to meet next year at Newcastle.

### The Classics: Their Use, Present Position and Future Prospects.

[Condensed from Prof. Howard Murray's inaugural address Dalhousie College, Halifax, September 20th.]

\* \* \* The following are some of the reasons which occur to me for the study of Latin and Greek: 1st. It is generally conceded that not even one's own language can be thoroughly mastered, from a grammatical point of view, without a knowledge of some second language with which to compare and contrast it. \* \* 2nd. The extent to which the classical languages have entered into our own vocabulary renders it necessary to know something of these, if we are to have a thorough comprehension of our own language; and if it is necessary to know best that of which we make the most use, language must be given the foremost place in our studies. Of the English vocabulary, as it is at present constituted, the number of words coming from old English or Anglo-Saxon amounts to not much, if any, more than one-tenth of the whole, while those coming from the Latin and Greek may be set down as not less than eight-tenths. \* \* The modern literatures, including our own, are so largely indebted both in form and substance to those of Greece and Rome that they cannot be fully appreciated except by those who have an acquaintance with classical literature. Among men there are few rules that have no exception, but it may be laid down as a general rule that the greatest writers and speakers of modern times have been those who have been students of the ancient classics. \* \* 4th. Besides being directly or indirectly the source of far the greater part of the English language, Latin is the parent of several other European languages, Italian, French, Spanish and Portuguese, and a person requiring to make himself acquainted with any of these would find his task very much simplified and shortened by a previous knowledge of Latin. \* \* 5th. A knowledge of the ancient languages opens up to us a great literature. \* \* \* "Well," you say, "we believe that the literature of these languages is

very fine, but what proportion of those in our schools ever proceed far enough to appreciate it?" It must be admitted that the proportion is exceedingly small, but where does the fault lie? \* \* The remedy is not in less classics, but more of them. Only give them a fair chance and see what the result will be. \* \* 6th. The moral effect of a careful study of the classics upon youthful minds is very great. In the literatures of Greece and Rome are to be found the most memorable examples of all the virtues, examples that have been accepted as ideal by the civilized world of courage, of constancy, of endurance, of virtue, of filial affection, of love of country. \* \* In education character unquestionably stands before everything else, and in its influence upon the formation of character language has an immeasurable advantage over mathematics and science. 7th. The Greek and Latin languages furnish us with a means of training and disciplining the minds of the young, which is better than that furnished by any other study.

\* \* \* Let us see what is brought into play in the making out of a Latin sentence. First there is the *memory*, in recalling the meaning of words previously met; then *observation* and *comparison* in noting the cases of nouns, pronouns and adjectives, and determining which adjective goes with which noun, in noting the voice, mood, tense, number and person of verbs, the degrees of comparison of adjectives and adverbs, etc.; then *reason* and *judgment* in deciding, for example, why this noun is in the genitive case and that one in the ablative, why one verb is in the subjunctive mood and another in the infinitive, why one of the third personal pronouns is used in one clause and a different one in the next, why the same conjunction is followed by an indicative mood in one place and by a subjunctive in another; finally *discrimination* and *taste* must be exercised in the choice of words and their arrangement in translating into English. No other subject furnishes such constant steady exercise. The mind must be continually on the alert. At the same time it never receives a strain from over-exertion. The result is the formation of habits of industry and accuracy, and the development of healthy mental muscle which can be turned to account in any direction.

\* \* \* At a meeting held last June in the Halifax Academy, our English teacher, Miss Mackintosh, whose judgment carries weight, declared that those taking Latin and Greek had a more thorough knowledge of English grammar and were doing far more satisfactory work in her subjects than those taking the modern languages. \* \* In our A class there is a bifurcation, or parting of the ways, some taking