

than the careless acquiescence with which they are usually received.

Suppose, for example, we wish to estimate the character of some prominent public man. Any discriminating judgment upon his genius and work must be based, not merely upon what he is now, but upon what his surroundings and antecedents were. If we find him to have been gently nurtured and carefully educated, we understand his present courtesy and accomplishments. If we find him reared amid coarse and narrow surroundings, we shall be ready, in one case, to make allowance for some gruffness of address, or illiberality of view; or, in the other, to admire the nobility of character which has shaken off the trammels of early influence and risen superior to its old life. In either case, the only fair estimate of the man must be based as much upon what he was as what he is.

As with individuals, so with nations. Enough has been said as to our conditions to show how, consciously or unconsciously, we are confronted by Greece and Rome at every turn of modern life. If we are even to hope to understand our modern life, we must understand its antecedents, and its development under different influences; and to do this fairly, we must go to the fountain heads of Classic history. More than this, since man in his essential characteristics does not change, we meet in Greece and Rome the same types of character and examine the same forms of Government as those which demand our attention to-day. We may observe in Athens, the virtues and defects of an extreme democracy; in Sparta, an oligarchy, where the army was the great central point of national life. In Rome, we can watch the growth and decay of a magnificent republic, the calm progress of a beneficent despotism, or the cruelty and desperate internal convulsions, which at-

tended an unsound and tottering empire to its final catastrophe.

Thus we may learn the merits and defects of different types of character, the dangers which beset different forms of government, and the moderation and patient endurance which bring all things to the nation as well as to the man that waits.

And there is good reason why ancient, rather than recent, history best explains modern problems. To say nothing of the permeation of modern life by Classic influences and traditions, man was less artificial, civilization more simple, in ancient days.

There we meet all the most advanced questions which claim the attention of modern thinkers, education, slavery, woman's rights, socialism and all the rest, but we meet them in a less complicated form. The requirements of the problem are simpler; there are fewer non-essentials to be eliminated.

We see them, too, more clearly, unobscured by the mist of prejudice or the fog of complication; but the principles themselves are the same as those with which we have to deal to-day. It is the study of the Classics which leads us to a clear understanding of different social forces; such as we can never reach by the sole pursuit of modern history with its manifold complexities to befog the brain of the student, and its conflicting authorities to confound his judgment.

Time forbids the consideration, in this connection, of another noble study for which Classics are absolutely indispensable—the history of language. To trace the evolution or decay of different languages and the laws on which these changes depend is part of the history of civilization; and is thus most intimately connected with the highest of all sciences, Sociology, the science of human society,