

of language and of illustration. Let it with him ever be a firm persuasion that it is a far nobler thing to write English like the best English authors, than to write Latin like Cicero.

The diligent and intelligent student may, unaided by any other, acquire a high degree of excellence in his own tongue; yet we are not to infer that no other than his own should be studied. No one would refuse to cross the limits of his own community, merely because it does not fall behind its neighbours in civilization. Foreign languages take precisely the same place in a man's education as foreign travel: they give a direct contact with the world, and with the advances in civilization that other lands are making.

Besides, some languages are wealthy in what we lack. The theologian knows this, and often longs to consult works that are inaccessible, because written in an unknown tongue. What student of modern science deems his outfit complete, if he is ignorant of French and German? To the man who would examine his own Saxon tongue scientifically, it is an astonishing fact that his deepest researches can be made in Germany. This supplies a sufficient ground for not limiting our attainments in languages to the one taught at our mother's knee.

We would hold, moreover, that though translations had brought into English everything of value which has been written, we would still have a powerful argument for extending our knowledge of other idioms. It is this: One of the most direct ways to cultured skill in the use of our own tongue, is through the medium of another. The reason of this is very plain. We come to possess our own easily, almost unconsciously. The child brought up in a household where correct speech is used, speaks correctly; but just as naturally as the child that betrays in every sentence

the defective culture of its companions. Our speech is, then, very much of an unreflective habit. But if, in addition to the advantage of good society, we are permitted to view a language from without, increased proficiency in it will result. The means aiding us to reach this end is translation. It has been said by D'Alembert, "If you wish to be translated, begin yourself by translating." In order that we may translate an author properly, we must first thoroughly understand him. Then we undergo a most beneficial discipline, to express the meaning accurately, in such words as best suit the author's purpose, and in such a way as neither to overcharge his thoughts, nor fall short of them. Every phrase, almost every word, may be made the centre of variations and delicate distinctions, thus affording a wide field for the exercise of the imagination and judgment. Translation teaches men to overcome difficulties; not merely to avoid them, as is so often the case in original essays, where men suit their ideas to the paucity of their words.

These remarks apply equally to the study of all languages. But the ordinary student can become proficient only in a few, and we may rightly ask, what choice is he to make?

There can be no question that until lately Latin and Greek were thought to be the only ones worth studying, and to be specially adapted for making ministers of the Gospel. When the great revival of letters in the sixteenth century came, men went to Greece and Rome for all that they could know of philosophy, of science, of art, and religion. That these two languages were essential to the possession of a liberal education, the universities proclaimed. The most brilliant rewards were won in the field of Latin and Greek classics. The brightest talents were devoted to their exclusive service. But these days are rapidly passing away. The speaker