

ables professional men to approach their professional work with the light of a liberal culture and the energy of a disciplined intellect. It is the exercise of the intellect in study that makes the capable man; and the average student, who, with a real desire for self-improvement, faithfully applies himself to the subjects of the university curriculum, has all his mental powers called into life or quickened into new growth, and goes forth from his college apprenticeship able to know and do all that is known and done under the sun. And it is the knowledge gained by the way, that acquaintance, as Arnold says, "with all the best that has been known and said in the world," that makes the cultivated man. This is not such knowledge and training, necessarily, as can be turned to account in the callings of after-life; but knowledge and training which equip a man for any calling whatever, preparing and enabling him to turn his attention to any subject, to lay hold of its principles and master its details. In many departments of the university curriculum the subject-matter of study is only an instrument of intellectual discipline—an instrument, it is true, which, if the student is wise, he will not throw lightly away, but will keep bright and furbished even amid the distractions of professional life; but an instrument which has virtually served its purpose when the student crosses, for the last time as a student, the college threshold. The knowledge acquired, elevating and refining though its influence may be, is only secondary, after all. And the common charge of inutility, so often brought against many subjects of the university curriculum, arises from a misapprehension or misappreciation of the use these subjects were intended to serve, and an ignoring of the fact that they realize their highest end when used simply as educational instru-

ments. Among the subjects of university study which have been most vehemently assailed by the utilitarian spirit of the age, the Greek and Latin classics stand forth pre-eminently. And to-night, though conscious that a bad defence is worse than none at all, and almost convinced that the subject needs no defence, but speaks for itself, I intend to attempt a brief justification of the prominent position which has been assigned to classical study in the university curriculum; hoping that such an attempt may be not altogether without interest to any, and not quite unsuggestive to the classical student, as shewing that the subject of his study really possesses in itself a value and authority as a potent instrument of mental culture, quite independent of the demands of the university examinations, and as tending to inspire with fresh interest a subject which many are inclined to regard as irksome drudgery and a waste of time. Without some conviction in the mind of the student that his studies are or may become to him a fruitful source of real culture, and without the guiding motive of a strong desire for such culture, apart altogether from the meaner motives of emulation, ambition, or love of material reward, all studies tend to become aimless and unprofitable. It is not difficult to discover the original reason for the wide-spread employment of the Greek and Latin classics as one of the main and central subjects in university education. At the revival of letters in the sixteenth century, when the human mind began to be stirred with the new ideas then floating in the air, it turned in vain for any literature worthy of the name to the writers of the Middle Ages. Scholasticism, limited and circumscribed by ecclesiastical tyranny, had produced nothing but metaphysical subtleties, and outside of the classical literatures there was neither eloquence, nor poetry,