

which were kindly furnished to me by my friend Mr. Harris, the head of the Bureau of Education at Washington, and from what Mr. Harris himself told me.

It is needless to say how greatly the practical importance of a knowledge of Greek and Latin has been altered since the revival of learning. It was then the indispensable key to the only literature worth reading; to the only literature, indeed, which existed, since even the chronicles, the theology and the school philosophy were in debased Latin. The early humanists were not philologists; they were seekers after the lost treasure of Greek and Roman literature. Philology came later with the generation of Scaliger and Casaubon. Then began the age of grammarians and their pedantry. We can hardly imagine the sensations of the maritime adventurers of that time when they put forth to explore an unknown world; we can as little realize the feelings of the scholars who were engaged in bringing to light the buried works of Greek and Roman intellect. Science in its progress has brought a vast and will, no doubt, bring a yet greater measure of knowledge to mankind. There is a romance which can never return.

On the other hand no age has stood more in need of humanizing culture than this in which physical culture reigns. One of the newspapers the other day invited us to take part in a symposium, the subject of which was "How to produce a perfect man." The problem was large but one help to its solution might have been a reminder to keep the balance. A romantic age stands in need of science, a scientific and utilitarian age stands in need of the humanities. Darwin avows that poetry gave him no pleasure whatever. This surely was a loss, unless that whole side of things which poetry denotes is dead and

gone, nothing but dry science being left us; in which case the generations that are coming may have some reason, with all their increase of knowledge and power, to wish that they had lived nearer the youth of the world.

The study of language, however, as we now pursue it is not less scientific than any branch of physical science, while it has a special interest from its connection with the history of the human mind. The chancellor of a university, a man high in the scientific world, once exhorted his students to take to physical science rather than to languages or literature, because nature was the work of God, while languages and literature were the work of man. It was answered that man was the noblest work of God, and that he could be studied only through his languages and literature.

Supposing the studying of language to be useful, there can be no doubt that the ancient languages are its best field. The Greek language especially has perfections, particularly as an instrument of exact thought, which make it almost as much a miracle as Greek art. Optimists may persuade themselves that the Norman Conquest was politically a blessing in disguise. But they cannot pretend that it did not bring confusion into our tongue and make the English language unfit for the purpose of exact thought. We are wanting in sets of cognates and in the power of forming compound words, as well as liable to being perplexed by double names for the same thing derived from different linguistic sources, perhaps with some difference of connotation. So great is the superiority of Greek over every modern language as an instrument of exact thought, that if we were to believe, as some do, that in the struggle for existence one of them will at some distant day become supreme and universal, we might think that a chance of the palm would be still left to Greek, which is still a