

the poetry and history of antiquity, the beautiful thoughts and noble acts of enlightened men and races long since passed away. It is advanced that "nothing can ever replace the classic languages as a means of general education ; that their theoretical study—even without the literature they contain—is of greater mental furtherance than the study of any other subject." On the other hand, it is claimed that a much larger and more effective field is accessible in modern literature ; that "for the great purposes of culture the modern are equal to the ancient writings, and, of all literatures, English is the most fully equipped, since it comprises works of the highest excellence in all departments, many of which can never be surpassed, and some of which have never been equalled. Others on the same side hold that the shortest course to come in contact with the ancient authors is to avoid the Greek and Latin originals altogether, and to take their expositors and translators in the modern languages. There are not a few eminent scholars who hold the opinion that in the majority of cases, an ordinary classical education produces no result commensurate with the long course of youthful years spent upon it. In any endeavour to harmonize these views, and to discover the course to be followed, various matters claim consideration. Individual man enters the world as a child, with a blank mind, and with nothing on his memory. However learned and cultured his parents, the child inherits none of the knowledge, none of the culture, none of the stores of experience, which have been acquired during the life-times of his progenitors. No child can begin his education where his father left off. Each mind in its turn has to be disciplined and cultivated, furnished and enriched. The treasures of knowledge, the thoughts and experiences of successive generations of men, are preserved in books and libraries. The stock accumulates year by year and age by age. The printing press will allow nothing worth preserving to be lost : consequently the child born to-day, in order to be abreast with the age in which he lives has very much more to learn than the man who lived one, two, or five centuries ago. While the empire of learning has been prodigiously extended, human life has not been prolonged, intellectual capacity has not been enlarged, and the limited time which any individual can devote to college work has not been increased. Although the thoughts and expressions of the wise men among the ancients have been handed down to delight and enrich the student, it must be borne in mind that great books have been written in more recent times, that human thought and life are spreading out in ever-widening circles, and that modern literature, science, and philoso-

phy present claims to hold a conspicuous place in a course of study ; and it must be conceded that to become familiar with the 'highest efforts of the human intellect (modern as well as ancient) is surely a main purpose of a liberal education at the present day. The learned gentlemen who are called upon to determine the course of study to be pursued at Canadian universities will recognize that this age and this country have strong utilitarian tendencies, that the people of Canada want no superficial training, no half education at the higher seminaries of learning—that they desire to have the education of their youth as complete as possible. They expect university education to be made thorough : but they demand that the means placed at the disposal of the governors of the universities shall be applied to the best possible advantage, that high education shall be disseminated over the widest possible area, and that the time of those attending college shall in no way be wasted. Here in Canada all are children of activity, obliged to toil with head or hand, and the young men who attend college enter on a few years of earnest academic life for the purpose of receiving mental discipline and the best possible preparation for the work that lies before them, either in the learned professions, in country life, or in the various industrial pursuits which are open for them. Is the course of training and culture heretofore employed in every way satisfactory? We are to-day opening a new page in the history of Queen's. This Institution is no mere theological hall ; it possesses all the rights, and privileges, and functions of a Canadian University. What course of training shall we then pursue? Shall we, without due investigation, accept as final a system which has grown out of the past, or shall we intelligently seek for such modifications and improvements as the circumstances which obtain at the present day demand? The question, like our civilization, is complex. Among other things we should consider that we have minds of different characters, and widely different aptitudes to train and teach, and it may not be productive of the greatest good to attempt to run all through the one mould—to adopt them all to one stereotyped system of training. Some students have no capacity for one branch of study, while they may have great aptitude for another. Some have strongly-marked taste and talent for languages ; others may be utterly unable to receive any great benefit from their study. The latter may be richly gifted in some other way—for nature always compensates—and they may be well qualified for other intellectual pursuits. With their minds properly stimulated and directed, they may become distinguished in an entirely different sphere.