

upon those who pretend to be educated. Go into any of our schools; we find there the three R's, but piled on top of these a dozen or so 'ologies that completely glut the child's mind; though it may be a prodigy in the eyes of parents, and a delight to the hearts of school teachers and school inspectors. Pass into the University, and the student who would take a creditable stand must submit to an examination that would test the most thorough specialist. All this seems to have been called into existence by the requirement of high attainments in those whom we call cultured. In the face of such facts, he who has fitted himself to enter upon any one of the so-called learned professions must needs add something to his special knowledge, that he may not remove his right to the title of wide culture.

What position, then, are we to assign to languages in these studies? To this an answer can be given only when the aim of any scheme of education is kept definitely in view. Many of our forefathers have sent down to us records of success in a method which trained men to earn their living honestly, and fear God. Children went to school, and were taught to read in order that they might read the Bible. The plan succeeded in securing the desired end.

But something more is demanded of us in this day. We come of a highly favoured race; and the process of education, which in savage nations reaches its monotonous height in each individual, making the man of the nineteenth century no wiser nor better than his untutored ancestor of the fifteenth, leads us into possession of the accumulated treasures of the past. All these it is in our power to acquire, and that, too, rapidly. In one short day we may store our minds with what a busy, long life scarcely worked out. To make a man owner of all that others have thought, or spoken,

or written, is the scope of education. He is to become, as it were, an abbreviation of the race which has existed before him.

Towards the accomplishment of this end, we do not need to occupy space in showing that language is the first step. With it the child is taken by the hand and led forward to the possession and use of the knowledge gained in the past. Without it progress ceases, and the present no longer enriches the future with its legacies. It will at once be said, every man must know his own tongue. Some may even believe that their own is sufficient, and may point to the noted instance of the Greeks, who, despising all other languages as barbarous, raised themselves to a height in their own that constitutes it to-day a model of perfection.

We are fully alive to the necessity of cultivating a close intimacy with what is best in our own tongue. In the study of literature it should come first. Above all, the sacred orator, whose ambition it is to make of speech the most powerful instrument possible in conveying to others the sublime truths of revelation, should be much in the company of those who have given the English language a prominent place among the literary languages of the world. He can do no better than copy the example of such a living orator as Mr. Bright, whose vacations are yearly spent in poring over the pages of some native poet. We would carefully distinguish, however, such a study from that generally pursued in our schools, and even in our colleges. What the preacher wants, is not a summary of an author's merits or faults; not a list nor even an analysis of his works; not a history of literature, nor the biographies of writers; but extensive and careful reading of the best English classics—such a personal acquaintance with the writer as imbues with his spirit, and gives not only a mastery of his ideas, but wealth