

mind nor thought; it is simply an acquired instrumentality, without which all these are comparatively impotent and unmanageable gifts. The part then, which language plays in the development of each individual is a reflex of that which it has played in the development of the race. It is generally conceded that not even one's own language can be thoroughly mastered from a grammatical standpoint, without a knowledge of some second language, with which to compare and contrast it. Here probably we have the key to the importance of the classics in a course of study. We need hardly stop to discuss the relative merits of the different languages, though in passing we might say that it is generally admitted that for this purpose Latin and Greek stand preeminent. It is hardly necessary to consider the study of English at all; for we take it for granted that all recognize its paramount importance. The inability of young children to pronounce especially hard syllables leads them to slur these syllables or leave them out altogether. They even omit endings and confound different forms and when they become acquainted with some tolerably extensive rules, they apply these rules in every case, often making blunders very glaring to those who know better. Now just as these children commit such errors, men too are liable to fall into the same snares, so that each person to his dying day should be a learner of his own language. As regards the languages most nearly allied to our own in character and circumstances, namely that of modern Europe, it is to be noted that they are especially our resort as sources of positive knowledge, yet with certain of them, notably German, our connections are of the higher and more philosophical as well as of the lower and more practical nature. The other modern languages stand off around these in ever more distant circles of relation to our education, some challenging a place almost as near; others interesting only the special student of literature. Each in its own manner and degree is worthy to be studied; each has its own contribution to make to that wider foundation of valuable knowledge, on which is to be built up the higher culture of the future. The extent to which the modern languages as well as the ancient have entered into our own vocabulary, renders it necessary to know something of these, if only to have a thorough comprehension of our own language; and as it is evidently necessary to know best that of which we make the most use, language must be given the foremost place in our course of study. But now we are met by the practical people as they call themselves. Let us have