

one time in England, France, or Italy, may not be called for at the present time in Canada.

It is advanced in favor of classical studies that the civilization of modern Europe is reared upon the wreck of ancient Greece and Rome, that the classical languages and literature furnish the key to the languages, literature, jurisprudence and philosophy of modern nations, that their study strengthens the mental faculties, and refines the mind by making it familiar with 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—and, as far as I know, on equally good authority—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.

Those whose minds have been formed and hardened in the mould of a particular school are apt to regard with feelings of disdain all opinions at variance with their own. It is not surprising, therefore, that the graduates of colleges, where the training is mainly classical, should be led to look with disfavor upon any system but the one familiar to them, and to consider the study of the literature of ancient Greece and Rome as the backbone of a liberal education. But even some deeply read classical scholars are not impressed with the idea that "the study of the ancient languages seems as if intended by nature for the development of the faculties." 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 endeavor 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 stories of experience, which have been acquired during the lifetimes 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. It becomes absolutely necessary, therefore, to adopt the very best means of meeting the emergency, and to endeavor in this time-saving age, to discover what course of training is now the most desirable. The question is of paramount importance, and it will continue to engage attention until some degree of unanimity prevails.

It appears to me self-evident that educational training

cannot be the same under all circumstances, and that what may be best at one period, may require modifications as circumstances change, and as time rolls on. I am not sufficiently acquainted with the merits of the classics to say how far and how long their study should be continued to the exclusion of modern subjects, or how far and how long their study of classical literature could be simplified so as to maintain, in their integrity, all the substantial advantages claimed for it, and, at the same time, give an opportunity for young men to become acquainted with whatever is desirable to be known that was not known to the Greeks and Romans. 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 philosophy 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 in the age in which we live.

At no time in the history of the world have universities had greater importance attached to them than in our own day. Those who are charged with the discipline and culture of youth are expected to adopt the means best calculated to accomplish the important purposes for which these institutions are established and maintained. At no period had professors more onerous duties to perform and higher responsibilities to bear. It is the work of our learned teachers to prepare and dispense the intellectual nutriment needed by the Canadian youth to fit him for the various difficulties and contests that must meet him at the present stage of his country's history.

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 teaching 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. It will be borne in mind that this country is widely different in some respects from the mother country,—that we have no class who live on inherited wealth as in England, where many young men attend college, simply as a condition of their social standing, to spend pleasantly the educational years of their early manhood, that in Canada there is but little accumulated wealth, that all are struggling to better their condition, and to promote the general progress. Here 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 may be open for them.

Such are some of the important conditions that university teaching has to meet. I shall not attempt to say how the work is to be done. It is enough for me to ask the question, "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 then shall we pursue? Shall we, without due investigation, accept as final a sys-