

indeed, of the whole scheme of academic education—has long been the language and literature of the ancient Greeks and Romans. No one questions the necessity of these studies at a period some centuries back when there was no modern literature worthy of the name, and when a man, ignorant of the classic languages, had no key to the recorded wisdom of the world. In the Middle Ages Latin was the language of the Church, of Law, of Medicine, of Diplomacy, of Courts even to some extent, and a knowledge of it to any one entering any of these spheres of life was indispensable. But the times in which we live are no longer the same. Principles of government, new sciences, schools of thought, powers of movement and means of intercourse then undreamed of, comforts and conveniences at one time utterly unknown in palaces, are now found in some of the humblest homes. These and a thousand changes have, step by step, modified all the features of life and with them its necessities and requirements. The learned professions and their accessories have not remained stationary. Theological, medical, and legal works are no longer written and read only in Latin. The laws of our country have largely sprung from sources which it requires no classical erudition to penetrate. Other professions have grown up that are by no means classical, and yet they are not necessarily or in any case wholly unlearned. The modern languages have brought forth a most varied literature. There is much of little value, much which is ephemeral, but there are numberless works on every subject which will endure forever. Indeed, no one life can compass the standard volumes already written in our own tongue, and day by day valuable additions are made in every sphere of thought in science and literature.

Then as to the literature of anti-

quity. What is valuable as a record of the past as history or philosophy, and what is pleasing and charming as the works of the imagination and fancy, can be read in translations. The English rendering should place the English reader for all practical purposes on a level with the classical scholar.

Is it, then, necessary? and, if unnecessary, is it wise? in the case of every individual student to devote so much of the most impressionable and valuable years of his life to a grammatical study of two dead languages. It is stated, perhaps fairly and with reason, that translations do not disclose the full beauty of the original writings. It is urged that translations give no better idea than plaster casts afford of the ancient sculptures. Let us judge by this standard of comparison. Any one who has seen the renowned marbles in the richest collections of the world—in the great galleries of the Vatican, in the Ufficio of Florence, and the Museum of Naples; any one who gazes upon these priceless treasures of ancient art must confess to a feeling of regret and disappointment—disappointment that the originals before his eyes are so little better than the casts with which he is familiar. The surface of the work is injured by the tooth of time—it is blurred and blotched; in some cases the sculptures are defaced and not unfrequently clumsily repaired. Hence it happens that the mind reverts to the carefully formed artistic casts by which we have learned to know and estimate the original, forming, as it would seem, too high an ideal. Who amongst us has seen those pure and stainless modern reproductions, faultlessly brought out with all the care and taste of patient genius, would say they are in point of real beauty in any way inferior to the originals. There are casts quite the opposite to those I describe sold by