

while the Greek has only five. On the other hand, the Greek has retained the dual, of which there is scarcely a trace in Latin, and a much greater variety of forms in the conjugation of its verbs, though regard for euphony has frequently so far modified the forms that they resemble the Sanscrit less than the Latin does.

A careful comparison with the Greek and other kindred languages has, in our days, greatly modified the study and treatment of Latin Grammar, especially that part of it commonly called the *accidence* ; and henceforth no grammar can be satisfactory which does not incorporate the principles and positive results of such a comparison. Many phenomena in Latin, as well as in other languages, which until recent times seemed inexplicable and arbitrary, are now explained and appear in their proper light, while many erroneous notions have been dispelled. But what has been of no less importance is a comparison of the Latin of the best or classical period of its literature with the earlier forms of the language, for much that seems mysterious in the later language turns out to be the natural growth and outcome of more ancient and fuller forms ; in short, to be rightly understood, a language must be compared not only with others, but with itself at different periods of its development. Every language is subject to a process of decay, or rather simplification, in its forms and inflections, and the further we go back in its history, the more we discover its original and fuller forms out of which the later ones have grown by a natural process of decay or development.

The grammar of a language, therefore, is not the same in all the periods of its history, and a complete grammar ought to exhibit the rules as they were observed at the various stages of its progress and development ; but a Latin Grammar which, like the present, claims to be no more than a School