

So much for the objection from the standpoint of science. But we firmly believe one strong reason why classics are unpopular is that they require much hard labour to be mastered. And so the superficial mind rushes about to find something easier, something more according to its calibre. Many years ago we were advised to study French and German for university matriculation and to discard Greek, but eventually we turned our backs on the wretched advice.

The truth is there is a wonderful amount of unrest in the minds of students now-a-days as to what to study. One hundred of Harvard's freshmen have discarded mathematics. But why should a university pander to the tastes of any one and every one? Why not have fixed statutes for conferring the degree of B. A.? This contempt of classics so common now, argues ill for the age; it will result in superficiality in other studies, especially literature. Why then boast that classics are of no use? Read the *Edinburgh Review*, or Macaulay, or Brougham, or Milton, or Shelley. Will not the classics be helpful to comprehend them? But not only so; the classics of themselves are eminently worthy of careful study. Who has read Homer without being charmed by his majestic yet unostentatious verse? And so with the other classical writers. They are themselves a mine of delight, independent of the light they shed on all modern European Literature.

#### PARLIAMENT HOUSE, EDINBURGH.

THE doings in Parliament House are a mystery to the generality of people; and only by the "initiated" are they fully appreciated. Strangers, from curiosity, at times find themselves within its walls; while others, more immediately concerned, are driven thither by their perturbed spirits, seeking solace at the hands of "justice." Around the precincts of the court their seems to hang an awe. This fear of the ermine damps the ardour of the timid and sends them away, convinced that serenity of life is more likely to be found at a distance from than in the immediate vicinity of the judicial bench. Nevertheless the proceedings in Parliament House are full of interest. There mercy, truth, vanity, presumption and justice are curiously comingled. Indeed, if "brethren were to dwell together in unity," it would be difficult to say into what channels of usefulness those dependents upon justice, who throng the courts and who seem created for their calling, could direct their talents.

The public entrance to the courts from High Street is through the Advocate's Hall, a large and elegant room, with a lofty ceiling, the rafters of which are of oak, the more prominent projections being gilded. The floor is also of oak. Around the walls are hung life-sized portraits of eminent barristers and Lords of Session. The more prominent are Lord President Hope (1811-41), David Hume, Baron of Exchequer (1822-34), Lord Rutherford (1851-54), Right

Hon. Duncan McNeill, Lord President (1852-67), and Lord Brougham (1863). There are statues of Viscount Melville, Henry Cockburn, Solicitor General (1830), Duncan Forbes, of Calboden, &c. Large variegated windows adorn the north-west and south walls. The southern window is especially worthy of notice. In beauty of design and colour the figures portrayed are really superb. The scene depicted was suggested by a narrative of the first meeting of the Court of Session, an account of which may be found in the *Records* of the Register House, and is written in Latin. It was translated by the late Joseph Robertson, LL.D. A key to the window states that "the Parliament was begun in the presence of the most excellent and serene King and Lord, our Lord James the V. of that name, at Edinburgh, upon the 27th day of the month of May, in the year of our Lord, 1532, by the Most Rev. Father in Christ, Gavin, Archbishop of Glasgow, Lord High Chancellor to the venerable Fathers in Christ, for the most noble and serene Lords, Alexander, Abbot to the magistrates of Cambuskenneth, Lord President." The "arms" of the successive Lords-President of the Court of Session are on the window in chronological order. The personages represented, and who were present at the opening of the first court, are Queen Margaret, widow of James IV.; King James V.; Sir James Foulis, of Colinton, Lord-Register; Richard Bothwell, Rector of Ashkirk; Robert Reid, Abbot of Kinloss; Gavin Dunbar, Archbishop of Glasgow, Chancellor; Alexander Myln, Abbot of Cambuskenneth, President; Thomas Crawford, Oxengang, Justice-Clerk; Sir William Scott, of Bulwearie; Sir Adam Otterburn, King's Advocate, and the Provost of Edinburgh.

Upon court days in the hall there is considerable excitement. Advocates, wigged and gowned, strut about, usually in pairs. Some are in pensive meditation with clients, others are engaged in jocular conversation. All have an "eye to business;" yet many a briefless one parades the floor with an air of concern peculiar to those who find time hanging heavily upon their hands for want of employment. The more fortunate, on the other hand, wear a dignity implying the presence of somebody.

The courts are classified Division I, Division II, and Outer Courts. In the First Division sits the Lord-President, supported on the right and left by two or more judges, according to the nature of the case on hand. The characteristics of priority amongst their Lordships visible to the stranger are a slight difference in the robes which they wear and the relative positions they occupy on the bench. The Lord-President fills the centre chair, and behind him hangs the mace, representing four feet of regal authority. Viewing their Lordships, as they look through the indispensable spectacles or eye-glass and give their opinion in calm, dignified, subdued and at the same time firm and didactic utterances, one is reminded of the words of Horace—"Fiat justitia ruat cælum." A smile from judge, counsel, or witness, may at times relieve the painful awe; but a due reserve and appreciation of their