

to feel it necessary to pay his tribute to Democracy by disparaging classical education and lauding the utilitarian system; yet those who had the pleasure of being his guests knew that he was devoted to the classics and spent much of his leisure in reading them. But I have lived with statesmen who, having taken high honours at the University never I believe thought of opening a Greek or Latin book.

As an optional study Classics seem to hold their own wonderfully well by the side of subjects regarded as more practically useful. They hold their own even in this commercial and industrial Continent, where it might be supposed that culture would have less chance in competition with utility. So I gather from statistics which were kindly furnished to me by my friend Mr. Harris, the head of the Bureau of Education at Washington, and from what Mr. Harris himself told me.

It is needless to say how greatly the practical importance of a knowledge of Greek and Latin has been altered since the revival of learning. It was then the indispensable key to the only literature worth reading; to the only literature indeed which existed, since even the Chronicles, the Theology and School Philosophy were in debased Latin. The early Humanists were not philologists; they were seekers after the lost treasures of Greek and Roman Literature. Philology came later with the generation of Scaliger and Casaubon. Then began the age of grammarians and their pedantry. We can hardly imagine the sensations of the maritime adventurers of that time when they put forth to explore an unknown world; we can as little realize the feelings of the scholars who were engaged in bringing to light the buried works of Greek and Roman intellect. Science in its progress has brought a vast and will no doubt bring a yet greater measure of knowledge to mankind. There is a romance which can never return.

On the other hand no age has stood more in need of humanizing culture than this in which physical culture reigns. One of the newspapers the other day invited us to take part in a symposium the subject of which was "How to produce a perfect man." The problem was large but one help to its solution might have been a reminder to keep the balance. A romantic age stands in need of science, a scientific and utilitarian age stands in need of the humanities. Darwin avows that poetry gave him no pleasure whatever. This surely was a loss, unless that whole side of things which poetry denotes is dead and gone, nothing but dry science being left us: in which case the generations that are coming may have some reason, with all their increase of knowledge and power to wish that they had lived nearer the youth of the world.

The study of language however as we now pursue it is not less scientific than any branch of physical science, while it has a special interest from its connection with the History of the Human Mind. The Chancellor of a University, a man high in the Scientific world once exhorted his students to take to Physical Science rather than to languages or literature because nature was the work of God while languages and literature were the work of man. It was answered that man was the noblest work of God and that he could

be studied only through his languages and literature.

Supposing the study of language to be useful there can be no doubt that the ancient languages are its best field. The Greek language especially has perfections, particularly as an instrument of exact thought, which make it almost as much a miracle as Greek Art. Optimists may persuade themselves that the Norman Conquest was politically a blessing in disguise. But they cannot pretend that it did not bring confusion into our tongue and make the English Language unfit for the purpose of exact thought. We are wanting in sets of cognates and in the power of forming compound words, as well as liable to being perplexed by double names for the same thing derived from different linguistic sources, perhaps with some differences of connotation. So great is the superiority of Greek over every modern language as an instrument of exact thought that if we were to believe as some do that in the struggle for existence one of them will at some distant day become supreme and universal we might think that a chance of the palm would be still left to Greek, which is still a living language though spoken by a small nation and in a debased form.

The ascendancy of English is commercial; should intellectual interests ever prevail over commercial interests the tables might be turned. Already Greek may be almost said to be the language of Science and Philosophy. Our scientific books, especially, so far as the principal terms are concerned, are almost written in Greek.

Latin it is needless to say has still an intrinsic value as a key to the Romance Languages. Any one who is master of Latin may learn in a few weeks to read French, Italian or Spanish with ease by himself though he must go to a teacher for pronunciation. Indeed though Latin quotations are no longer the fashion in Parliament, Latin, from its long use by the educated has so entrenched itself in our literature, our legal, medical, and ecclesiastical phraseology and even in our common conversation that total ignorance of it will always be felt as a disadvantage.

As models of style it is generally admitted that the ancient writers are still unmatched. Nor is it likely that they will ever be superseded since their simplicity and freshness are the dew of the early world. As Christopher Sly says, we shall ne'er be young again.

In the Drexel Institution at Philadelphia the founder's munificence and taste have brought together objects of art and beauty from all times and nations; but in the centre of the collection stands supreme over all the cast of a mutilated statue. It is the Venus of Milo and attests in its pride of place the unchallenged ascendancy of the Greek. Compare the work of Phidias with the work of Michael Angelo; while you may find more depth of sentiment in the artist who has the advantage of fourteen Christian centuries, you will own that in treatment he has more than an equal in the Greek. So it is in the case of literary style.

Some difference has been made no doubt in the practical value of a knowledge of the ancient languages by the increased number and excellence of translations. Still a translation is not an equivalent for the original. Till I saw the ancient sculpture, I thought the casts were equiv-

alents for the statues; but as soon as I looked on the originals I at once discovered my mistake. Even in Jowett's Plato the murmurings of the Platonic plane tree are not heard, nor does his Thucydides preserve the forms, characteristic as those of early sculpture in the Aeginetan frieze, under which political philosophy, newborn, labours to find expression. We have no adequate representation of the garrulous simplicity of Herodotus or of the majestic brevity of Tacitus. Poetry always defies perfect translation.

On the importance of a knowledge of antiquity to any student of humanity it is needless to dwell. Without it no one can understand European Civilization. From Greece and Rome are derived not only many of our institutions in law, but important elements of our character, especially of our political character, in which the Greek and Roman element has been at least as strong as the Christian. Republicanism, in contrast on the one hand to the monarchical spirit, on the other to what is called authoritative democracy, is an inheritance from the ancient commonwealths. It is curious to note the blending of Republicanism with the Monarchical spirit in the political character of the British Aristocracy when they were brought up on Greek and Roman literature. The Whigs of Horace Walpole's time were full of Brutus and Cassius. The French Revolutionists were still more antique in their aspirations. We all know the strange tricks which they played in their attempts to reproduce the sentiments, actions and costumes of tyrannical Greece and Rome. The world is probably now passing finally out of the zone of this influence and into a zone of social science but the traces of political classicism are still seen.

As a manual for the study of Humanity the ancient writers, while they cover nearly the whole field, have the advantage of being entirely removed from the heats and controversies of our time. Aristotle knows nothing of evolution, otherwise it would be difficult even now to name more available text books than his ethical and political works read with ample commentaries and with modern illustrations. The Ancients are removed from our heats and controversies, but the adamant barrier which was supposed to sever them as heathens from our sympathies has crumbled away and we recognize them and their civilization as most interesting and important factors in the development of our race. The people of Hellas were in all things our kinsmen though theirs was a simpler, more careless and sunnier life. Like us, though less anxiously, they strove in their inquisitive and philosophic moods to penetrate the mystery of existence. Perhaps the thing which separates them most from us is slavery, which solved for them the social problems with which we are grappling and made them all warriors, athletes and cultured gentlemen.

We now read the classics with enhanced appreciation of ancient life and thought. Bentley, prodigious as was his learning, had no distinct feeling for ancient life and thought; he treated the classics as if they were so many modern authors. The improvement is due partly to the progress of Archaeology which has disinterred and deciphered so much, principally, to the growth of the Historical and Rational