G5187

CLASSICAL INSTRUCTION:

WHY?—WHEN?—FOR WHOM?

A PAPER

READ AT

THE MEETING, IN SEPT. 1865, OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION AT SHEFFIELD; AND AT THE MONTHLY MEETING, IN MAY, 1866, OF THE COLLEGE OF PRECEPTORS.

BY

W. B. HODGSON, LL.D., F.C.P.,

ONE OF THE EXAMINERS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

"Scholarship has hitherto been a term reserved for the adept in ancient literature, whatever may be the mediocrity of his intellect; but the honourable distinction must be extended to all great writers on modern literature, if we would not confound the sense and propriety of things."—ISAAC D'ISRAELI.

"Un *savant* est un homme qui sait de la chose dont il s'occupe tout ce qu'on peut en savoir au moment présent, qui est celui où les connaissances humaines sont le plus avancées. Un *erudit* sait ce qu'on en savait quand elles étaient au berceau."—J. B. SAY, "*Petit Volume.*" 3me Ed. 1839. p. 149.

"Die höchste Aufgabe der Bildung ist aber die Erziehung zur Pflicht, zur Erfüllung des Gesetzes das wir in der Erkenntniss finden."—B. AUERBACH. Schwarzwälder Dorfgeschichten.—"*Ivo, der Hairle,*" §7, p. 235. Mannheim; 1845. Th. I.

"It is easy to say that in scholarship there is nothing that is not important. It may be so, but one thing is most important, and that is, never to lose sight of the true object of all scholarship, the diffusion of useful knowledge."—SATURDAY REVIEW, 28*th July*, 1866.

"'*Stemus super antiquas vias:*' which may be rendered—'Better stand still on turnpikes than move on rails.'"—CHARLES READE, "*Hard Cash,*" vol. i. p. 225, l. 8. 1863.

Reprinted from the EDUCATIONAL TIMES *for June,* 1866.

LONDON:
Printed by
C. F. HODGSON & SON, GOUGH SQUARE,
FLEET STREET.

1866.

"The learned languages are still considered by many, emphatically, Education. To teach them, and to teach little else, was a portion of the wisdom of our ancestors; but though wisdom in them, it does not follow it is such in us. With them it was knowledge, not for ornament, but use. It was the instrument of *action*, as well as *thought*. Law, Diplomacy, Medicine, and Religion, all was Latin: a man who was no 'Latiner' was a mere 'villain' in education; he was deemed unfit in civil life for any situation destined for the 'ingenuous' and free. But to insist on it at present, but above all, as the only thing necessary, and to the sacrifice of many other things really so, is a folly of which our ancestors could not have been guilty."—"*Educational Reform*," by Th. WYSE, Esq., M.P., 1836, p. 163.

"The Greeks had no models before them; why then have they been enabled to create models for us? Because they listened at the threshold of Nature, and creatively showed forth her inspiration. They strove to represent the idea within them, and in their continual endeavour to express the conception in the substance, the master-piece was at length achieved."—LUDWIG VON MÜHLENFELS, LL.D., *Introduction to a Course of German Literature.*, 1830, p. 85.

"The present neglect of Natural Philosophy and Natural History will furnish a curious story for after-times. It will be on record, that among the first commercial people in the world, who depended for their political existence on trade and manufactures, there was not, generally speaking, in the education of their youth, one atom of information on the products of the earth, whether animal, vegetable, or mineral; nor any account of the principles, whether of mechanics or of chemistry, which, when applied to these products, constituted the distinction of their country. And this, when the studies, so abandoned, were allowed by all to be worthy of pursuit, simply as an exercise of the reason, and without any reference to their application. This story will one day excite some wonder, which will be removed when it is added, that the tone of school-education was given by certain endowed establishments, which, resting their existence upon the fame acquired when Latin and Greek were reputed the only useful branches of instruction, used their influence to exclude all others, long after the rational part of mankind had pronounced that more was necessary. Thus much we can assert, without laying claim to the title of prophets; but it may be—and we would put it to those who direct the public schools, whether it is not worth taking into consideration—that their historian shall have to finish by saying, that while previously-acquired reputation was supporting them in their quiescent obstruction of all improvement, a gradual change took place in the public mind, on the subject of education, which they, occupied as they were in constructing elegant Greek and Latin verses, were among the last to perceive; that when, at a late period, they became willing to alter their system for the better, the time had passed, and the recollections of former obstinacy rendered their demonstrations of improvement of no effect; that they sank in estimation from that time, and finally became an object of interest to the antiquary only, for the remains of Gothic architecture which they left behind."—PROFESSOR DE MORGAN, *On the Study of Natural Philosophy*.

"Why are the people who notice what comes before them to be marked by a separating name, and called Naturalists. Why are we ashamed of a failure in what comes to us through books and the costly instrumentality of masters and teachers—why do we blush at any flagrant slip in history, or science, or language,—and keep cool and easy under any extravagance of error in what nature, through our own observation, might teach us?"—"*Saturday Review*," 18*th July*, 1863, *p.* 80.

"If there were the smallest attempt made to convert our schools from establishments in which we are taught to know with exactness *what other people thought a long time ago*, to establishments to enable us to think with exactness about *that which we are to do at present*, which persons of modern and bigoted notions think desirable, there would be a chance of obtaining something like scientific education."—PROFESSOR HUXLEY; *at Meeting of British Association at Nottingham, 24th August*, 1866.

"As Lord Houghton has pointed out, science is altogether unrepresented [on the Commission for reforming the Public Schools]. The most zealous believers in classical training will allow that this is a mistake. It is conceded by all that classical education must go on for the present, whether right or wrong, since the Report of the year before last strongly approved of it; and whatever change is ever made must come down to the Schools from the Universities. But while, on the other hand, it is not contended that science should at once be made the basis of Public School teaching, on the other hand no one urges that classics will last for ever. The chief object of introducing science now is, that a footing may be laid for a future extension, if ever it should be thought desirable to give more weight and prominence to it. The system must be made a little more elastic, or whenever the nation has outgrown the classics—supposing it ever does outgrow them—it will break, instead of yielding. The addition of some scientific name to the Board would not do much in itself to modify the instruction at the Public Schools, but it would at least indicate the direction in which the national opinion requires that the Schools themselves should take some slight step of progress."—"*Saturday Review*," *June* 2, 1866, *p.* 651.

"I entirely agree with you that the present system of classical education, as a general method of training all English gentlemen, is (in your words) 'a superstition, a blunder, and a failure.' If we would imitate the Romans, who taught their boys Latin and Greek, in the spirit and not in the letter, we ought to teach all our youth English and French; for French is to us, and was still more to Prussia, what Greek was to the Romans. The Romans learned two living languages; we pretend to learn two dead ones. I would demand with you a general basis of true British and Modern and Human education till the age of 14; then Classics should be taken up by the select few to whom they now naturally belong. The omission of natural science, drawing, and music, from the school education of England, is the plain sign that they are out of nature. It is like feeding children with beefsteaks, and throwing the good milk of the mother to the dogs. But do not growl too fiercely at the stupidity of dunces, Dons, and D.D.s in this world. A certain number of stupid people must exist."—J. S. BLACKIE, Professor of Greek in University of Edinburgh, "*Letter to the Author*."

CLASSICAL INSTRUCTION;—WHY?—WHEN?—FOR WHOM?

"Linguis quoque discendis operam dent, iis praecipue quarum apud finitimos aut domesticos usus."—CASPARI BARLACI, "*Methodus Studiorum.*" Ludg. Bat. 1792. p. 170.

"Quis facile se contineat, si omnium artium et disciplinarum salutem linguae Latinae castitate contineri, hac spretâ illas jacere, hac florente illas stare, toties inculcantem magistrum intelligat?"—MOSHEIM, "*Dissert. de Ling. Lat. Culturâ et Necessitate,*" p. 273. 1751. (*et seq.*)

OUR shores are visited from time to time by intelligent foreigners, eager to study our political institutions, our social customs, our processes of agriculture or of manufactures. Let us suppose that such a one, understanding our language, but only slightly acquainted with our history and social condition, had arrived in this country, anxious to extend his knowledge, and to turn his observations to practical account. I may well be excused from attempting to sketch, in even the vaguest outline, the elaborate and complex civilisation, with its bright lights and dark shadows, which would attract and bewilder and almost overwhelm his attention. Let us suppose that, after a time, he gained some general insight into our mode of government, our manners, our religion, our laws, our mechanical industry, our commerce, our manifold and ever-multiplying relations with all other nations of the globe, our rich and various literature, our national character. Such a man might reflect thus: Children are in this country, as in every other, born weak, helpless, ignorant, yielding easily, with a few marked individual exceptions, to the plastic hands of those who would mould them in this or that form, to this or that belief; capable of healthy growth and development from within, under the application of outward stimulus; but, also, of being crushed, or stunted, or perverted—of becoming, in short, either lovely flowers and useful fruit, or useless, it may be even noxious, weeds. Such a reflection as this would naturally suggest the question, What is done, in the way of teaching and training, to qualify and dispose the embryo citizens of this great nation to take a useful and honourable place in the social system in which they are destined to live, to promote their own good and that of their fellows, and, not least, to ensure that the next generation shall be wiser, better, happier, than that which is swiftly moving off the stage of life? To such a man as I have supposed it might perhaps occur,—In this country there are rich people and poor people; all have not equal means or opportunities; from all equal results are not to be expected; but surely, in the case of even the moderately rich, all will be done that the most enlightened intelligence can suggest to form and store and guide the youthful mind; and in the case of those less favoured by fortune, this same object will also be aimed at, and proportionately realized. Probably, then, the children of parents of the higher class are carefully instructed in the nature of their own constitution, bodily and mental; the conditions on which its soundness and happy working inevitably depend; its relations towards the diversified existences, animate and inanimate, which surround it; the terms on which future well-being must be, if at all, attained; in the structure and use of their own language, so rich and flexible and strong; in the art of tracing the relation of cause and effect, so as to avoid not only mental error and confusion, but unwise and injurious conduct also; in the elements of the arts and sciences, on the knowledge and application of which hangs the prosperity of the world, and especially of this nation; in their own country's literature, abounding as it does in noble monuments of every kind of mental activity, and with equal power to instruct, to rouse, to purify, to direct, to charm, to polish, to strengthen, to refine, to make strong the delicate, to make delicate the strong; lastly, in the language and literature of other nations, whose social characteristics are more or less different, but with all of whom the advantage, and even the necessity, of free intercourse are daily on the increase, and from all of whom much is to be learned, without the sacrifice, nay to the enhancing, of national and individual originality and independence.

Our supposed foreign visitor might not, and probably would not, work out in any great detail the programme of a system of instruction (*i.e.*, building up), such as he might expect to find; but it is not at all improbable that, looking at the facts of the case, and estimating future obligations and necessities, he would reckon most confidently on finding a foremost place assigned to such studies as I have roughly indicated. Well, what would be his astonishment if he were told that in the school-training, not of the poor only, but of the rich also, the very rich, every one of these subjects is more or less neglected; that what seemed to him the most important and indispensable things of all are left to future chance, or, at the most, to a later provision; that, in the

case of all above the poor, during the whole course of the school-life, extending over ten, twelve, or more years, the mind is applied almost exclusively, in the best cases mainly, to the languages and literatures of two ancient nations who ceased to exist centuries ago, who lived before even the infancy of our modern arts and sciences; whose religion and morals were widely at variance, if not wholly inconsistent, with the religion and morals which here prevail, and which are held as a revelation from heaven itself; nations whose people, whose great men even, were stained with gross vices, whose military glories (in the case of one of these at least) have so dazzled the eye and corrupted the moral sense of subsequent generations as greatly to retard the peaceful progress of commerce and civilization! Even if he found, as doubtless he would find, on further inquiry, that these literatures contain much, very much, that is beautiful and good, and that examples of heroism and virtue worthy of all praise are scattered over the blood-stained records of their history, I do not think that his astonishment would be greatly diminished; while it would be vastly increased, and would approach amazement, and even incredulity, were he to learn that, on the authority of able men, themselves the subjects of this system and favourable to its continuance—this system, as pursued in its most richly-endowed, and in all ways most favoured, institutions, is declared a failure as regards its own ends; "a failure" — and here I quote the *Times'* summary of the Report of the recent Commissioners — "a failure, even if tested by those better specimens, not exceeding one-third of the whole, who go up to the Universities. Though a very large number of these have literally nothing to show for the results of their school-hours from childhood to manhood, but a knowledge of Latin and Greek, with a little English and arithmetic, we have here the strongest testimony that their knowledge of the former is most inaccurate, and their knowledge of the latter contemptible. A great deal is taught under these two heads, but very little is learned under either. A small proportion become brilliant composers and finished scholars, if they do not manage to pick up a good deal of information for themselves; but the great multitude cannot construe an easy author at sight, or write Latin prose without glaring mistakes, or answer simple questions in grammar, or get through a problem in the first two books of Euclid, or apply the higher rules of arithmetic. A great many, amounting to about a third at Christ Church, and a fifth at Exeter College, fail to pass the common Matriculation Examination. Not less than a fourth are plucked for their Little-go, a most elementary examination in the very subjects which we have just mentioned; and of the rest many are only enabled to pass by the desperate exertions of College tutors and 'coaches.' We need not follow this class of public school men through the remainder of their University career, since the duty of teaching has then devolved upon others; but for their shortcomings at entrance the schools are mainly responsible. Most of them, says an Oxford tutor of great experience and judgment, 'are persons who were allowed as boys to carry their idleness with them from form to form, to work below their powers, and merely to move with the crowd; they are men of whom something might have been made, but now it is too late; they are grossly ignorant, and have contracted slovenly habits of mind.'"*

On recovering from his very natural amazement, our foreign friend might possibly be curious to know how a state of things so anomalous and perplexing had come about. Gradually he would learn that it had its remote origin in a period of European history between the decay of the old and the growth of the new civilisation, when it may be briefly and comprehensively asserted that, Latin and its literature apart (for Greek was of later date as a branch of general school teaching), there were, (1) No subjects to be learned; (2) No pupils to be taught; (3) No language in which teaching could be carried on. A few minutes may well be spent in considering this very curious position. There were, (1) No subjects to be learned. The natural sciences, as we now understand and pursue them, scarcely existed; they were confounded with the ancient literature, in which scientific observations and theories were recorded; there were no modern languages or literatures to claim and repay study. *Latin*, or its practical synonym *grammar*, was accordingly co-extensive, identical with instruction. (2.) There were no pupils to be taught. The mere idea of educating a whole people, of opening their mental eyes, forming their judgment, training their character, by means of knowledge, had not been even conceived. Not even the higher or highest classes of the laity were believed to need instruction. Ecclesiastics only needed and received instruction, and in their case it was naturally directed to the language in which the church offices were performed, in which the church history and traditions were enshrined. (3.) There was no language but Latin in which teaching could be conducted. Neither English, nor French, nor Italian, nor German, nor Spanish, nor any other modern language, in anything like its present state, existed. You know as well as I how and when they came into being. Petrarch more than half regretted his having ever written in Italian the sonnets which are the title-deeds of his fame, and fancied that posterity would delight to read his Latin poem on *Africa*, which is quite forgotten. Through what medium, then, except Latin, could any one be taught?—Latin, in which the learned of all countries wrote and corresponded with each other to much later times—Petrarch, and Eras-

---

* See Appendix, p. 8.

mus, and Milton, and even Locke. The influence of this threefold state of things was prolonged in spite of gradual progress. New subjects arose, but Latin held its place; a portion of the laity claimed a share of the instruction of the times, and ecclesiastics taught them the Latin which only they knew, and that not well. New languages were gradually formed, and crept into general, unliterary, unscientific, currency. But in European countries Latin still maintained its place, more or less exclusively, as the medium of teaching science and literature. Not many years ago, I travelled with a Piedmontese physician, who spoke Italian badly, French not at all, whose local patois was a burden to himself, and who bitterly complained to me of his having been taught even medicine, as well as logic and rhetoric, through Latin, while in Italian he had never received a single lesson. In our own land, the change has gone somewhat further in each of the three respects just stated. Other subjects of instruction have, more or less recently, more or less grudgingly, been allowed to break in upon the sacred monopoly of Latin. First, Greek (now so glibly coupled with Latin, like Day with Martin, or Swan with Edgar) fought its way to admission, through opposition the story of which would now excite some amusement and surprise.* Then mathematics, more lately; and it is now commonly declared that in this branch of study is found the needful and sufficient counterpoise to the old linguistic training, inasmuch as it exercises the reasoning faculties; the subject, however, being purely abstract, and one in which never occur the names of man or woman, or right or wrong, or duty or interest, of good or bad, praise or blame, or any other of those many things about which human reasoning is habitually employed in late and early life; so that, though, like chess, it is valuable for fixing the attention, it is a very inefficient training for ordinary thinking on moral questions. As Sir William Hamilton has said, "The railroad of demonstration is a poor preparative for the hunting-ground of probability." No other subject is taught otherwise than too exceptionally and incompletely, to claim notice in this brief paper.

Yet, how marvellously changed is the whole aspect of the world since this system first took shape. I need not do more than hint at our progress in science, art, literature, mechanics, in production and exchange at home and abroad; at the startling growth of foreign literatures; at the multiplication of sources of thought and subjects of interest general and deep; at the discovery of new and vast continents, over which is being rapidly spread a population speaking our language, in part living under this country's government, in part living under a government of its own; in either case bound to us by many ties of interest and affection, and adding everywhere to the common fund of the world's thought and knowledge:

"Quae regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?"

What region of the wide earth is there that is not filled with both the record and the results of our national achievements?

Is every thing to move on except education, which is to prepare for every thing? Is progress to be universal except in that one thing which ought to herald and facilitate and guide all progress? How long, one is driven to ask, is the ancient system to be maintained? In spite of coming changes, the extent of which we can but faintly guess, though we may clearly foresee their direction, is it absolutely ordained that centuries hence, even to the very end of time, our remotest posterity shall learn precisely what their ancestors learned, in default of aught else, and be taught precisely as their ancestors, in the infancy of the teaching art, were taught? Had we to begin now, to construct anew the educational edifice, few perhaps would say that it ought to be precisely on the existing plan. Can the present system, then, be not merely the result of historic causes, necessary and even useful in its season, but the fulfilment of providential decree, which must be binding now, henceforward, and for evermore? If not, then it is wise to inquire whether the time has not arrived for introducing changes, which may facilitate and promote further gradual change hereafter. I venture to think that this time has arrived, and that, in the interest of whatever is good in the old system itself, it is well to modify what it is impossible long to preserve unchanged. The present system is clearly untenable, and its doom is, I think, a question of time only. It is because I attach a high value to the educational influence of Greek and Latin, in proper place and time and mode, that I presume to invite the attention of this meeting to the questions stated in the programme — "Why? When? For whom?" These three questions are intimately blended. None of them can, apart from the other, be fully answered. On the first—the reasons *why*—I need not enlarge. They have been lately stated, for the ten thousandth time, but with unusual freshness and force, by Mr. Bonamy Price,* who, being himself a bright example of the good effects of such culture, is modest enough to assume that most others to whom it is applied are quite as good as he. But on all those reasons it suffices to remark, that not one of them applies to any but to an advanced school age, when only can the youth really appreciate the high work in which he is engaged. The wretched reality which experience reveals is in contrast, at once ludicrous

* So lately as in the year 1772, Dr. Adam's proposal to introduce Greek into the High School of Edinburgh was violently opposed by no less a man than Principal Robertson, the historian.

* See "The Shilling Magazine" for September, 1865.

and painful, with the glowing picture painted by Mr. Price.

As regards the second and third questions, taken always in conjunction with the first, I can only briefly say, as the result of my own experience and reflection, that by deferring these studies to a later period of life, by thus reducing the number of those to whom this instruction is administered, and the amount of time devoted to it, as well as the area over which it is spread, a greater amount of good would, on the whole, be achieved. Fewer persons would learn Latin and Greek, but those few would learn them more thoroughly and with greater profit. The fact that now, after all the expenditure of time and labour, so small a proportion of those taught exhibit even fair attainments, is conclusive against the present system, which sacrifices the many needlessly and wrongly for the sake of a select few. Nor can it be justly said, though it is often said, that, even if no great knowledge of the tongues, and no knowledge of the literatures, have been acquired, still a useful training has been gone through, and the mental powers have been strengthened and suppled by exercise. I much fear that the influence is quite the other way, and tends to discouragement, apathy, distaste for learning, mental confusion, and mental torpor. "The labour *we delight in* physics pain." Intellectual occupation, in which the intellect is a willing agent, not a drudging slave, and intellectual progress, are needful for our moral health. Mental vacuity is at the root of much moral mischief; and *congenial* mental work is one of the best preventives of the vices which idleness ever fosters.

In discussing this subject, we are too apt to fix our attention on the favourable exceptions, the small minority, who seem to have really derived advantage from the process through which they have passed; and we are tempted to forget that it is to "the mass" that education ought to be adapted, and by its success with the mass that every system must be tested. What should we say if a Sheffield cutler were to boast that five, or even ten, per cent. of his knives were sharp and strong and bright? We should be disposed to inquire about the remaining ninety, and to draw no favourable inference as to their cutting power.

Again, we are often confronted by a distinction which, though sound enough in itself, has little real application here. Instruction, we are told, is one thing; education is another. Even of instruction, the imparting of knowledge is not the chief part; while of education it is but a small and a very subordinate part. Very true; but it by no means follows that those subjects which are capable of what is called useful application in actual life, are devoid of educational influence in the process of their acquisition. The question is really much less one of subject than of method. Any subject may be taught intellectually, suggestively, improvingly, or in a dull, mechanical, stupifying way. Because much present teaching of Latin and Greek is of this latter kind, I do not argue against all teaching of Latin and Greek. But, on the other hand, I contend that it is most unjust to speak, for example, of physical science as a mere congeries of detached facts, the learning of which can give no beneficial training to the mind, no real exercise to any of its powers, except to memory. Were our scholars and our teachers themselves better instructed in such subjects, they would find, I think, that the processes of observation, generalisation, and induction, through which a pupil may be carefully led, afford a mental discipline of the highest value, and do much to train to habits of mental accuracy, cautious inquiry, conscientious balancing of probabilities, steady and honest work.

Again, it is not unusual to speak and write as if, outside of the charmed circle of Greek and Roman letters, all were barren, arid, prosaic, commonplace, mechanical, and cold. The very exclusiveness with which the term "classics" is popularly restricted to Latin and Greek, is a standing monument of this fallacy. Are such writers as Shakespeare, and Milton, and Wordsworth, and Tennyson, in our own tongue, or in others, as Göthe, and Schiller, and Dante, and Ariosto, and Rousseau, and De Staël, incapable of inspiring literary enthusiasm, or exercising critical taste? The case would not be altered were any amount of indebtedness to the ancients proved against the moderns.

Even if the superiority of Greek and Latin over all living tongues be admitted, (and I may say, in passing, that, without large qualifications, I cannot admit it,) it is not a necessary sequence that those other languages are not important means of mental discipline, if rightly taught, as well as of high utility in the affairs of life. The whole question is comparative. It is not what subjects are, in one or other way, useful; but what subjects are, on the whole, the most useful in degree, as in kind; which blend the greatest number of utilities; which are the indispensable, and which the merely advantageous or ornamental. Now I cannot but hope that in this matter the progress of opinion is tending towards this conclusion, that those subjects most useful to the poor as well as to the rich, to women as well as to men, those most akin to the deep unity of our common human nature, are the subjects to which attention ought, in every case, to be directed first and chiefly; that the essentials of education (not confounding *essential* with *necessary*, as we often do) are in all cases the same, and based on those things in which we all agree, not on those in which we differ. In urging, as I did some time ago, that the education of girls ought, in all essential respects, to be assimilated to that of boys, I did not mean that it should be made like to that of boys, as it now exists,—may heaven forbid!—but rather that each

should borrow from the other whatever it has of good, and that both should grow towards a common and still distant ideal. So with the rich and the poor; the great *substratum* ought, it seems to me, to be in both cases alike; it being the enviable privilege of the former to superadd whatever other culture, deeper or more ornamental, their greater leisure and ampler means may enable them to obtain.

According to the length of time given by the pupil to the school, would be the gradation and development of his studies. No boy leaving any school, say at the age of even twelve years, would be ignorant of his own language as a means of communication by writing as well as by speech,—of the elements of natural science, especially of his own bodily structure, and of the laws of conduct; without some dawning, but ever brightening, perception of the interdependence of all human interests rightly understood, and without some purpose, strengthening "with the suns," to guide his own life accordingly, to seek his own blessing in blessing others, to do good to others by improving himself; unable to observe, and think, and reason, but able to repeat snatches of Latin grammar-rules, to decline certain nouns and adjectives, to conjugate certain verbs—a kind of knowledge which I venture to think extremely unimportant, unless it be carried forward to higher attainments, methodised and utilised by study of the literature.

A boy prolonging his stay at school beyond the period necessary for acquiring the amount and sort of knowledge and of training at which I have but hinted, would, besides deepening and widening and fixing his knowledge of these subjects, and confirming his mental and moral habits, extend his range of study, and acquire more or less of one or more modern tongues, say French and German, the teaching being ever reflected upon that of the vernacular, and would take up other branches which it is impossible for me here to specify in detail.

Lastly, those youths who should prolong still further their school period, would, in reduced numbers, with faculties well disciplined, with a love of congenial mental exercise—such as every human being has in greater or in less degree, if it be not crushed by bad teaching or by neglect—with a clear perception of the use as well as of the pleasure of learning, with minds maturer and more vigorous, enter on the study, say, first of Latin and then of Greek. The progress now so slow, painful, unequal, and irregular, would be vastly more rapid, pleasant, uniform, and sure. Cramming of the memory, now declared to be indispensable with the very young, would, at a later age, be superseded by intelligible explanation and intelligent perception of principles; the authors read would be better comprehended, better appreciated, more enjoyed; the knowledge of words, constructions, idioms, would grow swiftly, insensibly, day by day; the judgment and taste, first exercised on the writings of their own country's authors, would be brought easily to bear on those of Rome and Greece; the beauties of Homer and Horace, and Virgil and Sophocles, and Livy and Thucydides, would not, as now, be wasted on dull and unwilling ears, but would be really felt; and all the good effects, intellectual, æsthetic, and moral, which, in the hands of a skilful teacher, with a heart in his bosom, and not merely a mass of learned lumber in his head, such studies can undoubtedly be made to yield, would really be accomplished, and not merely imagined, and in the great majority of cases imagined falsely, to be accomplished. Fewer persons would thus *be taught* Latin and Greek; but more persons would *learn* them than now. They would learn them with greater ease, satisfaction, and advantage in many ways. This they would do without neglect, nay to the gain, of other studies now too much neglected. Those who could not carry on a training in Latin and Greek to any really useful point, would not have wasted their time, but would have gained that kind and amount of knowledge and discipline, to which Latin and Greek may be a most admirable complement, but for which their verbal elements are a most wretched substitute.*

Let no one, therefore, denounce me as "an enemy of Latin and of Greek," "a foe to liberal culture," "a low utilitarian," "an advocate of cramming as opposed to training"—of "bread and butter sciences" in opposition to education worthy of the name; or pelt me with any other verbal missiles, such as, in this controversy, are too freely used. I am, I confess, a strict *utilitarian;* but it is a high and broad, not a low and narrow, utility for which I contend: imagination itself I maintain to be truly and highly *useful.* I am at heart a friend to Latin and Greek; I would not lightly part with my own knowledge of either, though it might have been far less dearly purchased.

I would, it is true, save multitudes from the mistake, the misery, and the mischief of merely pretending to learn them; but I would make the teaching real and fruitful wherever it is attempted, and I would put no limit to the height or depth to which it should be carried by those so disposed. I may, of course, be in error as to the proposed means; but I am quite certain that the end I aim at is the improvement, and the binding together, of all classes of the community by a rational and generous education, common to all in its main principles and essential features, but capable of wide diversities in its later developments, according to the means, the talents, the dispositions, the destinations, social or professional, of their individual members.

---

* "Ipsum quidem illud callere linguam, si per se solum spectes, neque majorem utilitatem intendas, magno opere jejunum mihi videtur atque inanitatis plenum: quid enim proficias ubi voces loquendique formulas in cerebrum constipatas ingesseris?"—"Tib. Hemsterhusius, Orat. de Mathem. et Philosoph. Studio cum Lit. Human. conjungendo," p. 214.

APPENDIX. (See p. 4.)

"Let us take a review of the acquirements of a clever youth, not prematurely hurried from school to the business of active life; but left there, we will suppose, to the age of sixteen or seventeen, to acquire what knowledge he may. He shall be found at that age tolerably well skilled in the mysteries of *longs* and *shorts;* to have acquired a facility of stringing together doggerel verses; to have construed unconnected scraps from ancient writers, such as are to be found in popular selections of extracts, his attention having never been drawn to any of those models of classic poetry so numerous in his own; familiar with the genealogies and exploits of the heathen divinities; well versed in the history of the Trojan war, and the feuds of the Grecian heroes, and but little in the social convulsions of his native soil, and the political storms which have swept over its face; slightly acquainted with geography; initiated into arithmetic, not as a science built upon principles, but as a set of rules, the arbitrary invention (for anything he knows to the contrary) of the book-maker; and acquiescing upon trust in a few propositions of Euclid.

"This, I apprehend, is rather an exaggerated statement of a youth's acquirements on leaving one of our schools.

"Now, of what is he wholly ignorant?

"The answer to this question is far too long to be quoted here." (See "Education and Educational Institutions considered," &c., by Rev. J. Booth, LL.D., M.R.S.A. London, 1846 pp. 35, 36, *et seq.*)

"At Eton, the most aristocratic of schools, though there is a drawing-master, and though, more fortunate than the unlucky Italian master, he has a room, and even some casts and models, the average attendance on his instruction is 35 out of 783. Music is not taught at all. In the report on Winchester, no mention is made of either. At Harrow, music and drawing are extras, studied by 18 and 50, respectively, of the 464 boys. Even at Rugby, the numbers are only 49 and 42 in 465. This, then, is the amount of attention paid in these great schools to the Fine Arts, and to the cultivation of eye and ear. Geography, after a little elementary instruction, is wholly neglected. Attention is paid to ancient history at some schools, in connection with classical work; but at Winchester, Dr. Moberley says, 'we do not profess to teach modern history at all;' and the case seems no better at the other schools, though no such open confession of failure is made.

"What, then, *do* these great schools teach? I need not give the answer. They teach Latin and Greek; and, subordinate to these, mathematics. To these three studies, or rather to two, Latin and Greek, almost the whole teaching-force of these great institutions is applied. Of the 35 masters at Eton, 24, or about 70 per cent., are classical; eight are mathematical; and *three* teach all the modern languages, physical science, natural history, English language and literature, drawing, and music; and this is about the proportion in all save Rugby, where matters are somewhat better." (Classical and Scientific Studies, and the Great Schools of England. By W. P. Atkinson. 1865. Cambridge, U. S. pp. 22.)

"There are no schools in the world which approach the English public schools in the immense cost at which their advantages, such as they are, have to be obtained; and yet Mr. Matthew Arnold, the son of the most famous Head-master who ever presided over an English public school, and himself profoundly acquainted with the state of the higher education both in England and on the Continent, could say, the other day, with almost as much truth as point,—'At Eton, a boy learns a gentlemanly deportment and cricket, at an expense of £250. a year.' The able men who reported upon Eton and the other public schools two years ago, pointed out a legion of abuses that urgently call for amendment, proved, indeed, to demonstration that the whole existing system was rotten to its core; but, although Bills were introduced by Lord Clarendon in the Sessions of both 1865 and 1866, with a view to remedy, to some small extent, the present disastrous state of affairs, the obstructives have up this time succeeded in preventing anything effectual being done." (Grant Duff, Esq., M. P., *Weekly Scotsman*, 1st Sept., 1866.)

Printed by C. F. Hodgson & Son, Gough Square, Fleet Street.