

if it be impressed on them that to translate the same Latin word always by the the same word in English is not always to be literal and seldom fails to be ridiculous; if the teacher makes a point of as frequently as possible investigating the radical force of words and showing the original meaning from which the various developments and departures of its other significations radiate—if, I say, these precautions be taken and no mistake in spelling, violation of good English usage, or misuse of words be allowed to pass unnoticed, then boys are in the fair way to reach that point in the cultivation of English beyond which their own taste and judgment must be their tutors. Surely this would be a sounder training than to put into their hands such manuals as are now being poured in quantities into the book market, books whose only aim seems to be to relieve the young student of all the trouble of thinking for himself, to thrust down his throat cut and dry opinions which may be reproduced as his own afterwards, undigested and unassimilated. Bookmindedness, as Wordsworth terms it, is a virtue that is easily carried to excess. Mathematics, too, though a necessary supplement to the classics in the youthful training, fall, if taken alone, far short of its requirements. Reasoning as they do from necessary premises to certain conclusions, they are an excellent guide to the cultivation of close continuous thought, but they leave untilled the whole estate of contingency, comprising by far the largest acreage in man's mental inheritance, leaving it at the mercy of the weeds of superstition or disbelief. *Urenda felix, neglectis nascitur arvis.* A celebrated mathematician in the unclassical days of the University of Cambridge declared that Milton was not worth reading because nothing was proved by "Paradise Lost." So the mere mathematician is prone either to refuse assent entirely to all conclusions which cannot be deduced according to the stern rules of his own science, or credulously to accept them without due investigation. Touching the proposal to substitute for classics one or more of the physical sciences I scarcely think it worth our serious consideration. Not but that plausible arguments well suited *ad captandum vulgus* are more ready to hand in support of this than of any other scheme. But mere accumulations of statistics, however carefully classified and docketed in the mind, cannot educate; that is, they cannot elicit or bring to light any potential talent nature has hidden within us. If the intellect while immature be crammed with a mass of facts they only serve to hamper mental energy and clog every effort of original thought. If the mind's apprenticeship be occupied solely in amassing materials that mind will have but poorly learnt its trade. Do not understand me to mean that these sciences are unworthy of a place in our system. My contention is that they should wait till a more generous course of study has ripened the brain. Nor will there have been any loss of time on this account. They will flourish more vigorously if the bud be grafted on a well-matured and healthy tree than if puny roots had been planted earlier in the ground. Now, classical education, to quote the sentiment of Döderlein, while presuming that all its pupils are designed for some intellectual employment, does not trouble itself to enquire what particular sort of employment that is

to be, keeping only in view the fact that such ulterior occupation will demand the most practised exercise of the faculties, while the encouragement in schools of such exercises as will be most subservient to the business of life (a plan, the infallibility of which has always found quickest acceptance with the most narrow-minded) is calculated only to debase every one of the more intellectual occupations to the rank of a better sort of trade. The mere scientist then may be a most useful laborer in his own particular groove, as one of the intellectual machines among which labor is now subdivided, but he will be, as it were, looking through a key-hole at the world and believing it must be bounded by the same limits as confine his own vision. The curriculum of the Adelaide University takes for granted that the preliminary education of candidates for degrees and honors has been conducted on the principles I now advocate, since it requires that each shall have read a portion of some Latin author, with due regard to grammar, syntax, &c., and expects, though it does not insist upon, a similar training in Greek. For the first year after their entrance as undergraduates a like routine is prescribed, and it is not until the second year of their course that the students are held sufficiently matured to be allowed to specialise. Then, leaving the vestibule of education, they may enter the halls of learning and diverge in their studies according to their several tastes and aptitudes. Some devote themselves to the sciences, others ascend to the nobler realms of higher-mathematics, while a happier few will prefer to advance their scholarship to learning, to lounge in the bowers of the Muses, to enjoy therein the pleasure which only the initiated can appreciate and take a place among the *kaloi kai agathoi* of their generation. But unhappily our well-meant scheme has been crippled in its infancy. The examination by which we proposed to test the fitness of candidates for entering on our course has been turned to baser uses. By what I cannot but think a most injudicious

concession to popular opinion we have allowed those who come to be examined the option of neglecting some of the subjects which we insist upon, and rightly, too, as necessary for the undergraduate course; while we honor with certificates some who have reversed the time-honored maxim *non multa sed multum*, and whose smattering of miscellaneous information can scarcely fail to endow them with a most unwarranted and premature appreciation of themselves. It is just questionable whether the University should continue an examination merely as a final test for boys leaving school. It is unquestionable that it is unsuited as an entrance to our course, as it does not guarantee that those who pass are competent to take advantage of all the lectures, while it excludes some who are. I allude to the regulation which leaves Greek optional with the matriculation candidate. Why it has been so thrown into the shade by its sister language has always puzzled me. Latin is no longer the common tongue of the diplomatic and ecclesiastical world, and if judged on their intrinsic merits Greek bears away the palm without a fall. Anyhow it is required as well as Latin for the first year of our B.A. course, and ought by all laws of common sense to be required of all those who propose to enter on that course. But most of our candidates have learned to regard our matriculation examination as the completion of their education and not in its true light as only the introduction to their real studies. This is the source whence springs the discontent that periodically follows the publication of our class-lists. All the candidates naturally do not rise to the standard required. Some disappointed ones, confident that their failure cannot have been their own fault, attribute it to the folly or malice of their examiners, and sometimes tell the public so. To acquire a true sense of our own ignorance is, according to Socrates, the first step to knowledge; but this is an unpalatable lesson, and often can be taught only by vexatious failure and bitter disappointment. Besides the wide range of subjects in which the student is allowed an option, there are some more elementary, which are imposed as indispensable. Now it often happens that all the time and energy of the student has been devoted to the more advanced department, to the detriment of the more than equally important rudiments. And it is an established principle among the examiners that no one who has displayed a weakness in what all boys should have learnt before their fourteenth year shall be admitted to any place of distinction in the lists, however well he may have otherwise acquitted himself. The comparative table of the marks allotted to each subject, drawn up after much deliberation, has an eye, firstly, to their relatives worth as educational elements; secondly, to the time necessary for their study. This system cannot in the nature of things be absolutely infallible, and a difference of two or three places is not to be relied upon as indicating any definite superiority, though we always try to leave an appreciable gulf between the classes. But examinations are useful for more purposes than the mere classification of candidates. It is by no means the least of the recommendations of these ordeals that they apply the touchstone to that vague illusory semblance of knowledge so often mistaken by its possessor for

the real substance; they compel definite and concise ideas; they perform the part of Socrates, in the Theætetus when he tests the offspring of his young friend's soul to see whether it be anemiasion or gonimon. And to conclude with the words of Mr. Gladstone, spoken twenty-three years ago:—"I do not deny that a certain trick or craft may be practised in them, that some may think more of the manner of displaying their knowledge to a momentary advantage like goods in a shop window than of laying hold upon the substance. But I say that these abusive cases will be the exceptions, not the rule. I say that those who so unjustly plead them against the system forget that this very faculty of the ready command and easy use of our knowledge is in itself of immense value. It means clear perception, it means orderly arrangement. And, above all, they forget what I take to be the specific and peculiar virtue of the system of examinations, namely this, that they require us to concentrate all the faculties of the mind with all their strength upon a point. In and by the efforts necessary for that concentration the mind itself, obtaining at once breadth of grasp and increased pliability and force, becomes more able to grapple with great occasions in the subsequent experience of life." (Cheers.)

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