

On what grounds, then, rests the claim of the classics as the foundation of a liberal education? Are those languages studied in order to learn them? How many classical scholars can translate at sight an unfamiliar work in either language? Some knowledge of ancient history and customs are acquired, but through the inexact translations of the student. The best methods of education sanction the principle of proceeding from the known to the unknown. The well advised teacher of geography will no longer perplex his scholars by setting them at the outset to study the facts of mathematical geography, and soon afterward the soil and productions of Central Africa; but will commence with the school house itself, and proceed gradually from what the scholars already know, to what they do not.

But in case of the classics this principle is signally violated. The student very frequently begins their study just after leaving the common school. He is set to work with grammar, lexicon, and commentary to render, by tedious steps, the finished writings of the Latin and Greek authors into good English. But in a classical course, the study of Latin precedes that of English literature. This is another way of putting the cart before the horse. The student, no doubt, acquires a large vocabulary of English words, but he often yields to the temptation of using those words in translation which most resemble their Latin equivalents. He is apt, therefore, to form a Latinized style before he reaches the study of the literature of his own language.

If Latin is essential to a good understanding of English, Anglo-Saxon is equally so, yet with the exception of our newer colleges, it is quite neglected. The student is sent into the mists of antiquity to learn all about Cicero and Xenophon, but the masterpieces of his own language are summarily disposed of.

The cry of "utilitarianism" which the partisan of the classics dilates upon, is

but a shallow charge. The pursuit of the almighty dollar is not a distinguishing characteristic of the American; it is common to all civilized nations. In retaining the classics as half of a curriculum, we persist in keeping behind the times. They have served the purpose as the sum total of liberal culture. The people sneer at higher education, because they often see the student come forth after receiving four years or more of classical drill, very deficient in practical knowledge.

Would it not be a little more logical to begin higher instruction with the study of our own language? By reserving the classics for the latter part of a course, more and better work can be done in a given time. It is questionable whether the alleged aid which a knowledge of Latin gives in the study of a modern language, is not more fancied than real.

Again, the increasing claims of the many branches of science are an additional reason for assigning to Latin and Greek a quite subordinate place in higher instruction.

THE CATALOGUE OF 1878-79.

The annual catalogue of the University has at last made its appearance. To say that the press work is of the Journal Company, is sufficient to insure the typographical neatness of its pages. Within it we find some material changes, both in the manner of instruction, and the courses of study to be pursued. The three sections under general directions, stating that the University is designed for higher education only, and not for instruction in the common branches, are decidedly a new departure from former announcements. This is as it should be. If the University is to be the head of the educational interests of the State, let it be made so.

We were, however, somewhat amused at the optional studies; viz: Algebra or Military Tactics, Greek or Field Fortifications. Both alternatives are good stud-