

mation of the world, which we inhabit ; of the origin and progenitors of our race ; of our present duty and our future destination ; and confine us through life to the dominion of fancy, doubt, and conjecture.

Destroy this volume ; and you rob us of the consolatory expectation, excited by its predictions that the stormy cloud, which has so long hung over a suffering world, will at length be scattered ; you forbid us to hope that the hour is approaching, when nation shall no more lift up the sword against nation ; and righteousness, peace, and holy joy shall universally prevail ; and allow us to anticipate nothing, but a constant succession of wars, revolutions, crimes, and miseries, terminating only with the end of time.

Destroy this volume ; and you deprive us, at a single blow, of religion, with all the animating consolations, hopes and prospects which it affords ; and leave us nothing, but the liberty of choosing (miserable alternative !) between the cheerless gloom of infidelity, and the monstrous shadows of paganism—you unpeople heaven ; bar forever its doors against the wretched posterity of Adam ; restore to the king of terrors his fatal sting : bury hope in the same grave, which receives our bodies ; consign all who have died before us, to eternal sleep, or endless misery ; and allow us to expect nothing at death, but a similar fate. In a word, destroy this volume, and you take from us at once every thing which prevents existence from becoming of all curses the greatest. You degrade man to a situation, from which he may look up with envy to “the brutes that perish.”  
—*Extracted from a Discourse by the Rev. E. Payson.*

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## MORAL.

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### INTELLECTUAL IMPROVEMENT.

In our last we gave an article on this subject, in which was recommended a systematic and thorough course of Reading as a means of intellectual improvement. We have in this number made another selection from the same work, and we wish it may be read with that attention which the importance of the subject demands.

**CONVERSATION.**—This is known and admitted to be one of the most important of all attainments, and perhaps nothing is more desired by all intelligent young persons who reflect upon their means of influence and improvement, than conversational power. But notwithstanding this general impression in its favour, there is nothing of half its importance which is so entirely neglected in education. Almost every effort to make it a distinct object of attention in a literary seminary has either failed entirely, or resulted in producing a stiff and formal manner. Acquiring skill in conversation, therefore, must be left to individual effort. I would not recommend that you should practice conversation systematically, but that you should have in view other objects than improvement in your manner of expressing yourself. You will become interested in these objects, and consequently the danger of that stiffness and affectation, which is so common a result of efforts to improve in such an art as this, will be escaped. I will mention what these objects may be.

Make conversation a way of acquiring knowledge. Every person has undoubtedly some knowledge which would be useful or valuable. You are riding in the stage, and the rough-looking man who sits by your side appears so unat-