

propose you should write. There are so many topics that you might touch upon, in sketching such a tour, no matter how short it might be, that I should rather think it necessary to guard you against a danger incidental to its being over fruitful in discussion, than suppose you could experience aught of barrenness. Here the skill of the student would, as in a biographical sketch, be apparent in the topics he selected—while telling us, it may be, of the localities he visited, of the company he met, of the individuals he conversed with, of the additions made to his knowledge, of the character of the scenery, of the productiveness of the soil, of the appearance of the farms, of the habits and morals of the people, of the nature of the roads, as well as many other particulars which I need not to enumerate. I cannot, therefore, but think you can at all times command a theme for a short essay. The great matter, as I have already said, is, that you make a beginning; and as the practice will soon approve itself to your own minds to be in all respects excellent and profitable, you will be more easily disposed to adhere to it after it is begun.

It will be of much importance also, that the student furnish himself with a blank book of sufficient size, and that he copy into it, in a clear and legible hand, the exercises he may have written; for this will serve as a record in after years, of his progress in general intelligence, as well as in the art of committing his sentiments to writing. And here, gentlemen, in recommending such exercises as peculiarly suitable to the young student, I need scarcely remark, I am far from advising you to think of commencing the profession of authors. The truth is, the notion that none but professed authors require to bestow any attention on these studies, is an idle prejudice, which greatly retards their more general cultivation. The young student who, it may be, has been distinguished in other departments of study, excuses himself for neglecting composition, by saying, "I never intend professionally to be an author, and therefore why should I begin to write a book?" Now, who does not see the fallacy which exists in this excuse. It supposes there is no motive to cultivate the mind for its own sake, which is certainly a great fallacy, and if followed out, would in a great measure suppress the most precious and interesting parts of education altogether. It supposes there is no motive to write out our own ideas on any subject, unless we intend to send forth the same to the public in the shape of a printed volume.—Now, so far from supposing this, I would have you dismiss altogether from your minds, the idea of becoming author. You will certainly have calls enough for exercising the art of composition though you never write for the public eye. The error of supposing that all who learn to com-

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