

boundaries of science are pushed ever further and further back, with what new delight does the student of nature discover that sciences, believed to be disconnected, complement and harmonize with each other, and that laws which seemed at first distinct, are but divergent instances of a higher law! Nor are the advantages of the study of nature intellectual merely. Science not only impresses upon us how wonderfully all nature hangs together, and thus enlarges our view beyond our own petty domain, but it assists in teaching us the all-important lesson of self-sacrifice. The scientific discoveries that have made man the lord, instead of the slave, of nature, are the result of no fortunate stumbling upon truth, but of the most painstaking and sedulous inquiries; for only those whose unswerving devotion has proved them to be worthy are permitted to lift the veil of nature. The illustrious discoverers, who have done so much to benefit their race, had to give up repose and ease for severe mental toil, and—what is much more difficult—to surrender long-cherished opinions and prepossessions at the demand of truth. He who seeks, with singleness of purpose, to discover the secrets of nature, must throw aside all fancies and guesses that will not harmonize with fact, however long and fondly he has cherished them. He may “scorn delights and live laborious days” in the eager desire to verify a favourite hypothesis, and, finding after all that he has not seized the right clue, be compelled to begin his labours afresh. If we consider all the sacrifices which have thus been made by men who so yearned for truth that no false glare could induce them to swerve from their direct path, surely we at once gain high views of life, purify our minds by contact with genuine nobility, and learn the moral lesson that “we are made perfect through suffering!”

The study of the outer world is one great means of developing and strengthening the intellectual and moral powers; but, marvellous as are the wonders it discloses, it is insufficient to satisfy all the cravings of the human mind. The progress of natural science is at the same time the development of thought.

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