

who understand it ; and if you add another and another study, you will yet be individuals who have fought and conquered. Yes, if you take the whole circle of knowledge, there have been heads large enough to contain its variety, and hearts sufficiently earnest to go forward ; to descend from things in the general to things in the particular, from the comprehension of worlds to the analysis of atoms.

And, after all, the most of these men were more remarkable for the virtue of industry than the gift of intellect. At every step their power both to will and to do so increased, that no task however Herculean, no effort however prolonged, no undertaking however onerous, could daunt, much less destroy, their enterprise. Like the arm, grown from a puny and flabby member to a nervous and iron limb by long exercise, so the mind's labour only gives an endurance, which results in a settled power next to omnipotent.

Let me not be misunderstood in these assertions, nor be deemed proud in experience ; for although my head has not become grey in the pursuit of science, yet I can fully assure the young that all the peculiar opportunities of observation have gone to establish this conviction,—*that laziness is the worst monster on the way to the temple of learning ; that men are more ruled and hindered by this vice, than held back and hindered by the lack of mental powers.* The tortoise and hare will be a true and lively fable for ever. The honest, slow-paced student will steadily, quietly, and without any show reach the goal ; whilst he who depends on his intellectual swiftness, only to abuse it, will as certainly sleep on in silly presumption, and awake only to self-reproach and mortification.

I reckon it rather a blessing not to have what is called *mediocre* talent, and especially if it be united with a fixed habit of industrious thought. It often happens that a person liberally endowed by nature, will live satisfied with the mere gift ; like many others in the world who take born-rank as the sole thing wanted : whereas, in each case, the very reverse is true ; for both God and the world expect that this high position should only be a starting-point to higher attainment.

The man of lavish gifts, pleased by his very power, is not only never to increase his ability by the use, but may even become vain and satisfied, complacent and contumelious. Not so with the modest. He neither sparkles nor carries bustle in his movement,