

in astronomy, Galileo in optics, Columbus in navigation, Shakspeare in poetry, Locke in metaphysics, or Newton in mathematics? We are aware that some of these men had been educated at college, but the exalted acquirements which have handed their names down to posterity were not the fruits of college life. In everything peculiar to them, or in any way affecting their greatness, Locke and Newton were as really self-educated as Columbus and Shakspeare. These men aspired to what was unknown in their times; their researches extended beyond the supposed boundaries of science. No institution could either aid their inquiries or determine the propriety of their course. From this it is evident that the highest and most successful efforts of the mind are necessarily independent of tuition. And if the noblest achievements of which the intellect is capable, can be accomplished without a teacher, may not every inferior task be easily performed in the same manner? In a word, if able to originate science, may not the mind readily acquire that which others have originated?

5. *Incidental character of the assistance afforded by schools.* The diligent student, although pursuing his studies at school, will in fact be self-educated, for his teachers have nothing to do but hear him recite. He repeats in their hearing what he had learned alone, and as much alone, as if such an institution had never existed. It is not, therefore, too much to assert that a thorough student is necessarily his own instructor.—His industry renders assistance superfluous, and pushes him forward faster than the current of instruction could carry him, or than will allow him to profit by its favouring tendencies.

But even the dullest and most dependent scholar receives only an incidental and unimportant advantage from the office of instruction. His time, his attention, his memory and his judgment must be in constant requisition in order to gain the knowledge which he is supposed passively to imbibe. And yet these requisites comprise everything essential to self education. They have given us all the sciences which we now possess, and must give all that we are hereafter to possess. The dependence which is created by leaning upon a teacher, seems to include nothing more than the difference in facility of comprehension between

written and oral directions. That is the advantage of the one is as much greater than that of the other, as a man can teach better than a book; it is the simple difference between writing and speaking. This, to be sure, is conceding the fact that every book is a teacher, and that those who have access to books are never without a competent instructor; yet the use of books has become so common that they have ceased to be looked upon in this light, and are regarded merely as pre-requisites to instruction. Hence they are employed in schools as much as in private, and the sphere of the living teacher is reduced to hearing recitations, or, in more general terms, to securing on the part of the student a thorough acquaintance with such standard works as are embraced in his course. If an author can be understood without additional assistance, then the labours of another teacher are not necessary, and may be dispensed with whenever convenience requires. Of the possibility of dispensing even with books, we shall speak in another place.

6. *History of literature.* Education has never flourished in proportion to the multiplicity of schools. Its foundation lies deeper in human character than can be reached by such a cause. Literature and science are rarely pursued because they can be; a higher motive is requisite; a motive, the inspiration of which will render assistance useless, and sets difficulties at defiance. The origin of literature is buried in the deep shades of antiquity, and we shall forever remain ignorant of the exact circumstances under which it arose; but this is the less to be regretted since its progress, with which we are familiar, must involve the very same principles which originally gave existence to the art of writing.—Under certain circumstances individuals and nations have always devoted themselves assiduously to the cultivation of letters. This event has occurred, either when superior talents have discovered the need of learning, or when popular energy has by degrees mellowed communities from barbarism into refinement.—Literature is one of the results of activity—of that general activity upon which all improvement depends. It is remarked by Mr Keightly that many of the best works have been produced in times of great excitement. “Though we cannot conclude that literary genius is the