

not omit any of the notes and illustrations; and should you have the opportunity, you would refer to some of the books quoted by the author, for the purpose of seeing if his statements were borne out and his quotations made with correctness. But a single reading of the view would not be enough, you would thoroughly master all the details. You would satisfy yourself that you were acquainted with the general drift of it. You would consider how each general assertion was borne out by the facts and quotations of the notes, whether for each effect a sufficient cause was assigned. You would analyse, either in writing or mentally. You would not allow any sentence, any allusion, to pass without understanding it; and you would make yourself able mentally to go through the various causes which, according to Robertson, prepared the way for the fall of feudalism, and produced the rapid strides made by civilization in the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th century. The effect of the crusades of chivalry, of the influence of the church, of the study of the civil and canon law, would all fix themselves in your mind.

Having thus mastered the introduction, you would be prepared to begin with profit the work itself; and here you would follow the same plan. You would often pause after reading a paragraph, to go through it in your own mind. You would never lay the book down, without mentally going through what you had that day read; and you would constantly review what had gone before. One great secret of being successful and accurate as a student is the constant habit of reviewing. This review would sometimes take the form of a written, sometimes of a mental analysis, sometimes of self examination. You would have the subject always ready to fill up any idle time. When you had nothing else to occupy your mind, you would at once think of some person, some event, or some general statement, and would ask yourself what you knew of it. You would find writing a most important aid; you would now write an analysis of a book, or chapter; now you would write an account of some transaction,—the history of some war or the life of a particular person, gathered from various parts of the work. The administration of Cardinal Ximenes, the part taken by England in continental affairs, the expedition of the Constable Bourbon into Italy, would all be profitable subjects for writing. Again, you would sometimes examine general statements, philosophical reflections of the author. Such a passage as the following would afford you matter for an essay: "Among nations, as well as individuals the powers of imagination attain some degree of vigour before the intellectual faculties are much exercised in speculative or abstract disquisition. Men are poets before they are philosophers." You would enquire how far it is likely to be the case *a priori*, and would then see

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