

the acquisition of knowledge comes in due course, that there are ranks in which intelligence is a business, and literature a natural recreation in long hours of leisure,—and we also imagine, that there are some situations in life, shut out almost by interdict from the book of knowledge. This is a superficial way of thinking; experience broadly contradicts it; and the present time is distinguished from all that has gone before it, for offering vast means of instruction to every individual in civilized life.

Let us glance over a portion of human history, and we will find every species of difficulty—which appear like dragons guarding the tree of knowledge—nobly overcome by a long list of worthies, whose names now, are beacons to guide other aspirants in the same path. Even from the small volume before us, we may gather many valuable facts, encouraging to the man, who pants for information, although surrounded by unpropitious circumstances.

Most of the learning of the present day, is but a following the steps of others, and when certain eminences are gained in knowledge, the learner is apt to look down too proudly, and to forget the guides, the pioneers of his road, without whom, he would not only have missed gaining the height, but he would never have even imagined that such a country existed. We see, however that the difficulties of a dark and unknown road are not sufficient to detain the ardent traveller: indeed were this the case the circle of our knowledge would be extremely limited, and would only extend to the arts and sciences which the necessities and luxuries of life had forced into notice. But we find ardent men pondering on the wonders of their own nature, and of surrounding creation; and struggling for solutions to the phenomena which everywhere appeared to an enquiring eye, they advanced from the simplest facts to those of the most sublime description; not damped by the novelty and boldness of their flight, not at all deterred from the difficulties which ensured delay and which threatened defeat. Sir Isaac Newton sitting in his garden,—wrought, no doubt, in philosophical meditation—saw an apple fall to the ground; who would have expected any results from so simple an occurrence? yet the philosopher saw a general truth in the incident, he reasoned by analogy from small to greater matters, and years after, finding his