

that, for general mental culture, there is no means to be compared to the study in early life of the ancient classic languages. Not only the memory but the judgment, logical accuracy of thought, and the exercise of a fine taste are necessarily brought into requisition. In no other languages can the nicer shades of thought and feelings be studied with so much advantage. Mathematics, though more limited in its range of mental culture, is admirably adapted to train to the more rigid forms of thought and logical deduction. And it is a happy arrangement, that, at the outset of a university career, classic refinement should be combined with the more robust exercise of the logic of geometry. A basis is thus laid for the more advanced studies of mental and physical science.

Seeing that the main object in a liberal education is the culture of the mind, it is obvious that this object would not be gained by a too great range of subjects. The grand object in college training is not to store up as much loose knowledge as you can, but to master thoroughly whatever you attempt. Be ever ready to sacrifice range to thoroughness and precision. It is not uncommon to find in society men who astonish you by their varied knowledge, and yet who have no title to be regarded as learned men. On any one subject, they may want sufficient precision to be useful, or mental vigour to turn their knowledge to account, and it is quite conceivable that knowledge may be acquired in such a way as to enfeeble rather than invigorate the mental powers. Be ready to submit, then, in youth to the severest mental discipline, necessary to acquire completeness and accuracy of thought. When you pick up a pebble on the margin of the great ocean of truth, do not throw it from you to look at another, before you have thoroughly understood its nature. Look at it on every side, examine its internal structure, analyse it into its constituent elements; and not till you have thus thoroughly mastered its nature, proceed to pick up another. This, to impetuous youth, appears to be too slow a process, but be assured, that, in this way, you will ultimately gain a far wider range, and a far more thorough knowledge than you would by a more rapid but more slovenly process at the beginning. You will require, however, much self-denial to carry out this plan of study. It is a far easier task to acquire congenial knowledge than to discipline the faculties; far more agreeable to indolent minds to engage in

mental dissipation and desultory reading, than sternly to restrict yourself to some task, requiring the exercise of severe thought, which you must and ought to master.

When I speak of limited range and thorough mastery, do not suppose that I speak of limiting the range of the mental faculties to be brought into play. The grand object of a liberal education is to bring into harmonious exercise and culture the whole range of the mental faculties, though, to effect this, a wide range of subjects is neither necessary nor advisable. It has been frequently a counsel to youth to select some sphere of thought or knowledge at an early period, and through life to devote themselves exclusively to this one thing, as the only means of attaining ultimate distinction. No doubt a man must in after life select some special pursuit, or some one sphere of thought, if he would gain the highest eminence. But I could conceive no counsel to the young student more unwise than that which would lead him to neglect a full and harmonious discipline of the mind, a discipline which does not necessarily interfere with a special devotion to one pursuit in after life. No man is warranted, merely for the purpose of distinction, to neglect the due culture of the mental powers and susceptibilities God hath given him, and upon the full and harmonious development of which his dignity, as a being endowed with reason, depends. A man may have a taste and special talent for mathematics, and he may be convinced that he ought to make mathematical studies the aim of his life, and to regard this as the sphere in which he can best fulfil the purpose of his being; but this does not warrant the youth at college to neglect those other studies which are needful for the due development of his character. Nay, the corrective of other studies is all the more needed to preserve him from the onesidedness of character which an all-absorbing taste is apt to produce. It is from a neglect of this salutary caution that we often find a man attaining the highest pinnacle of ambition in one department of science, and at the same time, measured as a man may be, distinguished only for his general littleness of character. When you meet with a mathematician or physicist, who has obtained a world-wide fame, you are apt to think you must meet with a man whom you must necessarily reverence and respect. But how often are you sadly disappointed in finding a man who has no grasp of thought, no generous sympathies, and in short, no true

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