

people, namely, that people should study books which are devoted to their own calling, profession, or pursuit in life.

Of course there is a danger here. "A man of one book" is not a pleasant kind of companion; and a man of one class of books is little better. A physician whose whole study is given to diseases and remedies will not be an educated man, and I doubt whether he will be a better medical adviser than one who can spare some time for general literature. A clergyman who reads nothing but theology may know the history of all the controversies, but he will probably not know nearly enough of the thing with which, after God, he has most concern—the mind of man.

Here we are between two dangers, the danger of dissipation and the danger of undue concentration; and both are distinct dangers. I remember knowing a very distinguished fellow of a college at Oxford, a well-read theologian, well up also in the history of philosophy and of science—a man so able and interesting that one sometimes wondered what it was that was wanting to him. One day he told me that he never read fiction or poetry, and then I found out. But I am told there are some clergymen—I hope none such will go forth from the theological school of this University—who never read even theology in any wide and deep sense of the word, but only old sermons, for certain practical purposes. If there are such, I am glad I am not a layman and one of their parishioners. Some one says that "a man should know everything of something, and something of everything." It is a great deal to require, but it contains a very important truth, although in an exaggerated form. A man should know his own business as well as he can learn it; but he should know a little about a good many things be-

sides. These principles, then, may well guide our studies. A man may read a good deal without being a mere smatterer; but he certainly will be this, unless he also concentrates his reading on some special department of study, of thought or of work.

3. A piece of advice, often given, may be repeated with some limitations and qualifications, namely, that we should *read what we like to read*, that in the choice of subjects of study and of books *we should follow our tastes and inclinations*.

We have many able thinkers and writers who give us this counsel; and we have others who warn us of its limitations. Thus Sir J. Lubbock, in his lecture on books, remarks:

"In reading—it is most important to select subjects in which one is interested. I remember years ago consulting Mr. Darwin as to the selection of a course of study. He asked me what interested me most, and advised me to choose that subject. This, indeed, applies to the work of life generally."

To a similar effect, Dr. Johnson, as reported by Boswell, remarks: "I am always for getting a boy forward in his learning, for that is a sure good. I would let him at first read any English book which happens to engage his attention; because you have done a great deal when you have brought him to have entertainment from a book. He will get better books afterwards."

And again, "Snatches of reading will not make a Bentley or a Clarke. They are, however, in a certain degree, advantageous. I would put a child into a library (where no unfit books are)"—mark the limitation—"and let him read at his choice. A child should not be discouraged from reading anything that he takes a liking to, from a notion that it is above his reach." This is an excellent point, and has been insisted on by