

they are all the results of the faithful application of the principles of the inductive method. Nature around us is now recognized as the grand field to which attention is to be directed, and our energies bent. Within her is contained our whole store of knowledge; and to observe her closely and examine her faithfully is the sure road to attain truth and to avoid error. Look abroad upon the face of society, and see what marvellous changes have been wrought. The forces of nature, long supposed to be the capricious manifestations of a god or gods, now wearing a frown of vengeance, or again beaming with loving smiles, have been shown to be uniform in operation and reliable in character. The lightnings of heaven, which were wont to flash terror into the hearts of an ignorant people, have been chained and made the willing subjects of man. By it oceans are bridged, and the thought of the moment invested with an omnipresence which to our forefathers would be incredible. The most distant nations are brought into communion. Space has been annihilated, and time-deprived of duration. The most distant nations are brought into mental communion. Mankind have become a grand unity—a united body, whose parts are inseparably related, and the affection of one part distributed instantaneously to every other. Thought is no longer latent;—it is developed, living, and self-creative. From being abstract it has become practical;—from being directed to unattainable ideals, between which and the real there existed no possible ground of union, it now creates, from a knowledge of the real, an attainable ideal, the possibility of whose attainments is measured by comparison with undeniable facts. The speculative and logical faculties of our nature are reconciled—the practical and theoretical harmonized.

The active character of the age assumes a variety of forms. As distinguished from the last age, it is an external and practical activity. There is no subject left untouched,—no field left untilled. Thought and its results, which were before merely local in their influence, have, through the agency of the printing press, become universal and cosmopolitan. The seeds of knowledge are thrown broad-cast over a soil which has been for ages preparing to receive it. The goddess of liberty has descended, once more erected her shrine and receives worshippers. Happiness is ascertained to be causatively related to obedience to certain invariable laws,—misery to be the inevitable result of disobedience. For this reason, the physical sciences, which connect themselves most intimately with human well-being, have become the objects of vigorous prosecution. Thought exercises lordship over the boundless domain of nature; she treads with fearless step,—she reigns with undisputed sway. The characteristic activity of the age has assumed a visible and tangible form. It is commercial, when the products of distant soils are wafted with marvellous certainty to our very doors; when mighty ships and steamers plough the ocean, defiant of wind and tide; when the shrill steam whistle resounds in our ears; when the din of great cities is heard afar off; where continually ply busy manufactories, sacred to the genius of human labour. It is social, when legislators are studiously devising the best means as