

But while the great importance of education in the abstract, is too generally admitted to require discussion, there will be found to be considerable diversity of opinion, and, we think, no little misapprehension, concerning the proper standard of education for a country, and the order of institutions which ought to be established in it. There is, we think, on this continent especially, a tendency to fix the scale of the institutions devoted even to what is termed a liberal education, by much too low; proceeding from considerations which are termed practical, but which are in reality, superficial, and unsound. Most people are disposed to reason in such a way as this. What, supposing my wishes unrestrained by deficiency in means—what would I wish a son of mine to learn? These limits must mark out what I conscientiously believe to be for the advantage of youth in general, and all beyond them is to be regarded as unprofitable.—Now we hold that his hasty jump at this conclusion, in all probability, leads into a very serious error. For, the education which may be fitting him to give a son, instead of regulating the education of the society of which he is a member, must in a great degree be regulated by it.

Man is so dependent on his fellows, that the additions which education may make to his happiness or his power are, in a great degree, limited by the attainments of those among whom he is placed. Hence one may easily be over-educated for the sphere in which he is to move. The reader probably recollects the story of the young Indians who were sent to college, and whom on their return, their friends declared the white men had ruined. They were neither hunters, nor fishers, or ever like to become so. They sent none back; and while they remained mere savages of

the woods, they did right in keeping them at home. A man whose intellect science has elevated, and whose taste literature has refined, is almost as much out of place, in some situations, as the learned savage in the woods. But though it is an easy matter for a man to be over-educated, we hold that it is impossible for a nation to be so, because unlike the individual, if it surpass other nations, its course, instead of being impeded by the circumstance, will only be the brighter and more triumphant. There are not therefore, as we conceive, any other bounds to the extent of the means which the legislator ought to provide for the cultivation of literature and the sciences, than those arising from the want of the funds necessary for providing for them, or the want of the inclination to take advantage of them. As man's happiness and greatness spring from, and depend upon, the perfection of his moral and intellectual nature, the more completely their principles are expanded—the more fully they are elaborated—the greater and the happier he must be. Search the whole world round and see, if, in countries possessing equal territorial advantages, the rank which each holds in the scale of nations be not pretty accurately marked by the scale of learning and science in it, and the more or less flourishing condition of its academic institutions. The cultivation of every study indeed, calling into action the perceptive, the intellectual, or the moral powers, is an addition to the healthy energy of the man, and must ultimately be felt by him as a source of new pleasure, new power, or new fame. As for the pleasures springing from national literature and science in an age, where at least such fruits of these, as are most easily plucked, are so generally relished, it is surely needless to enlarge on them. As