

important to know the place where our operations will soon be directed as it is known that Halicarnassus was the capital of Caria, or that there were 23 cities of the Volscians in the Campagna of Rome. I will give you one more instance, and it is from the Bible, in regard to which you might have supposed better things. (*A laugh.*) You are all aware that in the last session of Parliament Mr. Bright very facetiously denominated certain gentlemen by a name derived from a cave. (*Laughter and cheers.*) Well, I assure you gentlemen, there is not one person I met in twenty—and I speak of people of education—who knew anything about the Cave of Adullam—(*loud laughter and cheers*)—and I was under the melancholy and mournful necessity of explaining to them what it meant, and thus pointing the arrow that was aimed at my own breast. (*Great laughter and cheers.*) Now the danger of this kind of study is, that our attention being fixed so much on the words, we take everything that is in these books for granted. (Mr. Lowe then gave a negative catalogue of what an educated Englishman might be in total ignorance of.) He will probably know nothing whatever of the anatomy of his own body; he will not have the slightest idea of the difference between his veins and his arteries, or whether the spleen is on the right side or the left. He will have no education in the simplest truths of physics; he will not be able to explain the barometer or the thermometer; he will know nothing of the simplest laws of animal or vegetable life; he may know nothing whatever of arithmetic; and that defect sticks to him all through life. He writes an execrable hand; for, perhaps, the most important accomplishment a man can have is totally neglected. I know a most eminent man, who took a first-class honour at Oxford, and one of the things by which he got it was an English essay, in which there were forty-six words misspelt. (*Laughter.*) He may know nothing whatever of modern geography; or that of his own country; he need not know anything whatever of the history of England. (*Laughter and cheers.*) I knew an instance not long ago of a gentleman who obtained high honors at a University, and became a contributor to a periodical, and who, when it was suggested to him by the gentleman that managed it, that he should illustrate some fact by reference to Lord Melbourne's Ministry, said he had never heard of Lord Melbourne's Ministry. (*Loud laughter and applause.*) He need know nothing whatever of modern history, or how the present polity of Europe came into effect; he need know nothing of mediæval history, and that has become a matter of most serious importance, because, as we all know, one of the greatest schisms that have arisen in the Church of England has come from people forming most exaggerated and absurd ideas of the delightful perfection of everything in that dreadful period, the middle of the dark ages. (*Laughter.*) They have done so through sheer ignorance of that which they ought to know, and they have actually become persuaded that the best thing modern society, with all its appliances and improvements, could do, would be to return as fast as possible to the state of things that existed when the first crusade was undertaken. (*Great laughter.*) There is another most melancholy thing, and that

is the utter ignorance of the antiquities and laws of England. The educated Englishman knows the antiquities and laws of Greece and Rome, but of our English antiquities and laws, which are so bound up with our freedom and our everyday business, he knows nothing whatever. We have, I may say boldly, a literature unparalleled in the world. (*Cheers.*) But which of our great classical authors is a young man required to read in order to obtain the highest honours which our educational institutions can give him? He studies in the most minute manner the literature of Greece and Rome; but as for Chaucer, Spenser, or any of our earlier classics, or the great dramatists and writers of the reigns of Elizabeth and Charles, it never occurs to him to read them; and the consequence is that the language is impoverished. The noble English of our forefathers drops out of use, and the minds of our young men are employed in stringing together a few words out of the Latin poets into execrable hexameters. (*Laughter.*) Then, as to modern languages, there is some feeble attempt being made to teach them now, but nothing effectual; and surely if the English language is to have a preference over modern languages, modern languages ought to have a preference over the ancient. I have been abroad with a party of half-a-dozen first class Oxford men, none of whom could speak a word of French or German to order anything we wanted; and if the waiter had not been better educated than what we were (*loud laughter*) and known some other language than his own, we might have all starved. (*Laughter.*) I think then, you will agree with me that, as Dr. Johnson said of the provisions in the Highland inn, "The negative catalogue is very copious." (*Laughter.*) I therefore sum up what I have to say on this point by this remark, that our education does not communicate to us the means of obtaining knowledge, and that it does not communicate the means of communicating knowledge. I have spoken only just now of modern history and modern languages, but what are these compared with the boundless field that nature opens before us, the new world that chemistry is expanding before us, that old world that geology has called into existence, the wonderful generalization in regard to plants and animals, and to all those noble studies and speculations which are the glory and the distinctions, and the life-blood of the times in which we live, and of which our youth remain, almost without exception, in total ignorance? It is not too much to say that at present the man who is really well educated has generally begun his education after it was supposed to have closed—after all had been done for him that the present miserably contracted and poor system could do. He has to begin to educate himself over again, with the feeling that he has wasted the best and most precious years of his life in things either useless and unprofitable, not unlovely in themselves, but which were the mere by-paths—the fringes and appendages of the solid acquisitions that constitute the mental stock of a gentleman—a well educated man. (*Cheers.*) Well, the study of the dead languages and pure mathematics are noble and valuable studies, and if that was all I should not object; but you know that you cannot give a premium to one study without in some