A PREFATORY LETTER.

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The first is, that the oldest Essay of the whole, that "On the Educational Value of the Natural History Sciences," contains a view of the nature of the differences between living and not-living bodies out of which I have long since grown.

Secondly, in the same paper, there is a statement concerning the method of the mathematical sciences, which, repeated and expanded elsewhere, brought upon me, during the meeting of the British Association at Exeter, the artillery of our eminent friend Professor Sylvester.

No one knows better than you do, how readily I should defer to the opinion of so great a mathematician if the question at issue were really, as he seems to think it is, a mathematical one. But I submit, that the dictum of a mathematical athlete upon a difficult problem which mathematics offers to philosophy, has no more special weight, than the verdict of that great pedestrian Captain Barclay would have had, in settling a disputed point in the physiology of locomotion.

The genius which sighs for new worlds to conquer beyond that surprising region in which "geometry, algebra, and the theory of numbers melt into one another like sunset tints, or the colours of a dying dolphin," may be of comparatively little service in the cold domain (mostly lighted by the moon, some say) of philosophy. And the more I think of it, the more does our friend seem to me to fall into the position of one of those "verständige Leute," about whom he makes so apt a quotation from Goethe. Surely he has not duly considered two points. The first, that I am in no way

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