

And now, if I am asked, what is the great and distinguishing feature of such Institutions? the short answer would be, the diffusion of Science. The word itself is simply knowledge; but, in the course of time it came to have an understood meaning, and to include within its single designation many departments of great importance. I believe it is not contended that the divisions into which it is arranged can be very plainly or distinctly marked out. If in a popular way, I might be allowed to describe them, I should say, that the word includes Arithmetic, Mathematics, Algebra, and Natural Philosophy; and this latter, the noblest of all the Physical Sciences, comprehends Chemistry, Geology, Mineralogy, Astronomy, and Natural History; and this latter again includes Botany and Zoology, the knowledge of animals; Ornithology, history of Birds; Amphibia, treating of animals belonging both to earth and water; Ichthyology, which treats of Fishes; and Entomology, which treats of Insects.

If such be the list of subjects embraced by the word Science, how hopeless does the task appear of embracing them all? Yet, it is astonishing what intellectual victories some men have achieved on the field of Science! sometimes, indeed, acquired at the expense of health and even of life itself.

But it is most natural that a man should follow such branches as suit best with his own tastes, or accord with pursuits in life which he chiefly intends to follow. "A little learning is a dangerous thing — Drink deep, or taste not of the Pierian Spring," says the poet; and so indeed it is, if we permit it to foster our pride and self conceit. Yet I cannot but think it extremely desirable, that every man should at all times, and in all places, add as much as he can to his stock of general information.

Remember that education bears a far higher and wider scope than is popularly understood. It is well, very well, that all should be taught to read, write, and know how to count.