

led him to the discovery of the circulation of the blood. The apple which fell on Newton aroused his meditations on the subject of gravitation. A discussion on the nervous fluid, Locke tells us, gave rise to his Essay on the Human Understanding. A chance observation of Jenner led to vaccination, and of Galvani, opened the field of galvanism; and the unforeseen result of a lucky experiment, led Laennec to mediate auscultation. These may be taken as examples of the usual way by which gifted minds arrive at the laws of things observed, and by which, in many cases, they proceed from things known, to the determination of things previously ignored.

From which it appears, that in many cases it is not in our power to separate the origin of a science from its maturity; for in the attempt so to do, the science itself often vanishes, and we have left merely the thought or fact, which although the accidental incentive to investigation or discovery, or even fundamental in the science, was perhaps long before known alike to philosophers and to the multitude. And there seems as little reason in tracing, for example, the science of electricity to him who first noticed the attractive and repulsive actions between amber when rubbed and light bodies—whether he were a sage of Greece, or some fisherman on the shores of the Baltic—as there would be in tracing the science of universal gravitation to him who first observed the curve made by a projectile.