

a good place to stop in his intellectual course ; after he has spent a long life in study, he finds the further he goes the more widely does the boundless field of intelligence open before him. Give up, then, all idea of finishing your education. The sole object of the course of discipline at any literary institution in our land is not to finish, but just to show you how to begin. The objects of study are of several kinds ; some of the most important I shall enumerate.

1. To increase our intellectual powers. Every one knows that there is a difference of ability in different minds, but it is not so distinctly understood that every one's abilities may be strengthened by a kind of culture adapted expressly to this purpose.

2. The acquisition of knowledge. If there is any thing most manifest in God's intentions in regard to employment for man, it is, that he should spend a very considerable portion of his time upon earth in acquiring knowledge. The whole economy of nature is such as to allure man to the investigation of it, and the whole structure of his mind is so framed as to qualify him exactly for the work. If a person begins in early life, and even as late as twenty, endeavouring every day to learn something which he did not know before, he will make an almost insensible, but a most rapid progress. The field of his intellectual visions will widen and extend, and his powers of mind will be increased ; and if his spiritual progress keeps pace as it ought with his intellectual advancement, he is with the divine assistance and blessing, exalting himself higher and higher in the state of being.

3. The acquisition of skill. I point out separately the distinct objects which intellectual effort ought to have in view, that my readers may ascertain whether they are doing something to accomplish them all.

A young man at college will study his demonstration in the higher mathematics in the morning, for the purpose of improving and strengthening his powers. He will listen to a chemical or philosophical lecture, or study botany in the fields, in the afternoon, to obtain knowledge ; and in the evening he will practice in his debating society, to acquire skill. These three things are distinct and independent, but all equally important in the business of life. If one is cultivated and the others neglected, the man is very poorly qualified for usefulness ; and yet nothing is more common than such half educated men.

Take, for example, a young mother of a family. She ought, at all times, to be making such intellectual progress as to secure a proportional attention to all the objects I have named. She ought also to make systematic efforts to acquire information, by reading and by conversation, so that she can the more fully understand the means of influence and usefulness within her reach. She ought also to adopt plans for increasing her skill ; by learning, for example, system in all her affairs ; and by studying improvement in the manner in which her duties are performed. By these means she may acquire dexterity in every pursuit, an important influence over other minds, and especially a greater skill in interesting, and instructing, and governing her children.

I shall close the chapter with a few directions in regard to such means of improvement as may be privately resorted to by individuals in their desire to improve.

1. **READING.**—There are several detached directions which will be of great service if they are faithfully followed.

Read systematically. I mean by this, do not take up, and read any books because they merely chance to fall in your way. But you must not go into the opposite extreme of drawing up for yourself a set of rules, full enough to occupy