

tractive that you do not imagine that he has any thing to say which can interest you. But draw him into conversation, and you will find that he is a sea-captain, who has visited a hundred ports, and can tell you many interesting stories about every clime. He will like to talk if he finds you interested to hear, and you may make, by his assistance, a more important progress in really useful knowledge during that day's ride, than by the study of the best lesson from a book that ever was learned. Avail yourselves of every opportunity which Providence may place within your reach.

You may do much to anticipate and to prepare for conversation. You expect, I will suppose, to be thrown into the company of a gentleman residing in a distant city. Now, before you meet him, go to such sources of information as are within your reach, and learn all you can about that city. Now you cannot read the brief notices of this sort without having your curiosity excited, and you will go into the company of the stranger eager to avail yourself of the opportunity of learning something full and satisfactory, from an eye-witness, of the scenes which the book so briefly described. By this means, too, the knowledge of books and of conversation, of study and of real life, will be brought together; and this is the most important object for you to secure.

You may make a more general preparation for the opportunities of conversation which you will enjoy. Ascertain what are the common topics in the place in which you reside, and learn all you can about them, so that you may be prepared to understand fully what you hear, and thus be qualified to engage intelligently and with good effect in conversation.

On the same principle, when you meet with any difficulties in your reading, or in your studies, or in private meditation, consider who of your acquaintances will be able to assist you in regard to each; and when the next opportunity occurs, you can refer them and give yourself and your friend equal pleasure by the conversation you shall thus introduce.

Make conversation a means of digesting your knowledge. Knowledge must not only be received by the mind, but it must be analyzed and incorporated with it, so as to form a part of the very mind itself, and then, and not till then, can the knowledge be properly said to be possessed! A reader may peruse these very remarks on conversation thoroughly, and fully understand all that I say, and yet the whole may lie in the mind an undigested mass, which never can nourish or sustain. On the other hand, it may be made a subject for thought and reflection; the principles it explains may be applied to the circumstances of the reader; the hints may be carried out, and resolutions formed for acting in accordance with the views presented. By these means the reader becomes possessed really and fully, of new ideas on the subject of conversation.

Now, conversation affords one of the most important means of digesting what is read and heard. Two persons reading separately come afterwards together, and each one describes his own book, and relates the subject of what it contains as far as he has read. By this means each acquires the power of language and expression, digests and fixes that which he has read, and also gives information to his companion.

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*Knowledge and Ignorance.*—The man of knowledge lives eternally after his death, while the members are reduced to dust beneath the tomb. But the ignorant man is dead, even though he walks upon the earth: he is numbered with living men, and yet existeth not.—*Arabian Author.*