

thing impracticable in the nature of science; it can neither be monopolized by the learned nor lost for want of prerequisites on the part of the student. Did truth disclose itself only to minds previously developed according to the popular notion, then education would be the formation of capacities, and industry could avail nothing for want of constitutional power. But, except as one fact may help to know another, the learned have no pre-eminence above what nature has conferred. The natural equality of human understandings is not disturbed by the acquisitions of diligence; and hence we very frequently see those who have little of what is called learning making important discoveries, while the more learned waste their time in fruitless speculations.

*Analogy.*—In every other pursuit mankind are necessarily self-directed; and it is singular indeed if the acquisition of knowledge violates the analogy which everywhere else obtains in active life. Is man less able to direct his mental than his physical energies? or, rather, is he less able to direct the energies of his mind when applied to the acquisition of science than when applied to the acquisition of physical objects?—We must either suppose that some fatality attends the use of his faculties in the one instance from which they are free in the other, or admit that he is equally competent whether the objects of his actions are physical or intellectual. The only school for great achievements is the common theatre of human enterprise, where every man is a master, and all are learners. The agriculturist, the mechanic, the statesman and the warrior are thrown upon their own resources, and compelled to act, not only without direction, but frequently in opposition to the

most maturest counsel. In the highest department of science—that of invention, the same necessity prevails. Nothing can be done until the mind acts for itself independent of all authority. Even where much less than this is aimed at, science obliges all her votaries to an independent course. If they would throw themselves forward to future ages, it can only be by attaining such indisputable excellence as will suffer no depreciation from the lapse of time—by exceeding the standard of their own to meet the anticipated progress of future generations—by successful competition with the past, the present, and the future. That is, instead of following authorities, one must himself become an authority in order to secure a lasting reputation.—Such exertions as are required by an enterprise like this cannot be the subject of tuition. They demand an energy and a knowledge as incommunicable as genius itself. Thus, we have seen that in all physical pursuits, and in those intellectual operations, which, from their greatness are removed from the sphere of scholastic supervision, the mind is quite equal to the task of self-direction, and cannot by any possibility, be subjected to pupillage. Under these circumstances, can we conceive it to be impracticable for any ordinary intellect to direct its own efforts successfully in the pursuit of knowledge, and especially that kind of knowledge which is usually taught in our schools?

In concluding this chapter, I have only to say that if these remarks have the appearance of claiming too much for self-education, the result was unavoidable. Facts admit of no compromise. If the human mind is incompetent to this task, it is capable of no other.

Hoosier.

## INFANT SCHOOLS.

A LECTURE MADE BEFORE THE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION IN CONNECTION WITH THE MCGILL NORMAL SCHOOL,

BY PROFESSOR HICKS.

THE INFANT SCHOOL and its system, although intended for the training of a large number of children assembled under one roof, must not be considered as only deserving the attention of those professionally engaged in instructing the young. They have claims upon all. The mother who desires to train

up her children mentally and morally in such a manner as to ensure, in a great degree their future happiness, the sister who has her duties to perform towards the younger branches of the family, the father, brother, indeed all may profit by investigating the principles upon which infant instruction is based. Infant