

tate upon questions of every description of great importance that afford not one spark of interest to a man who is accustomed to read what conduces to his intellectual gratification.

Such a man is incapable of discussing the obscure questions that determine the most important actions in public and private life. He may try to investigate these abhorred but vital principles, but his mental organism, not disciplined for such labor, he cannot confine himself to such drudgery, and he is compelled, and often with great natural talents, to abandon higher investigations to those who are prepared to enter upon them. In the study of mathematics the student is compelled to bend all his energies to attain the desired knowledge. Language is scantily employed. There is no interval of high sounding words and rhetorical phrases, but it is a concentrated mass of sound ideas, arranged in the most logical succession according to the most consummate system. There are no flights of fancy to tickle the taste; there are no places of refuge for those flying from subtile points. But it is the province of uncorrupted reason. It enters into the very essence of things, and does not concern itself with the clothing of words that conceals so many sublime truths from the view. If a man undertakes to master such a science, his attention must be fixed and unswerving. Aversion to mental exertion must be divested in the beginning, or he will fail before he reaches the threshold of the magnificent edifice. When apparently unfathomable mysteries stare him on every page he must accustom himself to work under the most unpropitious circumstances. He will sometimes find some demonstration beyond his reach; the bright rays of hope may disappear amid a cloud of disappointment, still, if his resolution is steel-clad, he eventually succeeds. This inspires a man with confidence in his own powers. He thinks that if he can solve the unintelligible and mysterious problems of mathematics, he can safely defy the subtlety of any subject to evade a successful scrutiny. His mind and attention are completely under subjection, for he will never have again to survey any field of intellectual investigation so wearisome