

Lecture connecting the 3^d. & 4th April 2^d 1805.

The last Lecture completed our sketch of the history of human learning, from the Grecian to the Roman Republic, and from thence down to the dark ages; and after them, from the first dawn of light down to the present century. He who is best acquainted with Greek & Roman history, and with the middle as well as modern history, will at once see that it is a mere sketch; an outline that may be filled up at your leisure by Robertson's history of Charles V. The writings of Petrarch, Profius's life of Lorenzo de Medici The 1st Vol. of Blackstone's commentaries, and the lives of several of the Popes, written by different hands, together with Voltaire's sketches of History.

Our two last lectures have proved our assertion, that there ~~are~~ always has been two Empires commanding the world, viz the Empire of kings, and Rulers of states; and those who act under them; and the Empire of learning, or philosophy. This, we have seen formed a new species of Empire or command, infinitely more extensive than all others, and which survives after kings, conquerors, & Legislators have returned to dust. Who can doubt, after what we have seen of the truth of Lord Bacon's aphorism that "knowledge is power". — But when external knowledge

But when extensive knowledge, and great natural talents, unite with ~~great talents~~ extraordinary civil or magisterial power, joined with great personal courage, as in an Alexander, a Cæsar, or Bonaparte, it forms a force that has hitherto been found irresistible. —

We have spoken in our ^{three} past lectures of the pleasure and advantages of the study of Nature; and of that natural desire of knowledge, called curiosity as we said, was most commonly an indication of a vigorous intellect. In the course of education we have not to lament so much the want of abilities as the want of energy. The difficulty is not to make a youth comprehend a thing, ~~as~~ but to make him desirous to comprehend a thing. One of the principal intentions in these lectures, is to diminish that wonder, & admiration for great names & celebrated works, so common among youth. Every science has been advanced towards perfection by the emulous diligence of contemporary students, & the gradual discoveries of one age improving on another. The present superb structure of philosophy is the result of the joint labor & progressive exertions of a number of learned men in every age of the world. We would not have any of you imagine that you are incapable of performing any thing that ever man performed under the same circumstances, and with the like helps. Now the capability, or aptitude for understanding is a latent or

dormant powers within us, when it is not roused & vivified
by those energies of the soul, called the passions. Now the love of
fame, glory, or the love of power, or in one word the ruling
passion, is that which most commonly rouses this latent ability
unto action. Also, I say to you in the language of
Shakespear

" Surely He that made us, gave us not
" That capability and godlike reason
" To rust in us unused."

We must now turn back to some of the doctrines of ^{certain} some of
the antient Greek philosophers, because we there find
the first glimmerings of that philosophy which is the fun-
-dation or lower stratum on which our own is built.
The history of philosophy is the his.^y of the hu.^m understanding; shewing the extent of its
capacity, the causes of its perversion & the means by w.^h it may be recalled from
its unprofitable wanderings & made subservient to the happiness of mankind.
Such a hist.^y comprises a faithful register of discoveries in the world of
science; & is a profitable guide towards unknown regions. It shews
how far science has been hitherto successfully prosecuted, & in what in-
-stances imperfectly explored. It instructs the student in what is to be
avoided, & points out what yet remains to be done. It puts him upon
his guard against the repetition of fruitless attempts, & enables him to dis-
-tinguish new doctrines from old ones; but it would require at least
20 Lectures to do justice to so copious a subject, whereas we are compelled
to crowd all we must say on it into three.

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