

modes of teaching others, but said nothing—or, what amounted to the same thing, nothing to the purpose—on the best mode of teaching one's self. And as my circumstances and position, at the time when I had most occasion to consult them, were those of by much the largest class of the people of this and every other civilized country,—for I was one of the many millions who need to learn, and yet have no one to teach them,—I could not help deeming the omission a serious one. I have since come to think, however, that a formal treatise on self-culture might fail to supply the want. Curiosity must be awakened ere it can be satisfied; nay, once awakened, it never fails in the end fully to satisfy itself; and it has occurred to me, that by simply laying before the working men of the country the “Story of my Education,” I may succeed in first exciting their curiosity, and next, occasionally at least, in gratifying it also. They will find that by far the best schools I ever attended are schools open to them all,—that the best teachers I ever had are (though severe in their discipline) always easy of access,—and that the special *form* at which I was, if I may say so, most successful as a pupil, was a form to which I was drawn by a strong inclination, but at which I had less assistance from my brother men, or even from books, than at any of the others. There are few of the natural sciences which do not lie quite as open to the working men of Britain and America as geology did to me.

My work, then, if I have not wholly failed in it,