

nation which requires them least¹ possesses the most and the best translations of foreign authors. But the quality of greatest value for science which springs from the cosmopolitan and historical spirit is that of completeness and thoroughness of research.

34.
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Secondly, the German man of science was not only thorough, but was as little as the German philosopher or classicist had been, an isolated thinker. He was neither the member of an academy only, nor a solitary genius reduced to the resources of his own study. He lived mostly at a university, surrounded by others, whose labours came in contact with his own, or who treated the same subject from a different point of view. He had thus to define the limits of his science, and to see that no part of the common field was left uncultivated and unexplored. His object could not be to produce simply a work of individual greatness or of finished artistic merit; his work was an integral portion of the one great science; his

¹ This must not be misunderstood. A knowledge of the masterpieces of foreign literature was as necessary to the development of the German mind as it is to that of any other nation; it was and is more complete there than in any other country: what I mean is, that as a knowledge of French and English has been for a long time so common among the educated classes in Germany, translations are more easily dispensed with there than in other countries. In spite of that, German literature abounds in excellent translations of the classics of France and England both in general literature and in science. It is also interesting to note that no modern language has succeeded so well in imitating foreign and classical metres as the

German, hexameters having become domiciled in Germany through Voss and Goethe, the Alcaic and Sapphic metres through Klopstock and Herder, the more complicated stanzas through Platen, and above all through Donner's excellent renderings of the Greek dramatists. Rückert excelled in the imitation and reproduction of Persian, Indian, and Arabic poetry, and through him and Friedrich Bodenstedt German literature has been enriched by many lines of which it would be difficult to say whether their home was in Germany or in the far East, so perfectly is the spirit and diction reproduced. The well-known 'Weisheit des Brahmanen' of Rückert, and Bodenstedt's 'Mirza Schaffy' are examples.