ral and engaging, they are forced by the traditions of the past to attack and master if they can those abstract subjects which are better fitted for the contemplative mind of maturer years.

Aside from the enjoyment to be derived from the pursuit of the natural sciences, there is the more important result of their utility. No one man can master all that is known in these diverse fields, but he can master sufficient of those sciences bearing upon his profession or occupation to be of incalculable service to him in its prosecution. This is the day of specialists, and they who are the best armed and equipped by scientific training may easily distance their less fortunate competitors in the race for existence.

Science is yet in its infancy; and no one is bold enough at this time to predict where her limits shall be in the unseen, unknowable future.

The Margaret Cheney Reading-Room.

A FEW paragraphs in previous issues of THE TECH have called attention to the reading-room lately opened for the women students at the Institute; but as these statements have been somewhat misleading, the correct presentation may not be inappropriate.

The necessity of the room was early recognized, it is true, but was never fully met until the present year. Even in 1872, when the new building upon the triangular lot was contemplated, a provision for women was made in the plans then drawn; but it was reserved for "the new building," just completed, to embody the idea then proposed.

The Lowell Free Courses gave opportunities for chemical instruction as early as 1868. In this year and during each succeeding winter till 1875, a few earnest women here sought the scientific culture they desired. This work of the Lowell courses the men were able to supplement by attendance upon the classes of the Institute. In 1875, however, the professor's private laboratory was opened for quantitative analysis to the most promising of these women; and, as the quality of their work in this branch of chemistry removed all doubt as to the ability of women for advanced scientific study, a separate laboratory was provided in the following year, to secure for the steadily increasing number of applicants enlarged facilities for work, as well as to supply the long-felt want for special accommodations. For the Woman's Laboratory to meet fully this latter necessity was impossible; in fact, well do the young ladies now at the Institute remember a time of poverty, in which they were forced either to wander through halls and corridors with wraps over their arms, or else to appropriate the backs of library chairs for hooks and pegs.

But these things are of the past, they belong to the dark ages; a new era has dawned, is even now upon us.

The proposed "new building" pointed to the possibility of a realization of the long-cherished hope,—a ladies' private reading-room. When it was decided that a special room should be thus set apart, it was the happy thought of Mr. Ross, of the Corporation, to name it in memory of Margaret Cheney, who had but lately died, and who had long been connected with the Institute. Miss Cheney, the daughter of Mr. Seth Cheney, the artist, was one of the class which entered the Lowell Free Course of '73-74; and each year till her death, with the exception of those spent in travel, was she an earnest and enthusiastic student. Had she continued at the Institute a few months longer, she would have completed the work of the chemical course.

To those who knew Margaret Cheney, the form of memorial suggested by Mr. Ross was the only fitting one; while to those of us who have since learned something of her character, its appropriateness is apparent.

For the permanent use of the room as a woman's study the government of the Institute accepted the sum of $1,000, subscribed by personal friends of Miss Cheney; the immediate family generously contributed funds for furnishing the room, while other friends have kindly helped to fill the bookcase and cover the walls. Although the room does not invite luxurious case, the women students may here find, under