"I think it possible, my dear, that the pig might be taught to know the letters at sight one from the other, and that his keeper had some private sign, by which he directed him to each that was wanted; but that he had an idea of spelling I can never believe, nor are animals capable of attaining human sciences, because for these human faculties are requisite; and no art of man can change the nature of anything, though he may be able to improve that nature to a certain degree, or at least to call forth to view powers which would otherwise be hidden from us. As far as this can be done consistently with our higher obligations, it may be an agreeable amusement, but will never answer any important purpose to mankind; and I would advise you, Harriet, never to give countenance to those people who show what they call learned animals, as you may assure yourself they practise great barbarities upon them, of which starving them almost to death is most likely among the number; and you may, with the money such a sight would cost you, procure for yourself a rational amusement, or even relieve some wretched creature from extreme distress. But, my dear, it is now time for you to retire to rest; I will therefore bid you good-night."