

NEUTRALITY—RUFUS CHOATE.

nations in that behalf. And we do hereby give notice that all our subjects and persons entitled to our protection who may misconduct themselves in the premises will do so at their peril and of their own wrong; and that they will in nowise obtain any protection from us against such capture, or such penalties as aforesaid, but will, on the contrary, incur our high displeasure by such misconduct.' The trade in contraband is not unlawful—at least not municipally unlawful—but it is carried on at the risk of the trader and of all concerned in it. The neutral sovereign warns her subjects that if they commit any breach of neutrality which is not a breach of municipal law, though a breach of the law of nations, they will forfeit the protection of their own Government, and will be liable to the penalties decreed by the law of nations. It would no doubt tend to shorten wars if the municipal law were made coextensive with the law of nations, and could be enforced; for then the belligerents would be cut off from all foreign supplies, and their means of continuing the conflict would be limited to their own stores and resources. But it would be difficult to devise an Act that would make the municipal law coextensive with the law of nations in respect to neutrality; and, further, it would be utterly impossible to prevent the breach of such a law. No legislation and no vigilance on the part of neutral Governments can stop trade in contraband. The neutral Government is fortunately only responsible for those breaches of neutrality which are also breaches of its municipal law, and which it ought to have prevented by due vigilance.—*Law Journal*.

RUFUS CHOATE.

Although endowed with great intellectual powers, Mr. Choate was as careful, methodical and solicitous in regard to mental helps as any student who might have been less conscious of innate strength. He would seem to have been mindful that the summit of excellence was to be approached by a road open to all; that those who could pass on easily and swiftly, and those less favored by nature, but of superior diligence, might finally reach the same destination. Thus, regarding

genius as a mere capacity to acquire knowledge and to use it, he gave himself up to continuous toil.

Some perils attend students who possess great intellectual powers. From the hour when such a one first realizes how receptive he is to suggestions of truth and beauty, how readily the barriers which impede others yield to his touch, he is liable to become the victim of a delusive self-confidence, and to accept the notion that the harmony and fruitfulness of his life will be of spontaneous growth. As he seems to apprehend the less occult relations of things by intuition, he regards close and prolonged study as unnecessary. So, content with some appearance of culture, he falls into easy ways, goes through life as the lounge saunters through the streets. He bears to true learning the relation which the slothful miner has to the mine as he gathers up the bits of precious metal exposed to view, without acting upon the hints nature has given of the wealth hidden below the surface. Another student, of like gifts, moves on earnestly, acquires knowledge, does some good work. Having found that what he should learn is easily attained, he assumes that there need be no end to his acquisitions. Like the student in Faust, he confers with the evil spirit, and is encouraged to enquire into mysteries too deep and profound for his apprehension. He takes to such studies, and, thenceforth, swims not with the current but against it. He is vain, superficial, weak in proportion as he shakes off the influence of natural laws, the checks and hindrances designed to hold him in restraint, and which are as necessary for his safety as the wall built at the edge of the precipice, or of the road by the river is for the protection of travellers. He undertakes to inform the schoolmen in their specialties, and his speculations upon religion, science, the nature and relation of man, partake of the artificial texture of his life, but they are printed and in the hands of inquiring readers. As he has performed some good work in other departments, his speculations secure respect and confidence. So his best efforts have an evil influence.

As Mr. Choate escaped the perils which beset students in their early growth, it would be interesting could we know to what that good fortune may be ascribed.