

With regard to the commercial relations of life especially, it would seem possible to do good and avert evil by clear and practical instruction. These labour wars, these strikes and lockings-out, which, at a very critical juncture, are imperilling the future of British industry, must arise from a misconception of interest on the one side or the other. No doubt temper and class-feeling play a part, at least when the conflict has begun. Still the root of the disagreement must be a misconception of interest; and that misconception could hardly occur if the plain facts as to our economical relations had been ingrained into both parties from their childhood. There is in this case hardly any conflict of motives; self-interest is the only thing to be considered; it is a question between enlightened self-interest and self-interest unenlightened. Clear perceptions, therefore, are likely in this case to produce right actions. A workman would hardly sacrifice many months' wages, and expose himself and his family to severe privations for the purpose of forcing the market for his labour, if he saw distinctly that the market could not be forced, and that the only result would be injury to his own trade. He would not have blind faith in the effect of putting the screw on his immediate employer, if the fact were clearly present to his mind that it was not his immediate employer, but the purchasing public, which really fixed the price to be paid for the goods, and therefore for the labour which produced them. Nor, on the other hand, would the landlords in 1846 have furiously resisted the repeal of the Corn Laws, and hunted down the statesmen who repealed them, had they seen, as they might have done, and as the better informed among them did, that cheaper food would develop manufactures, that the development of manufactures would greatly enrich the country;

and that the increase of wealth in the country would raise the value of land. Recent events in the United States shew us the perils of economical delusion, especially where the legislative power is in the hands of the masses, who may make a suicidal use of it; and we may at least hope to banish delusion by making our people familiar from childhood with economical fact.

History, again, is a study which, as I perhaps am specially bound to remind you, may play a useful part not only in the intellectual, but in the moral and social training of the young. The philosophy of history is of course beyond the range of children, even if there were any settled philosophy of history to teach, which, with deference to Mr. Buckle and others who fancy they have discovered the great secret, I venture to think at present there is not. Leading facts and dates you may teach; the young memory retains them with ease, and they form a framework which after-reading will fill up. But you might as well feed a child with sawdust as force it to swallow a dry epitome of history, such as some of our historical school-books have been. The ethical portions of history, the striking characters, the great deeds—all that cultivates right sympathies and awakens generous emotions—are the best fitted for the purposes of education. They must of course be connected by a thread of narrative. Goldsmith long held his place, in spite of his uncritical character, by telling his story well and impressing the imagination. However, our writers of school-books know all this, and they are producing works which will enable history to do all in its power towards forming the character of the young.

Fiction can hardly be introduced into the teaching of schools, unless it be in reading-books, where, perhaps, more room might be made for it. It