

ing a sentence with a particle, be it preposition or adverb. A professor under whom the Talker sat four years, insisted on that negative precept, and wrote sentences that covered an octavo page. Another of his professors, in his rebellion against rules of all kinds, allowed the frequent repetition of the same word in a short speech or composition, which made his style very clear, but as bare of exhilaration as a jug of reservoir water. To begin a sentence with a conjunction is bad and slovenly, and to pile up synonymous adjectives indicates a lack of strength; but *I must stop or somebody's cow will be gored*. *Poeta nascitur non fit* is sometimes true if scriptor take the place of poeta, but not always. As Demosthenes struggled with his impediment and overcame it, so young writers, brought up in an atmosphere of careless, unkempt speech, by observation, attentive reading, and repressive practice, may purify their style and become models of literary propriety. Good diction, however, is more the outcome of soul-culture than of imitation, or of rules laid up in the memory. Great words that do not express great thoughts are easily seen through and deceive nobody but a novice. Mr. Bates's lectures aim at producing in others the simple naturalness of writing which is the highest art, and, while some of his canons, such as that which objects to pointing a moral, may be objected to, his book is worthy of high commendation.

Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.'s other volume is *Mere Literature and other Essays*, by Woodrow Wilson. This handsome volume of 247 pages is a collection of articles that have appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Century*, or the *Forum*, together with a hitherto unpublished one on Burke, called *The Interpreter of English Liberty*. They are literary and historical. To the first class belong *Mere Literature*, the *Author Himself*, *An Author's Choice of Company*, and a *Literary Politician*: to the second, *The Truth of the Matter*, *A Calendar of Great Americans*, *The Course of American History*, and the essay on Burke above mentioned. Mr. Wilson's