

the fact of both being Peers, with a Parliamentary training, and exercising a powerful influence in shaping the legislative events of their day. The attempt to make out that Hannibal and Wellington were both of a piece in mental and physical calibre, can only be an effort in special pleading, based on the broad ground that both carried swords and won battles.

While the *abuse* of comparison is thus productive of irritation and evil, it need hardly be added that the *use* of the faculty is valuable. "Comparison large" is a good item in a phrenological statement of one's mental claims. It is the basis of sound judgment of men and things, and a good factor in artistic capability.

All we have to do is to guard against false analogies and fallacious parallels, which enter so largely into our literary culture and social intercourse. There are true and there are false standards of comparison which may be applied in history, in politics, in art, in literature, and in life. It is most essential to form a habit of setting up the true standard, and thus avoiding the ridiculous spectacle which old Polonius presents to us when, at a hint from his Prince, he is equally ready to detect in a cloud, a resemblance to a camel, a weasel, or a whale.

It is not surprising that there should be a good deal of scepticism regarding the statements of historians on the subject of events which occurred a century or two ago when we find so much misconception prevalent regarding those that have taken place within the memory of persons now living, and the truth or falsehood of which could be established by reference to documents easily accessible:

It is not very long ago since the *London Times* said.

"Speaking generally, no child of any class, high or low, from the child of the duke to the child of the labourer, could name the day on which any great event in history occurred; even though duly crammed with the year. Such ignorance is not a thing to be proud of, especially as it goes much further, and a very large part of the history of our country is a blank to most English minds."