

to a question, is it to be supposed that he has no meaning at all attached in his mind to the words which he utters? and if he has, how much, and of what kind? The answer is, of course, more or less according to his grasp of the ramifications and bearings of the fact, its position among other facts, and its relations to them. He knows something about Julius Cæsar and something about the party which assassinated him; and the more he knows about each the more full of meaning does the fact of the assassination become to him. When at length he has read deeply on the subject, the tremendous significance of this event for all future history grows on him. And what is it that has produced this expansion of view? The knowledge of other facts; of Cæsar's character and aims; of the nature of the work which he did, and of that which he probably would have done; of the ideas embodied in Brutus and Cassius; of the state of the Roman world at the time, and of its subsequent development. The truth is that a fact is a living thing, endowed sometimes with a terrible pregnant life, and its relations are infinite. But it must be known first as a bare fact, and the outline become filled in as the view expands. One might multiply illustrations, but it is unnecessary. So, too, in science, the glib talker might disparage dry facts, and enlarge on the grandeur and majesty of law; but anybody who thinks on the subject knows that boasted law is nothing more than a bare statement, that, given certain conditions, certain results will invariably follow. And what is the basis of this generalization? Simply a series of observations of detached facts. Again, in language, grammatical inflections are facts, the reason for which only becomes apparent at a fairly advanced stage of scholarship. Is a boy to know nothing of these

facts until he is in a position fully to comprehend the principles on which they depend? The larger the number of facts that come under his ken the sooner will he be able to detect the law which regulates them. Of course the boy's interest in his facts should be kept alive by an occasional suggestion or reminder that he will see more in them as he goes on, which will serve to console him under the drudgery of committing a vast number of them to memory.

Early youth is the time for equipping the mind with stores of positive knowledge. Let the mind then get all that it can possibly take in; the cry against overloading is more affectation than anything else. Given an active mind in a healthy body, and knowledge which requires mere memory may be poured in even by the "shovelful." And those who, like Thring, decry and disparage such a process, do they fully realize that the facility for acquiring such knowledge as this diminishes year by year? There is no situation more tragic than that of a man of mature years, who, feeling the scantiness of his stock of positive knowledge in comparison with the vigour and breadth of his thinking powers, struggles vainly to make up the loss, and ends by finding that the voice of nature is stronger than any mere aspirations or longings of his own. Socrates was no *ignoramus*. He knew as much as any of his contemporaries. But he had discovered in his manhood that much so-called knowledge was sham, and therefore he said that he knew nothing, and tried to convince others that they knew nothing either. An inner light showed him that the first need was to know one's self, that is, to ascertain the nature and limits of human knowledge; to tear to pieces and ransack the conceptions and ideas which, under the name of knowledge, had made themselves part of a