

boy of the Dick Bultitude type (and there are many thousands of Dick Bultitudes among English schoolboys) generally finds himself, after a year or two at a private school, in unconscious agreement with Socrates that "nothing can be known." It is his habit accordingly, as his unfortunate instructors are painfully aware, to substitute for the effort to learn an attempt to guess; and the results he arrives at are often irresistibly suggestive of mental processes analogous to those pursued by the personage who read up in the *Encyclopædia* the article "China" and the article "Metaphysics," and combined the information thus acquired. The youthful philologist who defined "customs' duty" as "a usual or common duty" had probably never heard of this personage, but unconsciously to himself he was a disciple of the same school. There is a suggestion, too, of a similar habit of thought in the boy who replied, when asked for the meaning of the word character, that "character means the life or biography of a person, which cannot be seen, but only heard of when a situation is required," and something more than a suggestion in the genius who stated, in answer to a question intended to draw from him the history of St. Philip and the Eunuch, that "Philip was a king of Macedonia, who was at first a heathen, but afterwards was converted to Christianity and baptized by Enoch."

But the model on whom the British schoolboy most frequently forms himself is unquestionably Mrs. Malaprop. The excellent old lady herself might have envied him "the nice derangement of his epitaphs." He has been known to define a satire as "a poem containing a severe census," and to characterize Molière as a "chronic poet," and the elephant as "a very veracious animal." To the despair of his preceptors, he will refer in all simplicity of soul to the work of the

Apostles in "healing the deceased;" and not many months ago there was brought under the notice of an examiner at a large school in the East of England a short narrative of the events of 1588, which ended with the remarkable words, "Nothing more was seen of the Spanish fleet. Hence it has ever since been known as the Invisible Armada, Armada meaning a fleet of ships." One is inclined to conjecture that it must have been this last ingenuous youth who referred to the Israelites during their desert wanderings as being "fed in the manner of angels," and "guided by day by a pillow of clouds and at night by a pillow of fire."

In one respect Mrs. Malaprop could not hold a candle to our schoolboy. Admirable as she was when she dealt with words, she sank at once into the commonplace on entering the region of facts, and even when she spoke of an "allegory" was content to place it "on the banks of Nile." But the British schoolboy, by whatever name he called his saurian, would have scorned such a habitat for the brute. He might have housed it in the Pyramids, or represented it as disputing with the lion the supremacy of the desert; but those who know him best are best aware that neither as crocodile nor alligator would he for a moment have thought of permitting the beast to lurk in the mud of either Nile or Mississippi. He is never so remote from all possibility of being right as when his guesses shift from words to facts. Now, as existing methods of education consist largely of attempts to cram the youthful mind with facts and data—the hardest of facts and baldest of data—it would speedily result, were that mind capable of assimilating the crude masses of food offered to it, that society would be horrified by the apparition (at Christmas and Midsummer) of a brood of young monsters. Happily the dis-