

means of perfecting it, are the habit of thinking clearly, conscientiousness in seeking the expression that exactly corresponds to one's thoughts, and the honesty not to write when one has nothing to say.* Above all should it be remembered, that the veins of golden thought do not lie on the surface of the mind; time and patience are required to sink the shafts, and bring out the glittering ore. The compositions whose subtle grace has a perennial charm, which we sip like old wine, phrase by phrase, and sentence by sentence, till their delicate aroma and exquisite flavour diffuse themselves through every cell of the brain, are wrought out, not under "high pressure," but quietly, leisurely, in the dreamy and caressing atmosphere of fancy. They are the mellow vintage of a ripe and unforced imagination. The fitness of our language for such composition needs no proof, though, perhaps, in no other language has the average excellence of its prose-writing been so far below the excellence of its best specimens. The language which, at the very beginning of its full organization, could produce the linked sweetness of Sidney and the "mighty line" of Marlowe, the voluptuous beauty of Spenser and the oceanic melody of Shakspeare, and which, at a riper age, could shew itself an adequate instrument for the organ-like harmonies of Milton and the matchless symphonies of Sir Thomas Browne; which could give full and fit expression to the fiery

energy of Dryden and the epigrammatic point of Pope, to the forest-like gloom of Young, and the passionate outpourings of Burns; which sustained and supported the tremulous elegance and husbanded strength of Campbell, the broad-winged sweep of Coleridge, the deep sentiment and all-embracing humanities of Wordsworth, and the gorgeous emblazonry of Moore; and which to-day, in the plentitude of its powers, responds to every call of Tennyson, Ruskin, Newman, and Froude—is surely equal to the demands of any genius that may yet arise to tax its powers. Spoken in the time of Elizabeth by a million fewer persons than to-day speak it in London alone, it now girdles the earth with its electric chain of communication, and voices the thoughts of a hundred million of souls. It has crossed the peaks of the Rocky Mountains, and has invaded South America and the Sandwich Islands; it is advancing with giant strides through Africa and New Zealand, and on the scorching plains of India; it is penetrating the wild wastes of Australia, making inroads upon China and Japan, and bids fair to become the dominant language of the civilized world. Let us jealously guard its purity, maintain its ancient idioms, and develop its inexhaustible resources, that it may be even more worthy than it now is to be the mother-tongue, not only of the two great brother nations whose precious legacy it is, but of the whole family of man.

* Karl Hildebrand.

ONLY think of it! Prussia, whose educational system has been so frequently held up to the admiring contemplation of American State teachers' associations and county institutes, is unable to supply us with the text of a law to secure uniformity of textbooks. She is sadly in need of such a statute, if we accept reports that come to us through the Bureau of Education. According to this authority, there are in the Prussian schools

100 different books for religious instruction, 56 for German language lessons, 70 German readers, 19 for literature and pedagogy, 37 Latin grammars, 95 Latin exercise books, 23 French grammars, 85 French exercise books, 35 Greek grammars, 53 Greek exercise books, 109 histories, 70 geographies, 65 text-books of natural history, 34 of physics, 28 of chemistry; 191 of arithmetic and mathematics, and 201 singing books.—*Ex.*