

fobbed off with sawdust pie, when it requires the most nourishing food. Consider, too, how bad it is for the memory, which can grow and gain strength only on what is clear, complete, and firmly held.

The whole thing is a mere catalogue—nothing but a catalogue. Any one of these twenty-five statements would take from ten to thirty minutes in the hands of a capable teacher of history to explain. It may be replied: "That is all right; the book is a textbook, and the teacher takes each of these statements and makes it the text for his historical disquisitions." To this I will rejoin: "It is all wrong; the teacher does nothing of the kind. If he attempts to disentangle the mass of confused information given in this paragraph, he has recourse to the blackboard, and puts the statements in separate lines." But there is another thing which the teacher is tempted to do, and which, I am told, is often done. The memory of the boy is close at hand; it is entirely at the teacher's mercy, and he tells the boy to get the paragraph by heart, and hears him reel it off as a "history lesson." I once knew a boy who had learned by heart and could repeat any paragraph in the whole of a History of England that had been edited by Professor Freeman. This can be done, and has been done; but the knowledge of the pupil is no greater—it is, indeed, less, because you cannot make a strong and straight stroke upon this paper, which has been blurred and blotched by mutilated, confused, and inadequate impressions.

Again, look at the hideous literary style fostered by this undue compression. The vaguest language is employed. The allusive style (the "you-know-all-about it" style) is frequently adopted. The schoolboy—Macaulay's schoolboy, if you like—is supposed to know the allusion made, when he knows nothing. The persons introduced are mere lines and

dots, not living and breathing souls. The sympathetic imagination is never appealed to; and the pupil realizes nothing. He might be reading about fish, or plants, or pebbles. Let me give you an example. One writer says, speaking of the standing quarrel between Spain and England in the time of Queen Elizabeth: "The ambition of Englishmen in the west had been confined to an angry claim to contest the wealth and beauty of the New World with the Spaniard." Here is a carpet-bag of a sentence. The adventures of Drake, his plundering of Spanish ships, his sweeping the Spanish coast of South America of all its silver and gold; all his adventures, and those of some half-dozen or more Devon heroes, are compressed into the pale and featureless phrase, "to contest the wealth of the New World." Such writing is like an old worn coin, with no mark or superscription on it, with nothing to show its true value, or whether it is silver or pinchbeck.

Here is another fine, but I am sorry to say not rare, specimen from a book which is now in its thirtieth edition. It strains my intellect to guess how many thousands of young minds this book has puzzled, or, it may be, paralyzed.

"In the vast field of religious literature, Bunyan is unrivalled. De Foe devoted his almost equal genius to political conflict, as well as to popular fiction."

That is all that is given the young reader about Bunyan and De Foe. De Foe wrote pamphlets about brick-making, printing, the tanning of leather, a "Short and Easy Method with the Dissenters"; was a Commissioner for the Union with Scotland; and was probably the biggest literary adventurer the eighteenth century saw. But all we are told of him was that he "devoted his almost equal genius" to x and y . As well write history in algebraic symbols at once.—*The Educational Times.*