

culeses, not the Adonises of literature." They are, with a few noble exceptions, the hewers of wood and drawers of water for all the other literatures of the world. The writers of other countries, being blessed more or less with the synthetic and artistic power which they lack, pillage mercilessly, without acknowledgment, the storehouses which they have laboriously filled, and dressing up the stolen materials in attractive forms, pass them off as their own property. It is one of the paradoxes of literary history, that a people who have done more for the textual accuracy and interpretation of the Greek and Roman classics than all the other European nations put together—who have taught the world the classic tongues with pedagogic authority—should have caught so little of the inspiration, spirit, and style of those eternal models.

The fatigue which the German style inflicts upon the human brain is even greater than that which their barbarous Gothic letter, a relic of the fifteenth century, blackening all the page, inflicts upon the eye. The principal faults of this style are involution, prolixity, and obscurity. The sentences are interminable in length, stuffed with parentheses within parentheses, and as full of folds as a sleeping boa-constrictor. Of paragraphs, of beauty in the balancing and structure of periods, and of the art by which a succession of periods may modify each other, the German prose-writer has apparently no conception. Instead of breaking up his "cubic thought" into small and manageable pieces, he quarries it out in huge, unwieldy masses, indifferent to its shape, structure or polish. He gives you real gold, but it is gold in the ore, mingled with quartz, dirt and sand, hardly ever gold polished into splendour, or minted into coin. Every German, according to De Quincey, regards a sentence in the light of a package,

and a package not for the mail-coach, but for the waggon, into which it is his privilege to crowd as much as he possibly can. Having framed a sentence, therefore, he next proceeds to pack it, which is effected partly by unwieldy tails and codicils, but chiefly by enormous parenthetical involutions. All qualifications, limitations, exceptions, illustrations, and even hints and insinuations, that they may be grasped at once and presented in one view, are "stuffed and violently rammed into the bowels of the principal proposition." What being of flesh and blood, with average lungs, can go through a book made up of such sentences, some of them twenty or thirty lines in length, with hardly a break or a solitary semicolon to relieve the eye or cheat the painful journey, without gasping for breath, and utterly forgetting the beginning, especially when a part of the poor dislocated verb, upon which the whole meaning of the sentence hinges, is withheld till the close? Rufus Choate, had a genius for long periods; his eulogy on Webster contains one which stretches over more than four pages; but even he yields to Kant. It is said that some of the latter's sentences have been carefully measured by a carpenter's rule, and found to measure two feet eight by six inches. Who, but a trained intellectual pedestrian, a Rowell or Weston, could hope to travel through such a labyrinth of words, in which there is sometimes no halting-place for three closely-printed octavo pages, without being foot-sore, or bursting a blood-vessel? Is it strange that other people, who do not think long-windedness excusable because Kant has shewn that time and space have no actual existence, but are only forms of thought, are offended by a literature that abounds in such Chinese puzzles? Can we wonder that the German bullion of thought, however weighty