

may as well take out some of these washed little stones and see if any of them are made of the same material as the selection of pebbles you have picked from the bank. Here is a softish stone made up of grey and fine grains of sand. It is a sandstone. Have you one in your collection.

S. Yes. That is one, is it not?

T. I have here a stone in which three different minerals appear to be found. One is a sort of pinkish or milky white which I can just barely scratch with the point of my knife. The second is so hard that I can not scratch with my knife and it is a paler white.

S. That's quartz.

T. Right. And the third is dark colored, and is so soft that I can break it up into little shining scales.

S. Mica.

T. Correct. And the first mineral I pointed out is feldspar. Now when these three different minerals are found mixed up in a stone the stone is called

S. Granite.

T. That's it. This small pebble is a granite. Did any of you get a large pebble of granite in the bank?

S. Yes; here is one.

T. Well, you already see that "ground" is made up of small portions of pebbles which in their turn are portions of

S. Great rocks.

T. Correct. But we cannot in this lesson go over all the little stones found in this ground. Here is one of the grains of sand in the bottom of the bowl. What is it?

S. It is a quartz grain.

T. And this one?

S. A feldspar grain.

T. And what is this shining scale?

S. Mica. I suppose the mud will contain finer grains of all these stones.

T. Yes. That is just it. The mud may contain some of every mineral in the bank, perhaps even some gold. It also contains parts of leaves, of trees, grasses, and the like. The mud is richer than any other material you can find. And if we knew all that is in mud we would know nearly everything.

S. That is why mud is also the best thing in the ground to raise good crops of grain and hay and other things, I suppose.

Nearly every conspicuous member of the present French cabinet is a total abstainer not only from the use of stronger drinks, but also from the use of wine. The experience of France proves conclusively that the use of beer and light wines leads to the introduction of strong drink.

For the Review.

Notes on English.

Some quaint old-fashioned notions about our language and how to study it may still be found among some teachers. One of them is the notion of the all-importance of parsing and analysis. Another is the notion that English is a fixed and finished language; that "always, everywhere and by everybody," the same rules and laws and usages have been acknowledged to be the only correct ones for speaking and writing it; and that these rules and laws and usages are those laid down in the school grammar and the pocket dictionary.

On the first of these superstitions something may be said some other time, but at present it is enough to say that it is unfair to blame the teachers for the absurd and sinful waste of time devoted to the worship of these Great Twin Humbugs of our educational Pantheon so long as the provincial examinations put such a premium as they now do on this ridiculous form of idolatry.

There are probably some seventy words in that last sentence. If a pupil of mine were to perpetrate such a syntactical monstrosity, it is altogether likely that a fuss would be made about it. But I don't propose to make any fuss about this specimen. I have just been reading an article by Frederic Harrison in the October number of the *Nineteenth Century*, entitled, "Ruskin as Master of Prose." My impression on finishing the article is that Mr. Harrison agrees with me in thinking Ruskin the greatest master of English prose that ever lived. And now that Huxley and Tyndall and Froude and Newman are dead, I don't know where I would look for a better second among living writers than Mr. Harrison himself. Perhaps it may be as well to mention that this last opinion is not by any means based only on the article cited.

The article is not an unmixed eulogy. There is much praise, but there is also some blame. The latter seems mostly directed against the tremendous longitude of some of Ruskin's sentences. These often run over 200 words, and sometimes up to 280. All the same, Ruskin is "Master of Prose," and if such a dignitary in that line may sin to the extent of a 280-word sentence, it may be pardonable in a humble disciple of his to sin once in a while to the extent of seventy words.

The best cure for the second absurdity mentioned in the first paragraph is a course of reading in English literature. It need not be very extensive, but the more so the better. Punch's caddy discovered the other day that English was a living, growing, ever-changing language by reading the *Pickwick Papers*. He was much taken by "that patter o' Sammy," as he calls it,