

exclusion of silent letters would make, but, according to our estimate, these silent letters are not more than five per centum, which does not strike us as so great a matter. And it will be found that the words which perplex foreigners so greatly, constitute but a very small group. The main obstacle to foreigners and pupils is the identity in sound of words that have different meaning, such as *hear, here, there, their*, and for this difficulty phonetic spelling provides no remedy. The notions that the present irregu-

larity in our spelling is a fatal obstruction to learning to spell, and that "one of the causes of excessive illiteracy among the English-speaking peoples is the difficulty of the English spelling," seem to us very absurd. In fact, all those people who habitually read and write know how to spell, and those whose habits are unliterary are very apt to be bad spellers; and the spelling reformers will never be able to invent a short road to orthography that will obliterate this distinction.—*Appleton's Journal*.

A VERY moderate amount of knowledge of the other branches (other than geography in the sense of earth knowledge and history) at twenty-one, thoroughly accurate as far as it goes, is all I dream of; and it must be recollected that I would allow no subject to be commenced as a part of general education the study of which might not with great advantage be continued through the whole of life. Some subjects would, of course, be pursued in after life by one, some by another; but the kind of general education which approves itself to my mind would at least oblige those who passed through it to have looked at all the great divisions of human knowledge, and to have satisfied themselves whether they had or had not a turn for them. The line which bounds general education is, after all, only an imaginary one. General education should only end with life; but men who are to be busy with the world's work, and to give a due place to the second of the objects of life which I set out by enumerating (to do as much good as possible to other people), will, after one or two-and-twenty, begin to find the time they can give, in the course of the day, to general education,

much shorter than it used to be. Still, so great are the facilities which our modern life affords, that those who are now beginning their general education with the prospect of having all the chances, may well hope, if they live out their years and retain their energies, not only to know all the most important facts, which man has found out about himself, and the universe of which he forms part, but to have seen, heard, and read, before they die, all that is best and most beautiful in that portion of the universe which serves as man's habitation. In order to do this they must from the very first be carefully prevented from wasting their time on second or third-rate things. The real use of teachers, properly so called, after the very first of youth has been passed, would be chiefly to keep us within the limits of the really valuable and excellent. Not the least desirable professor in any university would be he who would tell us faithfully and wisely what famous books we had better leave on the bookshelves, what famous places we need not visit, what famous theories are cinders, ashes, dust.—*Plea for a Rational Education, by Mountstewart E. Grant-Duff*.

NEW VERSION OF AN OLD BALLAD.

[SUGGESTED BY THE PIRATED AND UNGRAMMATICAL "MANUALS" LATELY WRITTEN BY CERTAIN SCHOOL INSPECTORS IN TORONTO.]

"WHERE are you going, Inspector, well paid?"

"To publish a 'Manual,' Sir," he said.

"And where will you get it, Inspector, well paid?"

"From some other author, kind sir," he said.

"Are the Schools forced to use it, Inspector, well paid?"

"Yes, if they like it, Sir," he said.

"Mr. Crooks has forbidden it, Inspector, well paid!"

"Mr. Crooks is in England, Sir," he said.

"And what is your fortune, Inspector, well paid?"

"My brass face is my fortune, Sir," he said.

"But you lack sense and science, Inspector, well paid."

"'The Department' don't ax for it, Sir," he said.