

four under the advice of the Public Schools Commissioners. The governors meet twice a year to view the state of the hospital, make election of poor men and poor scholars, and do other business. The old Charter-house, though situated in one of the most crowded and unsuitable quarters of London, had this great advantage over the other metropolitan schools, that it had a playground of five acres adjoining the buildings. The whole premises, including school buildings and hospital, residences for the masters of each, cloisters and playground, were surrounded by a high wall, pierced by only one gateway. In this inclosure the boys lived, side by side, with the "poor, aged, maimed, needy, and impotent people," the poor brothers of the hospital, and worshipping in the same chapel, a pathetic juxtaposition brought out with exquisite delicacy and humour in Thackeray's sketch of the last days of Colonel Newcome. The property of the corporation, apart from the Smithfield site, produced an income of about £23,000, of which about £8,000 was spent on the school. The boys were of three classes, sixty foundationers, named by the governors in rotation, and entitled to free maintenance and education, clothes, and a gown and trencher-cap, with an exhibition of £80 a year at either university upon passing a satisfactory examination at the age of eighteen; boarders, who lived in the masters' houses, and day boys paying £18 18s. for their education. The monitorial and fagging systems were much the same as at Westminster, except that all boys in and above the fourth form were exempt. But the old school in Smithfield is a thing of the past. Since the visit of the Public Schools' Commissioners in 1862, the governors, acting in the spirit of their recommendations, have transplanted the school to one of the most beautiful parts of England, in the neighbourhood of Guildford. The great value of the site of the old school has enabled them to proceed in the most liberal manner, and the new school buildings, boarding-houses, and arrangements of all kinds are equal, if not superior, to those of any other school in the kingdom. This experiment, the first of the kind, has been eminently successful, and its results have by this time reconciled most old Carthusians to the partial break in the school traditions and the severance of their school from the hospital and the poor brethren.

The above sketch, though necessarily meagre, will, it is hoped, help to put our readers on the right road toward an understanding of the English public-school system, which undoubtedly furnishes one more example of the curious anomalies which are found in every department of the many sided

life of the country, and also of the strong practical sagacity which underlies the national character, and enables the nation, with all its strange wastefulness and indifference to logical methods, to achieve its ends and get what it needs, practically if not scientifically. We have only to look at the names of the founders to see how the need for such institutions as these schools must have been felt in all parts of the nation before and at the time of the revival of learning. The crown, great churchmen, municipalities, commercial guilds, city tradesmen, yeomen of the counties, are all there; in fact, the only class conspicuous by its absence is that of the great nobles and landed gentry—the very class which has in the long run made most use of the schools. The main object of the founders seems in all cases to have been the promotion of the best learning then obtainable; the next, the benefit of certain specified localities and of the poor. The two objects proved in the end incompatible, and one or other had to give way; time would show which it was to be. It soon appeared that there was no demand for the best learning among the poor, and so scores of Tudor grammar-schools gave up offering it at all, and fell gradually into decay and paralysis, from which they are only now awakening. On the other hand, there was and continued to be a fair demand for "the best learning" among the landed gentry and the professional and mercantile classes, and this demand the nine schools which remained comparatively faithful to their highest trust were there to meet with more or less success. And so (as the Commissioners declare in their report) "public-school education as it exists in England, and in England only, has grown up chiefly within their walls, and has been propagated from them; and, though now surrounded by younger institutions of a like character, and of great and increasing importance, they are still in common estimation its acknowledged types, as they have for several generations been its principal centres."

We are quite conscious, however, that, after having gone with us so far, the American inquirer in whose company we started will still be entitled to repeat his question in a slightly modified form, and to say: "You have only told me that certain specified institutions, differing widely in their constitutions and methods of teaching and discipline, are public schools in your sense, and that they are so because they give a public-school education. Now, then, what is this public-school education which they give?" The same question confronted the Public Schools Commissioners whom we have so often cited, and is adverted to by them in the introduc-