

But an excellent master was appointed, and so rapid was the progress made that in two years Mr. Bowyer, H. M.'s Inspector, reports that the condition of the children 'is as much above, as it had been previously below, that of other Unions.' Since that time a still more important progress has been made, and so much is the tone of moral feeling improved, that a return to the House is deprecated as the severest of punishments, to be inflicted only in very rare and desperate cases; and the boys, of their own accord, denounce any misconduct which, in their opinion, is a 'disgrace to the Home.'

'Great care,' says the same authority, 'is taken to ascertain the respectability of the employers, and the exact value of the children's service. The boy's own choice of occupation is consulted as far as circumstances allow. The feeling that he is worth something to himself is permitted to grow spontaneously into a principle, and the best stimulus to honest labour is practically established' (p. 241). 'The demand, both for boys and girls, has always been far greater than the supply.' Mr. Brown gives a list of 125 boys who have left the Home from 1845 to 1859; they have embraced almost every variety of occupation, and are all now doing well, with the exception of one idiotic, nine dead, and sixteen of whom nothing is known; but of these only two belong to the period when the Home was in its present state of discipline. Of eighty girls who, from the foundation of the Girl's Home up to the same date, had been sent into service, only two were living disreputable lives. Only twelve had ever returned to the workhouse. The financial statement as regards these Homes is so satisfactory that Mr. Brown seems, not unreasonably, to expect it may excite doubt. 'I subjoin,' he says, 'an account of the cost of the boys' and girls' Homes, as compared with the workhouse, calculated from the half-yearly printed statements of receipts and disbursements, which are circulated among the guardians after every item has been examined and passed by the Poor-law Auditor, and which embrace all expenses whatever incurred by each establishment.' And by this it appears that, while the cost of every inmate in the workhouse is 12*l.* 16*s.* 8*d.* per annum, the cost of each boy at the Home (deducting the boys' earnings) is 10*l.* 19*s.* 1*d.*, and of each girl, 12*l.* 2*s.* 2*d.*

After these statements, it is with no small surprise, and quite as much regret, that we hear that in the present year the guardians have prepared accommodation for the children at the workhouse, and threaten their speedy removal. What are the local circumstances that have brought about this change of feeling, and induce the guardians to undo their own beneficent work, we do not know. That it is no failure on the part of the Homes, we believe, is admitted; and the change is loudly deprecated by the many benevolent persons who have interested themselves in the progress of these institutions.

Nothing, however can prove more strongly than what has happened at these Norwich Homes that the time has come when the Legislature must no longer hesitate to act. The experiment has succeeded; the time for caution is past. A total and complete separation between the children and the adults of the workhouse must be effected. We do not think the Legislature is bound to decide absolutely in favour either of district or of separate schools. Both seem to do their duty well, and each has its peculiar advantages. In favour of district schools it may be said that large schools are the cheapest, inasmuch as the general charges are spread over a wider surface, and also the most efficient, for they can afford appliances of various kinds which are beyond the means of small schools; and they admit of a better classification of the pupils, whereby to a great extent the time both of teachers and learners may be economized. It is also worth considering that the future improvements of our system will clearly take the direction of what Mr. Chadwick calls administrative consolidation. On the other hand, in a small school home influences may be supposed to be more readily exerted; and, by establishing separate schools, all collisions are avoided between the guardians of different unions, who are said, by one of the Commissioners' witness, to hate each other with an intensity of the *odium vicinorum* beyond that of contemning nations. We think it may safely be left to the local authorities and the Poor-law Commissioners to decide according to the circumstances of each case which form should be adopted. Where a separate school has already been built, and is doing well, it would be hard to order its destruction. Where the population is very dense, a separate school may perhaps be most convenient; where it is very thin, a district union may be almost necessary. But one or the other, it is agreed on all hands, the guardians should be compelled to establish. In some cases, where expense has been recently incurred to enlarge the workhouse for the reception of the children, the alteration of the law will be felt as a hardship. But

in each several case it is probable that by the exertion of a little thought and ingenuity some means may be found of turning the additional buildings to account; and, at all events, the objection is too trifling to be allowed to stand in the way of so important an improvement. Such as it is, it gains strength every year that the reform is delayed and fresh expenses are incurred under the present law. Thus the objection itself furnishes an additional argument for despatch.

But, in making the Act imperative, it is very desirable that the experience should not be thrown away which has been gained when it was only permissive. Every check on expense should be contrived to prevent the triumphant philanthropist from dipping his hand too deeply into his liberal neighbour's pocket. It is remarked by the Commissioners that, if the formation of parochial unions had been left to depend on the will of guardians, no such unions would be now in existence. This is true; but on the other hand, if the coalition of parishes had been voluntary their proceedings would have been much more economical, and we should not have for poor-houses such a multitude of county surveyors' 'neogotic' architecture. It is a good sign that the Commissioners recommend hiring and adapting houses rather than building them for the new schools which will be required.—(*London Quarterly Review*.)

(To be continued.)

Teaching Grammar.

It is a mistaken though a common notion that English grammar is so abstruse and complicated as to be beyond the reach of students of ordinary capacity. Many compare its study to the drilling of the hardest rock, a process so laborious, so slow, so seemingly ineffective, that the labor of half a lifetime seems necessary to its profitable completion. Hence parents consider their children mature enough and advanced enough to study anything but English grammar. Hence, also, the pupils of most of our schools have such a repugnance to grammar that they will take almost any study in preference to it.

But why is this? Can it be that the science is of itself so hard?

Is it harder for a child to learn that a noun is a name, than that a hexahedron is a rectangular parallelepipedon, all of the faces of which are squares; harder to learn that a pronoun is a word used instead of a noun, than that if we mix the ashes of hard wood and evaporate the lixivium thus obtained, the result will be a deliquescent compound? Harder to learn that an adjective is a word used to describe a noun, than that Umerapoorā is a city on the Irrawaddy, opposite Masulipatam?

Shall we say, then, of the little child, who so delights to use language and so desires to learn its applications, that he defies the severest penalties of dunce-block and rod—shall we say that to him the science of language is necessarily repulsive? This would be equivalent to saying that the grain of our fields is very palatable if plucked and eaten from the stock on which it grows, but if gathered and properly prepared as food, nauseating in the extreme. This last might be, but it would be inexplicable to us unless we understand that it, through ignorance, had been mixed with some unfortunate lime-water solution. Is it not, then, evident that all such notions of the difficulty of English grammar are absurd in the extreme?

Where, then, is the trouble? for all admit that there is a "break" somewhere. I think it will be found that it is not so much in the science itself as in the way in which it is presented.

Indeed, the authors of our grammars themselves appear to have thought this the secret, and their systems defective. If not, why so many and such diverse works on the same subject? If the first was correct in its mode of presenting the truth, why the need of so many others?

All have seen that there was a defect somewhere, but, instead of beginning at the foundation, they have only amended their systems. They have discovered the faults of the superstructure, but have not learned that the whole foundation of our mode of teaching grammar is false.

Teachers, as well as authors, have seemed to labor under the same impression. In regard to a standard work they have been accustomed to say, "It is not just the thing which we need, but it is the best we can get, so we take it."

If now the present system is thus defective, what must be the characteristics of a better one? These may be partially shown by pointing out some of the defects of the former.

In grammar, as in all other branches of study, a mere knowledge of words is insufficient. It is not enough that a pupil can place