

board, twelve or fourteen feet long, on which he had painted the staves. Then he turned to the grim, gaunt walls of his school, unadorned by either map or chart. On the chimney breast he painted a double alphabet of flourished capitals and soberer small characters. Then he projected two enormous terrestrial hemispheres of eight feet in diameter, which covered one entire wall.

The work was done after the duties of the day were over, a small boy being recompensed with sixpence a night for holding a candle to his artistic labours. Armed with these giant maps and a pair of globes, privately purchased out of his scanty salary, Haswell began the teaching of geography. For years after, the "Jubilee" lads were recognised and feared by Shields skippers as tartars at geographical cross-examination. Astronomy, too, was taken up, and on clear, wintry nights, oblivious of bare feet red with cold, and blue, watery noses, a crowd of charmed youngsters stood with him in the school-yard drinking in the lore of the skies.

Geometry followed as soon as the master had extemporised a set of wooden compasses. Paper was precious, and the work, together with that of freehand drawing, was done on black boards and unframed slates. The blatant utilitarians of the time could not daunt Haswell's zeal. One feature of the school was a remarkable contrivance known as an "alphabet mill."

"This strange engine formed a principal function of the master's desk—a huge, wooden, hollow, cube-shaped erection, like a hut, some four feet high, and perhaps as wide. Inside, on an axis, suspended against the face fronting the school, was a great disc, or wheel, the whole height of the desk; bearing on a circle drawn just within its periphery the alphabet in capitals, upon an inner circle the same in small characters, and on yet another (the innermost), a series of arithmetical figures. Three apertures in front of the desk, one above another, and

each closed by a slide, enabled the teacher to expose to the class the letters or figures of any of the series, one by one—but only one by one. A winch handle on the axle afforded the means for rotating the disc, and bringing to the open eye of the machine any of the characters—and in any order chosen to bewilder the class.

The utility of the engine appears doubtful, though one may see in it the predecessor of several of the new word-building contrivances.

Writing on sand had long passed away, and slates were common. Chalk and slate pencils were obtained by forays upon the quays and by excursions among the rocks on Saturdays. The "Maister," though, of course, cognisant of the imperative necessity of an acquaintance with our unprincipled English spelling, deplored bitterly the waste of time involved in overcoming artificial difficulties and in sharpening the tools whereby the 'prentice student was to cut his way up the steeps of knowledge. Of infinitely more importance he believed a "systematic course of training in the art of verbally defining shades of difference, and of giving the best and tersest expression of the meaning." If any man is ever before his time, surely the "Maister" was. The systematic use of the newspaper as a source of everyday idiomatic English was early grasped by Haswell, who regularly gave his older boys practice in reading the "special" articles, which were afterwards discussed, explained and criticised. Thus the dominie's passion for founding a taste in literature found its vent. Articulation was a strong point with him, and such expressions as "Our Father Chirton Heaven," Chirton being a suburb of the town, had short shrift. What the Maister would have said to this passage from the creed, "Suffered under Punch's spider," we can't imagine. Here is a peculiarly enlightened dictum, worthy of recollection to-day:—