

of. But about this time the first two were added, the three subjects (the renowned three R's) being driven forward at a pretty rapid rate, followed closely by, not a manx cat, but one with the orthodox nine tails, which seemed to have discovered the long-sought perpetual motion. For it never ceased during school hours, but indeed made itself evident to all our five senses; and we could see, feel, hear, taste and even smell it from morning till night. Scripture lessons

... printed in large type and pasted upon flat, wooden boards hung from pegs on the wall, and round these, standing, hands behind back, in a semicircle, the class of a dozen or more boys, turn by turn, read a portion, or, failing, were helped by the monitor (himself only one of the older boys), who, pointer in hand, stood at the head of the class. ... Writing was taught to beginners on sand, wooden styles, or the finger taking the place of pens, and a 'smoother' being used by the monitor to efface the rude efforts of the learner and prepare a fresh surface for him. More advanced pupils had ruled slates, but writing paper was never seen. The first four rules of arithmetic were all that it was deemed advisable to teach the classes, though it was supposed that the monitors were privately advanced to the compound rules.

Visitors to the school, on the occasion of the public anniversary, were so alarmed at the proficiency displayed that they were only deterred from withdrawing their subscriptions by the chairman's eager assurances that the shining lights had "finished" their education and were on the point of leaving.

Before he was eleven, Haswell had similarly "finished" his schooling. For the next few years he was variously employed in industrial capacities. The lad, however, was blessed with an insatiable longing for knowledge, and his efforts to obtain it were scarcely short of heroic. A decided bent for music was assiduously cultivated and afterwards turned to splendid account.

In 1839, after much earnest reflection, he became a school teacher. Under the guidance of Francis Mason of the Westoe-lane Schools, South Shields, he studied the "*system*," and after a short period of probation was appointed master of his old school, in

May, 1839. In the twenty-one years since he had left the "Jubilee" things had gone badly. The scholars had dwindled to forty; they were unpunctual and unruly, and outside opinion was bitterly opposed to any scheme of amelioration. The *system* in vogue was dull, monotonous, and stereotyped, lacking every element of vitality. With an ardour unspeakable, an intelligence unusual, and a sympathy unrestricted, Haswell set himself the task of making his ill-lighted and wholly unventilated barn a Palace of Delight. Thus the place is described:—

"The windows of the stuffy schoolroom were never opened, and the air growing sculler and more asphyxiating as the long day slowly spent itself, rendered the sprightliest youngster drowsy and dense in spite of himself. Narrow benches or forms too high to allow his feet to touch the ground, gave him 'pins and needles' in his legs, as the villainously ill-contrived 'desks' twisted his back and gave him a stitch in the side. To say that his lesson-books were printed as badly as they were written is to say that they could not have been worse—paper and type unsuited to the eyes of children were yet much too good for the dismal rubbish set forth by their means. Written by persons devoid of capacity for, to say nothing of experience of, teaching, many were couched in a tone of ponderous prigginess and turgid self-satisfaction, wholly detestable to any healthy mind."

Haswell set himself from the first to kindle in these deadened souls new interests, curiosity, wonder, anything which could rouse them out of the black stupour in which they were plunged. His first appeal was to the emotions. Music was the magician's rod to make these young hearts blossom in the dust. And the music was no mere reeling off a few hackneyed tunes by ear.

His scheme was genuine, thorough, systematic, and despite the difficulties of the old notation he worked wonders. His boys learnt to sing at sight the works of recognized composers chalked on a colossal music-