If we compare the notation of our English tongae with the nota tion of the German language, we shall find that - as in its words, so in its letters-German is an almost homogeneous language. One sound is permanently-and not provisionally represented by one symbol; one symbol is permanently translated by one sound, and the consequence is that the experience of the German child in learning to read is always self-consistent, and every effort he makes tells towards the desired result. The attitude of his mind is a single and easy one ; every act of attention he makes tells towards the required total, he cannot go wrong if he pays any attention at all; his eye and his ear are always in accord and help each other. Far different is the condition of the poor English child. His attention to the letters will quite as often mislead him as not, in the purest English, the less attention he pays to the letters the better; and he is like a man in trade-he may often be working as bard to make bad debts as to make good ones. The contrast between the work of the German Teacher and of the English Teacher is just as great. The German Teacher's work is simple and straightforward ; while the work of the English Teacher is at least five times as difficult, and the conquest of these difficulties requires keen skill, perpetual inventiveness, and untiring perseverance.

Now all this has come to pass from the independent and highly individualised character of the Englishman. A local usage-a traditional custom would always override general convenience or a merely abstract consideration like logical consistency. Indeed, the confusion in our notation has parallels in almost every side of English life. It has an extraordinary parallel in our Weights and Measures, which have been regulated -down to the date of the 1878 Session of Parliament -ontirely by local custom. An imperial bushel of corn is estimated in Mark Lane at 63 lb., but it was down to 1878-72 lb. at Wolverhamton and Stafford, 70 lb. at Liverpool, and 75 lb. at Chester. In short, there were, prior to the passing of the Weights and Measures Act, twelve different kinds of bushels in use in the rain trade. This state of things gave rise to endless confusion. A man night buy his wheat by one measure, sell it by another, and, last of all, demand to be paid for it by weight. These complications involved endless reckonings, and, by consequence, numerous mistakes. They were a great hindrance to trade, and, no doubt, were now and then the cause of serious losses. Another parallel is to be found in the coinage of Austria. There is gold money; there is silver money-some of it debased and deteriorated; and there is copper money; but, in addition to these, there are four different kinds of paper money in four different languages, and some of it is debased to the extent of sixty-per cent. It is plain that, if one received payment of an account in six of these different kinds of money, there would beover and above the calculation of the value of the things bought in a self-consistent arithmetic-another reckoning based upon the relative and temporary values of the different kinds of money. In such reckonings, a foreigner and a child would be at a very great disadvantage. Now, just as an English bushel or an Austrian coin is continually changing in meaning and value, so the symbols by which we attempt to carry words to the eye of a child are constantly changing in meaning and value; and the child's mind is proportionally confused and weakened. If we had in our arithmetic a traditional system of notation made up of the fragments of the Greek, the Roman, and the Arabic systems; if 479 were written down as VII9; and if, moreover, our coinage were so irregular that supence in Midalesex counted for eightpence in Surrey, but it was only fourpence in Hertfordshire, then it would be a very difficult, tedious, and expensive process to teach arithmetic in our public schools.

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incurred, in teaching such an arithmetic as that I have indicated are really felt and incurred in the teaching of reading-in putting into the minds of the children an acquaintance with the bad habits of our notation. For the problem is not to make the child acquainted with 26 letters, it is really to make him acquainted with and thoroughly practised in 158 eccentric and self-consistent habits which the English have acquired in the course of time, of writing down the sounds of their mother-tongue. To master 158 combinations would require 158 separate acts of attention-each of which must be repeated until the whole are thoroughly mastered. Well; this can be done. But the difficulty is even greater than this. Of these 158 habits, some are inconsistent with and destructive of each other; and the experience of the child is not a regular process of addition and cumulation, but sometimes of subtraction and loss. Let me take an example. There are in the language 59 words in which the symbol ou sounds as in house, noun, &c.; and, of course, if the child meets with a large number of such words, he naturally and quite unconsciously draws the conclusion that ou will always have this sound. But by and by, he lights upon words like your, four, would, and mould ; and now, not only is his previous experience upset, but he forms a vague idea that to ou may be attached almost any sound whatever. Now, if we attempted to give an arithmetical value to his experience, we might say. He has met the first case of ou fine times; he has met the second case six times; and his experience is therefore equal to three. This is, however, rather a favourable way of putting it. The fact is, that, in our every-day procedure with children, the exceptions make themselves quito as important as the rule, and both Teacher and child, in a kind of silent intellectual despair, give up the guidance of the rule altogether, and teach and learn each word separately, as an individual, and not as one of a class.

The child at first expects to find a certain truth in these marks ; but he quickly comes to feel that it is no matter what sound you give to a sign-that the sign itself has only a chance value : and, so far as training is concerned, the Teacher soon discovers that his eye is never rightly or thoroughly educated until after the expenditure of a disproportionate amount of time and money. He has constantly to read off letters that are not there, and to ignore letters that are there; he is constantly coming upon new forms for the same sound, and new sounds for the same forms, so that habit is out of the question. So far as the mind of the child is concerned, unless the Teacher adopts a scientific method, no wish for classification ever arises in the child ; or it sets in late, if it ever sets in at all. His past experience is constantly putting him out-constantly tripping him up; until at last he comes to feel that he need not rely on his own exertions, but must be constantly helped over the stones by the teacher. Thus all teaching of reading becomes telling; and these are just contraries and exclusive of each other. And here is another loss. our evil notation tends to destroy good teaching. (To be Continued.)

ENGLISH LITERATURE IN SCHOOLS.*

This is pre-eminlenty an age of books and perioducals, bad as well as good . and if we estimate the demand by the supply, we must conclude that the influence exerted through their mediumship ranks in power second to none. This influence like the literature naturally divides itself into two classes, the first an educating, broadening, civilizing, and rofining force, leaving its impress upon humanity for all time ; the second a stultifying, degrading and demoralizing factor, as effective for evil as the first is for good. To arrive at the conclusion that this later class of literature is being spread broadcast over the land, we need but examine the heavily laden shelves The difficulty that would be felt, and the expense that would be by Principal Keys, B Falls