

ment, so far as the lettering of their words was concerned. He sees contradictions all around; he sees

CONTRADICTIONS of ENGLISH with NORMAN-FRENCH marking, of NORMAN-FRENCH with LATIN marking, of LATIN with ENGLISH marking, and of all with themselves and with each other.

In the two chief notations there are

CONTRADICTIONS OF			
SOUND	}	with	{ SYMBOL
EAR			{ EYE
SYMBOL	}	with	{ SOUND
EYE			{ EAR.

The philological explanation of all this is, as has been said, that the English language is a vast conglomerate or pudding-stone made up of several distinct and different home-dialects, as well as of Norman-French and Latin elements. It consequently possesses all, or parts of all, the notations of all these dialects and languages. And the error perpetually made in our primary schools is that the child is taught all these systems at the same time—as if they were all of one class, without the slightest sense that he is asked to do something that would be extremely difficult for a grown up man. He has to learn to recognise with promptitude and immediateness from two to five different systems of notation, mixed with fragments from others!

(To be continued.)

BURNS AND LONGFELLOW.

The following characteristic tribute to the peasant-poet of Scotland is from the pen of the greatest poet America has yet produced—the late H. W. Longfellow. It was first published a short time ago in the *Edinburgh Scotsman* :—

I see amid the fields of Ayr
A ploughman, who in foul or fair
Sings at his task,
So clear, we know not if it is
The laverock's song we hear or his,
Nor care to ask.

For him the ploughing of those fields
A more ethereal harvest yields
Than sheaves of grain;
Songs' flush with purple bloom the rye.
The plover's call, the curlew's cry
Sing in his brain.

Touched by his hand, the wayside weed
Becomes a flower; the lowliest reed
Beside the stream
Is clothed with beauty; gorse and grass
And heather where his footsteps pass
The brighter seem.

He sings of love whose flame illumines
The darkness of lone cottage rooms;
He feels the force,
The treacherous undertone and stress
Of wayward passions, and no less
The keen remorse.

At moments wrestling with his fate,
His voice is harsh, but not with hate;
The brushwood hung
Above the tavern door lets fall
Its bitter leaf, its drop of gall
Upon his tongue.

But still the burden of his song
Is love of right, disdain of wrong;
Its master chords

Are Manhood, Freedom, Brotherhood;
Its discords, but an interlude
Between the words.

And then to die so young, and leave
Unfinished what he might achieve!
Yet better sure
Is this than wandering up and down,
An old man in a country town,
Infirm and poor.

For now he haunts his native land
As an immortal youth; his hand
Guides every plow;
He sits beside each ingle nook;
His voice is in each rushing brook,
Each rustling bough.

His presence haunts this room to-night—
A form of mingled mist and light—
From that far coast.
Welcome beneath this roof of mine,
Welcome! this vacant chair is thine,
Dear guest and ghost?

Promotion Examinations.

The attendance at the public schools being irregular, it is not easy to determine the average time a pupil requires to pass from one class to another. Industry and intelligence are also factors that must be taken into consideration. Generally speaking, there are only a few stupid children in any school; the teacher, who worries over these and tries to make them keep pace with their more industrious and intelligent class-mates, makes a mistake and does a great injustice to all his pupils. It is well to arrange school work so that the moderately clever pupil can easily overtake the lessons given for preparation. By this plan, the brilliant—always the exception—will have hardly enough. Still they need not be idle, as the teacher can without loss of time assign something out of the usual course of study for their improvement, for which they need not be marked on the class-register.

Admitting that the attendance is fair and that the pupils are of average ability, experience justifies the statement that two years is the maximum time that a pupil should occupy in passing from one class to the next higher. Let us put this into a practical shape and see what it means: A child starts to school when its seventh year is completed; at nine he is through the first class; at eleven, through the second; at thirteen, through the third; at fifteen he is through the fourth, or has passed the entrance to a high school. This rate of progress leaves three years in which to prepare for matriculation or a teacher's certificate before the eighteenth year is completed. On paper such a result appears satisfactory, and, if practically carried out, there are few parents who could justly complain.

But it is not uncommon to find pupils promoted simply to avoid the dissatisfaction arising from parents and guardians on account of their being "too long," as they say, "in one book." Yielding to this pressure works irreparable mischief to both teacher and pupil: to the former, by pointing out a method by which he may appear to be doing his duty when he is not; to the latter, by an introduction to work for which he is not prepared. Of course, when the highest class is reached, this must stop. A conscientious teacher who succeeds one guilty of such a practice, finds seas of trouble in store for him, in fact, it may take him years to gain the reputation of his less deserving predecessor. It is hardly necessary to urge that classification by merit is a necessity, and, that the industrious teacher can, with a little skill, overtake the work and have parents under-