

this study would take us much further than is necessary for the practical requirements of life. We should have to go into many of those "mysteries" that excite Dr. Dawson's scientific indignation. But it is English Grammar, regarded as an art, with which we are more immediately concerned.

And here we are met with a distinction that is made between the teaching of English and that of other languages. In teaching English Grammar, it is said, we are teaching the grammar of a language which we all speak, and therein lies the great difference between English and, say, Latin Grammar. This, of course, is partly true, but it is not the whole truth. "There is an easily conceivable state of things," writes Professor Bain, "that would dispense entirely with school instruction in the mother tongue. If the child were surrounded only by those who spoke correctly and well, then the education in the mother tongue would be perfect through unavoidable imitation. It is in so far as our actual position is different, that we need express teaching in the native tongue. The primary school has to fight against the low standard of the home, in language as in other things. The other schools maintain the same contest, and the further contest with what is bad even even in the speech of the educated, including the mixture of tares and wheat in the field of general literature." President Stark, of Kentucky, puts it more plainly when he says that "most of the pupils in our schools hear only bad English at home,"* and unhappily we are no better off in Canada than our neighbours in Kentucky. We must teach our pupils to say, "that sort of things," instead of "those sort of things," to make the proper application of "shall" and "will," to avoid such expressions as "I done it," and to answer the query: "How many sums have you done?" by "I have done ten" and not by "I did ten."

In view therefore of the actual requirements of modern education, I am by no means inclined to agree with the old school, who believe English Grammar to be useless, and tell us that the best training we can have is the study of Latin Grammar. "It is no doubt true," Mr. Roby allows, "that progress in the knowledge of language is to be attained only, as in other sciences, by the constant action and reaction of theory and

* *Education*, May, 1881.