

English.

All articles and communications intended for this department should be addressed to the ENGLISH EDITOR EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL, Room 5, 11½ Richmond Street West, Toronto.

SOME PHILOLOGICAL QUESTIONS.

To the Editor of THE EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL:

Will you kindly allow me space in your paper to make a note or two upon the review of my little book, "Notes on English Grammar" (EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL, February 1st)?

There are, on page 39, fifty errors, which, perhaps, would justify the addition of a list of *Corrigenda*. I refer pupils to Sweet's "Anglo-Saxon Reader." The word *alms* (p. 24) is asserted to be derived from the Vulgar Latin *alimosina*, by Pogatscher, in his "Lehnworte im Angelsächsischen." I have not asserted (p. 36) that verbs such as "teach" and "seek" formed their past tense in Anglo-Saxon by vowel change. The passage runs as follows: "A third class of verbs existed in Anglo-Saxon. The past tense of these verbs was formed by vowel change, and by adding the suffix *de* or *te*. They are called mixed verbs. This name might well apply to such modern verbs as *teach*, *seek*, etc. *She*, *her*, *they*, *them* (p. 51) should be *She*, *they*, *them*." The reviewer's remarks, with the omission of this word, concern debatable ground, though his tone is a trifle arbitrary. As regards the neuter possessive, *its* (p. 53), I say that the changes were *his*, *hit*, *it*, *its*. Of course *its* was formed by analogy. With respect to the derivation of *other* (p. 58), I wrote in my MS. *o'ther*, which was printed *o'der*, and not corrected. Your reviewer does not mention his authority for the assertion that *by* in "Whitby" is not connected with *by* in "by-law" (p. 96). The statement that my account of umlaut (p. 92) is inadequate is unnecessary; the statement that it is erroneous, without specific instances in which it is erroneous, is cheap. In the example (p. 64), "The more, the merrier," I contend that the first *the* may be regarded as a conjunction, the second *the* as an adverb. So much for my positive errors.

I take this opportunity of repeating that the philological part has been subordinated to other more rudimentary matter, and that a chief object of the book is "to enable pupils to parse fairly complete at an early stage." Your reviewer read *age*, and so was betrayed into the notion that the philological instruction was intended for those of tender years. He says that my language (with his misreading) "warns the reviewer to be on his guard"—against, I suppose, some ill-advised attempt to bring on premature brain fever, or to deceive unsophisticated infants by printer's errors.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Yours faithfully,

A. ALLEN BROCKINGTON.

B.C.S., Lennoxville, Feb. 7th, 1896.

We are glad to find that Mr. Brockington has accepted so many of our corrections, and with so good grace. With respect to those he still doubts or disputes, we may add the few words our space permits.

The derivation of "alms" is a difficult question, not set at rest even by Pogatscher in his "Lehnworte im Altenglischen," to quote the title more correctly. The usual authorities, such as Skeat, remark, "The Anglo-Saxon *almesse* is a corruption of the eccles. Latin *eleemosyna*, borrowed from the Greek." The ultimate basis is the Greek *eleemosune*. That there was a Romance basis of the Anglo-Saxon is attested by the umlaut; but this basis was probably (Pogatscher, § 75) *alimossina*; through Kluge (*Grundr.*, i. 713) holds that *almesse* may have a closer connection with old Irish *almsan* than with the continental borrowings from Romance *almosna*, Lat. *eleemosyne*.

That the author still clings to his statement that the past tense of such verbs as "teach," "seek" was formed by vowel change, is strange. They are not "mixed" verbs, because they never had any trace of the vowel changes of the ablaut verbs. The vowel change is due to the absence of umlaut in the past tense and past participle. (Sieviers, *A.S. Gram.*, p. 407.)

The relation of "they," "them," to their Norse source will be found stated clearly by Skeat (v.

"they"), Kluge (*Grundr.*, i., 789, etc.). No one debates it.

That the "neuter possessive *its* is derived from the A.S. *his*; the changes were *his*, *hit*, *it*, *its*," is obviously erroneous. How could the form *its* be derived from the form *his*, or *hit* from *his*, which is the genitive case of *hit*? *Its* is simply a newly-formed possessive on the basis of the nominative and accusative *it*, which took the place of *his* as a neuter possessive.

That the connection of *by* in "by-law" with *by* of "Whitby" is no longer held is a matter of common scholarship. See, for example, under "by-law," in the Standard Dictionary.

The erroneous character of the explanation of umlaut (p. 92) begins at the beginning of the explanation: "There appears to be a constant struggle to return to what may be called the natural order of vowels, *i, e, a, o, u*." This is not simply error, but flat nonsense. Umlaut is the accepted term to denote the modification of a stressed vowel by another following it, by which the first vowel approaches in character the second. The back vowel *a* followed by the front vowel *i* has a resultant in a middle vowel *e*, *man* (*n*), plural **manni*=*men* (*n*). Similarly, A.S. *werold* becomes *weorold*; *wela*, wealth, becomes *weola*, etc. If the author will read Skeat's "Principles," I., pp. 190 ff., Sweet's "New English Grammar," §§ 751 ff., or Sievers' "A.S. Grammar," §§ 85 ff., he will learn something about umlaut that his little book does not teach.

Concerning the phrase, "The more, the merrier," whatever the first "the" is, it is certainly not a conjunction, from the simple fact that it does not connect. Originally it was the instrumental case of the neuter article *that*. So Alfred in his "Boethius" wrote, "thæt thu meahst thy sweotolor ongitan," etc., that you can understand the clearer. So in his preface to the "Pastoral Care," we find "hie woldon thæt her thy mara wisdom on londe wære thy we ma getheoda cuthon," they wished that here should be the (by that) greater wisdom tie (by that) more of languages we knew.

It will be clear from these examples that the modern usage of "the" is precisely the A.S. usage. Now the A.S. usage is the instrumental case, modifying adverbs and adjectives in the comparative degree. It is, therefore, used adverbially. The phrase, "The older the better," therefore, means simply "by what amount older, by that amount better."

ANSWERS.

W.M.—(1) In Shelley's "Cloud" some versions give *upbuild*, in last line, while others give *unbuild*. Which is preferable, and why is it? Give meaning when "unbuild" is used.

We are unable to find any intelligible meaning for the sentence when *upbuild* is used. The reference is clearly to the "cenotaph," and the "cenotaph," in its turn, is clearly the "blue dome of air" built up by the winds (which clear the sky) and the sunbeams. This cenotaph is the tomb of the cloud, which is not within it, but in the "caverns of rain," from which it laughs at its own empty tomb, and from which it arises to *unbuild* that cenotaph by covering the blue dome again with itself, the cloud.

NOTE.—Want of room and time compels us to hold over answers to other questions before us till next number. We shall hereafter give a good deal more space in this department to the Literature for Public School Leaving Examination. Will teachers please ask questions and state difficulties freely? Perhaps we can meet their wants more effectually by answering such correspondence than by attempting, at so late a date in the school year, to annotate all the selections in order.

Few persons have any adequate idea of economy of nervous and vocal strength, while the daily and hourly waste of power in these directions is lamentable. In no place is this waste so excessive as in the schoolroom. There is no work in the world which makes greater or more incessant demands upon the vitality than that required of a teacher. There is certainly no person who should more carefully seek to protect and save herself from physical breakdown, a vast amount of which might be prevented by attention to the one matter of proper vocalization.—*The School Journal*.

Special Papers.

THE PENCIL IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL.

T. F. M'LEAN, BRIDGEPORT.

(Concluded.)

Another important consideration is the habit of criticism, which must be inculcated by the teacher.

It is his duty at first to offer kindly and helpful criticism, the aim in view being self-criticism on the part of the pupil, which is a safe stepping-stone to improvement.

We all realize how easy it is to criticize, yet some of the most valued art critics have been but indifferent manipulators of the brush.

When these two stages of observation and self-criticism have been reached, give the pupil plenty of practice and he will learn to draw by drawing. Leave him to his own resources, and I warrant you he will not be idle.

The imitative impulse in children is inborn and you will soon begin to perceive evidences of it.

From the vague outline, rude and typical in character, parts and members are recognized, and then various objects of the same kind are examined with a view to seeing individual differences, while, at the same time, the process of generalization goes on in formulating rules to govern the construction of objects of the same kind. The pupil's mind views, analytically at first, and then synthetically, in stages corresponding.

No doubt all of you have an idea of what a child's conception of a human being is, and how it is drawn.

The explanation lies in the fact that the child's observations are, at first, only general and indefinite, confined merely to length and breadth in the body and a rude representation of features in the face.

As we proceed naturally from the known, and as, perhaps, the human figure is the most familiar and the most frequently presented picture in the child's sensorium, it would not be amiss to allow him to draw from nature various members of the body, such as fingers, hands, limbs, and faces.

At this stage, it may be, the precious youngster may demonstrate his attachment to the art by attempting to draw the oldest face in the room. But if a pupil caricature you, I should not advise you to vent your spleen on his devoted head.

You have the consolation that it was only intended as a mild rebuke on your personal appearance, and for this, in a great measure, you are not responsible.

Under the old régime in teaching, it was considered an unpardonable offence to be caught drawing pictures in school, and grievous were the penalties meted out to the offender if he were detected; but we hope that things have now reformed.

There never yet was a mischievous, though clever, boy who did not delight in drawing something, and I know of no more useful help in school management than the filling in of time by such a pupil, after his work has been carefully revised. Moreover, if the realm of art is not enriched by his productions, meanwhile the realm of order is under the dominancy of one of the best preservers of silence.

His precocity amounts to nothing more nor less than an irresistible impulse towards constructiveness and destructiveness, an impulse easily appeased in this way, while you shackle his mischievous propensities by appealing to a passion which is almost universal.

If, by placing good models before him, you lead him to appreciate good drawing as you endeavor to stimulate him in literature or composition, there is no question as to the character of his work.

But the question here arises—"How are we to cultivate in the pupil a taste for art and a pride in the preservation of the same?"

One axiomatic truth I have discovered in my short experience is, that there is only a step, a short, easy, and natural step, from admiration to imitation.

We grant such by our most approved methods in reading, writing, composition, and literature.

The kindling of the warmest fires of admiration for the sublime, or the beautiful, is simultaneous with the passionate desire to emulate, the fervent hope to excel, or even to surpass in merit, the immediate model.

This is the means *par excellence* of securing zeal and sustaining effort that oftentimes proves disheartening.