

class examination under the age of fifteen; that the examination should be one without respect to special grammars or formulæ; that no master should be in any way responsible for a boy who had been under his care for less than three years; and that a boy should only be examined on subjects in which his master had professedly prepared him; that the names, not of the boys necessarily, but of the schools, should be published in case of disgraceful failure, the tendency of this last being to force a master, in self-defence, to refuse to have his authority tampered with by the indulgence of parents, to put a stop to extra irregular holidays, and the unreasonable demands of a vast number of multifarious subjects; and last, not least, to prevent masters from putting forth their whole strength on certain show-cards and pattern-boys, to the utter neglect of the less promising—a system common in large schools in England, and complained of by Jules Janin, in France, who says of his own schoolmaster that, after inspecting him and trying his paces, he put him on a

kind of bench of outcasts, to be more or less neglected—"comme nullement digne de ses projets ni de ses leçons"—a process which takes place, practically, at many an overgrown school of high name among ourselves. Defects there may be in the working of these examinations, but there can be no doubt that they will tend to act as checks on a vast amount of folly in parents, and want of conscientiousness in masters: the credit and subsistence of the masters will be publicly at stake, and they will not be inclined to sacrifice these to satisfy the whims of parents, who wish to combine improvement with indulgence, and to get education without discipline. Then there are the "competitive examinations," at which we can only give a brief glance. To some of the papers of examination for the far loftier Indian appointments we should feel very much inclined to prefix a sentence of Locke's Essay: "Nobody ought to be expected to know everything;" but "les reformes se relâchent toujours," and this kind of evil will probably cure itself.

TOPICAL TEACHING.

BY LOTTIE L. VOIGT, BRIDGEWATER, MASS.

"This is the house that Jack built.
This is the malt that lay in the house that Jack built.
This is the rat that ate the malt that lay in the house that Jack built.
This is the cat that caught the rat that ate the malt that lay in the house that Jack built.
This is the dog that worried the cat that caught the rat that ate the malt that lay in the house that Jack built."

AS surely as the delicate tracery found in the hard rock, far below the surface of the earth, indicates the existence long ago of the fern, whose graceful outline is now all that

remains, so surely do these lines bear record of their origin; and that origin was topical teaching. Every element is here. *Observe*,—This is the house that Jack built. It is very evident from the way in which the facts are stated, that Jack was already a well-known personage. The teaching begins with, and takes for a foundation, that which is already known.

Proceeding,—The first new idea introduced is the house, and here, at the very outset, the thing itself is presented to the mind. Not, "Once upon a time there was a house that