

beginning to teach reading and writing to children at six years of age it is surprising to note how rapid is their progress under an able and zealous teacher. By the adoption of this method the time spent in learning to read common words in simple sentences may be reckoned by months instead of years. It is one of the most marked characteristics of German instruction that it is so extremely methodical, slow, and thorough. In arithmetic, for example, it is always a prime object with a German teacher not to be content with obtaining right results, but to insist further on finding out whether his scholars have really grasped the processes and principles involved in attaining the results. Thoroughness and exactness are amongst the most important and valuable marks of the German character. These qualities pervade the barrack-room, the drill-ground, and the battle-field just as much as the school-room. It seems as if the Germans had thoroughly and heartily accepted the maxim—"that whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well." Till a scholar has thoroughly mastered one step he is not prematurely urged to take another. With the German teacher this plan is quite natural and easy, because in his country there are not as yet (and, for his sake, we hope there never will be) any fixed "standards" of examination which must be annually passed by every school. Of course there are in Germany School Inspectors and periodical examinations of the scholars, for the purpose of testing amply and thoroughly their proficiency and the progress made from year to year. But these examinations are not conducted by the School Inspectors as ours are now in England, upon the cast-iron system that sprang from the principle of "payment by results." The Germans would ridicule the idea of paying vast sums of public money for

mechanical results in the art of instruction. We once had occasion to explain to a school inspector on the continent what was our system of inspection in England. He listened attentively to our account, which roused, first, his amazement, and then his amusement, for he could not refrain from laughing at such a mode of testing the real merits of a school or the efficiency of a teacher.

The methodical, systematic, and graduated steps deliberately taken in every German school, in accordance with a carefully considered theory of education, have led the Germans to adopt three distinct classes of schools, with courses of instruction of a perfectly distinct type in each of them. For children who are not likely to remain at school beyond the statutory age of fourteen there is the elementary school; for children who can remain at school till they attain the age of sixteen, and are likely to be employed in some commercial or manufacturing position of responsibility, there is the "*Réal-schule*," or, as we should call it, the "Commercial" school, where Latin and a modern language are learnt, in addition to other ordinary subjects; and, lastly, for those who are destined to enter one or other of the numerous universities of Germany, there is the "*Gymnasium*," or, as we should call it, the "Grammar-school," where Greek is taught. In each of these three classes there is a regular systematic curriculum of work to be done, so that the scholars in the lower schools are never allowed to attempt subjects which they will not have time to master during their stay at school. Hence, in German elementary schools no place is found for our "Specific Subjects" and a "Fourth Schedule."

Having seen how methodical the Germans are in defining the work in the three classes of schools above named, we shall be fully prepared to