

within the reach of all classes, and to scatter schools all over the country, of what nature should these schools be? The type most in favour with us at the present day is that of large boarding schools. But such schools are, in their present size, the growth of comparatively few years. The Rugby of Dr. Arnold scarcely rose above three hundred students; and the local grammar schools, in which so many great men have been educated, must always have been small in numbers. How far, then, is it possible at large boarding-schools to carry out any of those precepts which the history of education presents to us as desirable? The one essential condition to the acquisition of wider knowledge is a desire of learning in the pupil. The chief defect in all schemes of quick and easy education is that they presuppose no resistance on the part of the learner, whereas every schoolmaster knows that more than half his time and skill is taken up with overcoming that resistance. In the old days of public schools there was much idleness, boys were left much to themselves, but those who read at all were accustomed to read in a literary spirit. Some corner of the library, some favourite shelf of books, perhaps the peculiar care of some exceptional tutor, sowed in the mind of an able boy the first seeds of wide and commanding learning. There are many traces in old letters and diaries and school papers of the existence of this real love of solid knowledge. The 'Microcosm' of Canyning, the 'Etonian' of Praed, the 'Rugby Magazine' of Clough, are evidences of the existence of a literary spirit. Boys took a lively interest in each other's compositions, whether in living or dead languages. A good copy of no Latin verses would be passed from hand to hand, and copied into a book. Several extract books of this kind are extant, dating from the latter part of the last century.