

JOHN S. HART,

PRINCIPAL OF THE PHILADELPHIA HIGH SCHOOL.

THE name of this gentleman is so identified with the history of the Philadelphia High School, one of the most successful of its class on the American Continent, that a brief sketch of his life has been repeatedly called for by the readers of this Journal.

JOHN SEELY HART* was born on the 28th of January, 1810, in Stockbridge township, Berkshire county, Massachusetts, on the bank of the Housatonic, at a point where there has since sprung up the enterprising little manufacturing village of Glendale.

When John was two years old, the family with several of their neighbors emigrated into what was then an unbroken wilderness, in the upper part of Luzerne county, Pennsylvania. The settlement made by these Massachusetts families, in 1812, was in Providence township, on the Lackawanna river, two miles north of where the thriving town of Scranton now stands. The subject of this memoir continued to reside in Providence until he was thirteen years old. His earliest recollections are of a log-house, in the midst of a small clearing, skirted on all sides with the primeval forest. The life of a pioneer, in the back woods, though furnishing doubtless abundant materials for romantic adventure, is yet essentially a life of hardship. Children especially, in such circumstances, often suffer severe privations. The boyhood of Mr. Hart has been described by himself as "*one continued sorrow.*"

In 1823, his father removed with the family to Laurel Run, the seat of a small mill-privilege in a wild dell about two miles from Wilkesbarre. John was then thirteen years old. He was a pale, sickly boy, with delicate features, and a general appearance of extreme physical debility. His education, so far as book-knowledge was con-

* Mr. Hart is a lineal descendant, in the eighth generation, from Stephen Hart, who came from Braintree, Essex county, England, in 1630, with the company that settled in Braintree, Massachusetts. This Stephen Hart was one of the fifty-four settlers of Cambridge, who organized a church there, and invited the Rev. Thomas Hooker from England to be their pastor. Stephen Hart went thence in 1636, with Mr. Hooker and several others, to Hartford, Connecticut, and was one of the original proprietors of that place. Thence, in 1640, he removed with others into a valley a few miles west of Hartford, and formed a settlement called Farmington, where direct descendants of the family in the male line have continued to reside ever since, upon a part of the original homestead.

cerned, was limited to an acquaintance with Webster's Spelling Book, Murray's English Reader, Daboll's Arithmetic as far as the Rule of Three, and the Bible.

Two things occurred about this time, which entirely changed his career in life. The first was the establishment of a Sunday school in the neighborhood. Two pious ladies from Philadelphia, who were spending the summer with their friends in Wilkesbarre, in connexion with a lady of the village, after exploring the wild region, known as "Laurel Run," and finding it sadly destitute of religious privileges, resolved to establish there a Sunday school. As there was no school-house, nor place of worship of any kind in the neighborhood, nor any dwelling-house at all suited to the purpose, it was determined to hold the school in a barn. The whole apparatus of this school consisted of a few boards laid across old barrels and boxes, to serve as benches, a few tracts and books which the ladies brought with them in a satchel, and the blue and red "tickets" then given as premiums for attendance. John was present the first day the school was opened, and is believed not to have been absent a day, so long as it was continued. He was assigned to the care of one of the ladies from Philadelphia, Miss Mary R. Gardiner. Besides possessing a thoroughly religious spirit, Miss Gardiner was a lady of high culture, whose gentleness and refinement of manners, and scrupulous neatness of person, contrasted strangely with the coarse materials with which she was surrounded. To this lady the boy was indebted, not only for the religious impulse, which resulted in his becoming a Christian, but for the conception of a higher style of humanity than any with which he had before come in contact. There was something within him which responded at once to what he saw so beautifully exemplified in this Christian lady, and which he thenceforth longed with an unquenchable desire to have accomplished in himself.

The other occurrence, that affected materially his subsequent career, was a dangerous and protracted illness. He was attacked with a lameness in the left knee, which proved to be the formidable disease known as "white swelling." The disease was cured, but by a painful and tedious process, and with a very narrow escape, on his part, from being lamed for life. He emerged from this illness more delicate and feeble apparently than ever. So incapable was he judged to be, for any employment requiring physical strength, that it was determined by his friends to seek for him, by some means, such additions to his stock of knowledge, that he might be able to gain a livelihood as the teacher of a country school.

Sickness, and the increased physical debility which followed it, and

which threatened to become permanent, thus changed his destination from that of a mechanic, to that of a teacher. The Sunday school in the barn, and the generous impulses there awakened, changed it still further from that of a country schoolmaster, to the position of extended usefulness to which he has since risen.

When between thirteen and fourteen years of age, he took his first lessons in what he considered the advanced sciences of Geography and English Grammar, the very names of which were till then unknown to him. So extraordinary, however, was the progress which he made in these studies, that the attention of some of the good people of Wilkesbarre was attracted towards him, and by degrees he was encouraged to hope that in some way he might obtain a regular college education. At length, in his fifteenth year, he entered the Wilkesbarre Academy and began the study of Latin. Some one gave him a Latin Grammar. Another lent him a Dictionary. He bought a Virgil with money obtained by the sale of straw hats which he had plaited with his own hands. Living in a home where even candles were a luxury, he read the story of Dido and Æneas, in the Virgil thus procured, by the light of pine-knots picked up in the woods on his way home from school. The whole of the Æneid was read by him in this manner, he himself while thus studying being obliged to lie at full length on the floor in order to get the proper benefit of the light upon the hearth.

When he first began to attend the academy, he lived at home and walked to school a distance of about two miles. Subsequently an arrangement was made by which he paid for his board in the family of a clergyman in the village, by doing sundry jobs of work mornings and evenings. The amount of work, which this sickly but stout-hearted boy undertook, in order to pay for his board while preparing for college, would hardly be believed. The particulars, as communicated to the writer of this article, have satisfied him that they were not much less in amount and laboriousness than the full work of a regular day laborer. Besides this, during the school hours, throughout his whole course in the academy, he paid for his tuition by assisting the master in hearing the lessons of the younger classes.

After a life of three years thus spent, he was found to be not only thoroughly fitted for college, but ruddy and glowing with health, his lameness all gone, and his whole man, physical, intellectual, and moral, invigorated by the stern but wholesome ordeal through which he had passed.

Mr. Hart entered the Sophomore class of Princeton College in the fall of 1827, and graduated in the fall of 1830, with the Valedictory oration and the first honor in the class for general scholarship.

About the time of completing his college course, Mr. Hart received an invitation to be the Principal of the Natchez Academy, in Mississippi. He entered upon the duties of this position in October, 1830, and remained there one academic year. Having in view, however, the preaching of the Gospel, as his ultimate profession, he returned to Princeton in the fall of 1831, and entered the Theological Seminary of that place. About a year after beginning his theological studies, he received the appointment of tutor in the college. The duties of the tutorship were discharged in connexion with attendance upon the theological classes, for the next two years.

In 1834, he was appointed adjunct Professor of Ancient Languages. A large part of the instruction of the college classes in Greek now devolved upon him, and he gave himself to the task with renewed zeal. His ardor in prosecuting the studies of his department communicated itself to the students, many of whom, besides learning the stated lessons of the day, attended voluntarily at extra hours to the prelections of the professor upon authors not included in the college course. He read in this way, to a select class of students, a large portion of the Attic Orators, and of the Dialogues of Plato. One of the changes in the classical course of the college, which Professor Hart was mainly instrumental in bringing about, was the substitution of entire treatises, such as the "Memorabilia," the "Anabasis," the "Oration on the Crown," &c., in the place of the fragmentary Collectanea formerly in use.

While engaging with so much zeal in the prosecution of the Greek, Mr. Hart gave considerable attention also to Oriental studies, particularly to the Hebrew, and the Arabic, the latter of which he studied privately under the tuition of Professor J. Addison Alexander.

Mr. Hart was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, in the fall of 1835, and during the ensuing season he preached occasionally in the College Chapel and elsewhere in the neighborhood. It was his intention in due time to be ordained as a minister of the Gospel, and to remain permanently connected with the college. But in the following year, 1836, an event occurred which changed entirely his plans. This was an offer of the proprietorship and control of the Edgemoor School in the neighborhood of Princeton. In the management of this institution, which was exclusively a boarding school for boys, Mr. Hart thought he saw a field of special usefulness, and with the advice of some of his friends he embarked in the undertaking. It was obvious to him, on entering upon a work of so engrossing a character, that it would preclude the idea of his entering upon the ministry. He accordingly abandoned the purpose before going to

Edgehill, and subsequently communicated this intention to the Presbytery, and returned to them his license, with a request that it should be formally cancelled, which was done. The Edgehill School, under Mr. Hart's management, became widely known, and was very successful. He continued in the management of it five years.

In September, 1842, he was elected Principal of the Central High School of Philadelphia, in the place of Professor A. D. Bache, the present Superintendent of the United States Coast Survey. The High School had been established in October, 1838, with four Professors, equal and co-ordinate, but without any Principal or official head. In consequence of this radical defect in its organization, the school was practically a failure. After a year and a half of precarious and doubtful existence, the institution was remodelled. Professor Bache became its first Principal, and continued in this office two years and a half, namely, from January, 1840, to July, 1842. Mr. Hart has been Principal since that time, or for sixteen out of the twenty years of its existence. This, then, has been his chief work. In this school alone, he has had the charge of no less than 3792 students, of ages ranging from 12 to 21; and no one who has ever been much in the school, or known anything of Mr. Hart's habits of mind, and the energy with which he pursues any favorite object, can doubt that during these sixteen years of active exertion, in his own chosen field of labor, he has left an impress upon his generation which will not soon pass away.

A leading idea with Mr. Hart, in regard to teaching, has ever been the indispensable necessity of the teacher's rousing the pupil himself to decided co-operation and activity, in order to his making acquisitions of permanent value. This idea he developed, soon after his accession to the High School, in a public Lecture to the Controllers and Teachers of the Public Schools, on the subject of "Attention." The main point which he makes in this lecture, is thus stated:—

"The subject of study, in the case of young persons, is often of less importance than the manner of study. I have been led sometimes to doubt the value of many of the inventions for facilitating the acquisition of knowledge by children. That, the acquisition of which costs little labor, will not be likely to make a deep impression, nor to remain long upon the memory. It is by labor that the mind is strengthened and grows. And while care should be taken not to overtask it, by exertions beyond its strength, yet mere occupation of the mind with useful and proper objects, is not the precise aim of education. The educator aims not to make learned boys but able men. To do this he must tax their powers. He must rouse them to manly exertion. He

must lead them to think, to discriminate, to digest what they receive, to *work*. There must every day be the glow of *hard work*—not that exhaustion and languor which arise from too protracted confinement to study—which have the same debilitating effect upon the mind that a similar process has upon the body—but vigorous and hardy labor, such as wakens the mind from its lethargy, summons up the resolution and will, and puts the whole internal man into a state of determined and positive activity. The boy, in such a case, feels that he is at work. He feels, too, that he is gaining something more than knowledge. He is gaining power. He is increasing in strength. He grapples successfully to-day, with a difficulty that would have staggered him yesterday. Every hour so spent, is an hour of conquest. There is no mistaking this process—and no matter what the subject of study, the intellectual development which it gives, is worth infinitely more than all that vague floating kind of knowledge, sometimes sought after, which seems to be imbibed from the atmosphere of the school-room, as it certainly evaporates the moment a boy enters the atmosphere of men, and of active life.”

Mr. Hart's own teaching has ever been in accordance with these views; and his class-room, whenever he is engaged directly in giving instruction, is a scene of extraordinary activity.

But the chief function of the Principal of such an institution as the High School, is not teaching. His business is rather to guide and direct the energies of others, so as out of different and sometimes discordant materials, to produce harmonious practical results. The best commentary upon Professor Hart's administrative abilities is to be found in the actual workings of the High School during the sixteen years of his presidency. The annual reports of the Controllers and the frequent descriptions of the school by intelligent foreigners, who have visited it, have made its character in this respect a matter of history. It is universally regarded as a model of efficiency.

A very striking testimony to Mr. Hart's ability as an administrator, was given by his associates, a few years after his accession to the principalship. The question of the presidency of the Girard College being then under discussion, one of the directors of that institution judging that the Professors of the High School would have a better opportunity than any persons else for being acquainted with Mr. Hart's executive ability, addressed to them a letter with a view of obtaining from them an expression of their opinion. The director received in reply a joint letter, signed by all the Professors, from which the following extracts are made:—

“The intimate relations which have existed between ourselves and

Mr. Hart, during the five years he has been Principal of the High School, have given us, as you intimate, peculiar opportunities for becoming acquainted with his qualifications. The frequent interchange of views consequent upon our official connexion, and the constant intermingling of action during five or six hours of every day, could not but result in a definite and settled opinion on the point which has been named. This opinion it would be easy for us to express in a few comprehensive terms. But as such general expressions are extremely liable to be misunderstood, we have deemed it best, even at considerable sacrifice of brevity, to state some of the particulars upon which our general opinion is founded.

“By the organization of the High School, the Principal is charged with the whole government of the institution. Every case of discipline, great or small, passes through his hands. Hence, any inefficiency in his administration, would immediately be felt by every Professor. On this point, therefore, we cannot be mistaken, and as all of us have been conversant with other institutions, prior to our connexion with the High School, we feel authorized to speak comparatively, as well as absolutely:—and we are free to say, that we have never known an institution of learning, in which the Professors and Assistants were sustained in the discharge of their duties, with so much certainty, and at the same time with such a careful regard to the rights and interests of the pupils, or where discipline was administered with so little parade, and so much real efficiency.

“There are in the High School, besides the Principal, eight Professors and two Assistants. Among so many, there must necessarily be great diversity of views and feelings. In addition to this, several of us are older than Mr. Hart, and some of us were his competitors for the situation which he now holds. We are yet free to say, that from the date of his appointment to the present time, such a thing as jarring or dissension, among the Professors, or between any of them and the Principal, has been unknown. Such entire harmony of action and feeling, for so long a time, and in the management of so important an interest as the government of nearly five hundred boys, averaging more than sixteen years of age, could not be the work of chance. We cannot err in seeing its main cause, in the conciliatory manners, the evenness of temper, the mingled firmness and moderation, which characterize the present Principal.

“Another point in the management of the school, which we have often had occasion to remark, is the rare facility of Mr. Hart, in simplifying what would otherwise be complex, in the details of administration. It is owing mainly to his remarkable powers in this respect, that without

any increase in the number of Professors, and with an actual diminution in the annual expenses of the school, he has been enabled gradually to increase the number of pupils, to nearly double what it was at the time of his accession to the principalship, and to one-third more than it was originally supposed the school building could ever accommodate.

"In connexion with this, we would call attention to the steadiness and uniformity, which mark the movements of the institution. It argues, we think, in the Principal of the High School, no small degree of sagacity in the formation of plans, and of judicious adaptation of means to their accomplishment, that a machine so complex in its movements, and containing so many elements likely to produce discrepancy and confusion, should yet proceed from term to term, quietly working out fixed moral results, with all the certainty and precision of a mathematical problem.

"We should do manifest injustice to Mr. Hart did we not name with some degree of emphasis, his extraordinary capacity for labor. In this we refer, as well to the amount of time which he is accustomed to give daily to the business of the school, as to the amount of work which he can despatch in a given time. Both of these have often excited our surprise. Nothing but an iron will, and great physical powers of endurance, could carry a person through the exhausting labors, which we have seen Mr. Hart perform, during the past five years.

"But the feature in the character of Mr. Hart, which perhaps more frequently than any other has arrested our attention, is his fertility of resources, in cases of emergency. However excellent may be the plans for instruction and government of any large institution, yet, as in its actual operation, it is at every step dependent on voluntary agency, it is constantly liable to interruption and aberration. It is necessarily a problem, the elements of which change with every hour. Every day some new plan must be devised, some old plan must be modified, to suit a new set of circumstances. It is in these cases that Mr. Hart's talent for administration shows itself most decisively, to those who are, like ourselves, conversant with the internal economy of the school. In all the trying exigencies in which we have seen him placed, we may truly say, we have never seen him baffled, and rarely at a loss. We have not indeed known which to admire most, his fertility in the invention of means, or his instinctive sagacity in the adoption of those, that in the end proved to be successful.

"We have said nothing of his literary and scientific attainments. His character in these respects is so well known, that we have not deemed it necessary. The only point, which we would note in regard

to them, is their varied character. In philology, in mathematics, in intellectual science, in civil history, in general literature, we have found him equally and familiarly at home. This varied character of his attainments, combined with great soundness of judgment, and a remarkable balance of all the intellectual faculties, fits him peculiarly for the general superintendence of an institution intended to embrace various departments of learning and science."

Mr. Hart's position as Principal of the High School brought him into intimate connexion with the Controllers and Directors, as well as with the teachers of the lower public schools. The suggestions which he has made, from time to time, have contributed largely, not only to the gradual perfecting of the plan of the High School, but also to the general improvement of the whole system of popular education in that city.

His semi-annual examinations of the candidates for admission to the High School, are really a most searching scrutiny into the qualifications of the teachers. Besides this, he is often required to examine directly competitors for vacant situations in the public schools. The facts brought to light in these inquiries early convinced him that many of the teachers, while possessed of good abilities, were sadly deficient in many points of scholarship which were of vital importance. With a view to ascertain how far they were disposed to embrace opportunities for improvement, he undertook in the early part of 1844 to instruct a class of female teachers in the rudiments of Latin on Saturday afternoons. Beginning with about a dozen, and without any public notification, the class increased before the winter was over, to more than a hundred. Encouraged by this success, he then proposed to the Controllers that the whole of Saturday morning should be given up to the improvement of the teachers, and that they should be regularly organized into classes for this purpose, to be instructed by the Professors of the High School. The suggestion was approved, and the plan continued in successful operation for several years.

There can be no doubt that these Saturday classes gave a decided and healthy impulse to the teachers of the lower schools. They led also, by a natural and easy transition, to the establishment of the present efficient Normal School.

In promoting the interests of these classes, and in seeking to make them attractive, Mr. Hart labored with most untiring zeal. Besides taking a regular part in the instruction, in the same manner as the other professors, he prepared every week a written lecture of an hour's length, which was delivered to all the classes in a body at the close of the other exercises. The first course of lectures was on the "History of the

Public Schools of Philadelphia." In the preparation of this history, he not only explored all the annual reports, and other printed documents of the Controllers, from the year 1818 down to the date when he was writing, but actually read the entire original records of the Controllers, and of the various sectional Boards of Directors, covering more than six thousand pages of folio manuscript, noting each fact as he proceeded, item by item, digesting the information gradually into convenient tabular forms and chronological tables, and afterwards writing out the results in a continuous stream of narrative. The history, thus prepared for the purpose of creating in the minds of the teachers a local interest in their work, would make a good sized octavo volume.

After completing these lectures, Mr. Hart projected another course, still more extended and laborious, on the "History of the English Language and Literature." The admirable paper on the "English Language," which is to be found in the August number of this Journal for 1855, formed originally one of the lectures of this course. As an evidence of the thoroughness with which Mr. Hart entered into the subject, it may be remarked that these lectures, before they were suspended, had already reached the fiftieth, and he had then only come down chronologically as far as Shakspeare. Some of these lectures, as those on Chaucer and Spenser, were repeated in subsequent years to the regular classes of the High School, and elsewhere, and those on Spenser, twelve in number, were published in 1847, forming a large octavo volume of over five hundred pages.

One of the practical difficulties that beset the path of the school in the earlier stages of its history, grew out of its very prosperity. As this difficulty is one common to all similar institutions in large cities, it may be well to dwell upon it a little, and to notice briefly in what manner the problem has been solved in the case of the Philadelphia High School.

The school had grown from 63 pupils and four professors, the original number, to 500 pupils and twelve professors, which was more by 1890 at least, than the building then occupied could suitably accommodate. As the population was steadily advancing, and the public schools constantly gaining in favor, thereby increasing the applicants for admission to the High School in a two-fold ratio, the question would ever and anon arise, what must be the issue of this state of things? To deny admission to those who are truly and fairly qualified must create dissatisfaction, and end in settled opposition. To establish additional High Schools, from time to time, would, besides its extreme expensiveness, break up the beautiful and harmonious uniformity and homogeneity of the whole system of public schools.

In view of this state of things, Mr. Hart, in his Annual Report, September, 1846, made the following suggestion :—

“This gradual filling up of the school, suggests a serious question for the consideration of the Controllers. The time must come, if it has not already come, when the limit will have been reached, beyond which it will be impossible to increase the number belonging to the school. The school system will continue to grow, both by the natural growth of the population, and by the continued improvement of the lower schools. The time must come, therefore, when there will be more candidates qualified for the High School, than can be admitted on the present basis. To meet this difficulty, it was at one time feared that it would be necessary to establish additional High Schools. Experience, however, seems now clearly to indicate that such a result is not, and can never be necessary. All that is necessary, is to prescribe additional studies as a qualification for admission. There are several studies pursued during the first year in the High School, which might be pursued to quite as much advantage in the last year of the grammar schools. The removal of these from the list of studies pursued in the High School, to the list of those required for admission, so far from being an injury, would possess obvious advantages. It would benefit the High School, by enabling the professors to add new studies to the course, or to carry farther some of those already adopted. It would benefit still more the grammar schools, by introducing there some very important branches of study, which are now virtually excluded from them. Reading, spelling, and writing, grammar, geography, and arithmetic, form undoubtedly the basis of a good education. Before the establishment of the High School, even these studies were not taught adequately in the grammar schools. Some of them, as it appears from the records of the Controllers, were not taught at all to any extent. A very great change has taken place in this respect during the past eight years. The second, third, and in some cases, even the fourth division of a grammar school now, are quite equal in intellectual advancement to the first division, in 1838. In consequence of the desire to gain admission to the High School, and the necessity, in order to this, of the pupils being proficient in grammar, geography, and arithmetic, it has come to pass, that these studies are now taught in our public schools as well, probably, as in any other schools in the world of the same extent. But there are many other studies, which, if not equally important with these, are still highly desirable. Every pupil of the public schools should, if practicable, be made acquainted with the History of the United States, and the general prin-

ciples of the National Government. These branches might be taught in the grammar schools, just as well as in the High School."

In consequence of this suggestion, the Controllers adopted a resolution, adding the "History of the United States" to the list of studies required for admission to the High School.

Finding that the measure adopted was still inadequate to the exigency, Mr. Hart, again, in September, 1849, brought the whole subject before the attention of the Controllers in a special report, from which the following extracts are made:—

"In several of my annual reports, and particularly in that for the year ending July, 1846 (pp. 86–88), I have called the attention of the Controllers to the necessity of providing in some way for the steady increase in the number of applicants for admission to the High School. This increase is caused by the natural growth of the population, the improvement of the lower schools, and the constant extension of the whole school system.

"When the High School was opened in 1838, the number of pupils in all the lower schools was less than 18,000. It is now more than 40,000. From a careful examination of the early records of the Controllers, and also those of the sectional Boards, I believe the lower schools have advanced in other respects quite as much as in numbers. The second, and in some cases even the third divisions of the grammar schools are now as far advanced intellectually, as the first divisions were before the organization of the High School. Yet our terms of admission have remained nominally unchanged. I say *nominally*, for there has been of necessity a real change. While we continue to examine on the same branches that we did in 1838, we ask questions that are more difficult, requiring on the part of the applicants a much more extended study of those branches.

"It will be readily perceived from the nature of these branches, that there is a certain point beyond which the course heretofore pursued in our examinations ceases to be profitable or proper. Arithmetic beyond a certain point runs by a natural sequence into algebra and mensuration, the latter consisting mainly of the practical applications of arithmetic to mechanical and commercial business, the former being only arithmetic generalized. The study of the elements of algebra and mensuration is in fact, as every well informed teacher knows, the best and shortest method of perfecting a pupil in arithmetic. After learning thoroughly the easier parts of arithmetic, the most expeditious way of learning its higher problems is, not to study them alone, but to study them in connexion with the elements of algebra and mensuration. The elements of algebra and mensuration, and the whole of

arithmetic, may thus be acquired together, in the same time that arithmetic alone would require if pursued by itself to completion. There is in like manner a natural, though not quite so intimate a connexion between writing and drawing, grammar and rhetoric, geography and history, the history of the United States and its constitution and form of government.

“The removal of some of these simpler studies from the list of those pursued in the High School to the list of those required for admission, seems therefore to be desirable in itself, as well as demanded by the increasing number of applicants. Such a change would benefit the High School, by enabling us to add new studies to the course or to pursue farther some of those already adopted. It would benefit still more the grammar schools by introducing there some very important branches now virtually excluded from them.

“Changes of the kind contemplated should be gradual and prospective in their provisions. To add suddenly a large number of studies to the requirements for admission, would tend to discourage the grammar schools by overloading them with duty, and to embarrass the High School by causing a temporary deficiency in the number of applicants. The Controllers during the last school year made a useful beginning by a resolution requiring that in all examinations subsequent to July, 1849, the candidates be examined in the History of the United States, in addition to the studies heretofore required. This addition I am sure will not be sufficient. I would therefore respectfully suggest the adoption by the Controllers of a resolution requiring candidates for the High School to be examined, in February next and at all subsequent admissions, in the Constitution of the United States; and in July next and at all admissions subsequent to that, in the elements of algebra and mensuration. I have suggested these branches in preference to some others that might be named, because they seem on the whole to be the simplest, and the ones most intimately connected with the studies already pursued in the grammar schools.

“Whether other studies shall be required, and how soon they shall be added to the list, we shall have better means of judging a year hence than now. A change of the kind contemplated can hardly fail to give a favorable impulse, which will be propagated through the whole series of lower schools.

“I should be loth to believe that important improvements are not in store for all our schools, from the High School down to the primaries. I have great confidence also in the belief that improvements hereafter are to be obtained in the same manner that all improvements heretofore have been, I mean, by a constant process of *improving*

upwards. The primaries are to be improved by elevating the secondaries, the secondaries by elevating the grammar schools, the grammar schools by elevating the High School. The whole system, in short, is to be improved by every part rising equally, gradually, and constantly. The mode of improvement which I have suggested, seems to be that which with the least action secures the largest results. As a small angle of divergence at the top of a pyramid affects materially its solid contents, so a small amount of legislation, judiciously applied to the top of our system of public schools, and addressed primarily to only four or five hundred of its pupils, may enlarge materially the intellectual advantages of its whole forty or fifty thousand."

The adoption of this line of policy by the Controllers, and the perfect ease with which the measure was carried into effect, settled entirely the question of the adequacy of the one High School to supply the wants of an ever increasing population.

The transfer of so considerable a number of studies from the High School to the grammar schools, gave a fitting opportunity for extending the course of the former. Among the studies which Mr. Hart had long wished to see placed on the footing of an integral part of an English education, was the Anglo-Saxon. In 1849 and 1850, with the consent of the Controllers, he introduced this study into the High School course, in connexion with his lectures on the early English literature. As there was no one else at hand to undertake the task of instruction, he set himself courageously to work to learn the language, in the midst of his other multiplied duties, and taught it with most gratifying success to several classes. Some prejudice, however, having been awakened in the public mind, against this study, he was obliged in 1854 to yield to the popular clamor, and to abandon the course, just as it had become fairly developed. The experiment on this subject in the Philadelphia High School, was regarded with much interest in all parts of the United States, and its very unexpected abandonment, after such a noble progress had been made, was learned by many of the most enlightened friends of education with sincere sorrow. Mr. Hart's views on this subject are set forth with so much fulness in the paper on "The English Language," before referred to, that it is not necessary to dwell upon it farther in this place.

Professor Hart has been busy with his pen. Having access to the editorial columns of nearly all the daily papers of the city, he has seldom allowed a week to pass without some contribution to the general current of public opinion. In the numerous local controversies, which have necessarily grown out of the development of a general system of popular education, he is understood to have availed himself very largely

of this means of allaying opposition, and of propagating correct views. His thorough investigation into the early history of the public schools of Philadelphia, in preparing his course of lectures on that subject, gave him rare facilities for such a purpose.

Besides these anonymous, but not least important labors, his annual reports have furnished a vast amount of statistical information of the greatest value for general educational purposes. These reports, if collected, would form several large volumes. The information which they contain, is presented with a compactness and perspicuity that have made them models of their kind.

Mr. Hart's first work in the preparation of school books was the editing of "White's Universal History," in which he added several chapters to that part relating to the discovery and settlement of North America. This was in 1843.

In 1844 he discharged the duties of editor of the Pennsylvania Common School Journal.

During the same year, he prepared and published two reading books, which have been popular, namely, "The Class Book of Poetry," and "The Class Book of Prose."

In 1845, he published two other popular school books, namely, "English Grammar," and "A Brief Exposition of the Constitution of the United States."

Mr. Hale, the philologist to the United States Exploring Expedition, under Captain Wilkes, prepared for the government a large quarto volume on the languages of Polynesia. It was a learned work, containing some fifteen or more grammars and vocabularies of the different groups of languages with which the Expedition was brought into contact. Mr. Hale being in Europe at the time his manuscript was going through the press, the difficult task of editing it was intrusted by the Government to Mr. Hart, and occupied no little of his time in the years 1845 and 1846.

In 1847, his "Essay on Spenser and the Fairy Queen," already referred to, appeared contemporaneously in New York and London. It was a sumptuous octavo, of 514 pages, and was received with marked favor. A new edition of it was issued in Philadelphia, in 1854.

The severest literary labor, which he has at any time undertaken, was the editing of Sartain's Magazine. This was a monthly periodical, established with a view to high literary excellence, and enlisting in its service writers of the first class. Its success was immediate, and for that time very great, reaching in its second year a circulation of thirty thousand. Mr. Hart, in addition to his other engagements, dis-

charged the editorial labors of this magazine for two years and a half namely, from January, 1849, to July, 1851, writing all the editorials, reading all the proofs, reading and deciding upon the manuscripts offered for publication, amounting often in a single month to enough to fill the magazine for a year, and conducting the entire correspondence with the contributors. It was his boast, on leaving the office, that he had on no occasion kept either printer, publisher, or contributor waiting for an hour.

His connexion with this magazine brought him into familiar acquaintance with most of the living writers of the country, and made comparatively easy his next task, which was a publication on the "Female Prose Writers of America." This was issued in 1851. It was a large octavo volume, of 630 pages, printed in beautiful style, embellished with portraits, and containing original biographies with extracts. The work was well received, and has been reprinted once or twice since.

His latest publication is an introductory Latin reading book, entitled "Epitome of Greek and Roman Mythology." It appeared in 1853.

During his connexion with the Philadelphia High School, Mr. Hart has had numerous offers to go elsewhere. In December, 1844, he was invited to the presidency of the Pennsylvania Institution for the Blind. He has repeatedly had overtures to become the president of a College, and once to be the Chancellor of a University, with a large increase of salary. Thus far, however, with a wise moderation, he has uniformly declined all offers of the kind.

Mr. Hart was elected a member of the American Philosophical Society in January, 1844. He received the honorary title of Doctor of Laws from Miami University in Ohio, in 1850.

For several years past, Mr. Hart has given a large amount of time and labor to the Sunday school cause. Feeling how much he is himself indebted to this beneficent agency, he endeavors to discharge some part of the obligation thereby laid upon him, by doing whatever may be in his power to extend its benefits to others. On Sunday, both morning and afternoon, he superintends a large Sabbath school, numbering fifty teachers and between three and four hundred scholars. On this school he has brought to bear all the fruits of his long experience as a professional teacher and governor of youth. Besides this, he is an active manager of the American Sunday School Union, to which he gives from two to three afternoons a week all the year round.