The opening is large enough for a carriage and pair, and leads into an immense hall with a broad staircase on the left, so luxuriously inclined that hardly more exertion is necessary to mount, than walk the smooth, polished floors that smilingly invite the treading of a measure. From the doorway the porter’s lodge is visible, and the driveway sweeps gracefully up to the steps. The deep wainscoting of the walls and the lover-like embrasures of the windows, bear evidence of the height of skill in workmanship.

In these long saloons many a beauty and many a wit have stood in courtly ranks until the Governor, His Majesty’s representative, should open the ball. But youth and beauty, pomp and power, have all fled, and left but the stage where they played their little part. The old house keeps its secrets well, or perhaps holds converse with the nodding trees, whose branches sweep their long arms around it and gesticulate gravely to one another.

These are but side steps in our own past, a simple introduction into a region where the busy student of to-day, wrapt in the tremendous questions of science and investigation, can turn aside and rest his tired brain by a talk with a chapter from unpublished history.

Arithmetic in the Public Schools.

The importance of General Walker’s paper on “Arithmetic in the Public Schools,” seems to demand a more extended notice than The Tech has yet given. The subject is of particular interest to every one who has been passed through the school mill in our cities and large towns; for all such unfortunate beings doubtless keep vivid impressions of the special disgust which attended their study of arithmetic.

In these days, when a grammar-school graduate is expected to talk glibly about subjects of which his father never so much as heard the names, it is necessary to weigh pretty carefully the disposition of every minute of schooltime. The modern languages, the elementary sciences, the new industrial education, are all clamorous in their demands upon the pupils’ time and strength. The boys must be taught to drive nails and plane boards; the girls to hem pillow-cases and bake bread; and all very reasonably, too, for the mind can be truly educated only through the senses. There is danger, however, amid the clash of conflicting systems and the hurried transition from old methods to new, that in some cases, at least, the minds of young students may be taxed beyond their capacity. The cry of overwork is already being raised in many quarters, and any measures that will help to lighten the load of studies will be highly favored by hundreds of parents and physicians.

Such then being the rich and ample supply of desirable studies, it is quite suggestive to read “that nearly four hours and a half a week, or almost exactly one fifth of the entire school-time, are devoted to the study of arithmetic, on the average, during the nine years of school-life, according to the prescribed courses.” This large allowance of time is still further increased by the “home lessons” which are assigned in a majority of cases. We are forcibly reminded of Mr. Lowell’s remark: “Education, we are often told, is a drawing out of the faculties. May they not be drawn out too thin?” In the case of arithmetic, it seems as if the faculty must not only be drawn out pretty thin, but even hammered to enable it to sprawl over nine years of a child’s life.

Nine years on one subject! It makes one shiver a little to think of it even at this distance. What must be the feelings of a spirited and sensitive boy who is made to grind out so many “sums” a week for nine years, and that, too, in a subject often intensely distasteful to him from the very first! Is there wonder that many a child, harassed and fretted by constant number-juggling, should agree with little Marjorie Fleming that the multiplication table is “what nature itself can’t endure”? Great harm is necessarily done by this attitude of antagonism which the child is driven to take, since a thorough dislike for one branch of study may very readily extend itself to all. That enthusiasm for learning, that desire for acquisition so strong in early child-