

CONTEMPORARY OPINION ON EDUCATIONAL TOPICS.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE LONDON SCHOOL BOARD ON EDUCATION.

At the final meeting of the London School Board, elected in 1876, among the various votes of thanks proposed was one to the Rev. John Rodgers, the vice-chairman, who has shewn more interest in and sympathy with the work of popular education in London, and the teachers engaged in it, than any other individual at the Board—except perhaps the chairman, Sir Charles Reed. Mr. Rodgers, in his reply to the vote of thanks, stated that whether re-elected to the Board or not, he would in no way relax in his determination to assist in the work of education. His great object of life would ever continue to be to promote the education of the people. Our readers, we are sure, will thank us for bringing under their notice a man who has won the esteem and love of every teacher employed by the London School Board. That they may see how well these feelings are merited we subjoin a speech made by Mr. Rodgers lately, at the annual meeting of the Metropolitan Board Teachers, held at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham.

I am here to represent Sir Charles Reed in part, although I have nothing to say, and I have nothing to say simply because I do not think it is right to inflict a speech on you on your holiday in this charming place. Get out of the gas into the sunshine. You may say to me as Diogenes said to Alexander when the king asked him, "What can I do for you?" "Nothing," said Diogenes, "except stand from between me and the sun." Now what am I to say next? When I look at you teachers I feel a sort of inspiration come to me. I love the word "inspiration." I never swear, but if I ever did, I should say "Con-

found codes and that sort of thing." Teach; don't teach because the codes put down certain things, because there is a School Board ruling over you, because you are paid £ s. d. for doing it. Away with all these reasons! Teach because you love it. Teach because you love what you teach; teach because you are full of it; teach because you love those little, thinking, sensitive beings you call boys and girls, and you want to inspire them with the nobility of human life. Your president, in his excellent address, reminded you that the child is the father of the man. You are teaching, not the little children gathered around you to-day, but the men and women that these little children shall be in their day, and the men and women, from them, that shall people this metropolis, and this country and the world a future day. It is a grand, and a noble, glorious work, "moulding" character, as your president said. I like a thing neatly moulded, pretty and that sort of thing, but I like inspiration better. I like very well to see external beauty, but I want to see something more. I like very well to see the drill of a body of soldiers; it is a fine sight to see them stand up and step out together, with measured, uniform tread. I like to see that, but I like better to see the motion of the kitten or the little child; it is natural, graceful, beautiful. I take this merely to illustrate the great work of education. I like to see books and black-boards, but still I do not want you to teach out of books or of blackboards; I want you to teach out of yourselves. I do not want you to teach a boy that twice two are four because the multiplication table says so and has said so ever since I was a boy, but because it is in your consciousness, in your inner life, and part of your own intellectual living being that twice two are four; and knowing it, and