

against the new president in the board that his methods were too commercial. 'There ought to be one spot left in the world where there would be something of the dignity of repose!' exclaimed another very learned professor and altogether idle and indifferent teacher, in an institution whose president was working eighteen hours a day in his efforts to force the college up to a higher plane; and at the next meeting of the board there was a semi-official intimation that the president ought to be able to get on better and with less friction with his faculty. Said an honored alumnus of one of our most renowned institutions: 'The students' notebooks in physics for the year 1890 bring just as high a price as those for 1898':

Yet the president of that institution found it impossible to dislodge this calcined and fossiliferous instructor even from his position on the committee on Course of Study, much less from the university; and what hope for advancement could possibly exist under such a counsellor!"

The expression which is being given to the hitherto latent spirit of loyalty to the homeland in all parts of the Empire is most inspiring and sure to lead to most important results. Those who are looking for literature of this kind will do well to avail themselves of the "Empire Day Booklets" and "Canadian Songs," written by Dr. J. M. Harper, M.A., Inspector Superior Schools, Quebec.

CURRENT EVENTS.

THE PRESUMPTION OF BRAINS.

IN these days most children are thought to be too feeble to go to school in a storm. Instead of the little red schoolhouse, they have palaces of pressed brick, with furnaces, double windows and polished desks; and when it rains the storm signal stops the school. We do not recognize the probability of physical hardness, and we do too little to develop it.

No more do we recognize intellectual vigor—brains—in the child, and many of the recent methods of teaching do not stimulate the growth of mental fibre. To begin with, the kindergarten is an attempt to systematize play, and by a species of *leger-demain* to get from play the discipline of work. But play, useful and necessary as it is, is spontaneous activity, and it ceases to be play when reduced to a system.

Next, object teaching comes in and entertains the child through the

senses, as if the senses were all-important and the brain non-existent or not to be disturbed. But the sense perceptions predominate in the child; his whole life before coming to school is made up of them. It is not these that need stimulating so much as the mental activity to which they ought to lead. The objective method is good, even indispensable, in due proportion, but the tendency is to so emphasize it as to neglect the brain, which most needs and has less of the training.

When we come to reading, the methods are simplified to the last homeopathic dilution. The simplest word is illustrated by a picture of the most familiar object—a cat; and from this we advance by imperceptible gradations, interminably. This elementary process is good for a start, but it should be dropped very early—as soon as the child catches the notion of what reading is. There is a presumption that