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* Editorial Notes. *

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-ONE has gone into the irrevocable past, though the impressions it made upon characters and new influences it brought to bear upon lives are imperishable. Let us thank God in advance for all the opportunities the glad New Year will bring.

WE fancy—we hope it is not merely our fancy—that we can see some signs of a steady if slow increase of interest in the annual elections of school boards. It will be a happy day for Canada when the people shall have reached the point of development at which they will scrutinize most carefully the character of school trustees, and spare no pains to select the very best men available, no longer allowing one of the most responsible of all civic offices to fall into the hands of the first who may offer themselves.

FOR the information of the large number of teachers who have entered into our prize competition, we may say that we are making arrangements to have the competing papers examined and the awards made without unnecessary delay, by judges whose competency and fairness will be beyond question. We hope to be able to announce the results in our next number, though as the number of competitors is large, we may possibly have to defer it until February 1st. We shall do our best to expedite matters.

A GREAT change seems to have come over the spirit of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States, in its relation to the

public schools. The Pope, through Mgr. Satolli, who has been sent over seemingly as his plenipotentiary, now says that it is proper for Catholic parents to send their children to the public schools in all cases in which it is not feasible to establish a parochial school, provided that satisfactory arrangements be made for religious instruction out of school hours. This may well be hailed as a great advance and is probably the beginning of the end of the clerical war against the public schools.

PROFESSOR MILLS, of McGill University whose article in the *Popular Science Monthly* was commented on in these columns, a few weeks since, writes us the following note, which we avail ourselves of his kind permission to publish:

In a review of my paper in the *Popular Science Monthly* on "The Natural or Scientific method of Education," you remark: "True, let the terms 'organization' and 'environment' have sufficiently wide meanings and there may be nothing to object to. But whether Professor Mills intends them to have such meanings, we are in doubt." I do mean these terms to have the widest signification and think it an advantage to so use them, though possibly many may not at first realize this. What we are in all respects depends on the reaction between the organism and the environment, using these terms to cover respectively our whole being (*ego*) and all that enters into the *non-ego* or as I prefer to say the environment. I may add that I do not find myself at variance with any of the views expressed in your able criticism of my article.

IN a lecture on "Abraham Lincoln," delivered in Montreal a few weeks ago, Hon. Wilfrid Laurier spoke some sensible and encouraging words to those who have not had the advantages of collegiate education. He referred to Alexander Mackenzie as well as to the subject of his lecture, as an illustration of the fact that in English-speaking countries want of early education is not an insuperable barrier against attaining the highest positions in the State. We should be inclined to put the matter a little differently and say that while high education, that is, developed brain-power and force of will, are, or should be, indispensable in the highest positions, there are other ways in which this education can be obtained besides going to college or university. These are most desirable helps.

Let all who can avail themselves of them. But history abundantly proves and everyday observation confirms that there is no royal road to learning, and that there are few cases in this country in which the young man or woman who is thoroughly in earnest cannot obtain the equivalent of a college course, in the most essential respects, by a few years of faithful and diligent private reading and study.

THE following is going the rounds, under the head of "A Lesson for Schoolmasters." It is sufficiently suggestive to be worth reproducing. It by no means follows that such a mode of treatment would have been successful in another case, but then, Mr. Swan, being a veteran, and an adept in reading the nature of the boy with whom he had to deal, would very likely have tried something else in the other case. There can be no doubt, however, that want of self-respect, arising out of a consciousness of inferiority, even in such a matter as clothes, is at the bottom of much badness in children, and that in very many cases the same mode of treatment, or another mode appealing to the same set of motives, would be equally effective.

"The veteran schoolmaster of Boston, Mr. Robert Swan, of the Winthrop school, had a boy in his school who was particularly rough and troublesome, and who had been often whipped by other teachers for bad behavior in school, and had just come in after a three weeks' truancy. Mr. Swan told the boy to follow him into the basement. Of course the boy expected a severe whipping, but he was led to a closet where the benevolent master kept good clothes given to him for charitable purposes. He took down a very nice jacket, which had been placed at his disposal by a rich man whose boy had died, and said to the boy, 'Try this on.' He found that it was a nice fit, and then said to the boy, 'I'll hang your jacket,' which was very dirty and worn, 'here, and you shall wear this as long as you behave like a gentleman, for the boy who wore this was a gentleman. When you forfeit it I will give yours back in exchange for it.' The boy went back to the school-room without further blame, and was never reproved in school afterward. He became interested in school, wore the jacket out, and grew up to be an excellent man. Self-respect and gratitude were the medicine for his moral maladies, and a germ of living goodness was planted in the moral desert of his nature."