

Contemporary Thought.

CHILDREN are taught to read Welsh within the first two or three years of their attendance at Sunday school, occupying about an hour of direct teaching per week. Why? Because Welsh spelling, with slight exceptions, corresponds with the sound. Learning to read Welsh simply means learning the alphabet, every letter, with one exception, having its one sound. Combining letters into syllables, and these into words and sentences, is a matter of practice.—*Christian World*.

PROFESSOR ADAMS, in his address on the occasion of his inauguration as President of Cornell University, discussed the important question of elective education. He declared the history of education shows that the highest results have been attained under those systems that have given the greatest liberty of choice. He said that, through the introduction of elective work, "we are making for the first time what might fairly be called scholars, and in three or four colleges in the country the conditions of the highest success have at last been attained." It was his opinion, however, that the end of the second college year was the time when elective work could safely begin. This shows President Adams to belong to the conservative wing of the educational reformers. Some maintain that the student should be given the privilege of choice immediately on entering college. President Adams' recommendation gives the student time to ascertain what choice is best.—*Current*.

"ORTHOEPY cannot be taught like orthography, by written exercises; in the latter, defects arise from not seeing correctly or from not remembering [why be compelled to remember?] what we see, and written exercises remedy this, but in the former, the defects arise from remembering what we hear, and what children have heard amiss can be eradicated only by making them hear what is right. If this is not done, their wrong pronunciation will remain with them throughout life. The requirements of good pronunciation are three—right sounds, their division into syllables, and the proper placing of the accent."—EDUCATIONAL WEEKLY. Of the statement "what children have heard amiss can be eradicated only by making them hear what is right" we rise to remark that with letters having shapes modified to represent each its own sound, correct pronunciation can be learned by sight. Amid "cram" and the general crush of studies this can quietly go on without the tutor's supervision. What is learned by sight is far more fixed than impression made by the fleeting breath. Hence the general use of blackboards in our schools. Horace long ago referred to the faithful eyes (FILIELIBVS OCVLIS) being better than the ears.—*Dr. Hamilton's Phonetic Herald, Port Hope*.

LET us again point out that a much better plan of attracting students than this system of bonuses is to make the college course itself more interesting and more intellectually profitable. George Munro's magnificent endowment of chairs in Dalhousie College and the similar action of Senator McMaster, in McMaster Hall, are examples which we earnestly commend to Dr. Wilson and those gentlemen whom he may find able and willing to

become our benefactors. It does not affect our position to say that the benefactions that are being received by University College are not severally large enough to apply to such a purpose. It would be an easy matter to consolidate the funds received from these sources, and the aggregate result would be sufficient to endow a chair. Or it might be used to secure a short annual course of lectures from some outside Canadian or American scholar, such a course as, for example, Goldwin Smith delivers, in Cornell, or as Edward Freeman, Edmund Gosse and Sir William Thompson delivered recently in Johns Hopkins. Or it might become the nucleus of a loan fund for the use of students. This excellent plan is followed in some American theological colleges with the most beneficial results. But if we must have scholarships at all, they should not be allotted by the usual competitive examinations. Nor should they be available to students whose private means are amply sufficient to provide for their education. Let them rather be granted as a recognition of singular merit in original research or individual investigation, and when such a grant would be necessary to secure the continuance of similar intellectual activity. If our country is ever going to take an advanced position in the intellectual world it is only by original work.—*Varsity, on Scholarships*.

ENGLISH public schools, at present, though quite universal, are upon the whole elementary, and are supported by a combination of national taxation, local rates, weekly payments by parents sending children, and voluntary contributions. They are not wholly secularized, as the policy has been somewhat to divide the funds among denominations, and permit more or less explicit religious instruction. The demand of the Radicals is primarily for the abolition of the weekly payments. It is held that education is essentially a national function, especially now that suffrage has been made practically universal, and that the weekly payments press so hard upon the poor as either to actually cripple them, or else make them avoid the school-law by keeping their children from school. And the radicals not infrequently add that this education is a just debt which the wealthy of England owe to the poor as recompense for past spoliation. Mr. Gladstone in his manifesto treats the subject rather gingerly. He says that it is matter for discussion, not immediate settlement, and admits that his own mind is not made up in the matter. The following considerations weigh with him against free education: it might make education less valued if the sharers in it did not recognize that they had to pay for it; there is no reason for the state to assume any function which private enterprise, religious or secular, can do as well; the taking of the whole business of education into the hands of the state would increase the cry against instruction in the higher branches of culture, and reduce them to elementary training schools, and it would tend to abolish all religious element from instruction. Mr. Goschen, one of the ablest financiers and statesmen of England, who is as sincerely opposed to Radicalism as he is to Toryism, and who is waging an independent contest for his seat, is pressing these and similar arguments with great force. All we can say is that they are not justified by American experience.—*The University*.

Notes and Comments.

IN Dr. Grant's article in the EDUCATIONAL WEEKLY of December 3rd, "modifications" was printed for "mortifications," at the top of the second column on page 777.

WE invite the attention of all high school masters, and of the Minister of Education, to Mr. Millar's article on "Increased Legislative Aid to High Schools." We think Mr. Millar's contention, that the legislative grant should be increased, is, beyond all question, a sound one.

AMONG our contributors this week are Dr. Grant, Principal of Queen's University; Mr. Millar, Principal of St. Thomas Collegiate Institute; Miss E. J. Preston, of Ottawa; Mr. W. W. Jardine, Head Master, High School, Newcastle; and Mr. D. E. F. Wilkins, B.A., Bac. App. Sci., High School, Mount Forest.

WE have received from Port Dover High School and St. Thomas Collegiate Institute, their prospectuses for 1886. Each is interesting, and full of information useful to the intending student. That of St. Thomas is a little cyclopaedia in itself, and we are sure every pupil of the institution, whether ex-present or prospective, will prize it highly. It is just such an account as every school ought to have of itself.

THE last Monday Popular Concert was by far the most enjoyable of the series. Miss Beebe's singing of Kingsley's "Sands o' Dee" entered into the heart of every listener. When music and poetry unite, and are expressed by an artist who has soul as well as culture, the popular heart never fails to respond. The reason why much of what is called good music is not appreciated, is either because it is *not* intrinsically good, or because it is rendered mechanically.

MESSRS. GINN & CO., of Boston, who, by their enterprise, bid fair to become the Macmillans or Rivingtons of America, have in preparation a *Music Primer*, by G. A. Veazie; a *Greek Inflection*, by B. F. Harding, A.M.; and *Studies in Greek Thought*, by the late Dr. Packard, Professor of Greek in Yale College. This last promises to be a work of unusual interest. We have lately received several new books from this firm, reviews of which will appear shortly.

A VERY laudable attempt is being made to put the teaching of music in the Province on a professional footing. A provisional association has been organized, of which Mr. Fisher, the Director of the Toronto Choral Society, is President, and the intention is that this association shall include within its membership all properly qualified teachers of music in the Province. A meeting is to be held in the Normal School buildings, Toronto, on Dec. 29th and 30th, to forward the scheme.