Contemporary Thought.

"THAT school, or that system of schools," says D. C. Tillotson, Superintendent of Schools, Topeka, Kansas, "which succeeds in preparing ordinary children to be ordinary men and women, and fits them for the ordinary duties of life, is a remarkably successful school. Geniuses are not produced by the schools. The universities could not produce a Shakespeare. Because he was so poor in English composition, Harvard College questioned the propriety of granting a diploma to the man who is to-day the greatest American in the field of letters. Men of talent have ever done more for the schools than the schools have done for them. It is my opinion that that man is of greatest value to any community who urges and assists the schools to quietly persevere in fitting the average mortal for the commonplace duties of every-day life."

THE plan for a "universal commercial language" originated about five years ago by Herr Schleyer, of Switzerland, seems to be meeting with greater favour than has been accorded other projects of the kind. It is reported that Volapuk is already spoken with facility by thousands of Europeans; knowledge of it is being disseminated by more than fifty societies scattered over England, Germany, Austria, Sweden, Holland, Asia Minor, and other countries; Volapuk grammars for the use of Hottentots and Chinese, besides all the European nations, are either in the market or in course of preparation; and two reviews, one entirely in Volapuk and the other with a translation on alternate pages, are regularly published. The special advantage of the new language is the ease with which it can be learned, eight lessons having enabled a Parisian class to correspond readily with students in foreign countries.—*Ex.*

WE are most strongly convinced of the supreme necessity of drawing the line of demarcation most clearly and strongly between our system of education and the party politics of the Province. We conceive that not only the proper but the only course for a political head of the Education Office to adopt is to keep himself absolutely free from the discussion of political questions, and only to speak in the House upon topics connected in some way with his office. This is the rule in England and Scotland. The Minister in charge of the Education Offices of those countries are never heard on the stump or in the House, unless on some subject connected with education or of grave Imperial import. This is entirely as it should be. Education and politics should be severed as widely as the poles. The head of the Educational Department should not be a politician—in the ordinary sense of the term.—*The 'Varsity.*

INSTEAD, therefore, of pulling down the existing order, as the Socialists propose, the thing to be done is to enlarge its foundations. They are right in saying that an industrial system whose sole motive power is self-interest and whose sole regulative principle is competition will end in pandemonium; but they are foolish in thinking that humanity will thrive under a system which discards or cripples these self-regarding forces. What is needed is the calling into action of the good-will which is equally a part of human nature. This also must be made an integral part of the industrial system: it must be the business of the employer to promote the welfare of his workmen, and the business of the workmen to promote the interest of their employer. The organization of labour must be such that the one class cannot prosper without directly and perceptibly increasing the prosperity of the other. This is the true remedy for the evils of which the socialists complain. The reform needed is not the destruction but the Christianization of the present order.—*Rev. Dr. Washington Gladden, in the New York Century.*

SOME idea of the incalculable importance of realizing, in the highest degree possible, the end for which, in theory at least, our common schools are supported at the public cost, may be gained from the Treasury Department's figures showing that the tide of immigration is as great, in proportion, as it ever was, and in actual numbers is constantly increasing. Experience has taught, with growing emphasis, the necessity of bringing these foreign elements, as soon and as completely as possible, into sympathy with that which is, in the best sense of the word, American. We have also been taught the lesson that, with large numbers of the adults thus added to the voting, and therefore the governing, class in our republic, it is practically impossible to instill those lessons in republican doctrine which bear fruit in good citizenship. While we should spare no effort to make good citizens of the adults coming to us from all lands, it is obvious that the most hopeful and important work in its effect upon the future of our institutions, is to be wrought among their children. To make of these hundreds of thousands of youth men and women who shall be intelligent, upright and patriotic Americans is a work which must chiefly devolve upon the American school and the American teacher.—*The Citizen.*

MANY old theories of education are being mercilessly discussed. Many new theories claim the places of the old. The classical scholar still claims for the ancient languages the greatest educational power. The advocate of modern langages says life is too short to study dead things, and that modern languages furnish enough discipline, and are, besides, useful. To the scientist, science is god of all, even of education. To him no man is properly educated, unless his mind is stored with scientific ideas and trained by the scientific methods of the nineteenth century. Languages, ancient and modern, mathematics, science, philosophy, all advance their claims to be the best educators of the coming man. Meanwhile the coming man is nothing but a child, and must submit himself to his elders to be experimented upon according to the theories of teachers or parents. For men, women and children alike, I wish to enter a plea for a part of them much neglected in most discussions on education, and too much left out of sight in most theories of education—the body. In fact, for centuries past, many educators have seemed to regard the body as a rival of the brain, if not an enemy of it. They have apparently been filled with the idea that strength and time given to the body are strength and time taken from the mind. Unfortunately for the cause of good education, this erroneous idea is not held by teachers alone, but is a very prevalent one generally, the current dictum being that, representing by unity a person's force, whatever part of this unit is taken for the body leaves necessarily just that much less for the mind. To combat this idea, and to replace it by a much more reasonable idea, I had almost said by the *very opposite idea*, shall be the chief though not the only aim of these pages.—*From "The Influence of Exercise upon Health," by Professor E. L. Richards, in Popular Science Monthly.*

IF we imagine an observer contemplating the earth from a convenient distance in space, and scrutinizing its features as it rolls before him, we may suppose him to be struck with the fact that eleven-sixteenths of its surface are covered with water, and that the land is so unequally distributed that from one point of view he would see a hemisphere almost exclusively oceanic, while nearly the whole of the dry land is gathered in the opposite hemisphere. He might observe that the great oceanic area of the Pacific and Antarctic Oceans is dotted with islands—like a shallow pool with stones rising above its surface—as if its general were small in comparisom with its area. He might also notice that a mass or belt of land surrounds each pole, and that the northern ring sends off to the southward three vast tongues of land and of mountain-chains, terminating respectively in South America, South Africa, and Australia, toward which feebler and insular processes are given off by the Antarctic continental mass. This, as some geographers have observed, gives a rudely three-ribbed aspect to the earth, though two of the three ribs are crowded together and form the Europ-Asian mass or double continent, while the third is isolated in the single Continent of America. He might also observe that the northern girdle is cut across, so that the Atlantic opens by a wide space into the Arctic Sea, while the Pacific is contracted toward the north, but confluent with the Antarctic Ocean. The Atlantic is also relatively deeper and less cumbered with islands than the Pacific, which has the higher ridges near its shores, constituting what some visitors to the Pacific coast of America have not inaptly called the "back of the world," while the wider slopes face the narrower ocean, into which for this reason the greater part of the drainage of the land is poured. The Pacific and Atlantic, though both depressions or flattenings of the earth, are, as we shall find, different in age, character, and conditions; and the Atlantic, though the smaller, is the older, and from the geological point of view, in some respects, the more important of the two. If our imaginary observer had the means of knowing anything of the rock formations of the continents, he would notice that those bounding the North Atlantic are in general of great age, some belonging to the Laurentian system. On the other hand, he would see that many of the mountain-ranges along the Pacific are comparatively new, and that modern igneous action occurs in connection with them. Thus he might be led to believe that the Atlantic, though comparatively narrow, is an older feature of the earth's surface, while the Pacific belongs to more modern times.—*From "Geology of the Atlantic Ocean," by Sir William Dawson, in the Popular Science Monthly.*