

Notes and Comments.

"PRACTICAL education," says Professor Earp, in the *Indiana School Journal*, "stripped of all secondary bias, means ability to get money, to get it quick, to get it easy."

We trust that high school masters and teachers will show that they value the privilege of influencing educational matters by recording their votes for the election of representatives to the University Senate.

AFTER his long life of labor in the work of putting the world right, Mr. Ruskin has recently declared that scientific education, as now given, teaches that "honor is a folly, ambition a virtue, charity a vice, poverty a crime, and rascality the means of all wealth and the sum of all wisdom."

"THE standard of educational work," says *The Journal of Education*, "the character of the men and women in the profession, the quality of their service, the effectiveness of the school system, the benefit to the pupils, society, and the State, will be noticeably improved when there is greater security through a tenure-of-office law, such as has aided every European nation that has secured fame through its schools."

WE hope to hear from our correspondents on the words "demoralize," "proportion," and "pretty," mentioned by "J." in our last issue. Earle, in his "Philology of the English Tongue," makes some very good remarks on the last. A strange use of the second word is found in "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," where it is used in place of the Biblical word "portion," as it occurs in the parable of the prodigal son—or, as Shakespeare calls him, the "prodigious son." Certainly a demoralization of telegraph wires requires a stretch of imagination—at all events for purists. Linking the Latin *mores* to inanimate objects is surely a kind of catachresis.

THE following appears in the notices to teachers of East Middlesex: "A special meeting of the teachers will be held on Saturday, the 1st of May, at the County Buildings. Every teacher who can be present is requested to attend. The doors will be open at 10 a.m. The following is part of the programme: 10.30 to 12 a.m., local and foreign experts will discuss these questions: 1. The best kinds of trees to plant in our school yards. 2. How they should be planted. 3. What other outside exercises are appropriate to Arbor Day. 4. The character of the indoor exercises and how to conduct them. Invite the trustees and any other persons interested in arboriculture. This will be a useful session; please try to attend it. 1 to 2 p.m. The organization of the reading circle. There was not time to consider this

subject at the meeting on the 27th of March. The formation, if deemed advisable, of a class in practical botany."

THOSE who go up to the University of Toronto law examinations this year are fortunate in doing so under a curriculum considerably improved and modernized. It has long been a cause of complaint among such candidates as hoped to put the reading necessary to the LL.B. degree to a practical application, that the work assigned was not of a sufficiently practical character, and that text-books have been retained for years after they have outlived their usefulness and been superseded. This cause of complaint has to some extent been done away with, and on some subjects the curriculum is all that can be desired in so limited a course. But further amendments are necessary before entire satisfaction can be guaranteed. We understand that the curriculum, as now arranged, is subject to revision this year. If this is so, there exists the opportunity to effect the desired improvements without delay; so that the list of works, which in 1887 will be fixed for several years, may be satisfactory at once to those looking to actual practice, and to those simply desiring to study, in the light of positive law, the principles of jurisprudence as a science.

"JUDGING," says *Education*, "from the record of public education in foreign countries, there is no middle ground between strict neutrality in the schools and a perpetual conflict between Church and State authorities. In England, as a result of recent elections, the ecclesiastical influence is in the ascendant in the school boards of London, Manchester and Sheffield. Thus far with the new boards the first consideration seems to be the 'vested interests of the churches'; second, 'the objection of the ratepayers to increase expenditure'; and last, 'educational efficiency.' The *Daily News* and other London papers protest against the reaction policy. In Birmingham hot controversy has been excited over a proposition for religious instruction in the schools. The Rev. Dr. R. W. Dale, an advocate for strict neutrality, combats the proposition in a vigorous pamphlet. The Minister of Public Instruction in Austria, M. le Baron Conrad, who was objectionable to the clerical party, has given place to M. le Dr. Gauth, who, while not strictly a clerical, is more acceptable to that party. In Holland the Government has yielded to the demand of the Conservatives for a revision of the article of the constitution relative to public instruction. The proposed text is in the interests of the clerical schools."

IN treating the recent scandalous developments in the municipal politics of New York City, the Editor's Outlook of *The Chautauquan* for May says, "The plain fact is that

the first city on our continent, and the third in the world, does not choose its city council from among the thousands of its eminent citizens. Rich in character, genius, worth, ability, the city of New York does not so much as dream of electing its best men to administer its affairs. This would be bad enough; but there is worse in the case. New York does not even choose honest and reputable citizens for councilmen. The men chosen have usually no character or standing. The subject is of large moment. This is becoming a nation of cities. We must learn how to administer them. One experiment has not been tried, and it is easily tried. Let candidates for city councils be selected (outside of party caucuses) from among the first merchants, lawyers, and bankers of the city, and let the voters have a chance to support the kind of men who used to be chosen when the title *alderman* meant an eminent, worthy, and honorable man. The tickets might be defeated once or twice; but a resolute and persistent effort to elevate the office by filling it with a first-class man, would in the end revolutionize city affairs, and make that part of public administration a model for all other sections of administration."

A CORRESPONDENT writes from Odessa to the *London Times* as follows: "At Kieff have just occurred the following strange proceedings. The teacher of religion—a priest named Brailoffsky—at the third (boys') gymnasium of that city, happening, during the lesson of caligraphy, to notice that a pupil was writing with a steel pen on which was represented the Crucifixion, and considering that such a common object as a pen was quite unworthy to have such holy subjects represented upon it, he confiscated the offending little article, and reported the circumstance to the Kieff Consistorial Court. Thereupon the august body requested the police to seize all the pens—more than fifty boxes—of that particular make in the possession of the vendor—one Ivanoff, a stationer—to lodge them with the Court, and to report to the Public Prosecutor (of the Criminal Court) that Ivanoff had ordered the pens from Paris and was publicly selling them. On the other hand, Ivanoff, on his part, immediately petitioned the Consistory Court to give back to him his goods, saying that they had passed through the Russian Customs without any difficulty. He likewise disputes the right of the Consistory Court to detain them, and, still stronger, denies its right to have him brought before the Criminal Court, for he maintains that the engraving of holy subjects upon pens, which are instruments of intellectual culture, can by no manner of means be considered in the light of a criminal act. There the matter ends for the present. Should further action be taken upon it we may expect to know the result in, perhaps, a couple of years' time."