

## Contemporary Thought.

WORKINGMEN will have to realize that the disturbance inflicted upon all kinds of business by the recklessness and frequency with which employes are "called out" by "walking delegates," and by the arbitrary way in which strikes are made, cannot be tolerated as a permanent arrangement. No man in business will or can consent to have his work suddenly stopped because the hands employed by some other men have a grievance against their employer. Such interruptions invalidate contracts, paralyze commerce and production, cause wanton destruction of capital, and waste the earnings of labour to no possible profit. The world's work cannot be carried on in any such spasmodic and irresponsible manner, and the men who have latterly allowed themselves to be taken from their employments must realize, what everybody else has long seen, that they are being played with for the benefit of those managers and manipulators who spend their time in fomenting strikes as the easiest method of procuring the contributions on which they fatten. No true interest of labour has been served by these strikes, which, in fact, have injured the cause. Public sympathy is the breath of life to the movement, and to possess it henceforth a far more reasonable, temperate, and practical course will be needed. The whole affair has been a great mistake, and the best thing the strikers can do now is to go to work wherever practicable, and resolve to repudiate the dictation of selfish and demagogic leaders.—*New York Tribune*.

BEFORE launching the three torpedoes which have so sadly exploded on board his own ship, Mr. Lilly says that with whatever "rhetorical ornaments I may gild my teaching," it is "materialism." Let me observe, in passing, that rhetorical ornament is not in my way, and that gilding refined gold would, to my mind, be less objectionable than varnishing the fair face of truth with that pestilent cosmetic, rhetoric. If I believed that I had any claim to the title of "materialist," as that term is understood in the language of philosophy and not in that of abuse, I should not attempt to hide it by any sort of gilding. I have not found reason to care much for hard names in the course of the last thirty years, and I am too old to develop a new sensitiveness. But, to repeat what I have more than once taken pains to say in the most unadorned of plain language, I repudiate, as philosophical error, the doctrine of materialism as I understand it, just as I repudiate the doctrine of spiritualism as Mr. Lilly presents it, and my reason for thus doing is, in both cases, the same; namely, that, whatever their differences, materialists and spiritualists agree in making very positive assertions about matters of which I am certain I know nothing, and about which I believe they are, in truth, just as ignorant. And further, that, even when their assertions are confined to topics which lie within the range of my faculties, they often appear to me to be in the wrong. And there is yet another reason for objecting to be identified with either of these sects; and that is that each is extremely fond of attributing to the other, by way of reproach, conclusions which are the property of neither, though they infallibly flow

from the logical development of the first principles of both. Surely a prudent man is not to be reproached because he keeps clear of the squabbles of these philosophical Bianchi and Neri, by refusing to have anything to do with either.—From "Science and Morals: A Reply," by Professor Huxley, in *Popular Science Monthly*.

I REFERRED on several occasions in the columns of *Science* to the absence of the literary sense in German scientific men. It is one of the most flagrant arguments against the classical education, with its supposed results of literary culture, that the Germans, who have school doses of classics much harder and more concentrated than are administered in the rest of the world, themselves write more barbarously than any other civilized Western people. German scientific articles are full of sentences like this, which refers to the bristles serving among anthropods as organs of touch: "Man darf fur wahrscheinlich halten, dass die so sehr wechseleide gestalt und ausbildung der Tastborsten' nach der art des thieres und den korpe gegenden noch bestimmen nebenzwecken zu dienen nat, chue dass wiruns devon rechenschaft zu geben vermogen." Now, the author of this sentence is one of the most distinguished, and justly distinguished, of German zoologists, but his manner of writing is similar in quality to that of most scientific writers in Germany. The sentence is neither better nor worse than thousands upon thousands of others, perpetrated by his countrymen equally without literary feeling. The Germans need literary conscience to reprove them for all their awkward and involved phrases, that their souls may know how guilty they are in ignoring their readers' rights. The quoted sentence was evidently written without attention to the forms of expression. It never occurred to the author that aught was due the reader. His meaning can not be had except by an effort. It is ill-mannered to give others so much trouble, when a little pains on one's own part might save it. A cultivated Frenchman would be incapable of such a rudeness. The pith of the evil is the indifference of the German author as to how he writes: he feels no inward necessity of having a good style, and is inclined to despise the French qualities of grace and lucidity.—*Science*.

THE *London Spectator* devotes a long and carefully written answer to the question, "Does education diminish industry?" It is said by some parties that the present system of primary instruction will breed distaste for manual labour, that boys will be less trusty workmen and girls worse cooks and housemaids, that those who are so educated are less handy and more conceited than the boys and girls of former generations. Any boy who expends years in acquiring knowledge will not, it is argued, willingly engage in the drudgery of manual labour. The old method of training boys by apprenticeship is breaking down, and it is thought that they will not willingly work as they did. If this theory is well founded, general intellectual improvement is a misfortune. Somebody must do dirty and disagreeable work. The human hand is, for many kinds of labour, still the only available machine. It is true that the educated drift towards the towns, but this is because the labour is better paid as well as because it is

lighter. The excessive increase of competitors for clerkships is a matter of constant observation. In some cases the competition is so great that the clerk pays the employer. The complaint made against education points rather to defects in the system adopted than to education generally. The Scotch, who are the best educated people of the United Kingdom, have shown no dislike to agricultural work, and the same is true of the Prussian peasants. The gardeners of England who are educated are better workers than those who are not. The people of Rome who can read and write are more industrious than the Neapolitans who cannot. Unquestionably industrial education is greatly promoted by general intelligence. The industrial power of the world has been enormously increased by the education of the people. And while industrial training may have been too much overlooked, and the community may have suffered in consequence, it is pretty clear that evil will not be remedied by the reign of ignorance, but by endeavouring, so far as possible, to add to the work of primary education a special training in some useful industrial pursuit.—*London Advertiser*.

THE danger of war between Germany and France not appearing so imminent as it was a little while ago, people are turning their eyes again to the East to see the state of the horizon in that quarter. Many imagine they see there a war cloud which may soon spread and break in fury over the whole European continent. Austria is, however, the nation most immediately concerned in the attitude which Russia has assumed towards Bulgaria, and enquiries are being made as to her ability to resist the encroachments of the Czar single-handed. Russia's standing army in times of peace numbers 612,000 officers and men. The first reserve, including the Cossacks, are 890,000 more, making an army that could be brought into the field with very little delay, in round numbers, a million and a half strong. Russia has besides this immense force, 4,000 pieces of artillery and other reserves which bring up her war effective to two millions. Austria's peace establishment, on the other hand, numbers about 290,000, and her army could be increased in time of war to 1,100,000 men, not much more than one-half of the war strength of Russia. It is likely that Austria would have on her side, in case of a war with Russia, Bulgaria, Servia, and Roumelia. These provinces united could, perhaps, raise a force of 150,000 men. Austria would have a hard time of it if she were obliged to contend with Russia with no other help than could be afforded by the population of the Balkan Provinces. But it is altogether unlikely that the war would long remain a duel between Russia and Austria. The other nations of Europe would find pretexts for joining in the fray, so that there is no saying where the war would end if it were once commenced. The financial condition of Russia appears to be just now the best guarantee of her keeping the peace. She cannot afford to go to war. Her debt is immense and her credit is not good. The Emperor is, however, said to be very arbitrary and uncertain in his temper, and is apt to act without closely calculating the consequences. So the peace of Europe, to all outward seeming, depends upon the will of a single man who has the character of being both headstrong and capricious.—*Montreal Star*.