

PUBLIC OPINION.

THE TRAINING OF LIFE.—Great as the advantage of training may be, no mere collegiate or academic training can compare with that which an intelligent person can get in that greater university of human life in the outside world, in order to fit him for the noblest citizenship and the ampler work.

MORAL INSTRUCTION VERSUS RELIGIOUS TRAINING.—America is not the only country that is vexed and perplexed by the problem of religious education in public schools. France has been making an experiment in this matter, within the last half-dozen years, that is well worth noting. In 1882, the law was passed completely withdrawing the public schools from the influence of the clergy, and substituting "moral instruction" in the place of religious, without defining in detail what the authorities understood by such "morality." The result is severely disappointing to the advocate of purely secular education and of the substitution of vague and general principles of morals for positive religion. It is clear from the official reports that endless confusion prevails as to what "moral instruction" is, and that, in any shape or form, it cannot take the place of religious training.—*The Sunday School Times.*

READ LESS AND THINK MORE.—Said an Oxford scout, who had waited on many generations of struggling passmen and studied their ways and manners, when a candidate in whom he felt a special interest had once again failed in the schools, after much burning of the midnight oil, "Ah, sir, if you'd only read a little less and think a little more, I do believe that you'd get through the schools." Said an eminent schoolmaster scolding an

unsuccessful pupil, "I don't care how long you have been working. There is no virtue in just wearing out your trousers against your study chair." If the mere perusal of printed matter does little good to schoolboys and undergraduates, who do at least live in an atmosphere of thought and learning, are we to take it for granted that the same habit will become a great means of national self-improvement when it has been extended to the masses who are invited and urged to make use of the Free Libraries that are being founded and thrown open to them?—*The St. James' Gazette.*

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.—An important judgment has been given on the subject of corporal punishment, arising out of a special case stated by Mr. Bushby, magistrate at the Worship Street Police Court, for the opinion of the High Court of Justice. A Board School head master had appealed from a conviction on a summons for "unlawfully assaulting" a boy by caning him on his hands. There was no question that the boy had committed a fault deserving corporal punishment, nor was it charged against the master that the punishment—four strokes on the hand with a cane—was excessive, but the magistrate held that, as there were other methods of corporal punishment quite as available and efficacious, caning on the hand was improper, and ought not to have been inflicted. It is satisfactory to know that the conviction was quashed, with costs against the respondent. Mr. Justice Wills remarked that thirty years ago caning on the hand was the common punishment at school, and expressed a hope that we were not getting too effeminate or encouraging ill-behaved school-