

While we believe a good deal of nonsense is being talked and written about the "New Education," we are far from thinking that there is nothing in it. Few teachers, even of experience, can read the model lessons we are now publishing from the "Quincy Methods," without gaining some hints that may prove of great service in dealing at least with the very young and very dull pupils, who are pretty sure to be found in every school. Have you a boy or a girl who, while not, perhaps, lacking in general intelligence, seems to be wholly stupid where books are concerned? The mind is evidently there, but it appears as if sheathed over with a covering of some sort which shuts off access by the ordinary avenues. Your best efforts have hitherto failed to pierce the incrustation and awaken the dormant faculties. Discard the book methods and try the "Quincy Methods," for a time. Give the child something which he can touch and handle. Set him to do anything with slate, or blocks, or objects of any kind in which you can get him interested. To arouse interest is to gain the first victory. Whatever can banish listlessness, and call forth a consciousness of some kind of power, gives you access to the mind and enables you to begin your work. We do not suppose this is a discovery of to-day or yesterday. It is a method which, in some form or other, every true educator will have found out and used for himself. But by emphasizing it, extending it and reducing it to a system, the so-called "New Education" is conferring a great benefit upon the teachers and the children.

ELECTIVE COURSES AT HARVARD.

There seems to have been a good deal of misapprehension in regard to the new and bold departure of Harvard University in the matter of options. The plan decided on by the authorities is not yet perfected in detail, and consequently will not yet be published in the College Circular. But the *Christian Union* gives a very clear account of the principal decisions reached. The subjects of matriculation are divided into two classes. eight elementary studies, and nine advanced studies. The elementary subjects are, 1, English, 2, Greek, 3, Latin; 4, German, 5, French, 6, History (ancient and modern), 7, Mathematics, 8, Physical Science. The advanced studies are, 1, Greek, 2, Latin, 3, Greek and Latin Composition, 4, German, 5, French, 6, Mathematics, Logarithms, Trigonometry, and solid (or analytic) Geometry, 7, Mathematics, Analytic (or solid), Geometry and Elementary Mechanics, 8, Physics, 9, Chemistry. Any candidate presenting himself for examination in all the elementary studies is obliged to offer in addition any two, and only two, of the advanced studies. But he is not obliged to present himself in all the elementary studies. He may omit German or French, and then must take three, instead of two, advanced studies. He may omit Greek or Latin, and in that case must offer four of the advanced studies, and amongst the four must be the one numbered 6, and also either 7, 8, or 9. He may combine the other two options, omitting one of the two ancient languages and one of the two modern, but must then offer five of the advanced studies, including 6, and either 7, 8, or 9 as before.

Greek or Latin may thus be omitted for a scientific substitute, but not for a literary or modern language one. It is considered that the standard of matriculation remains about as it was in regard to difficulty. The concession is made in favor of a "scientific" training. As previous changes in the same direction during the past six years have resulted in a great increase of students, it seems highly probable that this more radical tone will add still more largely to the numbers. The chief anomaly seems to us to be in the tacit denial that a course in literature is equal in educational value to one in science. Without disparagement to the latter it might safely, we believe, be maintained that the former is more than equivalent by reason of the wider range of faculties it calls into play.

FIXITY OF TENURE.

The question of the uncertainty of the teacher's tenure is just now under discussion on both sides of the Atlantic. It is agreed on all hands that one of the most serious hindrances to the elevation of pedagogy to its true rank amongst the foremost professions is the fact that so few, comparatively, who engage in it make it a life work. By very many it is still regarded merely as a stepping-stone to some other pursuit. It is argued with much force, that one of the best means of counteracting this tendency would be to insure the permanency of the teacher's situation during good behaviour and reasonable proficiency. The last number of the *N. E. Journal of Education* contains a symposium, in which the views of a number of prominent educators are given. All agree in regard to the need of a change in the direction of more permanency, and all deprecate the existing law which compels the annual election of every teacher.

The annual election system is certainly bad. Few things could operate more powerfully to lower the dignity of the profession in the eyes of the public, or to unfit the teacher himself for doing his best work by keeping him in a state of mental unrest, and tempting him to study popularity rather than efficiency. Such a law opens up the door for intrigue, offers a premium to favoritism, and exposes the teacher to constant danger of being made the victim of prejudice or petty malice. On the other hand, it is pretty clear that any legislation in the direction of an enforced fixity of tenure would be a clog to progress. It would injure the teacher by taking from him one of his chief incentives to self-improvement. It would often deprive the school of the benefit of a change of methods, and virtually saddle it with a long regime of laziness or incompetence. We do not see that the present system in Ontario which leaves the matter pretty much in the hands of the local authorities could be bettered. The capable, efficient teacher need have, as a rule, no fear of removal, while the natural stimulus to exertion is always present. The thoroughly competent man or woman is, we fancy, very seldom dismissed, nor is the salary of such a teacher often lowered. A compulsory fixity of tenure would tend to lessen the chances of promotion, which is one of the strongest motives with the average teacher. In this, too, as in other matters, the less Government interferes