

NOTES FOR TEACHERS.

SCHOOL BOARD WISDOM.—It is one of the curious things of a democracy that every man and any man is thought to be wise enough to go on a school board, be a member of Congress, or hold the office of president. We have sent under this firmly fixed rule a good many fools and a good many bad men to Congress and to the state legislatures and will probably keep on doing it. Our system of politics is a huge misfortune to us. In one of the wards of this city a man wanted to be nominated for Congress; he applied to a "promoter" and asked, "How much will it cost?" Being told he drew his check, gave it to the "promoter," and was duly nominated.

The men who go on school boards have a general conception that there must be a house, desks, books, and teachers. Very often the selection of the latter is done on queer principles. In this city a teacher had done excellent work for four years, then married; the death of her husband occurred in two years; then she sought for employment again in the school and was rebuffed with this remark, "You have had your chance; there are other girls now that want to get a place and get married too." The fact of her excellent service was wholly ignored.

There are those who consider in an appointment the "backers" of the candidate—this is so well-known in our cities that the matter of qualification is quite secondary. The influence of the politician is fought; the school board man helps the politician expecting the latter to help him in return. This matter of influence cuts a very large figure in such cities as New York, Chicago, Buffalo, Cincinnati, Detroit, and a few others.

Then there are school board men

who insist the appointee shall live in the city—the idea is that the money raised in a place should be spent in a place. Some years ago a principal in Ohio nearly lost his place because he bought the furnishings of his house in another city than the one he lived in. He was warned that his salary must be spent in that town and no other. In New Jersey a teacher got a place by telling the influential member that he would hire a house of him if appointed; he says his salary was raised, too, as the rent was higher than he could afford.

A member in one of our Western cities, just elected, to show his ability to manage educational matters, when the salary list was read asked with curious stupidity: "How many female clerks have that much? How many good and intelligent mechanics have it at the present time?" He was a person who ranked the training of the minds of children on the same level as selling a pair of gloves or soldering a waste pipe. The delicate task of cultivating a human intelligence requires different powers from those that guide a mechanic's hand, and is to be rewarded after a different fashion. The profession is one that calls for constant study, for vigorous health, for earnest pleasure in its work; and these are necessary qualifications that cannot be maintained upon a pittance and the endless anxiety that is the result of that pittance. Where prices are resolutely kept down, or constantly reduced, there is no inducement to any one to spend years in careful and conscientious preparation, or the hours out of school in the study necessary to prevent intellectual rust.

The Cincinnati school board not long ago worried over the sinful extravagance of teachers. One mem-