

## Notes and Comments.

MR. ARTHUR J. READING is preparing a Graduation Diploma to be presented to those who pass the examinations prescribed for the different forms of high school and collegiate institutes by the Education Department.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES has been given a magnificent reception by the English papers. The London *Spectator* says Englishmen "have the feeling for him which they had for Charles Lamb, Charles Dickens and John Leech, in which admiration is somehow blended into and is indistinguishable from affection."

ON Easter Sunday Mr. Ruskin wrote concerning the Bible: "It is the grandest group of writings existent in the rational world, put into the grandest language of the rational world in the first strength of the Christian faith, by an entirely wise and kind saint, St. Jerome: translated afterwards with beauty and felicity into every language of the Christian world; and the guide, since so translated, of all the arts and acts of that world which have been noble, fortunate, and happy."

THERE is growing a powerful and beneficial influence on society, says the *Current*—namely, the profound feeling of relief which follows the end of a strike. If the populace continue thus to express its joy when a strike ceases, it will not be long ere a strike will be a thing so unwelcome that men will be slower to stop work. The shippers of Chicago are said to have put an end to the Lake Shore stoppage when the officers of the road and the chief of the unions could not do so. The effects of those shippers are worthy of all praise. That is public spirit, and it offers hope to the man who dislikes both Gould and anarchy.

"MR. RUSKIN'S undergraduate life," says the N. Y. *Tribune*, "was in one respect out of the common. He says in his autobiography that through all his three years of residence his mother lodged during term time in Oxford; on Saturdays his father came down, and they all three went in the old domestic way to St. Peter's for the Sunday morning service. 'Otherwise,' adds Mr. Ruskin, 'they never appeared with me in public, lest my companions should laugh at me, or any one else ask malicious questions concerning vintner papa and his old-fashioned wife.' Mr. Ruskin records to the credit of the undergraduates that 'none of them ever said one word in depreciation of either of them, or in sarcasm at my habitually spending my evenings with my mother.' But that was because Mr. Ruskin himself was never ashamed, but always pleased that his mother came to take such care of him as she could, and because his 'day was always

happier for telling her at tea whatever had pleased or profited him in it."

"I WENT to Cheyne-row the other night," writes a correspondent of the *Pall Mall*, "to revisit the old house at the steps of which I took leave of Mr. Carlyle some six or seven years ago. I found the medallion portrait stuck, not on No. 24, which has become one of the Meccas of the Old World and the New, but upon the house at the entry of the road fronting the ginshop which forms so undesirable a feature of the street in which the sage of Chelsea spent so much of his life. On inquiring as to why the portrait was not on the right house, I was told that its owner had fixed practically prohibitive terms for the liberty of affixing the memorial to his property. This was bad, but worse remained behind. On reaching the house itself I found it desolate, grimy, and untenanted, Dirty notices of "To Let" stared from the shuttered windows, the steps were foul, the area windows cracked, and the whole aspect of the front most depressing. In reply to inquiries on the spot, I was told that the owner of the house is so proud of the associations of genius which cluster round his bricks and mortar that he has fixed what is practically a prohibitive rent.

"A MOVEMENT having been started in England to commemorate the centenary of Lord Byron, which will occur in 1888. The poet's grandson, Baron Wentworth, writes," says the N. Y. *Tribune*, "that, in his opinion, such a demonstration is not to be approved. Nevertheless, he says: 'I feel that if the greatest poets and critics of our time were unanimous in wishing to accord recognition of some kind to the name of Byron, his family must respectfully acquiesce in any legitimate honours that were offered with such sanction. But I do not know how far such unanimity exists, or is likely to exist, and it is manifestly unfair that Byron should receive any of the ridicule which might attach to those who make inadmissible claims concerning him. I therefore think it my duty, as his descendant and in his name, to point out that no mere clique of unknown men without weight or authority would have the smallest right to possess themselves of Byron's memory as if it were their inheritance; and if real men of letters are divided in opinion as to his true place in English literature his representatives would ask that his grave may be left in peace.'"

MR. HENRY C. WHITE, of the University of Deseret, Utah, writes to the Chicago *Current* some three or four columns in defence of his opinions upon "The Purity of Language" criticised in the EDUCATIONAL WEEKLY of March 15th. "No single class of people," he says, "high or low, can wield such an influence over a language as to

shape it according to their own ideas or inclinations; the truth is, all classes have an equal share in the formation of a language which is used by them in common, or in other words, the rule of the majority is usage. The voice of the people is mighty and will prevail. *Vox populi, vox Dei.* There is no gainsaying this fact. As long as human nature is liable to imperfection and error in the cases of individuals, as long as one class of people will resist the dictation of another in matters pertaining to the mind, there can be no single criterion of usage, no one individual will be acknowledged by his fellow-men to possess a judgment superior to that of all the rest. Where, then, can we find the required standard? Nowhere but in the *concurrent voice of the majority of mankind.* A standard set up by one class will inevitably be pulled down and supplanted by another generation of men, *ad infinitum.*"

THE Halifax *Critic* contains the following: "Much fault has been found with the appointment of Rev. Mr. Currie to the position of Provincial Examiner of intending teachers for Nova Scotia. The chief objection offered to this appointment, is that he is not a graduate or connected with the Provincial Normal School. It is our decided opinion that the 'prizes' of the teaching profession should, as a rule, be reserved for teachers. It is probably for the public good that our inspectors of schools ought to be not only men of superior scholarship but practical teachers—men that have had actual experience in teaching different grades of schools, and that are consequently able to sympathize with all the teachers under their supervision. But it is by no means clear that Provincial Examiners of this Province ought to be men fresh from a teacher's desk in the Normal School or elsewhere. In the first place their positions are not so remunerative as to be considered one of the prizes of the teaching profession. In the second place it would be questionable wisdom to appoint as a Provincial Examiner any man whose business is (and would continue to be) the preparing of candidates for teachers' examinations. And, thirdly, as a uniform teachers' examination is, to a great extent, regarded as a useful adjunct to the educational work being done by the important schools in the Province, it seems to us best to have as conductors of that examination men of broad views and of liberal education whose minds are not imbued with the peculiar ideas that are apt to be in the ascendancy in almost every institution of learning. It might, indeed, be to the public interest to have among our Provincial Examiners persons that live outside the Province. As, therefore, Rev. Mr. Currie has the required qualifications for his new position, we do not think there are good grounds for objection to his appointment."