

## Notes and Comments.

THOSE who believe that lightning is more dangerous in these days than formerly, will be apt to take kindly to the theory of Dr. Andrea, that the electrical phenomena of the air increases in intensity with the increase of dust in it, due to locomotives and manufactories.

AT the annual session of the Music Teachers' National Association, Carl Florio created a sensation by vigorously protesting against the Church music of the day. He declared the quartette to be an abomination and urged the obliteration of everything that tended to make a concert-room of the Church.—*The Current*.

THERE appears to be no end to the blessing of electricity. It is now stated that the placing of a silver coin upon one side of an aching tooth and a piece of zinc on the other, will result, if the edges of the respective metals be brought together, in the establishment of a weak galvanic current which will allay the pain.—*The Current*.

SPEAKING of the condition of French literature in 1885, Francis de Pressensé says in the London *Athenæum*: "So far as poetry is concerned, the year might be epitomized in the words 'Victor Hugo is dead.' The sun has set, and there are no rays to warm and cheer those who think that a people can no more dispense with poetry than with food or order in the streets."

THERE was lately a public competition in pronunciation—open to all the students and teachers from all parts of the United States who are taking the summer course at Chautauqua, before an audience of about two thousand. Mr. Thos. O'Hagan had the good fortune to carry away the prize—a cash one. We congratulate Mr. O'Hagan on his success. As our readers may be interested in the list of words given for pronunciation, we shall print them in our next issue.

INSPECTOR MAXWELL, in his report to the County Council of North Essex, writes: "Our teachers' association is in an active condition, Attendance is large, work fairly well done, influence beneficial. We have two or three teachers who think they can learn nothing at associations. Egotists are to be pitied, for when they present themselves they have nothing to offer their fellow teachers. If they know so much they ought to be able to impart something serviceable to others."

THE *Chautauquan* thus indirectly puts in a plea for a better and more thorough study of English:—Must we put aside our hope of pure Anglo-Saxon to the day of the millennium, when all good things will come? A glance at a page of the note book, the work of a half-hour with our morning paper, make us believe so. The first news item is of an

"inebriated individual," the book reviewer praises certain "dainty booklets," an advertisement calls attention to an *élite* event, and now a correspondent from the south tells how the "flowering trees may be seen in a perfect galaxy of beauty," and that he went on a "recherche drive."

MRS. GLADSTONE encourages industry and thrift among the cottagers around her, and gives them personal assistance in the cultivation of trees and flowers. Among the charitable institutions founded by her is the Industrial School for Boys at Clapham. To one whom she had helped and who wished to do some service for her in return, Mrs. Gladstone said: "Do something for somebody else. A kind word, a bit of practical advice, a helping hand, even if there is not much in it, will always be doing something for me. And more than that, my child, it will be doing something for yourself and something for God."—*New York Church Union*.

D. C. TILLOTSON, of Topeka, very truly remarks that habits of right feeling and of right conduct are of the first importance all through life. Childhood and youth are the most impressible periods of life. The teacher has a peculiarly favourable opportunity for inculcating those habits that are of most value. I would enumerate them as, the rights of and our duties to others; the rights of and our duties to ourselves; the rights of and our duties to the state and nation. We hear much in these days of equal rights, civil rights, personal liberty, etc.; I think equal duties, civil duties, personal duties, if properly presented, would correct many false notions that have been inculcated concerning "rights."

THE object of the Central School Floral Society is a praiseworthy one. It is described by the London *Advertiser* as calculated to aid the teachers in cultivating virtuous and checking evil tendencies in the public school children. Seeking for such means to do this, as would be approved by all who had the welfare of the young at heart, the teachers formed a society whose test of membership was the possession and care of a single plant. Only those who have shared the children's innocent confidences know the many hopes bound up in these unassuming plants. The society soon numbered 230 members, when the list was closed lest the overwork should interfere with regular duty. The teachers are satisfied that this society can render valuable assistance in the moral education of our school children, but to do this unstinted support must be given by the public.

JOHN T. DOYLE, in *The Overland Monthly* for July prints a letter addressed to Lawrence Barrett, which is of great interest to all students of Shakespeare. It has often been alleged that the conduct of the court in the trial scene of "The Merchant of Venice"

demonstrated that Shakespeare had no accurate knowledge of legal tribunals. Mr. Doyle relates that, once in Nicaragua, thirty-five years ago, he became involved in some litigation, and that the judge called in a practicing lawyer, and left the decision of the points in issue to him. This, Mr. Doyle found, was the common practice—a practice identical with that of the Venetian court. A further parallel was found in the fact the Nicaraguan lawyer expected payment for his services, the *Duke* in the play, as those familiar with it will at once recall, suggesting to *Antonio* that he "gratify" *Portia*. Mr. Doyle has also met a case in the Mexican courts which affords grounds of probability for the infliction of the penalty against *Shylock*.

SENATOR WARNER MILLER, in a late address before the graduates of an eastern college, expressed the sentiment that the present teaching is to keep educated men out of politics; that they hold themselves aloof from participating in the affairs of the nation, as if they feared contamination. The Senator believes this is un-American. The honourable senator has not given the reason of educated men's declination to enter politics. Has Senator Miller forgotten the fact that a "plug ugly" in a ward meeting has more influence than any college president in the United States? Does he not know that to be a factor in politics one must bow to the dictates of the political leaders and pass under the yoke, and thereafter be a slave, to receive the party lash to the bone at the first sign of rebellion or insubordination? Does he not know that educated men are kept out of politics; not of their own choice, but by the manipulations of ringsters? This cry that educated men will not enter politics is becoming obsolete and altogether stale. They would enter if they could, but they are barred out. Of course many educated men are found in politics, but they have eaten and assimilated the food of politicians, and generally have a commanding influence of their friends, and wield a power not easily overcome. Politics is now a fight for the spoils, and has been since Jackson's day. Men who work for the welfare of the people and for the advancement of the nation are purposely kept out of politics. Those patriots are mostly educated, it is true. This gives some force to the cry that educated men will not enter politics. But trace back the line of evidence, and find the facts: These men are purposely kept out of politics by the powers that be. Neither can they enter unless their combined power is great enough to upset the political rings. In short, educated men are kept out of politics because they have not the power to overcome the politician's opposition and enter. This is the *status*, the truth in a nut shell.—*D. H. Pingrey, in The Current*.