

EDUCATIONAL.

THE STUDY OF GERMAN, HERE AND ELSEWHERE.

The difficulty of inducing pupils to elect the German option offered in our schools would seem wonderful to the people of the United States and other countries. It is said that the German population of Nova Scotia is small and unimportant, and that pupils educated here will probably never be required to speak German. Granting this to be the case, yet the ability to speak a foreign language is not by any means the highest advantage which accrues from the study of that language. Tried by this standard how will the ancient classics fare? The benefit of these, and it is a benefit shared in an equal degree by German, consists mainly in their educative influence.

Of a large number of American college professors recently consulted as to the best modern equivalent for Greek, two-thirds favored German rather than French on account of the superior training which the former affords. Of all the modern languages German has the best claim to the attention of English speaking people. We need not say that this is partly due to the fact that the English and German are sister languages. Although our language has been changed by the addition of a motley superstructure chiefly of Latin origin, yet the rolling stock, the wheel-work of the two sister tongues remains the same to this day. German has changed less than English. Owing to her power of internal growth, the vitality of her root words being unimpaired, she can create out of her own resources words suited to the requirements of any age. Thus, when we are forced to borrow from the Latin, the material for the word 'co-operation' the Germans could put two indigenous roots and an ending together, and form 'mitwirkung' (with working). When we imported the timber for 'plenipotentiary,' they raised at home as a product of nature, the word *Bevollmachtigte* (furnished with full power).

The much-admired plasticity and flexibility of the German language is due partly to this vitality of its roots, and partly to its power of forming expressive compounds. To take a few examples of this latter feature of the language:—*Baumwollen* (tree wool, or cotton), *Lichtdampfer* (light quencher, or extinguisher), *Pferdwechsel* (horse changing, relay of horses). Sometimes the compound is of great length, but then it conveys a meaning which would require an English sentence. For example, the word for street-car is *Pferdestrasseisenbahnwagen*, which means a "coach drawn by horses on an iron track in the street."

Such is the fundamental similarity between English and German that many of our grammatical puzzles can be solved by a comparison with the corresponding German idiom. As an auxiliary to the thorough study of English, then, German is invaluable.

Our limited space will not allow us to enter into the merits and the peculiarities, or to descend on the breadth, variety and richness of German literature. It contains much that is unexcelled in Poetry, Philosophy and Science, and we feel safe in saying that no language can hold out greater inducements to the student.

MORAL TRAINING IN SCHOOLS.

Last week we gave our views on moral education in schools, and we are pleased to see that those views are also held by educationalists elsewhere. The *Andover Review* has the following from the pen of Superintendent Dutton:—

"Abstract and itinerant gossip about right and wrong in the school room creates a distaste for morality. Moral lessons clothed in concrete form may be given in such a way as to interest and impress the child. For this purpose studies of character as illustrated in the lives of eminent statesmen, warriors, and authors, are most useful. Such lessons, while opening the richest stores of historical knowledge, quicken the moral instincts of the pupil, kindle his patriotism, and fire him with noble ambition."

And the *Boston Journal of Education* gives J. P. Wickersham's opinion which is as follows:—

"Moral examples have more influence upon the young than moral precepts. The heart is more easily moved to virtue by incidental than by direct teaching; and the faithful teacher will not fail to improve the occasions which so frequently occur in reciting lessons in history by planting moral seeds in the open hearts about him, well knowing that they will germinate and eventually produce rich fruit. No study is so useful in the formation of character as history. In its study pupils see life. Great deeds are done by beings like themselves, and they cannot resist the desire to do like deeds."

NOTES.

How often we find a magnificent school building in which poorly paid teachers are striving for existence because the trustees cannot afford to increase the salaries. Expensive buildings with costly fronts, unoccupied rooms and showy hypocrisy in all forms can be afforded, but common justice is too costly an article. Pictures of fancy buildings are often circulated as an advertisement for the school; a better advertisement would be a statement of the qualifications of the teachers and the salaries they receive. The *Chicago Inter-Ocean* has this pitny sentence quoted by the *Journal of Education*: "If compelled to choose between the two, always prefer a good teacher to a fine school-house."

The free-book question is creating considerable discussion in the United States. It has been found in Boston that supplying school-books has materially increased the attendance of the poorer children. On the other hand, the Ohio Legislature has defeated by a large majority a bill to introduce the free-book system into Cleveland.

School discipline should be such that it will produce well-behaved men, just as school instruction produces well-informed men. The great lessons which it should impress are respect for authority, regard for the rights and feelings of others, and self-control.

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