

Contemporary Thought.

I THINK there is no fault more prevalent in the present age than levity. The lofty in character, the high in station, the most sacred subjects, are alike objects of sport. Persons whom you know to be good and far from wishing to hurt the feelings of, or in any way injure others, yield to this fault. In this age it is thought to be evidence of brightness, smartness, to be quick at picking all things to pieces, uttering thoughtless speeches concerning the manners or lives of those with whom we come in contact. To find motives for things other than what appears on the surface is counted wit. This spirit pervades our newspapers, our society, our conversation, everything, and seems to be killing all reverence for any person or thing, however high or holy.—*Parish Visitor.*

THE Rev. Thomas F. Green, pastor of the St. Andrew's Protestant Episcopal Church of Chicago, sees great evil in the public schools there as now conducted. He said from his pulpit on Sunday that, just as sure as the secular tendency of the schools prevailed, atheism and infidelity would flourish in the land, leaving the inevitable fruits of anarchy and communism. He thought the secularization of the schools largely responsible for the growing evils of the social and business world. Without Bible, without Christ, without religion, almost without morality, they could not but breed atheism and wickedness. Mr. Green proposes to establish parochial schools in his parish to in some measure counteract the baneful influence of the public schools.

THERE is almost no limit to the physical development and health that may be gained and maintained by walking, which is done for the purpose of exercise. Any one can find time and space in which to walk, and one can find congenial company for such trips. A prospective husband is not the best company at such times, for with him the walk will almost inevitably degenerate into a saunter; further, no woman can walk freely when custom or affection compels her to lean upon a masculine arm. To be beneficial walking must be done in shoes broad enough to let the feet be placed firmly upon the ground at every step, and in clothing which will allow free play to lungs and arms. The step should be as quick as can be maintained without causing uncomfortable increase in the action of the heart. The pedestrian should breathe through the nose, carry the head erect, and not be afraid of becoming high shouldered.—*Cincinnati Enquirer.*

It has been openly asserted, not so long ago, that a journalist is neither a missionary nor an apostle. Knowing as I do that it is given to journalists to write the only printed matter on which the eyes of the majority of Englishmen ever rest from Monday morning to Saturday night, I cannot accept any such belittling limitations of the duties of a journalist. We have to write afresh from day to day the only Bible which millions read. Poor and inadequate though our printed pages may be, they are for the mass of men the only substitute that "the progress of civilization" has provided for the morning and evening service with which a believing age began and ended the labours of the day. The newspaper—too often the newspaper

alone—lifts the minds of men, wearied with daily toil and dulled by carking care, into a higher sphere of thought and action than the routine of the yard-stick or the slavery of the ploughshare.—*W. T. Stead in Contemporary Review.*

WITHIN the past ten years, instead of making strong books and strong meat for the mind, our publishers have been giving us decoration books, all bursting with illustrations, sensuous things that catch the eye and do not minister to the soul. You can not make a literature in your country without sitting sincerely down before it, working for long results, working carefully, with continuity, and as other men have made literatures. You can not make literature with magazine articles, you can not make it with pictures. After the literature is made your artist can come along and illustrate successive editions of your author, but I never heard of pictures carrying the author to the seventh heaven with them. Literature will never amount to anything in this country as long as it is made a sort of button hole bouquet carried into some prominence by a flimsy society. The honest characters which should in their interminglings make American literature, are not to be found around delicate dinner services. You will find them eating off blue china in the vales of your country. You will find them in the shops, along the seashores—even in the jails.—*Boston Globe.*

THE enemies of General Boulanger, having given him the lie by publishing photographs of his adulatory letters to the Duc D'Aumale, now point out that the said letters contain misspellings, bad grammar, and gross barbarisms in point of style. They affect to deplore this as a discredit to the Army and Government of France. But General Boulanger may be a distinguished soldier and a great statesman, and at the same time a bad speller and a writer of bad grammar. Our own Admiral Sir Charles Napier was a notorious blunderer when he sat down to write; and it is characteristic of the whole Napier family, not excepting Sir William, the historian, that they were as bad spellers as they were great men. The Duke of Wellington had much natural eloquence in him; but the orthography of his despatches was often at fault. Then there is the man who is acknowledged to be by far the greatest living statesman—Prince Bismarck. He not only failed to pass his examinations as a young man, but to this day, he cannot write half-a-dozen sentences on end (German sentences are not short) without one or more grammatical errors. There have not been, in modern times, many fighting men who could write with the elegance and refinement of the celebrated Northumbrian, admiral Collingwood. There were many such in ancient times; and, notably, there was Julius Cæsar, the greatest of all great fighting men, who actually wrote a grammar.—*Newcastle Chronicle.*

It is estimated that there are about twenty-eight miles of drainage—enough in length for the sewerage of a large town—in the system of sweat-tubes in the skin of an adult. Obstructing the outlets of this system clogs the whole, and sends the drainage back into the heart of the city—a speedily fatal effect. The average amount of perspiration given off by a person in health is about two pounds, or two pints, daily—a quantity almost

equal to that disposed of by the kidneys. It contains, in common with the other excretions, substances which, if retained, are harmful in the extreme. Also, the matter deposited in the clothing in the course of a week, and in warm weather especially, beginning speedily to decompose, is enough to suggest the eminent propriety of frequent changes, and washings and airings often. Sick lungs, liver, or kidneys call upon the skin to do their work for them. The skin must, therefore, be kept in good condition to do the work of three organs as well as its own, and, being so ready, may save a threatened life. The skin may be trained to adapt itself to sudden and frequent changes. It has the same capacity for adapting itself to circumstances that the eye has. It will shrink and give off little heat through its blood vessels and its sweat glands when exposed to cold, and will present a large radiating surface and much moisture when exposed to heat. A judicious training will enable the skin to adapt itself to sudden changes with safety.—*Lecture by Dr. Sheldon.*

It is an unfortunate habit with many people to consider that with the end of the holiday season comes the end of the year's enjoyment; that the law of compensation exercises its stern prerogative in the matter of pleasure as in most other things, and that the period of work is of necessity the period of drudgery and pain. Of course this does not apply to idle luxury, perhaps not even to the family with its united interests and oft-recurring pleasures; but more particularly to those who are much alone in the world. Work in itself and for its own sake is not pleasurable with the mass of mankind; it needs a definite aim, such as ambition, to give zest and real enjoyment. Apart from aim and end, work is very apt to become toilsome and unsatisfactory, and the call of duty is often answered with faltering voice and lagging step. This is doubtless the great reason for all the apathy that exists in human life and energy; and it is this which makes duty so unpleasant a word in the world's vocabulary. The Stoical philosophy tried to answer the problem of life in this respect and signally failed. The instinct in man for enjoyment is too strong to be suppressed, and no philosophy which takes no account of this faculty has ever been able to solve the problem of life, nor ever can. The great power and beauty, the perfection, indeed, of the Christian religion is that its only end is to satisfy this instinct in man for enjoyment. Matthew Arnold has laid immense stress in one of his essays, on the necessity of paying attention to what he calls man's instinct for conduct, and man's instinct for beauty. As he rightly insists there can be no true education, no culture, without the right appreciation of these two things. But they are both resolvable into one: they both arise from one—the instinct for enjoyment. The instinct for conduct arises from the enjoyment of the good and the true; and it was Keats' intense enjoyment of the beautiful which led to the expression of the well-known line: "A thing of beauty is a joy forever." Now the perfection of the Christian faith is that it appeals to man's instinct for enjoyment; it satisfies it in every way. Without this faith, the world has been proving for centuries that there can be no solid and certain happiness; the instinct for enjoyment, without it, craves satisfaction, and craves it in vain.—*J. O. M. in the Evangelical Churchman.*