

Contemporary Thought.

THE cause of technical education is making great progress in Massachusetts. The schools devoted thereto appear to be in great favor with the public, and to have passed quite beyond the experimental stage.—*The Current*.

REGULATED gymnastic exercise is only one means of physical culture; modes of dress, out-of-door exercise, bathing, sleeping, the plays of young children, all are of equal importance.—*Popular Science Monthly*.

PROF. KENNEDY discusses the question of Americans studying in Germany, pointing out the reasons for and against this course. He regrets that American colleges are so much below the German standard, but asserts that the best American high schools and academies are equal to the best German schools of the same class. He tells us that American students in Germany average twenty-five years of age, are admitted to the universities on diplomas, and stand next to those of Germany, herself, in number.

NOTHING can be conceived of as more contemptible than the code of honor adopted by many students at academies and colleges, compelling them to keep *num* on any matter affecting the doings or character of their fellow students. A man may have done physical violence to another, injured his property, or misrepresented his conduct greatly to his harm, and yet this *code* forbids "giving away" the offender. We would be far from encouraging tattling, or busy interference with the affairs of others, but the least we can say in regard to those who keep such secrets, is that they become guilty as accomplices in the wrong done, and stand in the way of the execution of justice.—*Academy News*.

WE believe that authors have cause for complaint against the United States. While we boast of our just laws and of our thorough care for a multitude of interests, we have neglected and swindled European writers. Our theory of economy: "Get all you can and keep all you get," and our assumption that to profit by trade we must cheat those with whom we deal, have made us regard all trans-Atlantic literary work as legitimate prey. We cry out for "protection" against cheap clothing, cheap food, cheap tools, and cheap labor, but we are not afraid of cheap literature, even if it be stolen.—*Academy News*.

THERE is now a demand for teachers of education, that is not likely to grow less, in a number of our best colleges, the presidents of which have taken up the lantern of Diogenes in earnest, and it is to be hoped, not in vain. The work of public school superintendence has lately become more professional in many parts of the country, and is also increasingly lucrative. . . . In view of these facts and many more, the writer is of the opinion that there is now no line of intellectual work to which a young baccalaureate can devote himself with greater certainty that industry and ability will find their reward in usefulness, reputation and position than to the professional study of the theory and history and institutions of education.—*G. Stanley Hall, in N. A. Review*.

IT is asked in England with as much seriousness as satire, whether it would not be well to add English to the list of languages taught in the schools, and especial point is given to the query by the statement of the Archbishop of York that he never, when a boy, read an English grammar, nor, indeed, in the whole course of his education, saw such a book. Yet, beginning before he entered his teens, His Grace doubtless spent much of his time for years in the study of Latin, Greek and Hebrew. The same fault exists in American educational systems. Scholars are drilled with untiring tiresomeness in classic tongues and foreign modern languages, and largely left to acquire a correct use of their vernacular by some sort of happy-go-lucky intuition. The disastrous results of this system are glaringly obvious to everyone who has eyes to read, or ears to hear, and mind to understand. Societies for the preservation of the mother tongue may do good, but every school and college should take up the work. To know the classics is well, and opinion nowadays inclines to hold that to be a master of modern tongues is better; but to use one's native language with correctness, directness and grace is decidedly the best of all.—*New York Tribune*.

THE lovers of history, in the modern literary sense of the term, will be delighted to learn that a fresh crop of material is nearly ready for harvesting. The Diplomatic Archives Commission of France has already in the press the first volume of a series of despatches from French ambassadors in London, beginning at the year 1538 and extending to modern times. The volume which is about to be issued includes the despatches of Castillon and Marillac from 1538 to 1543. This is excellent news for the reading public. No class of documentary evidence which modern industry has turned to account is so delightfully fresh and entertaining. When sovereigns were well served by their ambassadors they were provided every few days with the choicest dish of fact and scandal written by privileged hands, and intended only for privileged eyes. We are not obliged to take every bit of Court gossip for gospel truth, but it is certain that, from a comparison of letters by ambassadors writing in opposite interests, we can gain a far more lively picture of great personages and important events than from the statuesque portraits of contemporary writers or the pompous phraseology of official documents. Readers of Mr. Froude know what great things he has done for the Tudor period in the way of lively personal portraiture and interesting detail by the free use of the Spanish Ambassador's letters to his royal master. Now that we are to have the French Ambassador's letters for the same interesting period, we may reckon upon gaining an even clearer insight into the intrigues and machinations of an age so fruitful in results to the English nation.

JUST as the scheme for university confederation in Ontario is going into successful operation, President Gilman, of the Johns Hopkins University, publishes in the *North American Review* a paper on titles, especially academic degrees, in which he suggests such a confederation, or perhaps such confederations, by the stronger American colleges. The advantages which it is thought would result from such confederation are essentially the same in

America as in Canada—the better facilities in the way of laboratories, museums, and advanced instruction, which could thus be placed within the student's reach, and the enhanced value of his degree in representing these greater advantages and the more rigorous examinations that could then be instituted. It is probable that the intensity of the sectarian feeling in the smaller American colleges would defeat the carrying out of such a scheme in the United States, at least in the case of the older colleges. Mr. Gilman believes that in those States in which the State universities have become especially strong and promising—California, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin—the legislatures might advantageously find a way of grouping the little colleges about the State university, and thus forming a central university body for advanced instruction and for examining students and conferring degrees, students pursuing their purely collegiate work as before at the separate colleges and coming up to the university for examination, and for post-graduate work. While such a plan appears desirable on many accounts, we fear it could hardly be put into successful operation on account of the opposition likely to flow from the little colleges, which already possess charters, many of them with full university powers, and which would be loath to yield up the mere form of strength, even if it were plain that in so doing they would be reaping a substantial gain; and the legislatures of the newer States, where such a plan might be provided for by a prudent foresight, show little disposition to limit the number or imaginary powers of ambitious but sickly denominational schools.—*Index*.

FRANKLIN HAVEN NORTH in the *Popular Science Monthly* for March, in speaking of the Workingman's School, instituted some seven years ago in New York by Felix Adler and a number of business men, writes as follows on the system adopted:—

The theory of instruction is based upon natural inclination. A child visiting the circus, menagerie, museum, or theatre, is all eyes, all ears. Question it upon its return home, and you will, doubtless, be surprised at the amount and variety of its information. It has seen and heard that which you have failed to see and hear.

It is this faculty of the child of absorbing itself in what pleases or interests it that has been seized upon by the managers. In the public school, the young, restless with the impatience of childhood, are forced to remain quiet while attempts are made to describe to them a something which they have never seen, and, not being based upon anything in which their interests have previously been excited, leaves, at best, but little impression on their minds. When it has begun to dawn upon them that Columbus was a man and not a fish, and that he came hither in a sailing-vessel and not in a steamship; when they are a-hunger and a-thirst for information as to his reasons for believing there was a New World in the West, the bell rings and they are ushered into the awful presence of an arithmetician, who knows all about the denomination of numbers, circulating decimals, and the like, and who, having memorized all the rules, thinks everybody else should be compelled to do the same. This system of opposing the natural inclinations of the young is, perhaps, best expressed in the retort