

## Notes and Comments.

THAT the cause, or one of the causes, of the troubles existing in society of the present day is the want of a feeling of reverence and respect, is we think only too true. On this subject a writer in *Our Youth* says:—There is little hope for an irreverent fellow. It is hard to get hold of him. There is so little in him to get hold of. There is in irreverence a vein of meanness which makes one shrink from meddling with it.

"SHOULD we say two pairs of socks or two pair of socks?" asks a Wisconsin reader. in the *New York Graphic*, of its able and affable editor. Editor responds: "Neither. The correct term for the articles referred to is now accepted to be 'half-hose.' The answer in full would then be two pairs of 'half-hose.'" This is the latest American for a good honest English word that stood the wear and tear of centuries without shocking anybody's sensibilities until it fell upon the ultra susceptible ear of our cousins of the Republic. Whereupon the foregoing polite substitution:—Prunes are prisms—and half-hose!

PROF. W. H. PAYNE, of Ann Arbor, speaking on the subject of the life and teachings of Pestalozzi, says: It was his spirit, not the methods of his teaching, that has made him famous. The secret of his power was his sympathy with the lower classes. It is true of all the world's greatest teachers that they owed their success to their philanthropy. The modern tendency is away from these ideals. The school is drifting away from the people, and there is a pronounced tendency toward an intellectual aristocracy. An earnest purpose is of more value than mere technical scholarship; and in giving licenses to teachers, the moral qualities of the candidate should be taken into consideration as well as superficial accomplishments and text-book knowledge.

PROFESSOR BLACKIE says he wishes himself back in the middle ages when singing was the only sermon and the minstrel the only teacher. We are running too much to books. The people don't come together any more. There are no more grand public reunions of the masses. A man buys a book or a paper, and, hurrying home, shuts the door and reads. Everybody reads. Enter a family circle nowadays and man, woman and child has his, her or its nose poked down between printed pages. It's read, read, read. Absolute silence reigns throughout the house. It's despairing. I sometimes feel like yelling and demolishing the furniture, when I get into such a solemn-visaged circle, as a sort of counter-irritant. These human reading machines are stuffed

full of the sausage meat of literature. When the world was the wisest it read no books. Its teachers taught them from nature.—*New York Graphic*.

THE *New York Indicator* says that it may seem hard that one man can hold a fortune of \$100,000,000 and another not have enough money to purchase a night's lodging. It is also hard that one man is born blind and another is permitted to travel around the world and see everything that is beautiful in this world. But we must go beyond human existence to fix the responsibility for the inequality, and if any remedy exists it must spring from the source that makes all things unequal. The nearest approach that man has yet come, or will ever come, to fixing a common level is through the elevation of the individual, not the lowering of any class. By education man may be raised to almost any estate, but no leveling process can ever make the man of lofty attainments and high moral culture less than what he is—the noblest work of God. Let the Knights of Labour address themselves to raising the standard of manhood, instead of lowering it.

AT a meeting of the London Scientific Association recently, Sir John Lubbock exhibited a tame wasp which ate sugar from his hand and made no attempt to sting him. Those moralists that are fond of holding up the habits of various insects as models that should be followed by humanity with its weaknesses are going to get left. Science has discovered that the busy bee, which, from time immemorial, these persons have described as improving each shining hour, really works but two hours a day. The pet which Sir John Lubbock introduced to his scientific friends the other evening, proves conclusively that even the wasp, an insect popularly supposed to attend strictly to business at all times and in all places, is willing to neglect business for pleasure; and a further investigation of the ant, the *bête noire* of the sluggard, will probably show that she has her hours of ease and idleness and is far less industrious than she has been cracked up to be.—*Ex.*

ON the subject of athletics which is one of daily increasing interest, the opportune remarks of a correspondent in *The Canadian Athletic News*, ought to be published far and wide. He writes: The pursuit of athletics is unquestionably beneficial, but the difficulty arises when men will not recognize that they are over doing it. Hundreds may be benefitted where the few are injured. This is what I want to impress on those who read this column, and who are at present taking part in athletic contests, or who may contemplate doing so. I will not in this article go into the various methods of training, or indicate what I consider the best system. What I want to impress upon athletes is, to

husband their strength, develop their muscles in moderation, train so long as they feel they are improving in health, and obtaining greater freedom of movement, but they must come to a stop whenever the least indication is given of failing powers, or any particular organ gives signs of being prejudicially affected by the unwonted strain. By careful attention to this advice many may be prevented from doing themselves injury.

MR. O. B. BUNCE'S remarks on the subject of reading are quite in accord with our views. He says that it should never be forgotten that it is what a man assimilates, not what he reads, that determines the breadth and quality of his culture. All prescribed courses of reading simply cause a great deal of purely perfunctory reading, and perfunctory reading is about as profitable as pouring water into a basket. Let men and women read the books for which they have an affinity—the books that take possession of their minds, that stir their sympathies, that awaken their faculties—whether they be books old or new, books of imagination or books of facts. In intellectual pursuits every individual intelligence is a law to itself—and no one can obtain genuine culture of any kind unless he follows the bent of his own nature. "A boy," said Dr. Johnson, "should be turned loose in a library, if it contains no unfit books, and allowed to choose for himself." Very likely taste can be guided a little; and it is well to compare notes as to what is worthy; but it is only the books that we delight in that do us any real good.

PROFESSOR VON RANKE, who died at Berlin last month, in the 91st year of his age, was born in Thuringia, December 21st, 1795. On March 31st, 1885, he completed the sixtieth year of his own professional career in the University of Berlin. The work that gave him his continental reputation was "The History of the Popes," and this was really a continuation of his "Princes and People of Southern Europe." It appeared in 1834, and the review of it by Lord Macaulay in the *Edinburgh* would alone have made von Ranke's name familiar to the English-speaking world. The greatest work undertaken by this wonderful German was a history of the world in nine volumes. Of this he had completed only six volumes, but it is understood he has left notes and documents from which at least one more volume can, without difficulty, be compiled. He was a man of great mental power, but some of his works exhibit prejudices, both national and religious, that are hardly consistent with the character of an impartial historian. It is not, we believe, generally known in this country that Dr. von Ranke's wife was an Irish lady, whose maiden name had been Miss Greaves.—*Halifax Critic*.