

Contemporary Thought.

THE subject of industrial training in schools is now attracting considerable attention all over the world, and there is little doubt the school systems in the non-progressive countries are on the eve of important changes in the direction indicated.—*St. Thomas Times*.

MOST pupils hate "grammar," and no wonder. Fancy having to memorize a rule that a capital letter should be used "for the nominative case singular of the personal pronoun of the first person"! That is a foot-note in a volume of 253 pages. Who can say off-hand what is described? It is the pronoun "I."—*Lindsay Post*.

THE *American Journal of Philology*, which is the official philological organ of Johns Hopkins University, continues to give evidence of uncommon vitality, and versatility too. Prof. Elliott's "Contributions to a History of the French Language of Canada," opens up new and rich fields for the trans-Atlantic linguistic explorer. The French language in Canada possesses astonishing vigor and is spreading to the right hand and to the left, as this very suggestive contribution shows.—*The Critic*.

WE know now that his momentous work on the fresh-water fishes of Europe had its genesis in the questions evoked by his observations as a child along the shores of the Lake of Morat. Another part of his education to which he attached much importance was the mechanical dexterity acquired by practising the handicrafts of the cobbler, the tailor, and the carpenter, learned from those who came at stated seasons to the village and made the rounds from house to house practising their trades. Add to this an active, resolute disposition and we have the essential elements of after-success.—*Literary World, on Louis Agassiz*.

IT is a beautiful fact that while the warmth and exposures of summer tend to biliousness and fevers, the free use of fruits and berries counteracts that tendency. Artificial acids are found to promote the separation of the bile from the blood with great mildness and certainty; this led to the supposition that the natural acids, as contained in fruits and berries, might be available, and being more palatable, would necessarily be preferred. Experiment has verified the theory, and within a very late period, allopathic writers have suggested the use of fresh, ripe, perfect, raw fruits as a reliable remedy in the diarrhoeas of summer.—*Hall's Journal of Health*.

THE true end of education, of whatever kind, we must set steadily before us. There are some who wish to know that they may know; this is base curiosity. There are some who wish to know that they may be known; this is base vanity. There are some who wish to sell their knowledge; this is base covetousness. There are some who wish to know that they may edify and be edified; this is charity. The object of education is that we may learn to see and know God here and glorify him in Heaven hereafter. Knowledge is not a court in which to rest, nor a town, but a rich treasure-house for the glory of God.—*Archdeacon Farrar, at Johns Hopkins*.

JOSH BILLINGS' bad spelling blinded me to his wit and wisdom for many years, but one day I

heard him deliver a lecture, and at last realized his wonderful power as a humorist. Winnow his sayings, fan away the orthographical chaff, and you get grains of common sense that you may search for in vain in the writings of many more dignified and pretentious philosophers. He was a man of the people, but wiser than the people—though the people were wise enough to recognize his superiority to themselves. It will surprise many readers to learn that Henry W. Shaw was the Uncle Esek of the *Century's* Bric-à-Brac, the *nom de plume* Josh Billings not appearing in that magazine in consequence of an old understanding between Mr. Shaw and the publisher of the *New York Weekly*.—*Lounger, in the Critic*.

HOW strongly the appetite yearns for a pickle, when nothing else could be relished, is in the experience of most of us. It is the instinct of nature pointing to a cure. The want of a natural appetite is the result of the bile not being separated from the blood, and if not remedied, fever is inevitable, from the slightest grades to that of bilious, congestive, and yellow. "Fruits are cooling," is a by-word, the truth of which has forced itself on the commonest of observers. But why they are so, they had not the time, opportunity or inclination to enquire into. The reason is, the acid of the fruit stimulates the liver to greater activity in separating the bile from the blood, which is its proper work, the result of which is the bowels become free, the pores of the skin are open. Under such circumstances, fever and want of appetite are impossible.—*Hall's Journal of Health*.

THERE is a story in Boswell of an ancient beggar-woman who while asking an alms of the doctor described herself to him, in a lucky moment for her pocket, as "an old struggler." Johnson, his biographer tells us, was visibly affected. The phrase stuck to his memory and was frequently applied to himself. "I, too," so he would say, "am an old struggler." So, too, in all conscience, was Carlyle. The struggles of Johnson have long been historical—those of Carlyle have just become so. We are interested in both. To be indifferent would be inhuman. Both men had great endowments, tempestuous natures, hard lots. They were not among Dame Fortune's favorites. They had to fight their way. What they took they took by storm. But, and here is a difference indeed, Johnson came off victorious, Carlyle did not.—*A Birrell, author of "Obiter Dicta"*.

FIFTY years ago no educational establishment as comprehensive in its range as this university existed among the English-speaking nations of the world. The old systems then in vogue were, however, happily more honored in the breach than in the observance. While some boys profited by the scheme, others of equal talent and merit, like Sir Walter Scott, were sent forth dunces. In history they were deficient, and I may say that they were not taught to write Latin and Greek. The Greek they wrote would make an Athenian school-boy laugh. Happily, that day is past, and I am happy to say that I have contributed my share toward giving the death blow to that system of training. The fantastic folly of making every boy write verses in languages he does not understand has had its day. All that has been changed, and honor now is given to every branch of human knowledge.—*Archdeacon Farrar, at Johns Hopkins*.

EARLY marriages, by which we mean, under twenty-three for the woman and under twenty-eight for the man, are the misfortune and calamity of those who contract them. The constitution of the woman is prematurely taxed by early child-bearing, and is broken down before she is thirty-five, the age in which she ought to be in all the glory of matronly beauty, of social and domestic influence and power and enjoyment. But instead of this, in what condition does "thirty-five" find the great majority of American women? Thin, pale, wasted, hollow cheeks, sunken and dark-circled eyes, no strength, no power of endurance, with a complication of peculiar ailments, which, while they baffle medical skill, irritate the body and leave the mind habitually fretful and complaining, or, what is less endurable, throw it into a state of hopeless passivity, of wearisome and destructive indifference to family, children, household, everything!—*Hall's Journal of Health*.

AT the age of twenty-five he was a doctor of philosophy and of medicine; he had made a European reputation through his work on Brazilian fishes; he had studied for two years in Paris under the patronage of Cuvier and Humboldt; and he was installed as professor of natural history at Neuchâtel. The story of his university life at Heidelberg and Munich is of unusual interest. His lodging rooms were transformed into a laboratory, where, surrounded by colleagues who afterwards rose to fame, he dissected, observed, and wrote, while artists, whom with difficulty he paid from his slender stipend, prepared the drawings for his first books. At Munich the room occupied by Agassiz and his intimate friend Alexander Braun, the botanist, was known as "The Little Academy," and there the most energetic spirits among the students met to discuss biological problems and deliver lectures which were attended often by the professors.—*Literary World, on Louis Agassiz*.

IT is twenty years since the assistant master of Harrow published a little volume entitled "The Fall of Man, and Other Sermons." Many clergymen publish good sermons, and all the excellence of these particular discourses afforded no clear prophecy of a time when their author should be not only a most distinguished preacher, but a writer of wide and established fame. His reputation for vivid depiction and rhetorical fervor spread and strengthened, however, as other volumes came from his pen, marked by glowing religious emotion that was too firmly based in experience and knowledge not to be enduring, too sympathetic not to be catholic, and too brilliantly clothed not to attract. He had become known, also, as the author of some works of fiction, and some on philological topics, but there was a sudden leap into commanding public notice when his "Life of Christ" appeared in 1874. It combined, as no English treatment of the subject had ever done, a scholarship sufficient to claim respect, breadth and variety of illustration, picturesqueness of style, considerable dramatic energy, and great moral enthusiasm. The circulation of the book was extended and rapid, and it has taken an assured position among the classics of the subject. Dr. Farrar was not unknown in America before its issue, but since that time his audience here has been, to say the least, as large as his audience at home.—*The Critic, on Canon Farrar*.