

Contemporary Thought.

"THE public are demanding a reform on another point, and that is in regard to the mode of conferring higher degrees, and especially honorary degrees. The terms on which such degrees as Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Science, Doctor of Literature, and the like, should be granted, might be reviewed with profit, and with public approbation. The general sentiment is that they should be given only after a course of study in a special department has been pursued, and an examination held upon it. There is a deep and growing dissatisfaction with the mode in which honorary degrees are conferred at commencements and on other occasions. They are bestowed on no principle that I can discover. The end intended by all academic titles is to call forth, encourage, and reward scholarship. They are prostituted when they are turned to any other ends. It is alleged that they are given at times, merely from personal friendship—I believe that such cases are not numerous in our higher colleges. The avowed principle on which they are commonly bestowed is to secure friends to the college, in ministers of religion, in teachers, in wealthy or influential men. But this end is not always secured. The public are shrewd enough to see through the whole thing and despise the action and the actors. Trustees should see the sneer that gathers on the face of intelligent people when they hear or read of a degree bestowed on some person who has done nothing to deserve it. A decent, respectable minister gets a D.D., and it is supposed that he is thereby pre-engaged to the college, to which he will send all the boys in his congregation. But he is surrounded by a half-dozen ministers who feel that they are quite as good as he is, and, having been overlooked, they are tempted to send their boys elsewhere.—*Dr. McCosh in "N. Y. Independent."*

Is there any reason why the standard of female education should not be raised to that degree which would compare favorably with our best universities? Certainly there is none. The standard of education generally adopted in our female colleges, especially in the South, is not only an injustice to woman, but a disgrace to our country. Its sole purpose seems to be to embellish a few years of the student's life by giving a superficial knowledge of a few things that will probably make her glitter and sparkle on her entrance into society; totally disregarding the great demands of life's stern realities that will be heaped about her in future. To illustrate more clearly the great difference between male and female education of the present day, take an example. A boy and girl begin school at the same time, and are placed in separate institutions; before the boy has laid the solid foundation on which to rest his collegiate course, the girl in her white satin, etc., announces to the world that her career as a student is at an end, that her education is finished, and that she is now ready to "come out" into society. Contact with the world soon shows that the knowledge acquired by her is of a very superficial nature. Her mind has not been so directed as to give it an opportunity for development, but has been dwarfed by idle thoughts of frivolity and fashion; and, as a general thing, has been so much impaired by the

teachings of this false system, that oftentimes she is more concerned about what she wears on her head than what she has in it. A little music, painting, drawing, etc., constitute her chief accomplishments; and even these have made so slight an impression upon her mind that in a short time they vanish and are gone forever.—*South-western Journal of Education.*

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. The lives of such men as Washington, Franklin, Lafayette, Lincoln, and Garfield, afford limitless opportunity to impress lessons of honor, fidelity, and heroism. The study of noble sentiments, significant events, and the results of human experience embalmed in masterpieces of literature, is another means of shaping character. To memorize selections which embody noble Christian sentiment is to plant good seed in the mind and heart. In all such studies the higher strata of thought are awakened, purity of expression and literary taste are cultivated. What is done with manifest pleasure and profit in so many schools, should by popular demand be made a universal practice. But there should be no exclusiveness in moral training. The whole school life should be moral in tone and tendency. Reverence to God and respect for man, frankness and truthfulness, accuracy of speech and courtesy of manner, should be diligently sought by the teacher. The necessity of the times demands that children be fortified against the prevailing national vices. The evil effects of tobacco and the horrors of drunkenness should be heralded loudly and frequently without fear or favor. Their ruinous effects upon life are realistic and startling. It is fear rather than knowledge that is needed, as was the case with those who partook of the forbidden fruit.—*Pennsylvania School Journal.*

ONE of the dangers which follows in the train of commercial prosperity is the habit—soon acquired—of "taking it easy." This manifests itself, among other ways, in a general disinclination to incur physical fatigue, and results in the abandonment of walking for exercise and an excessive use of carriages and street cars, not to say a decided aversion for manual labor. The physical consequences to the next generation must be serious: an effeminate nation soon runs its course. Bearing this in mind every encouragement ought to be given to out-door exercises and games, whether the recreation chosen be riding, walking, cricket, lacrosse, baseball, rowing or sailing. But the greatest care should be taken to guard against the too great development of a combative spirit amongst players. Without some sort of rivalry most games would be unattractive if not useless, but no competition should be allowed to degenerate into a combat. The scenes which have disgraced some lacrosse and baseball grounds in Canada and America of late are altogether unworthy of a civilized community, and bode illy for

the continued popularity of the great American and Canadian games. Instead of meeting to measure their strength and skill in a spirit of generous rivalry, prepared to cheerfully see the best men win, the opposing teams too often come together as personal enemies, and use sticks and bats with serious results. No doubt the betting which accompanies most matches is to some extent responsible for this unfortunate state of affairs; but the evil lies deeper. All boys are said to be cruel and savage at heart, and were it not for careful domestic training and a firm social code the average youth might grow to man's estate and pass to his long account unregenerate. Until the press and the community at large protest against the brutality too often manifested—brutality which is sometimes unnoticed if not condoned in the newspaper reports—respectable admirers of lacrosse and baseball may well look with apprehension upon the future of those games.—*The Week.*

As many English authors are honorably paid by American publishers, so many American authors are honorably paid by English publishers; but, also, as many English authors are robbed by American publishers, so many American authors are robbed by English publishers. The evil is not as great in Great Britain as in the United States, and it is not likely that it ever will be; but it exists here, and it is growing. Only a day or two ago we saw the announcement of an oddly named "Britannia Series of Cheap Popular Books," of which the first eight numbers were all stolen from American authors—and as yet the series only extends to the eighth number. Nor is this the worst. The writer in *The Century* quotes Hawthorne's declaration that the English are much more unscrupulous and dishonest pirates than the Americans, because the Americans content themselves with reprinting exactly title-page and all, while the English edit and alter and adapt, attempting a gipsy-like disfiguring to make the adopted child pass for their own. Two of the instances given are sufficiently comical; one novel of a popular American novelist was amended by the substitution of the Queen's name for the President's wherever it occurred, and of the Thames for the Connecticut; and another appeared with the announcement on the title-page, but in the finest type, that the final chapter was "by another hand"! This practice is, unfortunately, not as infrequent as we should like to think; one of the most notorious instances was the omission of the American author's name from a book of reference for children's use, the book appearing as "edited" by an English scholar whose share of the work was trifling and injudicious. It is to be regretted greatly that British laws do not prevent literary outrages of this kind, and it is to be hoped that they may soon be amended. There is suffering among the authors on both sides of the Atlantic. The power of putting a stop to this suffering at once lies wholly in the hands of the Americans whenever they choose to avail themselves of it. The passage of the brief, simple, and direct Bill introduced into the Senate of the United States by Senator Hawley would stop all future pirating of American authors in Great Britain, and at the same time stop all future pirating of English authors in the United States. For the sake of the promising young literature of the United States we hope that the Bill will become law during the next Congress.—*Saturday Review.*