

Contemporary Thought.

PRESIDENT WHITE, having resigned the Presidency of Cornell University, is said to have in view the writing of a constitutional history of the United States.

"CULTURE is indispensably necessary," says Matthew Arnold, "and culture is reading, but reading with a purpose to guide it, and with system. He does a good work who does anything to help this; indeed, it is the one essential service now to be rendered to education."

A MAN who has no time to read the daily papers may as well say he has no time for business. Reading men rule the world and teachers are no exceptions to this general rule. The progressive teachers are the reading teachers. The successful teachers are the progressive teachers, and these are they who receive the appointments and promotions.—*Indianapolis Educational Weekly*.

"NOTHING tends to check the development of the mind and character of the young so much as what used to be called 'setting down.' Unless people are preposterously conceited, or intolerably forward, snubbing is a bad regimen. You might as well think to rear flowers in frost, as to educate people successfully on reproof and constant criticism. Judicious flattery is one of the necessities of life; as necessary as air, food, or water."—*London Truth*.

ONE of the most successful teachers of the country states as the essentials of the best teaching, the following: (1) A high order of personal character and an aptitude for the work; (2) accurate knowledge of the nature of the child to be trained; (3) a thorough acquaintance with the subject to be taught; (4) a knowledge of method based on psychology on the one hand, and the logic of the sciences on the other; acquired skill in actually organizing, governing and teaching children. This statement of the essential emphasizes one that too often is overlooked, viz.: that a method must be based on the logic of the science with which it is concerned. This is "the method of the subject," and is the co-ordinate of the "Law in the mind."—*School Education*.

THE chief interest pertaining to the history of the Michigan University lies in its dependence upon the State, in which respect it is, of course, typical of a large number of Western institutions of the same class. On the whole, the relation, here as in Wisconsin, has been such as to confirm the wisdom of these State foundations. The temptation on the part of the body which sustains, to interfere with the working of the university is constant, but the courts have kept this in check to some extent, as in the case of the Legislature's endeavor to force homeopathic professors upon the medical school. In the end, the Legislature founded a special college for this school, and then, of course, the Regents had no objection to supplying it with professors. An irregularity in the financial conduct of the Laboratory led to a legislative "investigation," and that to the importation of politics into the controversy. Still, the university has kept pretty clear of entanglements. It is perhaps worth noting that chapel exercises were compulsory from the start, and twice a day. Afternoon prayers were given up when the dormi-

tory system was abandoned. For a dozen years there has been no compulsory attendance at the chapel. Harvard, therefore, so far from setting an evil example of innovation, as Dr. Peabody fears she might, will be at least half a generation behind Michigan.—*The Nation*.

It is a very generally expressed opinion, that any person can become an acceptable teacher. A more mistaken idea never found lodgment in the mind of man. No other vocation demands such peculiar, ingenerate qualifications and requirements to render the teacher's work satisfactory. There are numerous pursuits and various employments that can profitably occupy the time, and will well remunerate mankind in this world of material interest, of manual labor, and of intellectual efforts. But let no one adopt the occupation, or long continue in so important a calling as that of a teacher, unless irresistibly drawn to the vocation; unless with his whole being he can throw himself into an arena which calls forth his unflagging energy, his most earnest endeavors to stimulate and uplift, direct and guide, the mind and soul of the young committed to his trust. Imbued with such a spirit, governed by principle, and constantly manifesting in full force those peculiar characteristics in manners and personal influence that win, encourage, and hold in willing obedience all mental efforts, the teacher will not fail to inspire the young student with that energy and ambition to reach the goal for which he is striving. Such a teacher will be rewarded by the conviction that his labors will bring forth fruit for the harvest, and that he will not have lived in vain, if he has been the means of directing and developing the lives of men whose work shall live after them, whose influence becomes limitless, and goes down to generations in the ages yet to come.—*N. E. Journal of Education*.

THOMAS ARNOLD believed in boys—not that they were all good nor that they were all bad. He accepted them as they were, full of boyish traits, distorted, many of them, by wrong treatment, and sought to train them. He trusted them as he saw they could be trusted and they learned to hate deception. If they came to him irreverent, with low aspiration and untrained wills, he set about cultivating these powers. With a profound faith in the power of human influence he went to work among his boys, coming into the closest personal relation with each of them. He taught them formally, placed before them high ideals of character, and kept in continual activity those powers which he had under training. Arnold demonstrated with wonderful force the susceptibility of child life to be molded and the boundless resources of one human being in influencing another. He saw that in getting his boys into the proper spirit for their work in Rugby he was but anticipating their needs when they should leave school and become men. The belief that there are forces that win even in the most difficult cases should be the last to leave the teacher. Pervading and presiding over every faculty of his being should be an unshaken faith that the realm of possible things in his work is one almost infinitely broad. The world's great teachers have been filled with this faith. He who would do much must believe that much can be done. The measure of faith, aspiration and preparation is the measure of power. What our schools may be depends mainly upon what we as teachers are willing to be.—*Ohio Educational Monthly*.

IN Germany, as in America, the amount of salary depends upon circumstances: such as sex, amount of experience, character of the position, locality, etc. A German teacher begins with a salary of from two to four hundred dollars per annum, and receives an increase from time to time until it amounts to from five to eight hundred dollars for ordinary teachers, and from seven to twelve hundred dollars for principals and directors. But few reach a salary of twelve hundred dollars. Perhaps one-tenth of the teachers are females, who receive about seventy-five per cent as much as the male teachers in corresponding places, but who seldom get a place paying four hundred dollars. Women are employed in the five lower classes in girls' schools, and in the two lower classes in boys' schools, in some parts of Germany, but this is by no means general. They are always employed to give *Handarbeit* lessons (knitting, sewing, fancy work, etc.) to girls. In Prussia the tendency is to increase the number of female teachers, and many young ladies are fitting themselves to meet the rigid examinations of the government. This increase is looked upon with some coldness by the male teachers as an innovation, and because there are thousands of young men who stand ready to enter the lists as teachers, should there be openings to warrant it. But there are thousands of young women too, and why should the door to this vocation, for which they are so eminently fitted by nature, be closed to them? These times are pregnant with universal advancement, and one of the surest indications of it is the increased respect accorded to woman.—*The Practical Teacher*.

IT is strongly questionable whether it is an un-mixed good to substitute the kindergarten's skill for the mother's care, and whether the kindergarten does not excite in the children an abnormal appetite for excitement and change. The so-called "Quincy System" has no doubt drawn attention to the value of cultivating thought and expression, of using the pupil's curiosity, and of allowing the teacher ample freedom. It is but an expression of principles and methods which have long been received and acted upon. It has been a little louder and more pretentious than other statements of the same principles and methods, and that its truth should be mixed with error would naturally be expected from a system that needs for its advocacy the exaggeration of its own merit to the caricature of other systems. Curiosity is a strong trait and may be used advantageously. The pupil should be kept interested, and study should not be continued to the point of disgust. The teacher's powers should be untrammelled and she should feel her responsibility. It is well to prevent ironclad systems from destroying common sense. It is well to keep the child under loving discipline rather than under despotic government. It is well to know and respect the natural tastes of the child. All these are well. But it is also well to beware that idle curiosity does not take the place of thoughtful inquiry; that the disposition to flit from thing to thing with every passing whim does not take the place of the steady pursuit of one subject. We cannot—we would not take away from the business of learning all the labor and drudgery, all the toil and tears. One of the chief factors in the formation of character is the power of long, continued and intense application.—*Ex.*