The Educational Weekly.

THE EDUCATIONAL WEEKLY.

THE UNION OF

The Michigan Teacher, Michigan.
The Illinois Schoolmaster, Illinois.
The Nebraska Teacher, Nebraska.
The School, Michigan.
Home and School, Kentucky.
The School Reporter, Indiana.

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CHICAGO, THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 1877.

Editorial.

PRESIDENT ROBINSON, of Brown University, is credited with the opinion that "we can better afford to have a wooden head over a college than over a primary school." He further adds that "men go to college and utterly break down because their early education was not properly attended to." "It has seemed to me," he continues, "that one grand error in our education is the mistaken idea about elementary training." Again, Ex-President Eliot of Trinity College, in a recent lecture on "Educational Service Reform," condemns the practice of placing incompetent teachers in charge of the elementary classes.

That "enlightened educator," be he college president, superintendent, or district clerk, who has not discovered that incompetent elementary teachers are the cheapest, surest, and best means for undermining the entire educational fabric, is a very poor observer of educational phenomena. The foundation being weak, the superstructure must be weak. The lower or elementary schools being poor, there is no proper basis for the high school or college. The success of higher education is conditioned upon the thoroughness of lower education. We must not expect to construct a building from the top downward. The "men who go to college and utterly break down because their early education was not properly attended to," are nothing but overgrown boys. They cannot fail to subject to the law of cause and effect. If the college examinations for admission were what they should be, thorough tests of early or elementary education, such "men" would be sent back to their homes and to the fostering care of the elementary schools. Then the elementary schools would be stimulated to do more thorough work.

They would employ better teachers. Better foundations would be laid. The basis of collegiate education and the basis of good citizenship would at the same time be greatly improved. The higher institutions would thus exert that elevating influence upon the lower schools which in theory they are designed to exert. The Weekly rejoices that the presidents and even the ex-presidents of some of the colleges begin to see the point, and to urge forward an "Educational Service Reform," the true basis of all reform. But it is a curious coincidence that while President Robinson of Brown wants better elementary teachers, his namesake, Governor Robinson of New York, wants to destroy the very agencies by which such teachers are produced. We vote for President Robinson, a true reformer, as against Governor Robinson, a spurious specimen.

The President of the United States has given a clear and explicit expression of his views upon two topics of the highest interest to the educators of the country. It now remains to be seen whether the educators will respond to these views by giving a hearty support to the practical measures to be devised in furtherance thereof. Indeed, it remains to be seen whether the measures themselves, being admittedly educational, our educational men will apply themselves to the work of devising, or aiding to devise, such plans as seem to be the most wisely adapted to accomplish those two objects, which, we feel assured, are the heart's desire of every truly thoughtful and patriotic citizen. We refer, of course, to the problem of education in the South, and of a reform in the civil service. Upon both of these themes President Hayes has spoken clearly, decidedly, nobly. No one who reads his words, who recalls his history, and who remembers his unpartisan and manly bearing during the long and exciting conflict now so happily ended, can question the honesty of his motives or the sincerity of his purpose as proclaimed in the inaugural address.

In respect to education in the South, the President believes, as every thoughtful man believes, that the basis of all prosperity there as elsewhere, lies in the improvement of the intellectual and moral condition of the people; that universal suffrage should rest upon universal education, and that, to this end, liberal and permanent provision should be made for the support of free schools by state governments, supplemented, if need be, by legitimate aid from the national authority. That this supplemental aid is indispensable, we think admits of no doubt. Facts have heretofore been adduced in these columns to show that the South is not only impoverished, and hence not in a condition to assume, unaided, the pecuniary burden of building up and supporting a comprehensive system of schools, but that there is in that section a wide-spread hostility to popular education among the more influential classes. Hence, if the Southern States are left to their own option in this matter, if no special inducements are offered in the form of material aid and moral support, generations may pass away before the great work so essential to their repose and prosperity can be consummated. Undoubtedly, much of the opposition to general education results from its cost and the taxation necessary for the support of schools, while a portion of it arises from political motives and the prejudices of caste and race that still survive the wreck of the "peculiar institution."
It is believed, however, that a wise and statesmanlike policy of conciliation, conjoined with such material aid as is entirely legitimate and proper for the national government to render, will, to a great extent, dissipate these prejudices, and dispose a majority of the people to the support of a policy so manifestly for the interest of all classes. The character of the presidential utterances is such as to afford ground for the belief that the policy of the new administration will be eminently conciliatory, and that all reasonable efforts will be made to cultivate a spirit of harmony and fraternity among the people of all sections. Should these efforts prove successful, the people of the Southern States will be more disposed than heretofore to consider the real causes that tend to political repose and material prosperity, and will be the more ready to second such efforts as may be made to render those causes efficient. In due time the opposition heretofore manifested to a free school system will give place to a feeling of acquiescence, and a disposition to encourage an agency so beneficial in its influence upon the public welfare.

This disposition will be greatly assisted by such legitimate aid as the national authority may very properly grant. On the broad principle now quite universally accepted, that the public lands of the country should educate the children of the state, it may be affirmed that the public lands of the country should be so disposed of as to exterminate the illiteracy and promote the intelligence and security of the country. In view of recent events so threatening to the national peace and prosperity, no adequate excuse can be offered for longer neglecting this vital measure. Millions of acres have been bestowed upon soulless railway corporations, for purely speculative purposes. Other millions have been donated to higher institutions for the education of the few. Still other vast tracts have been made over to certain states for the support of common schools therein. There can hence be no valid objection to the final dedication of all that remains to the paramount object of promoting universal education, and the preparation of the teeming millions of the coming generations for the duties and responsibilities of citizenship. This is a measure that ought not to be any longer delayed. Time flies and with each year thousands of our youth pass beyond the school age and are enlisted in the ranks of that vast army of illiterates which are the burden and the disgrace of the republic.

What can the educators of the country do to facilitate the speedy establishment of free schools in all the destitute places of the South? We answer that through petitions, addressed to Congress, through correspondence with members of that body, through the agitation of the subject in the public press, in their own journals, in their conventions and associations, they may inaugurate a movement which will be speedily effective. There are not less than two hundred and fifty thousand teachers in this country. There are not less than the same number of school officers of the different grades. With any concert of action, such a body of men and women devoted to the cause they serve would be invincible in any wise effort to extend the blessings of education to our remotest borders, and to redeem our waste places from the curse of ignorance that rests upon them. One of the particular objects to which our efforts should first be directed, we think, is the passage of the act, pending in Congress, setting apart the proceeds of the sales of the remaining public lands to the education of the people, and the distribution of the income thereof among the several states on the basis of the illiteracy therein. This bill has among its advocates the most able and patriotic members of both houses of Congress. But they need the support of a public sentiment outside of Congress. The true friends of education should see that this support is not wanting. They have abundant time from the present until the opening of Congress in December, to agitate the subject. The National Educational Association, and the American Institute of Instruction, our two representative educational bodies, will hold their annual meetings in the interim. Several state and a large number of local associations, institutes, and the like, will have an opportunity of discussing and taking definite action upon the two subjects to which the inaugural has given such prominence.

The Weekly takes this occasion to urge that education in the South, the passage of the Public Lands bill referred to, and Civil Service Reform be made prominent topics in the educational discussions of the year at all of these meetings, both national and local. Let resolutions be adopted and memorials circulated in behalf of these all-important measures, care being taken that all such expressions of sentiment find their way to the National Congress. We suggest that frequent reference to them by the educational journals will lead to their agitation in the daily press, and assist in keeping them before the people, until they shall receive that attention which the interests of the country demand. If the teachers and school officers of this country expect their wishes to be recognized, they must assert themselves. They must show that they have opinions worthy of respect, and they must not be backward in giving expression to them. During the next four years the better elements in our American society will have an unparalleled opportunity to assert themselves. If patriots will step to the front, plant their feet upon the eternal rock of justice and truth, and stand there, demagogues and partisans will take back seats; true statesmanship will bring forth its fruits for the healing of the national wounds; peace, unity, and prosperity will abound throughout all our borders. The educators of the nation above all other classes, should become the firm friends and allies of its purest and noblest statesmen. It is the business of the educator to lead the children; it is the business of the statesman to lead the people. The work of the statesman begins where that of the educator too often terminates; for he who is worthy to guide the footsteps of trustful childhood into the ways of a noble manhood thus proves himself fitted to become a leader of that manhood. If American educators will rise to an adequate conception of their opportunities they will have little occasion to lament a lack either of appreciation or influence.

The editor of the Faribault, Minnesota, Republican, in a recent issue of his paper, has given a pretty searching review of the Text-Book Bill passed at the last session of the Legislature of that state. The editor, who was himself a member of the Legislature, exposes the delusiveness of the scheme in a tolerably effective and convincing manner. He thinks that if the Governor had vetoed the bill, he would, in the end, have commended himself much more strongly to the intelligent judgment of the people of the state, than in extinguishing the mill-tax bill for the support of schools. We venture the prediction that the people of Minnesota will find out the quality of their reform legislation on the school book question, to more than their heart's content before they get through that fifteen year contract with Messrs. Donnelly and Company. The history of the attempted Wisconsin scheme will be edifying literature for Minnesota readers.
we would suggest that they make early application for extra copies. In the mean time, outside barbarians will wait with bated breath for the forthcoming monopoly text-books that will sweep all past achievements in that line from the educational boards!

The contest over the appropriations for the state normal schools in the New York Legislature is likely to terminate as all such contests do usually, in a complete triumph of the schools. The bill has passed the Assembly by a vote of 16 to 99. We are assured on the best authority that it will pass the Senate without doubt. The total amount appropriated by the bill is $144,000, or $18,000 for the current expenses of each school. The issue seems to have been made to a considerable extent upon the academic departments. We have the information that these departments will be eliminated by legislative enactment, the model or practice schools being limited to an average attendance of 250. Hence, the schools will become what all normal schools should become, exclusively professional institutions, with no entangling alliances and no aims not in entire harmony with the true purposes of such agencies. Reformers Robinson and Ruggles have thus met with a disgraceful defeat, and can turn their attention to some more worthy object of their statesman-like ambition. A vote of 16 to 99 is tolerably conclusive.

A PLEA FOR PERMANENCY.

"CIVIL Service reform" is supposed to mean, among other things, that a competent and worthy public officer shall feel some degree of assurance that his place will be permanent while he continues faithful. In this respect a teaching service reform is sorely needed. Of the 59,000, or more, now teaching within the states over which this journal has its chief circulation, it would be extravagant to say that over 1,000 have any assurance that their tenure of service will extend beyond the close of the current year. Many of them may indeed expect that it will; but nearly all are without any satisfactory guaranty that, however successful their work, they may not be superseded at the beginning of another school year. Indeed, the case is far worse than this. A great majority of the teachers of our public schools will have no definite knowledge as to whether their services will be desired in the same place next year or not, till the summer vacation is well nigh past. To say that this state of things is scandalous, and often cruel, is to speak mildly of it. Why should not teachers of established character be given definitely to understand that their position is permanent unless made otherwise for cause? Why should such teachers be hired by the year? The practice is abominable. Why should boards who expect to retain teachers in their places the next year so often defer saying so to such teachers until near the close of the vacation? This practice is infamous. Any one who is familiar with our mid-summer convocations of teachers, knows that the rule is that teachers in our lower grades are painfully uncertain as to the future. "I think perhaps I shall stay; but I have not been informed by the board, as yet," is a common reply. Do, Gentlemen of our Boards of Education, if you must continue the stupid practice of hiring your teachers by the year, be so merciful as not to suspend them through the summer, for the sheer amusement of seeing them struggle or struggle. At least let every teacher in your employ now, whom you wish to retain another year, know the fact three months before the close of the current year. This is simple decency—it isn't justice. Justice cannot be done in the premises until it comes to be the rule that such teachers hold their places, as do the teachers in our colleges, so long as the arrangement is satisfactory to both parties; and in case either desires the relation to cease that a reasonable notice to the other party be required.

LOOK TO THE SCHOOLS.

We have been reading with thoughtful, and even painful, interest, the paper on "Our Common School Education," read by President Hinsdale, of Hiram College, Ohio, before the Northeastern Ohio Teachers' Association, last December. There is not the slightest doubt that the paper gives expression to a wide-spread notion that, with all our boasted improvements in methods of organization and teaching, we are failing to develop intellect and character as well as did our predecessors of fifty or a hundred years ago. Nor is this impression confined to parents who happen to have dull children in the schools, or to constitutional croakers. President Hinsdale quotes the sentiment from Dr. Peabody, of Harvard, and from visitors and officers of West Point, the judgment in the latter case being based on the West Point examinations. And, indeed, the opinion is well known to be current in circles of intelligent, practical life. It finds frequent expression, not only in private conversation, but in our public lectures and in the better sort of our public prints. The opinion of Prof. Church as to the deterioration in the essential elements of scholarship is emphatically endorsed by General W. T. Sherman. Now all this does not settle the matter in our own mind. More facts are needed in order to determine the case, but there is reason why, as teachers, we should give heed to the criticism, for it is becoming painfully common among outside observers. Two of the causes alleged are the crowding of too many things into our schools, and an excess of simplification in our methods of teaching.

THE ACQUISITION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES.

O. S. WESTCOTT, Chicago.

The usual method of the schools seems not to be precisely the grammar first and language afterwards, of the ancient language method, but it is so modeled on this plan as scarcely to escape its most glaring defects. The so-called Ollendorff plan is a hybrid of the grammar plan and a consecution of dish-water sentences such as no human being would ever be called upon to enunciate. Years of study with this plan have failed to familiarize one with a language. Translation is thereafter possible, but only such a translation as is fitly characterized by the German scholar as an Eselsbrücke, a veritable pont asinorum. Marcel endeavored to reform this mode, and with appreciable success. He seems, however, to have started with a false theory, and subsequently to have bent all his energies to working out this theory, regardless of aught else. His false theory I mean his notion as to the order of work in acquiring language. This he formulates as follows:

1. The art of Reading.
2. The art of Hearing.
3. The art of Speaking.
4. The art of Writing.

In accordance with this notion, he first places in the hands of a student a book written in two languages, opposite pages containing the same thoughts invested in the two different garbs, with the one of which the student is fairly familiar. He is directed to read carefully the language he understands. It is claimed that by this process one may very soon acquire a reading knowledge of a modern language. After the eye has thus been more or less thoroughly trained, the living teacher is introduced and the ear is next familiarized with the sounds of the language. Then follow exercises in speaking, and lastly exercises in writing. This order of presentation seems at once unnatural, unphilosophical, and impractical. Its impracticalness may readily be seen by reference to the results obtained in the use of interlinear translations which accomplish so little for the student so far as familiarizing him with a new language is con-
cerned. The difficulties seem to be well nigh insuperable. In Marcel's own so-called "Rational Method for Learning French," occur some shameful mistranslations which are sure to mislead the student, and always into a path from which he unfortunately will rarely or never emerge. Or, when the idea is correctly grasped, it may be couched in such a foreign form or idiom as to be almost hideous. This is quite likely to be the case where foreigners have such an overwhelming confidence in their abilities as to volunteer to teach us our own English, or claim to write it so well that no criticism of an English scholar is needed for its improvement. Instance Marcel himself when he says: "It might happen also that the ear might be led astray by the orthography of some words from which differs entirely their pronunciation," or when he tells us of "idiotism" for "idiotic" or when, to the entire falsification of his own French, he gives us this mystifying sentence: "While exercising them in one branch, he examines them in another, as pronunciation will only suggest the sense, inasmuch as it will recall to their memory a text previously known to them," instead of saying as he should, "for pronunciation will suggest the sense to them only so far as it shall recall to them a text previously known."

That this order of presentation is farther both unnatural and unphilosophical is plainly evident if we consider for a moment how a child acquires language. He surely hears first, speaks second, ready third, writer last. Without fear of contradiction, then, this is claimed to be the natural order of instruction.

Now, since a child learns language by hearing, the ear has first to be cultivated, and it has been well said that he learns "correctly or incorrectly, "as in proportion to his power of observation."

2d. In proportion to the pliability of his organs of speech.

3d. In proportion to the correctness of the language used by his parents and others with whom he comes into frequent contact.

4th. In proportion to the bias in favor of his native tongue which prompts him to hear wrong, or imitate wrong, or both.

"This bias causes the adult to translate word for word." In fact, translators are usually after words rather than ideas. How many students, after their first, or second, or possibly third reading of one of Cicero's orations, can sit down and give an intelligent abstract of the speech, noting the strong or weak points in the argument, the sophistry, the flatness, the irrelevant matter, etc.?

"This forgetfulness of ideas, caused by an error of the method," says a modern teacher, "puts on the school programme the most miserable textbooks. This defect causes books to be given to the pupils to read, which are chosen without due discrimination."

Why should Caesar with his "oratio obliqua," and Virgil with his heathenish gods, be so much more desirable for use as school textbooks than the Christian hymns of the middle ages? Is there any likelihood that the New York house which has issued a book of Latin hymns and a portion of the Greek text of Eusebius will get back its outlay for the first editions in a decade of years? Why should the student be conducted "for educational purposes through a region from which it is well-nigh impossible to come forth with an unsoiled mind?" You might just as well shut him up for ten years in a coal mine, in order to qualify him for discussing the properties of light and shade, as cause him to wade through the mire of a heathen mythology in order to fit him for the interpretation of the oracles of God.

This seeming digression has been thoroughly natural, but let us return.

Why should the proposed change be thought unreasonable? Are not teachers of English generally beginning to recognize the necessity of instruction in language as a thing antecedent and more thoroughly apart from instruction in grammar? Why then should not the same wave of progress be allowed to submerge the still extant fogisms in the matter of instruction in other living languages? "The works of the masters have preceded grammars. The epoch which one calls in literature the epoch of grammarians is already an epoch of decadence, because the grammarians soon forget the masters and know only the grammarians whom they study and copy."

How true is this of too many brethren of our profession, who air their ignorance of law and knowledge of grammar in the pages of the New England Journal of Education, or Hankle's Notes and Queries, and who are distressed in soul because all the beautiful idioms of our glorious language cannot be made rigidly to conform to Clark, or Greene, or Howland, or Boltwood.

Says Montaigne: "I learned Latin without a book, without a grammar or rules, and I spoke it as well as my teacher."

If this statement referred to such a speaking knowledge of Latin as we teachers of the latter half of the nineteenth century possess, Montaigne would doubtless not be considered boasting, but in Montaigne's time Latin was, to a limited extent, used "as a medium of communication, and his success may surely indicate what is practicable in the study of languages not yet classified as dead, when so much may be done with the now rarely spoken Latin of the ancient world.

The ear then must be first trained. It must hear the language which is to be learned. And to prevent all possible confusion it must hear nothing else. The vernacular must be thoroughly banished from the class room—this is imperative. In no other way will the pupil so quickly acquire confidence. If one would learn to swim, he must go into the water. It will by no means suffice to throw him from the water and talk wisely of the various modes of swimming, or even to make him familiar with the names of a wash-stand. These matters admit of no compromise. Would you swim? Go into the water. Would you learn to talk a foreign language? Talk it.

This, moreover, is not by any means so foolish as it may at first sight appear. After the first ten minutes of embarrassment, everything is easy. And the interest is unfailing. It is wonderful how the members of a class will be every one on the gui vive for three hours without cessation when the same individuals would be annoyed beyond expression if compelled to attend fifteen minutes uninterruptedly to almost any other school duty. The three hours recitations pass away and no student realizes the flight of time.

After some six or eight, or perhaps fewer conversations, the teacher places in the pupil's hand a book with some story containing only such words as have been previously used in conversation. Reading is at once only a relaxation from conversation. After reading, the conversation is renewed, and so by a change of occupation the mind is constantly fresh and vigorous while the eye and ear are now both being subjected to the training process, the ear always being allowed the precedence in point of time.

Do you say this is incredible? I can bring abundant witnesses to show that I have not stated the case sufficiently strong. By this method properly carried out, an average child twelve or fourteen years old can be so instructed in one year of forty weeks as to communicate his ideas on any subject with no difficulty whatever. I have seen within the past week a young lady in one hour so instructed in German as to thoroughly understand a dozen lines or so when read to her, and no information of any kind was communicated except in German or by the universal language of gesture. Within the same time I saw the same thing attempted with another young lady who had studied German three years in school, and the time consumed in the latter case was at least one half what was occupied in the former. Does such a fact as this call for reform in methods? Teachers, shall we not look to it? Professors Whitney, Thacher, and Hadley, of Yale, all endorsed such a plan as the one proposed, by placing their sons in a school established for the purpose, and when at the end of the school year a pic-nic was held in the woods with the condition that English was not to be used as a medium of communication, it was as thoroughly enjoyable as need be. Nay, more, when one of the pupils, on his return home, was questioned by his mother as to his day's frolic, he stammered so as to be quite unintelligible until, after being reprimanded by his mother for his incoherency, he said: "Mother, if you will let me talk in German I will tell you all." This he proceeded to do without hesitation or difficulty.

As pupils become somewhat advanced, the teacher reads to them some interesting story, after which some one is required to reproduce it. By this means the interest and attention of the pupils are ever kept active, the perceptions are quickened, the memory improved, and the mind subjected to a healthy pressure which induces a broad rather than a spiralling growth. But I am too wearisome. I have prepared the present paper hoping that it will influence any of the teachers of modern languages to try the natural method. If I shall have induced any thought among any such teachers, I shall have accomplished my design and am content.

CONCERNING SPONGES.

THOMAS EDWARDS, Irving Park, Illinois.

THE lower forms of animal and plant life are very similar. Just where the separating line can be drawn, so that on the one side will be all animal characteristics and on the other all vegetable, is not yet definitely settled. In endeavoring to draw this line, naturalists have met with forms of life that almost puzzled them to decide on which side they naturally belong. The great difficulty was contended with, the microscopic size of these organisms. Frequently have naturalists with the assistance of a powerful lens, found themselves doubting whether, according to the characteristics observable, the or-
ganism is animal-like or plant-like. This difficulty some have endeavored to
surmount, by ascertaining if the general resemblance is greater to beings of a
distinctly animal character than to those of strongly marked vegetable charac-
teristics. If the resemblance preponderates in favor of the animal, the organ-
ism receives a place in the animal kingdom. If the contrary, it is placed in
the vegetable kingdom. These general resemblances are determined from
the structure of the being, and not from the evidence given of voluntary move-
ment and sensibility.

Among the lower forms of life are sponges. Like plants, they present only
the lower degrees of spontaneous movement and sensibility. Their entire
organization is of the most extreme simplicity, and is adapted to perform only
the most simple functions. While in some respects sponges exhibit the
vegetable characteristics, the work of defining to which form of life they really belong is necessarily difficult. For a long time the
naturalist was in doubt whether to call them plants or animals. Later in-
vestigations, however, have settled the question beyond controversy. They
no longer claim the attention of the botanist. The zoologist now has
the sponge within his domain.

Since sponges are regarded as animals, the question arises, to what division
of the animal kingdom do they belong? This is yet an unsettled question
among scientists. One author places them in the class Porifera, of the branch
Radiata. Another thinks they should be assigned a place in the lowest scale
but does not state what that is. In Tenney’s “Elements of Zoology” sponges
form the division Spongida in the sub-kingdom Protozoa. Although a num-
er of authors and scientists regard them as Protozoa, many others consider
them as having closer analogies to the Radiata. Thus it will be seen
that what rank they should occupy in the animal kingdom remains to be
determined.

The sponge of commerce is the skeleton of the being. This is formed by
siliceous secretions. In the living sponge the fibrous network is clothed, within
and without, by an exceedingly soft and filmy substance. It is in this gel-
atinous matter that the vital endowments exist. These are manifested by a slow
and regular growth and by a constant circulation of fluid within the mass.
When the sponge is removed from the water, this matter drains off and no trace
of it is detected in the sponge we use. Let us not forget that the sponge we
find so useful contained, once, a being that was created for the use of man by
an All-wise and Provident Creator.

TEACHER AND PUPIL.

Superintendent B. B. Snow, Auburn, New York.

ONE of the most difficult things for the teacher to learn is, that he knows
more than his pupils. Their mutual relation of course implies this
superiority of knowledge, and therefore assume it as a matter of course; but
the significance of the fact in all its bearings is only fully realized after years
of experience. The truth is, we have been gradually and imperceptibly grow-
ing away from “childish things,”—away from the mental condition of the pupil, until we have attained a plane of thought which seems in niswe con-
ected with the feeble beginnings of our earlier school experience, even if we
may trace a connection back to our maturer development. The steps by which
we ascended are invisible, or at most faintly discernible in the distant past. How
many of us, for instance, can recall the time when we first comprehended th
it will do for the

TEACHERS have been about the only persons who have been blessed with
everlasting examinations, but they are to have some company, for all physi-
cians in Texas, under the new law, are required to appear before the county
board, and pass an examination. The only difference between them and
chirurges is, that one examination is considered sufficient for a doctor, while
another is not enough for a teacher. They have been examined so many
times, they are accustomed to it, it has no dread. We know a young lady of
great timidity, who has presented herself at seven consecutive examinations,
and each time has passed, and now she is patiently waiting for the eight. Th
educational department has not yet been able, after all these successive
examinations, to ascertain whether she is competent to teach or not. Dear
patient teachers. One examination for the doctors is enough, but no amount
of it will do for the teacher.—National Teacher’s Monthly.
Musical Department.

Editor, W. L. Smith, East Saginaw, Michigan.

(Musical exchanges, looks for notice, correspondence, queries, etc. touching upon musical topics, should be sent to the editor of this department.)

If music is worthy of any attention in school, it is worthy of being made a regular exercise, in which all should be required to take part, and a good teacher will rarely fail in securing the hearty participation of nearly every one. Prof. Loomis says: "Many go through the world songless, because, having been unsuccessful in their first attempt, they have been made to believe that they could not learn to sing. Their great-grandfather was no singer, and their grandmother could not sing, and their parents are hot singers, and therefore song has become one of the lost arts to them." We would not insist that every one can learn to sing, for, with Dr. Holmes, we bewail the fact that there are — "those who never sing." But most all their music is in their heads. But we would not discouraging the unmusical pupil, for many such have learned to sing, and to sing well, who at first were unable to control their voices in the least. Experience has proved that, when commenced in early childhood, as great a proportion may be taught to sing as can learn to speak well. But if we, occasionally, do find such as can never sing, why not have them learn the principles of music, which may be applied to the playing upon some kind of instrument? Then, by all means, let every one participate in the study of music.

-Do not give all the time you have for music in each day's exercises at once, but divide it up, and interperse it at various intervals, between recitations. In this way the music lesson does not assume the form of a "task," but becomes a recreation. The voices do not become tired, causing some of the pupils to become listless, and, often, ultimately resulting in their losing all interest in singing. After a short interval of three or four minutes having been thus devoted to this exercise, the pupils will return to their other lessons with renewed energies of thought, and instead of time having been lost, it is gained.

- The advances which the cause of music has been making within the last few years, command the earnest admiration of every wide-awake man or woman in our land. But more might have been accomplished had there been a greater discrimination made between competent and incompetent teachers, in securing private instruction. Owing to a lack of discernment, the people have been led into giving their patronage, too often, to a class of musical charlatans who make great pretensions, but seldom give their pupils any lasting benefit. The first thing necessary to a knowledge of music is to acquire the ability to read, and not to fritter away time and money in trying to become "masters," whose limitation comprises the solution of a biquadratic, such as only in special cases does the elimination result in a quadratic. Hence as should be expected, the elimination of $x$ from the equations, $x^2 + y = a$, and $x^2 + x = b$, gives $y^2 - 2by + b^2 - a = 0$, a biquadratic of general form and lacking only a term in $y^2$ to be a complete biquadratic. Of such an equation there is no solution by means of quadratics. The equations $x^2 + y = 11$, and $x^2 + x = 7$, give $y^2 - 14y^2 + 38 = 0$, a quadratic solved by the ordinary method of examining numerical higher equations for integral roots. Thus these roots being factors of 38, if $y$ has a integral value it is $2$, or $19$. Evaluating for $y = 2$, we find that this is a root. Hence we may write $(y - 2)^2 + y^2 + 10y - 19 = 0$. This gives $y^2 - 2y + 4 = 0$, and $y^2 + 2y - 10y - 19 = 0$, which comes out as $x$ but there still remains the solution of the complete cubic $x^3 + 2x^2 - 10y - 19 = 0$, in order to find the other three values of $y$. This equation has no integral root, since neither $+1$, nor $-19$ satisfies it. But as it has at least one real root, we can proceed to find its approximate value by Horner's or some other method.

Practical Hints and Exercises.

Editor, Mrs. Kate B. Ford, Kalamazoo, Mich.

STUDENTS OF NATURE.

This is just the time of year when pupils of all ages need to be led into the study of the natural world around them. The earliest bird should be noticed; its form and color described; its song discussed; and every member of a school should be set to watch its movements whenever an opportunity presents itself. During the present month the earliest spring flowers may be found in many of the Northern states. Children ought to know what kind of places they are most apt to be gathered from, what the habits of the plants are, and their names. The birds of our trees and shrubs, too, form a most interesting field of investigation. As they swell and by and by become into leaf-clusters, the observing student will grow more and more alive to the work he has before him. Plant in a box some common seeds such as cucumber, morning glory, pumpkin, or radish seeds, and watch them "come up." Peas, beans, or kernels of corn begin growing easily in a tumbler of soft water. A turnip, potato, onion, or any similar garden vegetable, will send out green and growing branches with very little coaxing. That some plants commence growth with one seed-leaf, and others with more, will speedily be learned. The use of the starch stored up in the cabbage, potato, turnip, and beet, will need little explanation. Why the pumpkin seed is so thick and the first seeds so clumsy will be seen at once. Better than any of above lessons, however, is the interest awakened in all living growing things by the study of the few.

PERHAPS most teachers of mathematics in the country have had the problem, "To find the values of $x$ and $y$ in the equations $x^2 + y = a$, and $y^2 + x = b$," propounded to them. Sometimes it is given $y^2 + y = 11$, and $x^2 + x = 7$. The writer expects to get a letter about once a month asking for a solution of one or the other form. What is meant is a solution by means of quadratics. Often it is said, "the problem looks very simple." This means I suppose, that it looks as if it could be readily reduced to the solution of a quadratic. The difficulty is with the eyes that look. The fact is it should not look as though it could be so reduced— the presumption should be the other way. The equations are both quadratics, and, in general, the solution of a simultaneous quadratics requires the solution of a biquadratic; while only in special cases does the elimination result in a quadratic. Hence as should be expected, the elimination of $x$ from the equations, $x^2 + y = a$, and $y^2 + x = b$, gives $y^2 - 2by + b^2 - a =$, a biquadratic of general form and lacking only a term in $y^2$ to be a complete biquadratic. Of such an equation there is no solution by means of quadratics. The equations $x^2 + y = 11$, and $x^2 + x = 7$, give $y^2 - 14y^2 + 38 = 0$, a quadratic solved by the ordinary method of examining numerical higher equations for integral roots. Thus these roots being factors of 38, if $y$ has an integral value it is $2$, or $19$. Evaluating for $y = 2$, we find that this is a root. Hence we may write $(y - 2)^2 + y^2 + 10y - 19 = 0$. This gives $y^2 - 2y + 4 = 0$, and $y^2 + 2y - 10y - 19 = 0$, which comes out as $x$ but there still remains the solution of the complete cubic $x^3 + 2x^2 - 10y - 19 = 0$, in order to find the other three values of $y$. This equation has no integral root, since neither $+1$, nor $-19$ satisfies it. But as it has at least one real root, we can proceed to find its approximate value by Horner's or some other method.

CLOSING SCHOOL.

It is a common thing to open school in a formal way, but the ending—who can describe? In the morning, hymns, prayers, scripture readings; in the evening, reproofs, punishments, tears, unfinished tasks, solemn looks, and more solemn thoughts. These things ought not to be. Serious offences sometimes require a meeting of teacher and pupil alone, after the daily session—in fact, it is impossible to do the case justice during the day without using too much time belonging to the entire school. And almost any rebellious pupil will think and talk more reasonably when away from his comrades. These, however, should be and are occasional. There comes to mind, as we write, what a teacher once said: "No matter what the day has been, I try to send the boys and girls home with something pleasant to dream about." Now what can you devise to give the day a cheery ending? And may we suggest for the little people, a lively song, a short story, an exercise in rapid adding or subtracting, a review drill in reciting down, in spelling, but as frequently in arithmetic or geography, a game in natural history. The children will be delighted to carry home, too, a few interesting, practical questions. The same will bring plenty of answers for similar use to-morrow. We give below two or three questions for illustration: "Of what are the buttons on my dress made?" "Why is it good for the canary bird to eat sand, and very bad for me to do the same thing?" "We say now that it is the year 1877, when did the people say it is the year one?" Many similar exercises, particularly the queries, will please no less the older pupils. Such as the following are for them alone. During the day, when grammatical errors occur, place the most glaring ones on the blackboard, being sure to include the laughable ones. No matter who made the mistakes—the names, in fact, are better forgotten. Read and comment at the day's end. The making of anagrams is another method of brightening the last ten or fifteen minutes, and will serve as topics of thought and conversation on the way home. Specimens may not be out of place: Telegraph—Great helps; Idioman—Tim in a pet; Parishioners—I hire parsons; Presbyterian—Best in prayer; Astronomers—No more stars.
PRIMARY SPELLING.
MARY P. COLBURN, Boston.

FROM present indications it seems imminent that one of the most important events of our new century is to be, literally, a “war of words”—or more properly, a war with words. Educators are all alive on the subject, and this method or that is held up as a standard. The good old rugged and thorny paths by which we arrived at an intelligent estimate of things, are thought to be too rugged and thorny for the rising generation, and numerous plans are before the public for lightening the burden and the labor. It is a self-evident fact that the right way has not yet been hit upon for making good spellers in the shortest time, and a lamentable one that so many poor spellers are annually turned loose upon society.

Now, if spelling books fail of the desired result, would it not be a good thing, just for a term or two, or with a class or two, to try to get along without one in the schoolroom at all? I can imagine the holy horror of scores of parents, who would, in their limited knowledge of how things work, think “Peter and Hannah might as well stay to home as try to learn anything about a spelling book; they had one, a good big one too, and used to learn two columns nigh about, every day!” But Peter and Hannah stand a pretty good chance, after all, of learning as much as was learned by the parties afore-mentioned, if, with a teacher who understands her business, they only take in a fair proportion of the teaching.

I would recommend relying solely upon the reading lesson. The words there are the ones in every day use; or, if a notably uncommon one was introduced, the very fact of its presence then an there, and its connection with the subject in hand, would tend to fix it medly in the memory. I never could see the use of taxing the mind with a series of words which have no connection at all with each other, or with anything the little fellows ever see or hear about in their daily life!

The English language is a noble one, and has arrived near to perfection; and I, for one, should feel very sorry to see any such substitutions as are being proposed. Why not let it be, as it is, an exceptional language? It would take a long, long time for our eyes to become accustomed to the looks of the words and the letters, to say nothing of all the rest. As children advance in their studies, new words are constantly occurring to demonstrate what they are about; and then is the time to learn such words.

I never would propose such a plan as my own dear old schoolmaster—Heaven bless him!—followed; but yet it shows what pluck will do. In his own school days, he gave greater attention to everything else than to spelling, so that, when he came to his first teaching, he found a formidable rival in the orthographic line, in one who had a school in the same town.

The contrast between them must have been very great, for our friend, being determined not to be outdone in any direction, much less in this, used to take a ponderous dictionary with him out under the trees at his home, and there, lying flat upon the grass in the cool shade, give an hour each day to learning to spell, taking column by column, and page by page; he never gave up the wearying task till he had conquered the whole, and was able to spell every word in it, triumphantly adding the definitions! His motive to begin with, he used lastingly to instill, was emulation, but he gained a lifelong luxury by the means.

No, I wouldn’t counsel any such despotic method as that, but I am convinced that the language, as it now stands, can be at our perfect disposal, if only the right means are used. All knowledge is arbitrary with our species; we cannot, as do the brutes, fall back upon instinct, we have got to learn. We are not like the ducks, who can swim the first time they try, we must “get in” over head and ears many times, before we can swim in any sea.

The Bible must look to us as it always has looked all our days, or the standard is insensibly lowered; the hallowed verses, as we learned them lispingly and have always remembered them, would lose the sacredness were they put in any other form; so the laborious task of retranslating was not a success. No. Correct the plans for teaching spelling, but let our beautiful words stand. Home would never have been to us if it spelled home—all the long marks in Christendom would never bring up to our mental vision the dear old days of childhood, as the simple, sweet word does, spelled as our eyes have always seen it! And so with all the rest.

But, at the risk of breaking down my own argument, I am tempted to give you a specimen of a paper handed in by a girl well up in the ranks of one of our grammar schools; though how she ever got there must forever remain a mystery, as the merest child in the most of our primary schools can spell at least one-half of the words correctly.

The teacher gave me the paper and I send you a copy:

“Norwund (knowledge), collop (scallop), nuw (neuter), putur (pewter), nume (nunius), mutrel (neutral), Munday, mouthy (mouth), merit (superfluous), butter (between), manau (maneuver), thruth (through), mury (mercy), gut (adverb), crier (group), nusty (beauty), wanety (view), crwnene (quarrel).”

This was the entire lesson, and you can see how near she came to it; in most instances, not even the slightest perception of sounds—and certainly none at all of meaning.

But, after all, is this an argument for a simpler form of spelling? No—it only shows the more forcibly, how much fact is necessary on the part of the teacher, to impress certain minds. This one must certainly have been wanting from her very birth, and only furnishes a formidable instance of the fallacy of establishing a “regulation” standard.

This miss would have made a “miss” of it, every time, everywhere. The subject is by no means exhausted, and in a future paper I propose to consider the make-up of a standard “Speller,” etc.

ARITHMETIC—FRACTIONS.

B. F. STOCKS, Fairmount, Illinois.

“VASTLY too much time is given to the study of arithmetic” says one. We meekly submit and agree. Infinitely greater results ought to be reached in much less time than is usually devoted to this “all-important branch.” In nine-tenths of our country and village schools the mind of the pupil becomes so stupefied by the work of incompetent teachers in the primary grades that it becomes practically impossible to reach any definite results in the short time many of our pupils remain in school.

There is no emphasis in the teacher, consequently none is created in the pupil. As a striking evidence of this, I verily believe not more than one teacher in ten of the schools referred to is a reader of any educational journal, hence they know nothing of the educational status of the country. Equally meager is the knowledge of the subjects to be taught. But it is our purpose only to draw attention to a few errors we have so often observed, even among teachers of high local reputation.

How many of the class of teachers referred to can give a clear and philosophical reason for inverting the divisor in dividing one fraction by another? One was shocked because, in division of decimals, his pupils were requested to place the decimal point in the quotient before writing the figures that follow. “Why,” said he, “they can’t, the rule says ‘from the right hand of the quotient point off as many places for decimals as the decimal places in the divisor exceed those in the divisor.’” He was surprised, however, to discover that he might know when the figure in unit’s order was written, and write the point before writing the figure in tenth’s order.

The complex fraction is another subject that leads to much unnecessary and unphilosophical work. Just here we have observed more bad work than in any other part of the subject.

Let us illustrate:

It is required to divide \( \frac{11}{3} \) by \( \frac{1}{3} \).

\[ \text{Solution:} \quad \text{Reducing each term of each complex fraction to an improper fraction, indicating the division and dividing both numerator and denominator by the same factor, or in other words, employing cancellation, we have,} \]

\[ \frac{13}{3} \times \frac{6}{9} \div \frac{9}{17} = \frac{662}{76} = \frac{55}{1} \]

There is but one point in this solution that will not readily be seen by the pupil, and that is in regard to the denominator of the divisor, \( \frac{3}{5} \). It is equal to \( \frac{3}{1} \); this is a divisor of the numerator of \( \frac{662}{76} \) and would be written, \( \frac{3}{1} \), but this expression is a divisor of the first fraction, \( \frac{13}{3} \), and hence must be inverted, which gives the completed expression, \( \frac{662}{76} \times \frac{3}{17} \) or, \( \frac{13}{3} \times \frac{6}{9} \times \frac{9}{17} \). The fraction \( \frac{13}{3} \) is twice inverted, which is equivalent to no inversion.

It is not only amusing but astonishing to see the number of figures and the amount of work that is sometimes tortured from problems so simple as the one above. It draws to mind the expression of President Hewett in his address before the Illinois Teachers’ Association, “They know absolutely nothing of the philosophy of fractions.”
Correspondence.

PROF. MORSE IN MINNEAPOLIS.

THIS popular and versatile lecturer favored this western University city with a course of three lectures on "Evolution," last week; delivered under the auspices of the Minnesota Academy of Sciences. They were listened to by large and appreciative audiences, expressive of the intelligence and the culture of the city. The speaker's facile style was used, as usual, to graphically impute the truths which were to impress on the mind. Dry arguments and abstruse conceptions were made to speak from the blackboard in visible forms and diagrams, as the lecturer proceeded to announce them. He presented in the three lectures given, the theory of evolution, and worked out his views with facts and familiar illustrations, and concentrating them on the themes in such a way as to bring out frequent expressions of applause and admiration. Prof. Morse is a rapid and direct speaker. He is full, to overflowing, of his science; and, as he is, we understand, his lecturer's proprietary, his evidence of his honesty and candor. Sophisms need thought and metaphysical adjustment to conceal their falsity, but his is the open and disingenious liberty of truth, expressing itself as to the opening mind of a child, and asking reasonable interpretation and acceptance. Prof. Morse is one of those independent men who care not for the consequences of evolution, if it be true.—a class of men who are growing rapidly more numerous. He barely alluded to the Scriptural bearing of evolution, toward the close of his course; and then only in such a way as to confute and denounce it. He cited the acceptances by theologians of the scientific interpretation of the Mosaic record of creation; and the beautiful adaptability of the Old Testament to the accepted truths and discoveries of modern science, and mentioned the linguistic studies of Prof. Whitney, and Dr. S. Packard, of the University of California. He said the acceptance of evolution has no effect whatever on the truthfulness of Scripture. While claiming, as he doubtless does, that if there be two revelations of a Supreme Intelligence, one by his works and one direct and verbal, transmitted to us from Moses that is most creditable to him which speaks to its sentiment, nature, and still explicitly denied any intention to wound the religious faith of any one, or deprive him of his life's chief solace. He evidently thinks that the sincere testimony that man can have of the truth which he sees or hears or feels himself, if it be never so still or so obscure, and that his faith is bound to believe regardless of all contrary traditions or interpretations. That revelation which he gets through science, as an expression of a Divine Being, he is bound to stand by, because it directs him to his senses. If tradition or authority brings him a revelation at variance with what he knows to be true, he is bound to reject it. It is, in his opinion, cramped by the limitations of human language, and shaped in the feble conceptions of human knowledge.

It was with some surprise, therefore, that we read, in the Minneapolis Tribune, for March 15th, a very unfair editorial notice of Prof. Morse's recent lectures in this city, calling on certain "Christian gentlemen," over whose names the course of lectures was advertised, to purge themselves of this kind of fanaticism, set up in the name of science. Such one-sided slurs at science, and at "Christian gentlemen," are not to be expected in a newspaper which is professedly devoted to the advancement of Christian civilization." To call Prof. Morse's lectures of his course is to set one's own standard of scholarship and to set up one's assertion against the intelligent expression of thousands of intelligent and delighted audiences before whom he has lectured in the United States, and to contradict the opinion of the ablest naturalists of the world.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, March 19, 1877.

N. H. WISE.

POLITICAL.—One of the most notable indications of a revolution in the political party organizations of the country is the confirmation by the Senate of Frederick Douglass as Marshall of the District of Columbia, which was accomplished by a vote of 30 to 12. The twelve Democrats who voted against Douglass claimed that the question of color was not considered by them, but the alleged unfitness of Douglass for that particular office.

Judge Davis was highly complimented by the Bar of the Supreme Court on his withdrawal from that body to take a place in the Senate.—The Inter-Ocean contains, recently, an interesting editorial on the "Report of the Silver Commission." It says: "The conclusions of the committee point to the silver demonetization act as the chief cause of the industrial and commercial disasters of the last three years and a half." The subject demands general attention.—President Hayes is determined that no discrimination on account of color shall be made in filling public offices, either by himself or others.

Congress will re-assemble on the fourth July.—General Geo. B. McClellan has been nominated for the position of Superintendent of Public Works in New York City. His nomination was not confirmed.

GENERAL.—It is announced in the daily papers that Prof. C. B. Riley, State Entomologist of Missouri, Prof. Cyrus Thomas, State Entomologist of Illinois, and Dr. A. S. Packard, of the American Naturalists of Massachusetts, have been appointed a United States Entomological Commission, to inquire into the character and habits of the grasshoppers and other destructive insects which have created for several years so much ravage in the agricultural districts of the West. The commission will have its headquarters in Prof. Hayden's office in Washington, and their western office, in which a larger part of the indoor work is to be done, will be at St. Louis. They expect to get into the field in a few days.

Prof. Riley will occupy himself more particularly with the whole country east of the mountains and south of the 48th parallel; also the west half of Iowa and whole of British America. Prof. Thomas takes Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota, and East Wyoming, while Prof. Packard will make Montana, Idaho, West Wyoming, and the Pacific slope his field.

The natural history, remedies, preventive measures, the meteorological and geographical bearings of the subject, etc., will also be divided and allotted to facilitate the work of the commission. Massachusetts has passed a law legalizing the metric system.—The New York Legislature has brought to light some not very comforting facts in connection with life insurance. Testimony before a committee appointed by that body has disclosed the fact that the losses by death are but a small percentage of the expenditures of the company. The salaries paid by the New York Life in 1876, aggregated $30,528, the President alone receiving $33,250. Large salaries are required for the large number of those who forfeit their policies for non-payment. Only 7½ per cent. of those holding policies die while insured, so that 92½ per cent. are clear profit.—John D. Lee, the friend who was chief perpetrator of the Mountain Meadow massacre, twenty years ago, was last week executed for his bloody work, upon the very field where the outrage occurred. The execution was witnessed by his friends, some of whom have been brought before the bar of humanity and become lost—nobody can find him. It is expected that he will turn up in Europe after the trial of Sweeney has occurred.—Prof. J. C. Freeman, of Chicago University, has been invited to address the literary societies of Antioch College at the coming commencement. It was fitting that the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Industrial University at Champaign should be celebrated in a proper and pleasant manner on the 10th inst. It was fitting that the Governor, and a majority of the legislature of Illinois, should know that there is at least, and at last, one creditable institution of higher education in the state which has been wisely and securely established out of the last and the least of the magnificent donations which the Government of the United States tendered previous governors and legislatures of Illinois for that purpose. It is a little sad, however, that one of the chief newspapers of the chief city in the state, could see nothing in this entirely appropriate gathering but a "cute way of securing an appropriation." There is some satisfaction in

Notes.

The Educational Weekly.

[Number 13]
the reflection that the generous endowment of the University makes it very slightly dependent on those who would be influenced by such suggestions. —Since the acquittal of Alexander Sullivan, on trial for the murder of Hanford, in Chicago, one of the jurors, a Swede by the name of Swansen, has been committed to the County Jail by State's Attorney Millis, for perjury. Having sworn that he knew nothing of the murder, he is discovered to have been in constant attendance at the first trial, and to have refused to sign a petition against Judge McAllister, for the reason that he believed Sullivan innocent. This story is now believed to be true, and the case is still in the hands of the district attorney in Blue Earth county, Minnesota, has applied for an injunction forbidding state officers and contractors from proceeding under the law for furnishing cheap school books. This is only one of the many difficulties arising.

—It is a curious fact, that when a spasm of economy seizes the public, teachers are the first to suffer a reduction of salary, and often it ends there. —New York is now agitated on this question. The reduction there is said to be temporary, however. That is better than in most cities. San Francisco is the place for teachers to flee to at present. That fortunate city has a surplus of $500,000 in the treasury, and they are increasing the salaries of their teachers. Two principals of grammar schools receive $225 per month. The salaries of music and drawing teachers are now $175 per month, for principals, and $150 for assistants. —Woe be to the teacher who speaks disrespectfully of a school director, however. For the first offense he shall be suspended; for the second, dismissed. With so generous a board of directors, one would expect to find little cause for complaint. —The appropriation of public funds to the support of sectarian schools has again come to the surface at Fort Madison, Iowa. Good citizens had repeatedly protested, without effect, but at the last election of trustees, the issue was fairly made, and the public element prevailed. —The Boston teachers have been reprimanded for preaching to their pupils. —The Royal Society of Great Britain is at present urging upon the education department of the government a proposition to the effect that a scheme be adopted offering prizes or grants to persons who undertake specific researches or solve scientific problems. The Royal Society considers that the Parliamentary grant of £4,000, expended annually by the education department for scientific education, would thus be more usefully distributed. If the proposition is adopted, it will doubtless give a valuable impetus to science.

—The New Education is a monthly tract for parents and teachers, which advocates in a masterly way the claims upon them of the kindergarten of Froebel. It is edited by our contributor, Prof. W. N. Hallman, of Milwaukee.

Principia or Basis of Social Science. Being a survey of the subject from the Moral and Theological, yet Liberal and Progressive Stand-points. By R. J. Wright. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. pp. 52.) Price $3 1875.—This is not entirely a scientific work, as it has been written rather from the moral and theological standpoint. Its style is very plain and unequivocal, indeed, rather homely. It is the product of study, inspired by a natural disposition to sermonize upon political and metaphysical questions. The work is peculiar in this, as it aims particularly to give merely the fundamental practical organic principles. It is the "principia," or basis of social science that the author aims to present, and future volumes may present the subject in a manner less abstract. It cannot be said to be a scholarly work, nor does it claim to be, though the scholar, especially the student of Comte, Carey, Paley, Spencer, Mill, Mill, Guizot, Fourier, and a dozen others, will find, in the volume much to interest and attract attention. He will find that the author differs from all these writers in some important points, particularly in presenting metaphysics, ethics, and religion, as branches of a really positive philosophy; though in this point he seems to be quite at harmony with Paley. Paley places expediency, or reasons from expediency, before the moral instincts, while Wright places the latter on a par with the former. While Comte and Spencer deal chiefly with the physical sciences, and Mill largely with the commercial, and Paley with the moral and the theological, Wright combines the physico-scientific with the metaphysical, and makes little use of mercantile and financial considerations, but the moral and theological are kept constantly in view as to render the work one which can be read to advantage by the theological student, as well as the student of social science merely. Ninety pages are devoted to a discussion of "Limited Communism," which fact the author attempts to excuse by citing the example of greater writers, but it becomes evident, before reaching the close of the work, that his chief aim has been to reinforce the various communist societies already in existence and aid in the organization of more. "But the reward which he would like to hope for is, that it may promote virtue, liberty, and harmony, in church and state, both in and out of communism."
Educational Intelligence.

Editor, Henry A. Ford, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Home.

NEW YORK.—The winter term of the evening schools in New York city closed February 16th. Their number, including the High School, was thirty-four—nineteen for men, twelve for women, and two for colored people. The attendance has not been so large or regular as in former years. The approximate number of attendants since October 2d, in the school for males, was 5,079; for females, 2,272; for colored people, 105. The aggregate attendance of the three classes of students last term was 8,278. But, notwithstanding the decrease in attendance, the progress of the pupils has been rapid and satisfactory, and the general department of the school has attained much distinction. Much indignation has been excited among public school teachers of the city over the proposed reduction of salaries. A committee of the Board of Education has reported in favor of a cutting-down process, that should save altogether about $50,000. As the public schools cost about $1,500,000 a year, the percentage of the proposed reduction is not by any means a large one.

—MEASURES have been submitted to the state Legislature that the state shall provide text-books at cost, and that the graduates of normal schools shall, by virtue of their diplomas, be entitled to employment as common school teachers. The University calls these propositions "miscellaneous," but the latter at least is just what is done in other states we are not of, and that without "mischief." There are at present in active operation in the state 20 incorporated colleges and universities. Five members of the Board of Education, together with the President, have gone to the New England states to ascertain what is being done there, and to confer with the professors of the academies. The matter is of considerable importance, and the discussion is to be continued at a future meeting of the Board.

MAINK.—The State Agricultural College wants the Legislature to help it with money. The trustees of the State College contemplate erecting machine-shops for instruction on the Russian plan, which has also been adopted by the state of Massachusetts. The regulations of the University formally recommend the adoption of the metric system as the only legal system of the country. The Portland city schools are open but 816 hours per year. This state will hereafter give its normal schools $15,000 annually for the support of its academies, In the regular annual report of the Legislature, he endorses the program of reduction to a school district in this state where the twenty-four pupils are all the teacher's second cousins, and each is brother, sister, or cousin of every other pupil. It has been called a family school.

MARYLAND.—In order to give the advantages of the Johns Hopkins University to recent college graduates and to other educated persons resident in Baltimore and vicinity, the trustees have arranged that the various courses of lectures announced by non-resident professors, as well as members of the faculty, shall be given from 4 to 6 o'clock every afternoon until June next. Two lectures on general subjects are given at the same time in the different apartments of the University, and they are always well attended. They are of an academic rather than a popular nature, but they are not restricted to members of the University, and the audience is always largely made up of ladies.

Massachusetts.—This state, in which the common school system originated nearly two centuries and a half ago, still presents some strange statistics of illiteracy. Those who cannot read or write, or can neither read nor write, are called illiterates. The native-born illiterates number 12,160 (more than one-half being above twenty-one), or less than one per cent of the native-born population; the foreign-born illiterates number 29,265, or twenty-two per cent of the whole foreign-born population; 83,842 of 92,363, foreign-born pupils in the state, are enrolled in the cube of a number is an expression for the volume of a cube whose edge represents the numerical cube, and a face of the geometrical cube truly represents the numerical square of the number. A philosophical discussion of this question would be out of place in your columns. Allow me to remark, however, that it is no objection to the geometrical method that it will not apply to all roots higher than the third. If it is correct for the second and third, and is more easily comprehended, it should be taught. Persons that are accustomed to this method of extracting roots of a high degree can use logarithms or some special formula. Why puzzle young minds with the general binomial formula? A child cannot take as comprehensive a view of a country as a Humboldt can; neither can a tyro in mathematics take general views in the mathematical field.

FOREIGN.

Great Britain.—The Senate of the University of London has decided to admit women to medical degrees. Prof. Goldwin, Smith, writing of university extension in England, says: 'There is one mode of extension against which transatlantic experience emphatically protests—the university has the right to determine the conditions of admission to the university system in the United States and Canada have been ruining to high education and to the value of degrees. When a college, after obtaining from a facile legislature university powers, fails or falls into decay, it keeps its powers, which unwarlike retain a pecuniary value, though their literal usefulness has ceased. Three universities are enough for England.' It is said that Prof. Jowett, the well-known Greek scholar and translator of Plato, has made Balliol College, Oxford, of which he is master, the first seat of education and learning in this country. A Scotch minister has lately flourished the unprecedented feat of winning at Cambridge all the chief prizes in one swoop, and becoming Senior Wrangler, too; he began his studies at the London University and left it because the work was too hard, the requirements too scrupulous. The latitude of the old university, however, is that it is not confined to the teaching of some of the so-called higher branches, in a district school, has recently been granted by a court in Johnson county. Two of the patrons had daughters who had completed the common school studies, and who, being still of legal school age, were entitled to school privileges. They desired instruction in Latin and algebra, which it was understood the teacher was qualified to teach. Although the voters of the district had voted by a large majority that no studies should be taught except those commonly recognized as English branches, the court granted the prayer of the petitioners so far as the algebra was concerned. It stated that the Latin would also have been included in the decree except for some technical informality in the petition. The decision was made under the 147th Section of the Indiana School Law, and practically recognizes the high school as a necessary part of the public school system.

The Legislature has at last adjourned after agonizing, in extra session, over the appropriation bills, general and special. The normal and other state

Holland.—The Minister of Public Instruction has published some educational statistics for 1875, from which it appears that there were 2,665 primary schools, of which 459 are schools of a higher degree, being an increase of 22 over the preceding year. There are, in addition, 1,35 private schools in receipt of a subsidy, and 904 which do not receive any assistance from the state, 569 of which give education of a higher degree. Altogether Holland has 3,217 schools, or 33 more than in 1874, and of these 1,174 are schools of a higher degree. The staff of teachers consisted, in 1875, of 9,626 masters and 7,278 mistresses.

State Departments.

Minnesota.

Editor, O. V. Tousley, Minneapolis.

Ex-Superintendent Horace B. Wilson made a strong argument against the "School Text-Book Bill" in the Legislature, but the scheme and its provisions, and 904 which do not receive any assistance from the state, 569 of which give education of a higher degree. Altogether Holland has 3,217 schools, or 33 more than in 1874, and of these 1,174 are schools of a higher degree. The staff of teachers consisted, in 1875, of 9,626 masters and 7,278 mistresses.

Superintendent Tousley, Dear Sir:—D. B. Hagar, in his correction of Miss Abbott's explanation of cube root, speaks of "solid geometry." The term solid is hardly correct. A cube in the mathematical sense is not a solid. The cube of a number is an expression for the volume of a cube whose edge is represented by the number. So the geometrical cube may be taken as the representative of the numerical cube, and a face of the geometrical cube truly represents the numerical square of the number. A philosophical discussion of this question would be out of place in your columns. Allow me to remark, however, that it is no objection to the geometrical method that it will not apply to all roots higher than the third. If it is correct for the second and third, and is more easily comprehended, it should be taught. Persons that are accustomed to this method of extracting roots of a high degree can use logarithms or some special formula. Why puzzle young minds with the general binomial formula? A child cannot take as comprehensive a view of a country as a Humboldt can; neither can a tyro in mathematics take general views in the mathematical field.

Mankato, Minnesota, March 6, 1877.

David Kirk.

Indiana.

Editor, J. B. Roberts, Indianapolis.

An Important Decision.—A petition praying for a mandate to compel the teaching of some of the so-called higher branches, in a district school, has recently been granted by a court in Johnson county. Two of the patrons had daughters who had completed the common school studies, and who, being still of legal school age, were entitled to school privileges. They desired instruction in Latin and algebra, which it was understood the teacher was qualified to teach. Although the voters of the district had voted by a large majority that no studies should be taught except those commonly recognized as English branches, the court granted the prayer of the petitioners so far as the algebra was concerned. It stated that the Latin would also have been included in the decree except for some technical informality in the petition. The decision was made under the 147th Section of the Indiana School Law, and practically recognizes the high school as a necessary part of the public school system.
Michigan.

Editor, Lewis McLouth, Ypsilanti.

Michigan afternoon engineering, 15; architecture and design, 3; advanced zoology and botany, 4; advanced analytical chemistry, 6; University of Michigan, 12; Electrical Engineering School, 18; Mechanical Engineering School, 16; Medical Department—regular, 31; homoeopathy, 5; 4; dental school, 31; total, 39. Department of Law, 39. The total number of students in all the departments, for the year, has been 1,110. The post-graduate students are from 10 different states—Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Florida, Alabama, and Arkansas, and 4 from Texas. The number of students attending the school is reported to have increased by way of Nashville. For further particulars, address Prof. John A. Myers, Irvington, Indiana.

Nebraska.

Editor, C. B. Palmer, Beatrice.

A RECENT number of the Plattsmouth Watchman has several educational articles which remind us of what an Atlantic writer said in the January Contributors' Club's article, "Unconscious Humorists." He thinks all writers are humorists at times, and "the unconscious humorist is apt to be the more amusing of the two," and adds: "Our comical serious writers have never had just established a place in this world, perhaps because they are for the most part writers of criticism and cannot be conveniently reviewed." Mac's corrections of the Chancellor's grammar form a specimen of Cello-American caricature which is only excelled in perfection by the subtle but unconscious humor of the closing sentence. It is evidently this fact that has more check that is left on knowledge." How apt we are to judge of the infirmities of others by our own.

The charge that the University and normal School are "only for the favored few"—"the wealthy classes"—because it costs students something for board, books, etc., is puerile. The state maintains these institutions, and offers substantial advantages to the people of the state. The only purpose is to support themselves and buy their books, stationery, etc. If they are not able to hire the board, facilities are afforded for self-supporting by which they can live almost if not quite as cheaply at home. They can undoubtedly spend from $50 to $100 a year for board, clothing, washing, books, etc., if they choose, or twice that sum, but it is not necessary. Those who choose to practice a little wholesome economy can get along comfortably for a much less sum. We know both from experience and observation that any young man or young woman in good health, can, if he has a sufficient amount of industry and perseverance, complete a normal school or college course, by self-support. Hundreds have done so, and the facilities for doing so were never better than now. The prevalence of small-pox has caused the temporary suspension of the public schools in Atchison and other counties. In one or two of these cases this disease has occurred in any of these places, but it was undoubtedly a wise precaution to close the schools until the danger was past.

We note as an important addition to the educational influences of the state, the establishment of a first class teaching paper at our state capital. No class needs the benefit of a paper especially devoted to its interests more than the farmers, and owing to local peculiarities Eastern agricultural papers are not entirely suited to the wants of this Trans-Missouri region. The Agricultural Farmer, under the management of Messrs. McBride and Clarkson, seems destined to supply the demand for a good local industrial paper, in an admirable manner.

In answer to inquiries we wish to state: 1. It is not necessary to have a year's experience as a teacher in Nebraska in order to obtain a first grade certificate. 2. With the new law, there is no place for the Missouri law to apply. 3. The law was adopted by the legislature several years ago. Experience anywhere will suffice. 2. Webster's Dictionary is now the authorized standard in this state 20-years ago, and having been added to the recommended list during the administration of the Ex-sitter County Education. The new law—Hon. S. R. Thompson, has made no changes in the recommended list of text-books, and we understand that he does not propose to make any.

The Gage County Teacher's Association deserves honorable mention. It was organized more than a year ago, and has sustained meetings on the last Saturday of each month, ever since, the summer vacation excepted. The officers are: President, W. H. Salter, of Beatrice; Vice President, C. B. Palmer, the Editor; Treasurer, J. T. Sutton; Secretary, W. F. Oatman; and Librarian, Mr. John A. Myers. The new officers were elected during the last meeting, and the work is progressing in a satisfactory manner. E. W. M. L. Richier, of Beatrice; Miss Rhine, of Seward; Miss Malherbe, of Beatrice; Miss C. S. L. Chamberlain, of Beatrice; and Miss J. H. M. Chamberlain, of Beatrice, were elected the new officers.

The county teacher's organization is not entirely satisfactory, but is an improvement over the old system. The teachers have given their methods in teaching different subjects, often illustrating by forming a class of the teachers, and usually there is at least one lesson to be prepared beforehand and recited. Phonetic Analysis was taken up as a regular study last September and is to continue until the February meeting. General exercises in writing and singing vary the programme. There are some who talk a good deal, and some who can not be persuaded to say a word on any subject, from A. B. C's to Moral Science. How can this matter be adjusted? Once they had an "Experience Meeting," but it was so funny that the dignity of the thing was suspected, and it was not repeated; the teachers were afraid that if it occurred every month they should not be able to get their faces drawn down to proper pedagogical length during the year. There is no one very remarkable among the members; it is just such a class of teachers as might be drawn together in any county where the schools are ordinarily good; but there is a spirit of earnestness and genuine teachableness that is inspiring when one thinks of the petty quarrels that are apt to destroy the usefulness of such organizations. There is much that has all been done by the members of the association, --the teachers of the county and their Superintendent—except a fine lecture on the Art Department of the Centennial Exposition, by Mrs. Colby, of Beatrice. One of the objects of the Association is to found a library of works upon education, and over 20 volumes have already been obtained. We say to the teachers of other counties, "Go and do likewise."
Iowa.

Editor, J. M. Dearmond, Davenport.

OFFICE OF SUP'T OF PUBL. INSTRUCTION.

Des Moines, Iowa, March 20, 1877.

THE provision of Section 1723, requiring consultation with the county superintendent on the plans of school-houses, does not compel the board to act by the decision of the superintendent.

1. Where two school-houses are within the same district or sub-district, a school of three months in each held at the same time does not fulfill the requirements of the law, that a school of at least twenty-four weeks shall be taught in each sub-district.

2. In the formation of an independent district including a town or city under sections 1,800 and 1,801, contiguous territory may be taken from adjoining civil towns.

3. The acts of de facto officers are valid and binding as long as their disqualification is unknown.

4. If a new district is formed by change of the boundaries of civil townships, the sub-director or sub-directors residing within the township or territory set off should call the election for three or more sub-directors.

5. The failure or refusal of the proper officer to issue a certificate to a person duly elected to an office (sub-director) cannot operate to deprive such person of his rights. The certificate or commission is the best, but not the only evidence of an election, and if that be refused, secondary evidence is admissible. McCray, on Elections, p. 271.

6. The power to suspend or dismiss scholars is vested in the sub-director and principal, or the board of directors, or such officer as may be exercised by the teacher only under special instructions from this authority.

7. When a tax has been voted by a district meeting unanimous, and the vote declared carried, a subsequent vote by ballot for the same purpose refusing such annual tax is void. See Cash's large manual. Article 3, sect. 11, and note 4 under it.

8. Where the number of ballots exceeds the number of voters, the election is void unless the wish of the voters can be determined without doubt.

9. A person who acts as chairman at a school election is entitled to his vote as much as any other elector.

W. C. von Colleen.

Wisconsin.

Editor, J. Q. Emery, Fort Atkinson.

Tlie regular annual examination of candidates for State Teachers' Certificates was held in Madison, commencing Tuesday, August 7, 1877, at 8.30 a.m. The examinations for the current year are President W. D. Parcer, of River Falls, Prof. Albert Salisbury, of Whitewater, and Prof. S. H. Carpenter, of Madison. Applicants for Certificates will be examined in the following branches of study:

1. For an Unlimited State Certificate the branches now required for a first grade county certificate, with the addition of English literature, and the rudiments of botany, chemistry, geology, political economy, general history, and mental philosophy. This Certificate will be issued only to those who present satisfactory evidence of successful teaching for at least nine terms.

2. For a Limited (five years) State Certificate, the branches now required for a first grade county certificate, with the addition of English literature and the rudiments of mental philosophy. This certificate will be issued only to those who present satisfactory evidence of successful teaching for at least three terms.

Applicants who fail in any of the branches required for either of the above certificates may present themselves for reexamination in such studies within one year. A reexamination in the branches in which they were successful will not be required.

Edward Searing,
Superintendent Public Instruction.

——Superintendent John M. Reed, of Kewanee, gives the school officers and teachers of his county some wholesome advice relative to text-books, in a well prepared circular. — The Institute at Fort Atkinson, March 19th and 23rd, was a pronounced success. Salisbury conducts the various exercises with marked efficiency. Over one hundred teachers were in attendance.

Superintendent Collier, of Jefferson county, is holding school district officers' conventions in connection with his spring examinations. We believe this will prove a most valuable measure for the schools of the county. — We believe that Wisconsin never had a larger number of efficient county superintendents than at the present time. Do not be discouraged, gentlemen, because your work is not duly appreciated.

PLATTEVILLE, March 5, 1877.

President Charlton, who has been quite ill, is again in school doing his usual work.

The attendance in the higher departments does not yet show indications of the annual falling off, usual at this season of the year, on account of spring work on the farms, very few having withdrawn so far this term.

There is a growing tendency, from year to year, to more constancy in attendance by terms and years.

Superintendent Guernsey has entered upon his semi-annual examination tour, having ten appointments, of two days each, at various points in the county. To cover nearly 1,500 square miles, containing upwards of 200 schools, employing about 260 teachers, would require any one man to spread out quite thin.

Chicago Notes.

Prof. James Hannan, Chicago.

The March meeting of the Principals' Association was held on the 10th inst. Superintendent Pickard presided. Not much of general interest was done. Some directions were given, and some questions answered in reference to various details of grade work. The topics discussed were Revisions, Conventions, as at the schools of the counties. Prof. Little, Prof. Heath, Mr. Bright, Mrs. Young, and others. Miss Little's and Mr. Heath's remarks were the result of careful thought, and abounded in good points. Mr. Bright and Mrs. Young were disposed to rather vigorously object to some of the postulates and deductions of the previous speakers, and further their own positions with copious testimony from experience. The April meeting will be held on the 7th prox. The topics agreed upon for discussion at that meeting are "Ventilation, Warning, and Cleaning." The meeting adjourned at 9.30 A.M.

—and now Westcott (O. S.) is going about coupling his brain to evolve a worthy and original programme for the next meeting of the State Association. That brain is the congenial home alike of the languages, mathematics, and natural science; and when the worthy chairman of the executive committee subjects it, let the assembled multitude be prepared to regard the result with interest, appreciation, and delight. We venture to express the hope that President Lewis and the executive committee will see their way to avoid the construction of a programme involving a division of the Association into sections. Make the meeting a unity. The usual amount of business to attend may take it all in. Don't repeat the folly of placing him in the position of the scarcely classical quadruped whose embarrassment was caused by the peculiar and unfortunate position of several bundles of hay.

Crowds innumerable visited the rooms of the Board of Education during the ten days following March 6th, to inspect, study, and criticise the Boston. Drawings, prepared by pupils of the public schools, were exhibited for the Centennial Exposition last year. The Boston Board of Education, to whom they belong, has permitted them to be taken to several cities, including St. Louis and Chicago, for the edification and education of the pupils, teachers, and citizens of those cities. No uninitiated person, who sees these drawings can fail to acknowledge their excellence, and no intelligent thinker can fail to be impressed with the suggestion of practical, easily accomplished, and brilliant possibilities which they convey. The dictation drawings, the drawings with a memory, and the specimens of aUnderstanding of the facts are excellently done by pupils of from seven to thirteen years, are such evidences of valuable, desirable, and practical mental development as must convince all, save those who will not see, of not only the entire propriety but the absolute indispensability of the study of drawing in every well ordered system of schools of this generation.

At the present writing, the Chicago Board of Education has failed to regulate the mental and moral life of its pupils by an examination at seven o'clock. It delayed the opening of the ungraded rooms, which was to have taken place at the beginning of this school month. It has also resulted in the putting of some extra but necessary work into the hands of committees. It is not probable, however, that there will be any objection to the ratification of such necessary work. There has been, and is, considerable strain upon the minds of several members who are more or less intimately connected with public affairs. It is hoped that, the electoral returns duly counted, when the new civil service rules are successfully inaugurated, and the exigencies of the approaching municipal election are happily met, educational affairs will attract their wonted attention, and resume their wonted regularity and importance.

Two familiar faces were missed at the last meeting of the Principals. Mr. J. K. Merrill, of the Brown School, who has suffered from an extended and very dangerous illness of a pulmonary character, has retired from his school for the balance of the year. His place is taken by Mr. A. J. Wood, late of Geneva, Wisconsin, and previously of Michigan. Mr. J. H. Brookmell, of the Cottage Grove School, has forsaken the pedagogic ranks, and held him hence to regain his health and strength in the rural and attractive occupation of butter and cheese making. He has gone from the dust, difficulties, and thankless responsibilities of the Chicago principal, to contemplate with bucolic satisfaction his "laying hens" in North Aurora. Miss L. S. Curtis, of the Moseley School, and well and favorably known as its former principal, taken charge of the Cottage Grove School, and Miss N. H. Little, of the Cottage Grove School, has been elected Principal of the East Kinzie Street, Miss Lizzie M. Kennedy, of the Skinner, was selected for the May Street, and Sophia A. Phelps is to direct the destiny of Central Park School.