

Our churches may well borrow a suggestion from their English contemporaries, and set apart a day to be celebrated as « Citizen Sunday. » Three hundred London churches observed this day on October 27 last, when the clergy preached sermons on the civic aspects of Christian duty. A great deal of good would come from such a practice, if the exhortation followed the simple lines laid down by the Christian Endeavor societies. All that is necessary is to impress upon Christian people the duty of carrying their principles into politics, and insisting that the same rules of morality must prevail there as in every other walk of life. Nobody would recognize the power of this morality vote quicker than the professional politicians. If they knew that every Christian in the land had determined to apply the fundamental principles of morality to every candidate nominated, and had determined to vote against all candidates who failed to conform to them, there would be an instantaneous and remarkable improvement in the character of all nominees. This is not « carrying the churches into politics, » as some timid persons might fear, but making true citizens of the members of churches. To refuse to do this is to shut up citizenship as a department of human activity apart from morality, and thus leave to the immoral elements of society virtually undisputed control of public affairs. Popular government cannot long endure on that basis, and we are glad to see that the American people are awakening to this fact and are preparing to ward off the danger.

#### Plenty of Gold in the World.

THE figures which the director of the mint gives in his annual report as to the gold product of the world in 1895 must put an end to all apprehensions as to the possible advent of a « gold famine » in case the leading nations of the earth persist in transacting their business on the gold standard. He shows that the product of last year was about \$200,000,000, against \$180,000,000 in 1894, \$155,000,000 in 1893, and \$146,000,000 in 1892. Here is a gain of \$54,000,000 in three years, and of \$45,000,000 in two years. Furthermore, as the annual output of gold is not consumed each year, but is added to the preëxisting supply, the world's stock of gold has been increased during the last three years by \$535,000,000, making the total stock on January 1 of the present year \$4,286,800,000.

These are overpowering figures, the full significance of which cannot be grasped without comparing them with others. For many years the maximum of gold production was that of 1853, which was \$155,000,000. From that time onward it dwindled till it reached \$95,000,000 in 1883. After that year it began to increase slowly till 1889, when it started upward rapidly, reaching nearly \$131,000,000 in 1891. The increase between 1887 and 1893 was over fifty per cent., and between 1887 and 1895 it was over seventy-five per cent. The annual product of gold now exceeds by \$20,000,000 the average yield of both gold and silver in the period from 1861 to 1865, and by \$10,000,000 the average yield of both in the period from 1866 to 1873.

That the increase of the last three years will be maintained and added to is the unanimous opinion of all expert authorities. It is estimated that by the close

of the present century the annual output of the South African mines alone will exceed \$100,000,000, or half the total output of the world in 1895. In the United States the product is steadily increasing, we being next to Africa as gold-producers. When we bear in mind, therefore, that the world's stock of gold is not used up each year, but with the slight diminution due to wear and tear is a perpetually growing fund, and that the tendency of the business of the world to conduct itself more and more with credit instruments rather than with actual money is steadily on the increase, it must be admitted by every intelligent person that the danger of a « gold famine » is too remote to be discussed.

It is claimed by some persons that more gold is used in the industrial arts than heretofore, and that this item must be considered as affecting the supply of gold for money purposes. This is not the fact. The director of the mint gives statistics which show that, so far as this country is concerned, the use of gold in the arts has been declining steadily during the past few years. The amount so used in 1892 was over \$16,600,000; in 1893 it fell to about \$12,500,000, and in 1894 to \$10,600,000. No statistics are kept in other countries, but it is reasonable to suppose that the same causes which have led to a diminution here had a like effect elsewhere, the chief of them being the hard times.

It is not surprising, in view of these facts, that we no longer hear the charge made that the fall in prices of commodities which the world has witnessed during the last twenty years is due to appreciation in the value of gold because of its scarcity. There being no scarcity, but on the contrary a much greater supply than ever, there can, of course, be no appreciation in its value. Hence the fall in prices is shown to have been due to other causes, frequently pointed out in this department of THE CENTURY, the chief of which are improved methods of production and transportation. If this were not the case, and if gold were responsible for the decline, then the increased supply of gold ought to cause a rise in prices all over the world. The fact that this rise has not come, although the increase has been in progress for several years, puts an end to that discussion.

The aspect of the question of most interest to Americans is, Why is it that the United States, alone among the great nations of the world, is having difficulty in obtaining and maintaining a sufficient reserve of gold to preserve its credit? The answer to this is very easy. It is because the United States is the only great nation in the world which is in the banking business as a nation. All others leave the banking business to private banks, to be conducted by private persons under such restrictions and safeguards by the government as insure protection to the people. We are in a continual struggle to get what portion we need of the gold supply of the world because our financial system is working continually to send gold away from us. As Secretary Carlisle aptly terms it, it is an endless chain passing through the treasury and conveying out the gold which has been put in. We pay for this every year great sums in the way of premiums on the gold that we have to buy. We have rolled up a debt of several hundred millions for no other purpose than to enable us to keep up a system which makes the debt a necessity in order to maintain our public credit. In other words, we threaten our credit

by maintaining a defective financial system, and then incur debt to escape the consequences.

When Congress is asked to abolish this system and substitute one more in accordance with our needs, and in accordance also with enlightened finance as practised by the rest of the civilized world, it refuses to do anything of the kind. It not only insists upon retaining the old system, but insists also that we shall pay a far higher rate of interest than is necessary this year upon the debt which we incur to sustain our threatened credit. We paid \$16,000,000 more than was necessary on a single item of this debt in 1895, and are likely to pay a larger sum upon another item. Sooner or later the folly of all this will be recognized by the people, and then we shall have a system of national finance which will be a credit to the national intelligence, as well as an incalculable boom to national prosperity. A system which would remove forever all doubt about our credit by making it absolutely certain that all our obligations would be paid in gold, would send through every avenue of trade and industry a thrill of confidence, a feeling of stability, which would be worth untold millions to us as a people. It would bring among us from Europe vast sums of hoarded wealth which are now eagerly seeking investment, but fear to come to us because of the menace which our present currency system holds over our national credit. What this would mean to our national development every intelligent man can picture for himself. We have not sufficient capital to develop to anything approaching their full extent the extraordinary resources of this country. We need the aid of the idle capital of Europe, and if we could get that, as we should get it with a financial system that was above suspicion, we should enter upon a career of prosperity far exceeding anything we have ever known. Why cannot we develop a race of statesmen who will be able to comprehend this magnificent opportunity and secure it for us?

#### Two Ways of Teaching English.

THERE are few harsher and more melancholy contrasts observable at present than that between the training of French and of American youth in the knowledge of their respective literatures, and between the consequent ways of using language which the public men of the two countries display. In France boys are taught three things of which American school students are mainly ignorant: the political history of their country, the general outline of their literature, and the exact niceties of their vernacular. A Yale or Harvard freshman may know the history of Greece superficially, but he knows it better than the history of England or of the United States; his knowledge of Homer, Vergil, Plato, and Cæsar may be unscholarly, but it is more trustworthy than his knowledge of Shakspere, Milton, and Swift; and whatever the result of his labors may show, he has spent far more time on his Greek and Latin sentences than on his English. Fortunately, public sentiment has become so thoroughly aroused on this subject that just now there is no more interesting educational question than the teaching of English. Recent reports show that the experts are all agreed on the diagnosis; as to the remedy we naturally find the customary divergence.

Two dangers loom up in the path of reform. First, Vol. LI.—100.

that of exalting pedagogical method at the expense of the teacher's personality; second, that of placing mere training in composition superior to familiarity with good literature. The country is suffering at present from an acute attack of pedagogical psychology in its most malignant form; so that some zealous teachers spend more time on the study of method than on two things vastly more important—their specialty and human nature. Nothing is more vicious than to suppose that a man with a «psycho-pedagogical» method can teach either school or college students without a sympathetic and personal knowledge of his pupils. Much of the popular pedagogy of to-day is all moonshine, because the natural-born teacher (and there are many such) does not need so elaborate an apparatus, and the pedagogue who has no natural gift is deluded into thinking that this new-fangled machinery of soul-development is all that is required. There are really only two things the successful teacher needs to have—knowledge of his subject-matter and knowledge of his pupils. The first of these can be gained only by study, the second only by experience. The man who has never been a real child himself cannot effectively teach children; and he who does not know by experience the warm-hearted, exuberant gaiety of school and college boys cannot successfully teach them. Furthermore, the teacher who spends more time on the method of teaching literature than on literature itself is sure to come to grief. Greatest of all forces is the personality of the instructor: nothing in teaching is so effective as this; nothing is so instantly recognized and responded to by pupils; and nothing is more neglected by those who insist that teaching is a science rather than an art. After hearing a convention of very serious pedagogues discuss educational methods, in which they use all sorts of technical phraseology, one feels like applying Gladstone's cablegram, «Only common sense required.»

The second danger which threatens the progress of reform is the supposition, very generally accepted in some high circles, that the pupil, in order to write good English, may profitably neglect literature, if only he steadily write compositions. We are told that the way to become a good writer is to write; this sounds plausible, like many other pretty sayings equally remote from fact. No one thinks that the way to become a good medical practitioner is to practise; that is the method of quacks. The best way, indeed, to become a good writer is to be born of the right sort of parents; this fundamental step having been unaccountably neglected by many children, the instructor has to do what he can with second- or third-class material. Now a wide reader is usually a correct writer; and he has reached the goal in the most delightful manner, without feeling the penalty of Adam. What teacher ever found in his classes a boy who knew his Bible, who enjoyed Shakspere, and who loved Scott, yet who, with this outfit, wrote illiterate compositions? This youth writes well principally because he has something to say, for reading maketh a full man; and he knows what correct writing is in the same way that he knows his friends—by intimate acquaintance. No amount of mere grammatical and rhetorical training, nor even of constant practice in the art of composition, can attain the result reached by the child who reads good books because he loves to read them. We would not take the