

pear which are given to the public on the part of universities and colleges. Among those which have reached us, that of Columbia college may first be named, which is dated as far back as May 5. President Barnard discusses the working of the elective system, and says that the study which has commanded the preference of the largest number in the classes where there is freedom of choice is Greek, while mathematics commands the preference of the smaller number. It should be borne in mind that this refers to the academical or classical department, not to the School of mines, where those young men are most likely to go who are adverse to Greek and inclined to mathematics. Of those electing, one-half elect French, one-third German, and one-seventh Spanish. The library, which a short time ago was forty-seventh in magnitude among collections in the United States, is now twentieth, and connected with it there is a school for the education of librarians. The School of mines, in its new accommodations, is more useful than ever, but the tendency to overwork is so strong that the faculty are considering important modifications of the courses.

President Walker, of the Massachusetts institute of technology, shows that the number of students has increased from 302 in 1881-82, to 609 in 1885-86,—a truly wonderful advance. They come from thirty-three states, and their average age is eighteen years and two months. He exhibits the value of the system of receiving young men as 'special students,'—a practice which elsewhere has led to inconveniences and difficulties.

In the University of Michigan, President Angell expresses regret that there are less students than formerly from homes without that state, and justly says that the institution will suffer if its cosmopolitan character is lost. He strongly commends the working of the elective system, and makes a vigorous, and we hope an irresistible, appeal for continued liberality in the development of the university.

The annual report of the University of California is prepared by the secretary of the regents, J. H. C. Bonté; and while it contains all the information which can be desired, and much more than is commonly given, it indicates the lack of a coordinating mind. The new president, Prof. E. S. Holden, entered upon his duties after the report was issued, and the result of his oversight will be seen a year hence. The report indicates great generosity in the endowment of the university. Its funds for general purposes amount to \$1,678,386, besides the site, the buildings, and certain property not yet available, estimated at more than a million of dollars. In addition to all this, there

is the great Lick gift, for an observatory, and smaller endowments for medicine and law.

The full reports of Governor Stanford's gift indicate that his purposes are by no means so definite as were at first supposed, and it may be hoped that his mind is still open for suggestions which will tend toward important modifications in the original instrument.

Col. H. B. Sprague, late of Boston, has become president of Mills college for women, in California, and his inaugural address is a glowing review of the various subjects which tend to constitute a liberal education.

NEW BOOKS.

'HOUSEHOLD economy,' published under the direction of the Kitchen garden association (New York, *Iverson, Blakeman, Taylor & Co.*), is intended to supply a want long felt by almost every class of society, that of a clear, concise, and systematic text-book on those duties which "always have claimed, and probably always will claim, the main thought and time of the vast majority of women."—'*Food-materials and their adulterations*,' by Ellen H. Richards (Boston, *Estes & Lauriat*), is a little work intended for the intelligent housewife. The author disclaims novelty or originality. In some places the work is too technical for the readers whom the author would reach, and, as in the analysis of milk, some errors have slipped in; nevertheless the work will serve a very useful purpose, containing as it does a description of the principal food-materials and their adulterations, and at times hints on their culinary preparation. — '*Nature's teaching*,' by J. G. Wood (Boston, *Roberts*), is designed "to show the close connection between nature and human inventions, and that there is scarcely an invention of man that has not its prototype in nature." The author has there grouped a long series of parallels under the heads '*Nautical*,' '*War and hunting*,' '*Architecture*,' '*Tools*,' '*Optics*,' '*Useful arts*,' and '*Acoustics*.' But often the merest resemblance of some natural growth to some human contrivance causes their association, when one has but the remotest connection with, or suggestiveness toward, the other. — '*A handbook to the national museum at Washington*' (New York, *Brentano brothers*) will be a useful guide to the extensive scientific collections of the national museum now on exhibition. It is interspersed with a large number of engravings, mostly good, which, together with the numerous explanatory notes, will give the work an independent value. It was prepared by Mr. Ernest Ingersoll, whose pleasant literary style is well known.