

SCIENCE.

FRIDAY, MAY 28, 1886.

COMMENT AND CRITICISM.

THE ELECTION OF A PRESIDENT of a college or university, especially in the case of one so venerable and distinguished as Yale, is an event of great importance. Under the present constitution of our colleges, — and it is by no means so faulty as some persons declare it to be, — the presidents not only govern, but they represent their institutions. The president's voice is generally the controlling influence in matters of academic policy and discipline, in financial matters, and in the selection of professors and subordinate officers : therefore his importance and sphere of activity are not limited to his own college, but are co-extensive with the wide boundaries of higher education. This fact has entered, though perhaps unconsciously, into the popular interest which has been manifested as to the choice of the Yale corporation for the succession to President Porter. Undoubtedly the activity of the younger alumni of Yale has served to keep the matter prominently before the public, but we know that in the university world, at all events, considerations higher than merely personal ones have been taken into account.

On Thursday of last week the matter was settled by the election of Rev. Timothy Dwight, professor of sacred literature in the Yale theological school, to the presidency of Yale college. Professor Dwight's election cannot be called unexpected, for the well-informed had some months ago settled upon him as the coming man. But there are elements in the choice which make it a peculiarly happy one. In the first place, no college, however progressive, can afford to break entirely with its past, to which, after all, it owes its present. The fact that Professor Dwight graduated from Yale in 1849, and has for more than thirty years been connected with the college as tutor and professor, identifies him sufficiently with the traditional policy of Yale to insure that it will not be inconsiderately abandoned. Then there are elements in the newly chosen president's personal views and opinions which promise that

Yale will not be left behind in the race of development. He has carefully considered the details of university policy and organization, and we may be sure that he will guide Yale on the forward path as rapidly as the college can travel — but no more rapidly. That is the great point : Yale must grow and develop, but she must not lose her character in the process. Educated men throughout the country look to President Dwight to secure this happy mean.

IMITATION BUTTER.

THE manufacture of substitutes for butter originated with the production of the so-called oleomargarine, by the French chemist Mège-Mouriez, from beef-tallow. During the siege of Paris by the Germans, the making of this artificial butter was carried on upon a considerable scale, and was first brought prominently into notice. The manufacture of oleomargarine commercially, however, did not cease with the necessity which gave birth to it, but with various modifications has increased in amount, until now it is believed to have seriously damaged the dairy interests of the country ; and congress is being urged to pass a bill, which, under the guise of a revenue law, is really a prohibition law. The agitation has attracted such general attention, both from dairymen and from consumers of butter, and so much misrepresentation and flaming rhetoric have been called forth, that it may be worth while to consider calmly what are the facts in the case.

Process of manufacture. — Although numerous patents have been taken out for the manufacture of imitation butter, and a great variety of materials have been named in the specifications, the process as now conducted is comparatively simple. The raw materials are beef-tallow, leaf-lard, and the best quality of butter, together with small amounts of milk or cream and of butter-color.

From the beef-tallow is prepared the oleomargarine oil of Mège. The caul fat of freshly killed beeves is, after thorough washing, first in tepid and then in iced water, allowed to hang in a cold room until thoroughly cold. It is then rendered at a temperature between 130° and 175° F. The resulting oil is allowed to cool slowly until a considerable portion of the stearine and palmitine have crystallized out, and the pasty mass is then subjected to hydraulic pressure. The still fluid portion (about two-thirds of the whole) flows