

is but reasonable to expect that its active operation will prove effective in the removal to a large extent at least of this serious evil.

The Collegiate Institutes and High Schools in the Province of Ontario number 104 with a reported attendance of 13,136. Effort has been directed to make these institutions as efficient as possible, and they are doing much good work. Extracts from the Inspectors' reports, however, deal faithfully with what are serious deficiencies. Intelligent reading is in too many cases imperfectly understood. Writing is described as slovenly. Order and method in written exercises are neglected. The study of history is imperfect from too great prominence given to mnemonic exercises on dates, names, and trivial details. It is also mentioned in these criticisms by inspectors that science does not receive the prominence and careful teaching that its practical importance demands. Judging from the great advance in educational improvement in recent years it may be inferred that the pointing out of these defects will lead to their speedy removal. The efficient means provided for the training of teachers will enable them to surmount difficulties, and they are too intelligent a body to tolerate palpable defects to interfere with the results they seek to accomplish.

The number of schools opened and closed with prayer is 4,501, and that in which the Ten Commandments are used is 2,802; the former shows an increase of 12 and the latter of 76.

The importance of education to the individual, the State, and the Church is so great that its condition ought to be a subject of deep interest to everyone. That the school system of Ontario has attained its present proportions and efficiency, and that those most interested in its success are devoting so much intelligent attention to its requirements are grounds for gratitude and hope.

#### ANOTHER JOHN HOWARD NEEDED.

THE Governor of Massachusetts is not a commonplace man. Somehow he has the faculty of setting people to talk about him. If being kept in the public eye is any advantage Ben. Butler has managed to be a conspicuous object for many years. His admirers are by no means enthusiastic in praise of his exalted goodness, while his enemies would fully satisfy Dr. Johnson's preference for "good haters." He is at all events a vigorous man. He can decide with firmness and act with promptitude and energy. That is something at least worthy of respect. He is at present engaged in a work that will entitle him to the blessing of those who were ready to perish.

For years grave suspicions have been entertained that State institutions for the destitute and afflicted have been badly managed. Governor Butler has instituted a searching inquiry into the abuses alleged to exist in connection with the charitable institutions of Massachusetts. These inquiries have not been begun a moment too soon. Already disgraceful doings in connection with several of them have been disclosed. Whether the full depth of atrocity has been sounded or not remains to be seen, though it is scarcely conceivable that worse crimes can be brought to light than have been already disclosed.

People who in these days when publicity is given to the minute details of crime are not easily startled, have been shocked by the terrible doings in the Tewksbury Almshouse. The grossest barbarities have been perpetrated there for years. At its best the Poor House is a dreary and uninviting abode; but when it is made the scene of the slaughter of helpless victims, the inhuman tortures of defenceless childhood and decrepit age, and a place where a trade in corpses which the rat hunters of the Parisian sewers would despise is carried on, it becomes inconceivably hideous. Straightforward testimony, that has withstood keen cross questioning, has established the fact that it would have been difficult to intrust the management of such institutions to worse hands than those who have held it for the last thirty years. Unsympathetic and cold official fulfilment of duty by the managers of public institutions is sufficiently repellant, occasional outbursts of passionate temper of which the inmates are the victims are bad enough, but the gross, systematic, heartless perpetration of inhuman cruelties, and trafficking in the bodies of the dead are overwhelmingly bewildering. The first impulse is one of incredulity. "Can these things be?" is the natural question. The next is a feeling of burning indignation that such

brutalized beings can be found capable of such atrocities, and that, in the State foremost for philanthropy and intelligence in the American Union, they should be entrusted with the management of the public almshouse. A witness testified that—

There were seventy-three foundlings taken in during the winter she was there, and that but one lived. Counted, but is not absolutely sure of her count. There may have been more, but did not think that there were so many as admitted. When witness and her husband took charge of the insane hospital they found the beds rotten, the stairs wet and filthy, and the ticks falling to pieces.

This is but a momentary glimpse of the appalling state of things existing within the walls of the Tewksbury Almshouse. The inquiry will arouse public indignation sufficient to secure the punishment of the miscreants banded together in crime, and to eradicate the evils that will make the name of this particular institution proverbial for generations hence. One lesson ought to be taught by these disclosures. Capable and humane parties only ought to be intrusted with the management of all public institutions, and these should be carefully and repeatedly inspected so that abuses may be prevented. It should also prompt Christian people to take a deeper interest in the condition of the unfortunate inmates of our charitable and penal institutions.

#### A PLEA FOR DISTRESSED HISTORIC CHURCHES.

The Presbyterian Alliance, not only meets triennially to deliberate on questions of Christian truth and Church polity, its executive take an active interest in important practical matters as they arise. The next meeting of the Alliance takes place at Belfast, in 1884. To suit the convenience of Canadian delegates the Committee on Arrangements have appointed to hold the first meeting of the Belfast Council on Tuesday the 24th June. The Continental Committee are deeply interested in the present state of affairs in Moravia and Bohemia. They are anxious to help the brethren there in this interesting but perilous juncture in their history. The opportunity of extending help to them is urgent, if not embraced the result of neglect will be deep but unavailing regret. The following circular forwarded by the Rev. Dr. Matthews, Quebec, the Canadian Secretary, fully and clearly explains its object. It is heartily commended to the most careful consideration of our readers:

The Continental Committee of the Presbyterian Alliance beg to lay before their brethren of the Reform Churches the following facts respecting the needs of the Churches in Moravia and Bohemia.

At the commencement of the Seventeenth Century, the Protestants of Bohemia outnumbered the Romanists by fifty to one. To-day, the proportions of the two religions are nearly reversed. This sad change has resulted from the following causes:

During the Thirty Years' War, the Protestants of Bohemia opposed the claims of the Romanist Emperor of Austria. When the latter became victorious, he desolated the country by war, martyrdoms and exile, reducing the population from three millions to eight hundred thousand. Penal laws of the most atrocious nature were adopted against the Protestants, so that for one hundred and sixty years adherence to the Reform Faith was a political offence, punishable with death. During this period the keenest search was made by the Jesuits for Bibles and Protestants' books of every kind, and with such success, that all literature of that kind practically ceased to exist.

In 1781, the Emperor Joseph the Second, removed the existing prohibitions and "tolerated" the Reformed Religion. Pastors from Hungary at once crossed over into Bohemia, and a Protestant ministry again existed in the land.

There is now, however, the greatest need of religious books, that the people may be instructed in divine truth. Hence there was formed in 1860 at Prague, a Publication Board or Society known as the Comenius, for the printing and publishing of books in the native language and of an evangelical character.

Owing to the poverty of the people, the operations of this Society are necessarily very limited, and as next to the direct preaching of the Word, the circulation of religious tracts, newspapers and books, is one of the most effective means of spreading Gospel truth, the Committee believe that they most fitly observe the instructions of the Philadelphia Council, by asking their brethren of like precious faith, as they now do, to aid this Society in enlarging and carrying forward its most blessed work. A Christian literature adapted to the necessities of the Sabbath school, the Home circle and the Pastor's study, would be a very right-hand of strength to the Bohemian Church in all her evangelistic activities.

The present position of public affairs in Bohemia constitutes a special call for us to aid this Society. There is to-day a remarkable awakening among the people as to a national life, so that the name of John Huss, as a patriot is being lovingly remembered and highly honoured. Attention is thus being called to his work and martyrdom as a religious Reformer. Deepening the result, the Romish Church is employing the printing press in a most liberal manner, and in her own defence is flooding the country with tracts and

illustrated papers, intended for both young and old. The printing press must be fought by the printing press, and the Comenius Society must be put in funds for its great work.

Contributions for the above purpose are therefore respectfully asked from Congregations, Sabbath schools and Missionary Societies, and individuals, and all money may be sent to Rev. Dr. Reid, Toronto.

#### FOREIGN MISSION COMMITTEE MEETING.

The Foreign Mission Committee, western section, met in the lecture room of Knox Church, on the 17th and 18th inst. Sixteen members were present. Proceedings were opened with prayer by Dr. Wardrope, Guelph, after which the minutes of former meetings were read and sustained.

A communication relating to the proposed erection of a college at Prince Albert, N.W.T., was read.

The committee agreed that the minutes of their proceedings should in future be printed for the use of the members.

A communication was read from the Woman's Foreign Mission Committee asking that a proposal by them to raise funds for the establishment of a girls' school in Formosa in accordance with a request of Dr. McKay, be sanctioned by the committee. The proposal was favourably entertained and the convener instructed to correspond with Dr. McKay on the subject.

Messrs. James Ballantyne and Joseph Builder, both graduates of Toronto University and who have completed the course of theological study at Knox College, offered themselves as missionaries willing to labour in the foreign field. The committee agreed to accept the offer of these gentlemen on their presenting the required medical certificates, and agreed to apply to the General Assembly for their sanction to make the necessary arrangements for the ordination and designation of Messrs. Ballantyne and Builder to the Mission in Central India.

Respecting the disposal of the Mission property at Prince Albert, N.W.T., the committee agreed to inform the directors of the South Saskatchewan Valley Railway Company that they cannot see their way to recommend the General Assembly to make the disposal sought for.

The committee agreed to invite the Rev. George Flett, missionary at Okanasse to be present at the ensuing meeting of the General Assembly.

Letters were received from Rev. Hugh McKellar, minister at High Bluff, and the Rev. John McKay, missionary in the Mistawasis reserve, asking for the sanction of the committee to make several additional arrangements in the interest of the Mission to the Indians.

It was reported to the committee that Miss Ross, a lady missionary designated to the Mission field in India, had arrived at Indore on the 23rd of January last; and also that Miss McGregor, who had been advised to put herself under medical treatment at Bombay in consequence of having met with an accident, had so far recovered that she expected to be able soon to return to Indore.

The Convener was authorized to correspond with certain ministers with the view of securing one to be sent as a missionary to China.

The generous offers of Mr. John Macdonald and Mr. William Gooderham, both merchants in Toronto, and members of the Methodist Church, to contribute to the sending of missionaries by the committee to Japan, were carefully considered and the Convener was authorized to correspond with these gentlemen.

A telegram was received from Dr. McKay, of Formosa, stating that 1,000 people there had thrown away their idols.

It is intended that the committee shall meet again at London, immediately before next meeting of the General Assembly.

HIGHWAYS OF LITERATURE. By David Pryde, LL.D. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls; Toronto: William Briggs.)—Dr. Pryde is a literary Scotchman, the Head Master of the Edinburgh Ladies' College. He is a versatile and racy writer. The present is a delightfully readable book. It exemplifies a fine and discriminating taste and a wide acquaintance with standard literature. To young readers especially it will afford guidance and instruction. In addition to thoughtful chapters on the chief departments of literature, it contains good portraits of Shakespeare, Henry Fielding, Dr. Johnson, William Cowper, David Garrick and Cicero.