

I was always apprehensive, that those worldly entertainments would give to the pupils an aptitude and taste for the theatre — no inconsiderable evil in itself. Besides, those serious studies, for which children have been entrusted to your care by parents, are very much interrupted in preparing those plays. The pupils themselves, being obliged to be separated from the rest of their fellow-students to practise those plays, are exposed to danger, as well as to lose time from important studies.

The teachers, especially those of religious orders, are more or less secularized and annoyed in trying to infuse into the pupils the spirit of the drama, with attitudes and declamations quite unsuited to them and the pupils entrusted to their care for a real and solid education. Certain parents may be flattered at seeing their children smart and attractive on the stage of a school; but the sensible and prudent would prefer to see their children exhibit proficiency in Geography, History, Reading, Arithmetic, Philosophy, and other branches taught in the Academy.

Only a few of the pupils can be employed in the exercise of a play; and if there be any education to be acquired by it, which is very doubtful, but few can be benefited by it. Correct and elegant reading, so much neglected in schools, recitations, dialogues and speeches well studied and delivered are certainly more improving to pupils, and would please patrons of schools, at these public exhibitions, and be more entertaining than snatched pieces and scenes, even from great authors. I am aware that these theatrical representations are produced in distinguished Colleges and Academies; but I am also aware that distinguished Ecclesiastics and thinking men deplore that any necessity should arise for them.

From those very exhibitions in the Middle Ages, though innocent and religious in the beginning, sprang the theatre of modern times. Many dangerous and evil consequences have arisen from the spirit of the stage acquired in some schools. A very grave responsibility rests with the Prelates of the Church under whose jurisdiction and patronage religious schools exist, to see that piety and purity of morals and solid studies reign in them and all dangers be removed. Teachers have and assume all the responsibilities of pious parents, and they cannot be too careful of the sacred trust confided to their care, for which they must give a strict account. Public schools and Universities became so deteriorated, even in Catholic times, that pious mothers, notably the mothers of St. Thomas of Aquinas, of St. Aloysius Gonzaga, and of St. Francis of Sales, had the greatest repugnance to entrust their sons to them.

No responsibility rests more painfully on my conscience than that of our educational establishments. If in the ages of Faith many became a scandal to the faithful, we must be doubly watchful in our age that our educational establishments, especially those conducted by religious orders, should be as the "field of sweet smelling odour, which the Lord hath blessed" (Gen. xxvii; 27).

Parents must know and be assured that in intrusting their children to the care of religious communities they will be more protected than under the paternal roof. We therefore come to the conclusion that all plays and theatrical representations shall cease in the educational establishments under our jurisdiction.

† JOHN JOSEPH LYNCH,
Archbishop of Toronto.

4. IGNORANCE LEADS TO CRIME.

The moral instructor of the Eastern Penitentiary, Pennsylvania, Rev. John Ruth, makes the following statement concerning the educational relations of the 226 prisoners:

Education sufficient to fit them for business.....	7
Can read, write and cypher.....	98
Can read and write.....	43
Can read only.....	18
Illiterate.....	60
Had good early moral training.....	36
Had no special care taken of their morals.....	190
Went to Sabbath-school.....	49
Did not go to Sabbath School.....	177

To the thoughtful what a story of neglect these figures reveal! But mark well the words of Mr. Ruth in the following paragraph:

In regard to the beneficial results of secular teaching we are not left to conjecture. In this department we have witnessed, year after year, the most satisfactory improvement on the part of those who have been placed on the school list. Many who can only read, write and cypher a little might find great advantage if they could be placed under instruction, but the statistical tables which follow will show that the teacher is already over-taxed. It must be observed that the school books are furnished and the lessons given to the prisoner in his cell, and in this way the teacher can give only from two to four lessons to each pupil during the month, and

from twenty-two to twenty-five lessons during the year. But even with this small amount of instruction incalculable good is accomplished. This is evinced from the fact that those who come to us illiterate, and receive the rudiments of an education, seldom if ever return to prisons, but usually make good citizens. If our teaching force could be augmented, so as to enable us to place under instruction all who really need to be instructed, the security realized against further acts of violence would abundantly justify the expenditure, and the communities from which the recipients came would be insured in good degree from further injury at their hands. Reformation is what the community at large needs in order to be protected.

These are the words of truth and soberness. Weigh those especially which we have italicised. Mr. Ruth is no theorist. He has lived and worked among the prisoners of the Eastern Penitentiary for some twenty years. What he says is worth more than many fine speeches on education from men wanting his experience. We add only this. If education is worth so much when tried in so feeble a way on the hardened prisoners in the Eastern Penitentiary, who can estimate its influence for good when applied skilfully and under favourable circumstances to the tender minds of the young? Then it is almost omnipotent.—*Pennsylvania School Journal*.

5. HABITUAL MODERATE DRINKING.

Sir Henry Thompson, the eminent English surgeon, has added the weight of his opinion and mature experience to the testimony accumulated against habitual "moderate drinking." In a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury he expresses the conviction that the use of alcoholic beverages is the greatest cause of evil from which the country suffers. "I do not mean by this," he explains, "that extreme indulgence which produces drunkenness. The habitual use of fermented liquors to an extent far short of what is necessary to produce that condition, and such as is quite common in all ranks of society, injures the body and diminishes the mental power to an extent to which, I think, few people are aware of. Such, at all events, is the result of my observation during more than twenty years of professional life devoted to hospital practice, and to private practice in every rank above it. Thus I have no hesitation in attributing a very large proportion of some of the most painful and dangerous maladies which come under my notice, as well as those which every medical man has to treat, to the ordinary and daily use of fermented drink taken in the quantity which is conventionally deemed moderate."

6. LADIES' HUMANE EDUCATION COMMITTEE, MONTREAL.

This Committee, established in connection with the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, is formed for the promotion of the systematic education of the young in the principles of humanity, and by early training to inculcate in their minds the duty of kindness and consideration to all dumb creatures.

With this object in view the Committee has organized a plan of operations similar to that established by the Ladies' Humane Education Committee in London under the presidency of the Baroness Burdett Coutts.

The Committee first desire to obtain the co-operation of the schoolmasters and mistresses of the Province, and to this end an address will be presented to the Minister of Public Instruction for permission to introduce certain specified text-books into the schools under their control. These text-books are those which are now in use in the schools in England and France.

The Committee will also send an appeal to all the teachers in the Province, requesting them to inculcate the principles of humanity and kindness upon the children under their care, and recommending to their notice the method pursued with eminent success by Monsieur de Saily, a French teacher in Algiers. It is proposed to offer prizes for the best essays on the subject of kindness to animals, to be competed for annually in each school. The Committee will also recommend, as an effectual method of awakening the interest of the young in schools, etc., the formation of small societies for the protection of dumb animals, and particularly of birds, their nests and young. The good objects for which the Committee is labouring can be materially assisted by the ladies of Montreal, who are now invited to associate themselves with the work of the Committee. This is peculiarly a sphere of action in which women's influence can be advantageously exercised, as they have opportunities for awakening and training the sympathies of the young, in families, schools, and charitable institutions. A subscription of one dollar constitutes membership. The money obtained from the members' subscriptions will be expended in prizes, rewards, periodicals, etc., and the necessary expenses of the Committee.

The Committee urgently request heads of families to subscribe either to the *Animal World*, a monthly periodical published by the London Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (at 75 cts.