

in great deeds. Yet for our young people no person, it seems, has worthily related this story of a nation's birth and growth. It is hard to believe it. Young Canada is not devoid of patriotism. Somewhere the sons and daughters of the land must have caught the enthusiasm which finds expression in Mr. Lighthall's anthology. There is not one of the text-books already mentioned that does not contain, in more or less compendious form, a narrative of the main events in the two dispensations under which Canada has developed. No text-book can do much more. Take the most succinct of them, that of J. Frith Jeffers—it omits nothing of importance, and, in the hands of a good teacher, with a fairly full library at his command and that of his pupils, it might be made to serve every purpose of a school history. The other text-books are larger than Mr. Jeffers's Primer, and some of them are excellent manuals. It is not the writers of our histories that are at fault, so much as the stinging style in which they are printed. In our schools we have no such volumes as Eggleston's History of the United States and its People, with illustrations of the domestic and public life of every generation since the days of John Smith and Pocahontas. Every thing that typographic skill and the engraver's art can do to make a book attractive has been lavished on it. Let our Canadian text-books be presented in like garb (and some of them are well worthy of the distinction) and they will be found quite as interesting. But, when all is done, a great deal will depend on the teacher's knowledge, sympathy and tact. With a mere outline text-book the history of Canada may be made a most fascinating study, if the right impulse is applied, while the most animated pages, with all the wealth of illustration that our age affords, may become dull and dry if the teacher lacks the faculty of breathing life into them.

A NEEDED REFORM.

According to a circular issued some time ago by Dr. Rosebrugh, of Toronto, on behalf of the Prisoners' Aid Association of Canada, it appears that a movement is on foot, with the co-operation of a number of religious bodies, to secure certain reforms in our system of prison management, as well as to provide some practical plan of help for convicts who have served their time. This agitation is not altogether new even in Canada. The method or absence of method in the disposal of criminals in our gaols has been again and again the subject of earnest appeals to those in authority—with what precise result we do not know. One thing is certain, there is still ample room for improvement, and if the Association succeeds in awakening the public conscience and those who have its power of attorney as to the enormity of huddling young and old, the comparatively guiltless and the hardened reprobate, the enemies of society and its victims, into one house of correction or detention, they shall have gained no small triumph. It ought to be borne in mind, however, that prison discipline, like other branches of civil polity, can only be dealt with fruitfully when it is regarded in the light of experience and scientific knowledge of human nature. The criminal who acts anomalously in the eye of the law or from the standpoint of ethics is as much a subject for careful scientific study as the lunatic whose thoughts and acts are out of harmony with the common sense of mankind. For a person who has never examined the statistics of crime and the data fur-

nished by experts in the treatment of criminals to deliver judgment on prison discipline is as rash as though a novice in mechanics undertook to pronounce *ex cathedra* on some complicated piece of machinery. Unhappily, the day has not yet arrived when appointments to the supervision of criminals are made solely on the ground of intellectual and moral capacity; and, therefore, outsiders whose only reason for interference is the plea of humanity and the public weal, consider themselves perfectly qualified to advise men who have spent a good part of their lives in actual contact with prisoners. The privilege of protest against wrong-doing or blundering in the administration of the *res publica* is, indeed, one of the boons of our system of government; and so long as grave mistakes are persisted in—especially, as in this case, when such mistakes affect the entire community—it is the duty of the citizens to call attention to them till they are rectified. The only danger is that, in the exercise of this liberty of agitation and appeal, the people's champions may arrogate to themselves not merely the suggestion of reforms, but the dictation of the *modus operandi*. Better, however, excess of zeal—even of zeal without knowledge—than the deadly stagnancy of apathy and indifference.

There is one point in connection with prison administration which cannot be too often or too emphatically urged upon the attention of those in power—the advisability of segregating the young from old and hardened offenders. For the neglect in Canada of this application of a principle which is as ancient as ethics there is no excuse whatever. No country in the world is so favourably situated as ours as to opportunities for the industrial training of young people whose native environment exposes them to temptation. It is, indeed, so rarely endowed in this respect that ultra-oceanic philanthropists have made it their chosen field for the hopeful distribution of those waifs and strays of London and other British cities who, if left to the influences amid which they were cast into the world, would be sure to swell the ranks of evil-doers. It has, indeed, always seemed to us somewhat anomalous that, while Canada should thus be made the stage of humanitarian effort, having its centre of operation beyond the sea, our own little arabs should be deprived of any of the benefits offered by our great cultivable areas and the constant demand for farm and other labour in new districts. Now should we not have, either in the North-West or in every province (for there is land to spare in them all) a grand training farm to which the children taken off our streets—in many cases to be solemnly apprenticed to older criminals—might be sent to learn agriculture? There is no reason why other occupations should not also be taught in such an establishment, which might, moreover, be so conducted that there would be no room for complaint from the ranks of honest industry. The object of such a farm-school would be not so much to reform criminals as to prevent the rising generation from lapsing into crime by removing its allurements. Year after year Dr. Barnardo and other workers in the same field send to Canada scores of young people, not of Canadian birth, to serve as farm hands or in other trades—in some cases to find homes in happy households, while our police magistrates are puzzled how to apply the law for the disposal of youthful offenders with the least shock to their own consciences. They know that in most cases, when they pronounce sentence of imprisonment, they are

simply banishing them—often for life—from every influence that would tend to save them from perdition. If the Prisoners' Aid Association would devote its efforts to the task of making for these young wards of Canadian society, born on our own soil, and having the first claim on our merciful regard, some provision of the kind which we have ventured to suggest, they would, we believe, be conferring a very real boon on Canada by diminishing the number of criminals and saving souls from the pit of ruin and moral death.

THE MADONNA'S ISLE.

Embosomed on the deep there lay
A green Elysian isle,
With curving shore and crystal bay
Whose waters glowed awhile,
Crimson and golden, as the day
Sent down a parting smile.

It seemed to sleep, a holy spot
Amid the sleepless sea,
Where guilt and grief might be forgot,
And man, from passion free,
Might cease the sole, black, sully blot
On God's fair earth to be.

There, like some phantom that we meet
In visions of the night,
The tenant of that calm retreat,
Arrayed in stainless white,
Strayed, lost in meditation sweet,
A virgin pure and bright:

Bright, as the dreams of childhood's sleep,
Which waft the soul to Heaven:
Pure, as the tears that angels weep
When man with God hath striven,
And sinned dread sins, perchance too deep,
Too dark to be forgiven!

She knelt, immaculately fair,
With love-illumined face,
And, like some lute, the voice of prayer
Breathed spells around the place,
Up floating through the summer air
To reach the throne of grace.

But hark! hoarse shouts her prayer arrest,
Her piteous face is pale!
For lo! to that green Eden-nest
A boat with sun-lit sail
Airily skims o'er ocean's breast,
Like sea-bird in the gale.

Its crew are rovers, bold and free,
Men stained with human gore,
And, when they marked with savage glee
The Presence on the shore,
They bounded madly o'er the sea
With lengthened sweep of oar.

Rude threats they mutter, as they row,
Against that hallowed one:
They scoff and jeer—they do not know
The Mother of God's Son.
Heaven shield their helpless prey, for oh!
Compassion they have none.

With eyes upraised, that maiden mild
In speechless woe implored
Quick succour from a sinless Child,
Her offspring, but her Lord:
It came—and shrieks of terror wild
Burst from the pirate horde!

Fiercely, Euroclydon awoke,
And lashed each angry wave,
Far-echoing peals of thunder spoke
In tones that shook the brave,
While shadowy depths asunder broke
In many a yawning grave.

Men struggled with unearthly might,
And gasped with gurgling breath,
And when the lightning in its flight
Glared on the wreck beneath,
Just God! it was a ghastly sight
To see their ghastly death!

The gentle Moon hath charms to still
The murmurs of the main,
As mothers, at their own sweet will,
Can soothe an infant's pain:
That night, she hushed them not until
That ruthless band was slain:

And when the billows' vengeful might
Had swept those sinners o'er,
Oh! calmly then her cloudless light
The gentle Moon did pour
Upon the Virgin, clothed in white,
Still kneeling on the shore!

GEO. MURRAY.