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Editorial.

RAILWAY-CAR LITERATURE.

There are few of our readers but know what that literature is. There are, of course, the daily papers, and some useful books, which one is glad to get, to while away the time that hangs heavy, in a long journey. But what next? Then comes the chief dish, the "*pièce de résistance*" of the entertainment—trashy novels, dream-books, songs, ballads, mysteries of London, Paris and New York—literature that is well described by the Editor of the *Boston Christian* as "useless, worthless, polluting trash, by which the young are poisoned and the old are cursed." There are not many who, perhaps, trouble themselves with the enquiry as to whence this literary and moral pestilence comes. Some of it is produced in Canada and in the city of Toronto, but the vast bulk of it comes from New York. During the past two years Mr. Anthony Comstock has been engaged in suppressing this vile and pernicious literature, and his report, read recently to the Young Men's Christian Association, New York, shows us the extent to which that filthy fountain is pouring its waters over the land. During his campaign he seized 200,000 obscene pictures, 13,000 lbs of vile books, 130,000 sheets of songs, &c., and arrested 106 of the rascals engaged in the business, 29 of whom have been sentenced, some of whom have escaped, and 48 of whom are now waiting trial,

Frank Leslie being among this latter number.

But do our readers trouble themselves with the question as to *where* this polluting literature goes. Are their own skirts clean altogether of contact with it? Are there not seen at times on the tables of Christian households doubtful pamphlets, sensational trash, reports of the trials of notorious criminals, bought on the train, glanced over, and carelessly flung in among young people to eat there like a cancer? One thing, however, is sure, and that is that our railway car literature enters our land as no other literature does, permeating society, filtering through it, reaching its lowest depths and remotest corners as the glance of the destroying angel went through the homes of Egypt, and well-nigh with the same result. It happened to the writer, not long ago, to visit a family in the woods. As he sat in the house, the bright red cover of a book hung up on the wall, on the same nail with the almanac, attracted his attention. He asked, which was granted, permission to examine the flashy volume. It was a railway-car song-book containing a few good songs, but otherwise vile and base beyond description. A member of the family, returning from the city, bought the book on the railway-car, and thoughtlessly hung it up in the centre of a household of some dozen members, most of them boys and