

The Degradation of Scholarship

of Ontario than is the objectionable character of many of the poems that are assigned for literary study. In the selections from Browning of last year this choice stanza greeted the Catholic pupils in their study and appreciation of "Up at a Villa—Down in the City":

"Or a sonnet with flowery marge to the Reverend
Don So and So,
Who is Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, St. Jerome and
Cicero.
'And moreover' (the sonnet goes rhyming), 'the
skirts of St. Paul has reached,
Having preached us those six Lent-lectures more
unctuous than ever he preached.'
Noon strikes,—here sweeps the procession! our Lady
borne smiling and smart
With a pink gauze gown all spangles and seven swords
stuck in her heart!
Bang-whang-whang goes the drum, tootle-te-
tootle the fife;
No keeping one's haunches still: it's the greatest
pleasure in life."

It may, we think, be legitimately questioned whether either the study in our secondary schools of a one-sided presentation of the facts of history or the interpretation of poems which ridicule the tenets and ceremonies of any Church conduces to that breadth of scholarship and culture and to the upbuilding of that large-minded Canadian citizenship which we all so heartily desire in our land.