

In a very comprehensive, though short, article, in the *Youth's Companion*, on the waste of vitality, occurs the following passage:—"Our schools waste this store by drawing too largely on the brains and nerves of their pupils through the competitive systems, the worry of public examinations, through exacting the same tasks of the bright and of the dull, and through the lack of adequate and persistent attention to the sanitary condition of the schoolrooms." These are words worthy of all who exercise an influence on educational systems. Without being alarmists, we have more than once endeavored to impress upon the public the fact that (as we believe) injury is done to the youthful brain and constitution in many cases, by the exactions of too multifarious studies and too little thought and consideration for tender years.

In reference to the question whether the Australian Colonies should send delegates to Canada, or Canada send representatives to Australia, *Imperial Federation* remarks:—"While from one point of view it would seem natural that Canada, both as the senior Colony and as the issuer of the invitation, should play the part of host, on the other hand it cannot be denied that it is easier for two or three delegates to travel round the world than for fourteen." It is then suggested that the British Government should place a man-of-war at the disposal of the Canadian delegates, and send them as the guests of the English people from Halifax by Gibraltar, Malta and Aden, to Bombay, Singapore, and Australia, and home again, either by Mauritius and the Cape, or by Hong Kong and Vancouver, as they might prefer. The idea does not seem to be a bad one, and it is added, "there will not be one Englishman in a hundred thousand who will grudge the expenditure, nor will there, we think, be one Canadian delegate who will consent on his return to forego his share in so splendid an inheritance."

The *Toronto Globe* would perhaps make a hit (which it will evidently soon be glad to do) by re-christening itself *Ishmael*, for its hand seems to be against every one, and it will naturally not be long before every man's hand will be against it. A fortnight ago, the *Globe* devoted a column and a half to an elaborate attack on Dr. Goldwin Smith, for an article in *McMillan*, in which he treats the cant of extreme Prohibitionists with reason, sound sense, and in behalf of the liberty of the individual. The article is seasoned to please the Prohibitionist palate, and in carrying out this intent even the sympathy of Dr. Smith with the *Globe's* Americanism fails to divert the assault. But the Jesuit Estates Act provokes the modern Proteus to still more extraordinary gymnastics. Not satisfied with the brilliant effect of its first grand "flop," and with bolstering up Col. O'Brien's resolution in the face of Mr. Blake's opinion of the constitutionality of the Act, it now turns round on the former gentleman, and accuses him of playing into Sir John's hands in the affair. The *Globe* just now reminds us of nothing so much as a Tom-Cat tied to a long string, at the stretch of which it rushes hither and thither and bounds to and fro after the feline fashion under such limitations. It is an amusing, if not an edifying, spectacle.

Theoretically, there are a number of reasons why it would be advisable to compel electrical companies to put their wires under ground. The multiplicity of unsightly poles, the dangers to life and limb from falling wires and the liability of the disarrangement of all overhead systems from storms, fires or other causes are a few of the most prominent. The expense of repairs from these causes alone is so heavy that the companies themselves would adopt the under ground system were not the practical difficulties so insurmountable. Take for example a stragglingly built city like Halifax, and think of the difficulties in the way. Without touching on mechanical difficulties, the question of cost alone presents an impassable barrier. The companies operating here know well that in order to meet the cost of putting their wires under ground they would have to so raise their tariff of rates that they would lose their customers, and find themselves without revenue. Rather than face certain bankruptcy, if ordered to place their wires under ground, they would simply be compelled to cease doing business here, and we should be without telephone and the electric light, and might have to go to North Street to send a telegram. In this case the practical so overrules the theoretical aspect of the case, that for the time being at least, the under ground idea must be abandoned as an impossibility.

A young gentleman, whose style, ability and good feeling do him much credit, put forth in the *Herald* last week a touching appeal to the fair sex on behalf of the birds, whose extermination their thoughtlessness is rapidly tending to accomplish. This is not the first time we have touched on this sad subject, but, albeit we have little hope of creating any impression, we shall still from time to time keep it before our readers. Some of the statistics given by Mr. Piers ought to arouse attention, for, as he aptly quotes, "Evil is wrought from want of thought," but it may well be questioned whether want of thought be not really at the bottom "want of heart." Here are some figures. "From a single locality on Long Island a man sent in four months nearly 70,000 birds to the New York market, while in the vicinity of Philadelphia 1,000,000 rails and bobolinks were killed in a single month. At Cape Cod 40,000 terns were shot, and at Cobb's Island, off the Virginia coast, 40,000 birds, chiefly gulls and terns, were slaughtered in cold blood. The agent of a Boston milliner recently repaired to Florida, taking with him fifty breech-loading guns and ammunition. These he distributed among the inhabitants, with requests to shoot as many plume-birds as possible, as he had orders to collect 50,000. Whole tracts of country which once were swarming with birds are now lone and silent. The birds are gone never to return, massacred in thousands by these miserable mercenaries who are rewarded and encouraged by our "fair ones." Next week we will see how far the "fair ones" of our city contribute to this pitiful butchery.

Indications are not wanting that the Americans—at least a considerable section of them—are really "spoiling for a fight." Another bellicose resolution has been introduced into the Minnesota Legislature, urging a "vigorous foreign policy" (whatever that may mean) and that the United States "should compete for the commerce of the world." We were under the impression that the foreign policy of the United States is tolerably vigorous as it is, and as for "competing for the commerce of the world"—who hinders them? But there is yet balm in Gilead and some common sense still left in the Republic, and the *Chicago News*, commenting on the resolution, distinctly takes these views, and adds:—"It is true the American flag is not often seen on the seas, and the foreign commerce of the world goes begging so far as this nation is concerned, but a vigorous foreign policy cannot mend these melancholy matters. Nothing can mend them, save a wise revision of the present high tariff. * * * Apparently, he (the mover of the Resolution) has merely attempted to feed the moloch of war frenzy which is growing up in this peaceful but bumptious Republic. * * * The military passion rages here like a moral scarlet fever. * * * But war is not a blessing, and there is no need of wagging our heads at our neighbors unnecessarily." It is to be hoped such rational counsels may increase and prevail.

One of the most conspicuous results of the modern scientific tone of thought is the enormous number of "fads" generated in the minds of persons to whom a little knowledge is, if not a dangerous thing, a decidedly disturbing element. People find that there is disease in this, and death in that, which their forefathers ate, drank and used in happy ignorance of the perils of their practices. There is death in the old oak bucket of the well; cats, dogs, and chickens infect us with diphtheria and other terrors—anything for a new sensational idea for the timid and pseudo-scientific to gape after and chatter about. Bacteria is just now one of the most attractive fads in vogue, and accordingly, in a paper recently read before the Boston Horticultural Society, Mrs. E. H. Richards says that the "dust" in rooms is largely composed of living bacteria, and that the ordinary "dusting" of furniture with a feather duster only transfers these bacteria to the throats of the inmates. Now, there is very likely truth in this, but—what are we going to do about it? Are we to let the dust lie and accumulate? We know that dusting is not an agreeable recreation; and, no doubt, some things do get down our throats, as they do in the streets and everywhere. But we know we have got to swallow our peck, which may be accepted as the representative of, say a ton, and may we not take comfort from our experience, that we can, after all, stand a pretty good allowance of dust?

A stinging rebuke to the shameless effrontery of political warfare in virulently attacking, when in opposition, a policy which the attacking party has fully enforced when in power, has been administered by Mr. Michael Davitt to the bully of the Liberal party, Sir William Harcourt, and in a less degree, by implication, to Mr. Gladstone himself. Mr. Davitt, who suffered nine years' imprisonment under Mr. Gladstone's regime, says:—"There is not a single trick in Mr. Balfour's policy of party meanness and vindictiveness which does not bear the closest possible family relationship to the old Liberal panaceas of combined toffy and stick for Ireland; and no amount of Sir William Harcourt's delightful new born zeal in a better and brighter policy can obliterate this fact from people's memories. Mr. Gladstone was not correct in saying that my treatment by Sir William Harcourt's orders when in Portland in 1881-2 was, 'in point of decency and indulgence, everything that could reasonably be desired.' I was dressed as a convict, located in the infirmary of a convict prison." It was the manner of the sudden conversion to Home Rule, not the principle, which disgusted so many and operated to swell the union ranks. The long warfare which has ensued has ventilated the whole question, and it now stands in a different light; but Sir William Harcourt assailing Mr. Balfour's treatment of prisoners is simply pot and kettle. Our own politicians may take a lesson from this episode, if they be so minded, which they are very unlikely to E.

We noticed in the *North Sydney Herald* of the 20th February the following paragraph:—"Where is he?—Brother Drummond of the *Trade's Journal* thus places a contemporary—*THE CRITIC*, professedly independent, is extremely partizan." Will *THE CRITIC* or some good friend supply the words omitted in the following elliptical sentence: The *Trades Journal*, professedly—is— "And we did not happen to notice it in the original. We scarcely felt inclined to take advantage of our kindly contemporary's suggestion at the time nor do we now. On the 20th March, however, the *Trades Journal* lashes itself into parturition on some remarks we made on the *New York Herald's* defense of the *London Times*, and announces that we "seem to endorse" that defense. It then proceeds, with evident pains of labor, to invent a supposititious case which could never by any possibility occur to *THE CRITIC*. "Supposing," it says, "*THE CRITIC* were violently opposed to Mr. Fielding, a man drops into its office and produces letters," &c., &c. "*THE CRITIC* eagerly accepts the letters," &c.—instituting a parallel case to that of the *Times* and the Piggott forgeries. Now, in the first place, nothing can be more profound than the indifference of *THE CRITIC* as to opinions about its partizanship. In the next, we set forth in the Notes out of which our venerated contemporary takes such pains to make capital two or three statements of facts, without a shade of comment. The longer note of the two was entirely quotation. As a matter of fact, we had previously expressed our blank astonishment at the open-mouthed want of precaution displayed by the *Times*. There is nothing to be actually taken hold of in the meretricious elaboration of the *Trades Journal*, but we are free to suggest that that sort of thing is not quite clean journalism.