

Contributed Articles.

Literary Record.

RAILWAYS AND THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT.

It is the desire of superintendents of every department on every road of which we have any knowledge, that employees should at all times be free from the effects of intoxicating liquor, and most railway companies have rules to this effect. These rules, it is true, are not carried out to the letter, but the disasters that have resulted from this violation, are now making their observance imperative. For many years the skilled hand of an engineer was set over against his intemperance habits, and a similar compromise was often made in other departments of the service. In the case of the former the travelling public did not, and never will appreciate such an arrangement. Although officials do not care to part with confessed ability, they have become aware of the necessity of keeping abreast of the temperance sentiment of the age; and from experience they are learning that the management of moving trains must be placed in the hands of men who will act with cool judgment, and not in the frenzy of drink.

When the railway system of this country was in its infancy, people were not disposed to criticise its efficiency; every leniency was shown to a work of such importance in developing the resources of the country, but times are now materially changed. Competition is keen, different roads traverse the country from end to end, patronage is now a matter at choice, rather than necessity. Other things being equal, the company that employs strict and courteous officials will distance those who are careless in this respect.

From a business point of view no one would care to risk his property with men where the chances of it reaching its destination in safety, and being destroyed in a collision were about equal. We do not argue that all the mishaps that befall railway trains are traceable to the intemperance of employees, but we do know that work on the line, as well as in the office, is much retarded by the drinking habits of one or more of the staff. We would here say, however, that the travelling public are often to blame in this matter, and drinking is often the result of mistaken kindness on their part. Travellers or shippers may wish to manifest their appreciation of favors shown them, beyond what the official duties of the servant demanded. In such cases the social glass too often cancels the obligation, and level-minded people ought to see that this method of expressing thanks is a fearful wrong.

Railway history tells us of men of commanding ability, men who have attained responsible positions in their several departments, but on account of their drinking habits have been the objects of repeated caution and humiliation until they are reduced to the lowest grades in the service. In many cases it is only out of sympathy for their misfortune that they are retained in the employ at all.

The harmony and efficiency of an entire division may be seriously disturbed by the intemperate habits of some of its staff. Such is the nature of intemperance that its victims often obtain such sympathy and assistance from friends, as makes detection extremely difficult. Far-seeing managers recognise that too much indulgence has been shown to offenders, and feel that more stringent measures must be employed to suppress the first appearance of drinking among their employees. It requires prompt and effective action inasmuch as the most moderate drinker will sooner or later be less capable of perfectly performing his duties. It cannot be too strongly urged that none but strictly temperate men should be employed. The work is such that it requires all the skill and ability possessed by ordinary men. In a mercantile establishment drinking would not for a moment be tolerated. There are grave reasons then why it should not be permitted at all, where life and property are at stake. We are glad to know that strenuous efforts are made by railway managements in general to have the evil suppressed. Strictly temperance principles are such essential feature points in the character of an applicant for the most humble position in the service. A strict adherence to this principle will have its own reward, and we expect that the next generation will speak of drinking railway men as a thing of the past.

There are few occupations in which a person can display his ability to such advantage as in the management of railway affairs, but temperance men, and those only need hope to succeed. Let us all guard against the approach of drinking habits, and assist in so moulding public opinion that the traffic in strong drink will eventually be suppressed by entire prohibition.

RAMBLER

THE TEMPERANCE PRIMER, an Elementary Lesson Book on the Nature and Effects of Alcohol.—This is the title of a little volume prepared by G. D. Platt, Esq., Public School Inspector for Prince Edward County, and published by W. J. Gage & Co., Toronto. We are much pleased to see a Canadian book on this important subject, and specially so when the work is of such a character as that now before us. There is no other branch of temperance work so important and so far-reaching in its result as is the training of our young people in habits of true temperance, and the imparting to them of just such information as this book contains. We have read many works on the physiological aspect of the temperance question, but Mr. Platt's primer surpasses all others that we have met in concise statement of the results of a great deal of study and research. Temperance is now a subject in our programme of public school work, and we would recommend every teacher to carefully study this little book as a summary of exactly the facts with which he ought to aim to make his pupils conversant. It ought also to be studied by every temperance advocate that he may be better posted on the fundamental facts which form the basis of the great prohibitory movement. It is published in a neat and convenient form and sold at the low price of 20 cents.

THE CANADIAN METHODIST MAGAZINE for April, 1885, price \$2 a year; \$1 for six months; 20c. per number. Toronto: William Briggs. For sale by all booksellers. This number has four well-illustrated articles:—Wanderings in Spain—On the Rhine—The Cruise of the *Challenger* and A Visit to the Grave of Barbara Heck. The numerous engravings of the first two articles are of special interest. Many persons are not aware that the foundress of Methodism, both in the United States and Canada, spent her closing years in Prescott. The Editor gives an account, of much interest to every Methodist, of his visit to her grave, and of an interview with her three surviving grandchildren, with numerous incidents about the Heck family. An article of unique interest is that by George G. Stevenson, M.A., of London, tracing the ancestry of the Wesley family back through Knights and Barons for over 900 years. "Sugar Bags" is a quaint and graphic story of London Life. The study of Wesley's Hymns and the story of "Skipper George Netman, of Caplin Bight," increases in interest. An Easter flavor is given to the number by an article by the late Dr. Punshon, and by several Easter Poems and other Easter pieces. Back numbers of the *Magazine* can still be supplied.

"THE BOOK-WORM."—A unique, handsome, and delightfully readable little Monthly Magazine, containing for the year over 300 pages, and many fine pictures, all for 25 cents a year, is a recent characteristic product of *The Literary Revolution*. Each number contains attractive selections from some noted book,—the last presents Prescott's famous chapter on the "Spanish Inquisition." What will interest a vast number of book-buyers will be the regular monthly news of the *Revolution's* progress,—an enterprise that has wrought wonders in the book world. A specimen copy of *The Book Worm* will be sent free to any address. John B. Alden, Publisher, 393 Pearl street, New York.

THE VOICE.—A weekly prohibition paper published by Funk and Wagnalls, New York, is one of the best conducted journals that it has been our fortune to meet with. It is the outspoken advocate of the American National Prohibition Party, and fearlessly exposes not only the villany of the whiskey traffic, but truculence and hypocrisy of the rum-controlled wire pullers of the political parties. It is all life, fear and energy, and well merits the phenomenal success that it is achieving.

THE SCOTT ACT HERALD for April is out, and is a splendid number. It ought to be circulated thick and wide in every county in which the contest is likely to take place. For terms and specimens write to the Editor, CANADA CITIZEN.

A very homely man, finding his little nephew crying one day, said to him: "Johnny, you shouldn't cry; it will make you look homely as you grow older." The little fellow gazed earnestly at the speaker for a moment, and then said solemnly: "Uncle you must have cried a great deal when you were a little boy."