



VOL. 3.

A Magazine of General Literature.

No. 10.

GILLIES & CALLAHAN, }
Publishers.

MONTREAL, AUGUST, 1878.

{ Terms in Advance:
{ ONE DOLLAR A YEAR.

WHOLESOME LITERATURE.

Of course, we do not expect secular newspapers to become active exponents of the great truths of religion, nor should it even be required of them to give undue prominence to the publication of matters of a religious character. That is not their province. But appearing as they do in a Christian community, and being supposed to reflect in a great measure, the feelings, views, and moral status of the people who support them, we have a right to demand that they adhere to the teachings of that moral law which ought to govern us all.

The secret of this apparently unconscious Anti-Catholic feeling which we lament in the daily press, is to be found in the mental inferiority of the editorial fraternity as a class.—*Catholic World*, for July.

There are few who, amid all the discussion of the power of the press, as it exists at the present day, have ever really attempted to sound the causes which have given it birth or the ultimate influence which it exerts. Correctly regarded, the press is not an engine wielded by a few hands for the convenience of the many; its operations are not, as in the case of other professions, the result of a distinct class of minds individually and entirely responsible for its tone. It is the reflex of every mind, the exponent of every principle. The philosophers of olden time believed that every portion of the physical and mental structure of every man corresponded to some portion of the great world in which he had lived and that its changes were sympathetically signified in him. This little world, or microcosm, forms no unapt parallel for the press as it exists in a free country,

where every voice, every opinion and every development in the great world of the popular mind is chronicled in, and forms the being of that *multum in parvo* the modern periodical. It is a strong point in the practical portion of Cousin's philosophy that the great man is the product of the age, and that those men are most worthy of regard who best represent the spirit of the times in which they live. Were the editor less nearly identified with the people whose views he sets forth, we should soon find the calling regarded in a different light from that in which it is at present seen.

It was believed at one time that books were the only legitimate source of knowledge, and there is still a lurking prejudice current against the man who relies on those flying leaves, the newspapers and magazines, for his general information. And yet, what a vast proportion of intelligent and highly educated men there are who with a reputation for much general knowledge, which they themselves believed came from their libraries, have in reality unconsciously extracted nine-tenths of it from the ephemeral literature of the day. In fact there is hardly a branch of science or art, or a philosophy, opinion, or doctrine, which has not its literary representative in some periodical. Magazines and newspapers are as we have indicated, peculiarly a production of the present age. Men are busier now than they were in the olden times—they have less leisure for acquiring information; and still to pass current in society they are required to know far