

of the usefulness of education in this direction was extravagant. We need not therefore be surprised if the contradictory notion should gain some currency,—that education is actually a promoter of crime. The experience of England throws light on the subject. It was in 1870 that the great new departure in public education was made in England. Previous to that year crime was on the increase. Since that year the decrease has been steady. In 1860 there were in England in prisons 115 persons of every 100,000 of the population. In 1870 the proportion was 128. In 1880 there was a decrease to 111 in 100,000; in 1890 the number in prison was reduced to 68. This result is wonderful, especially in view of the rush to cities during the years of decrease. The following figures are equally remarkable: In 1870 out of every 13 of the population 1 was on the rolls of the primary schools, and 1 in 280 on the books of the police stations as known or suspected thieves. In 1895, after twenty-five years of compulsory education, the number on the rolls of primary schools had risen to 1 in every 6 of the population, while the number of known or suspected thieves on the police rolls had fallen by about the same proportion, being then 1 to 830.

When account is taken of the crimes of drunkenness and assault the results stand thus: In 1860, in every 100,000 there were 109; in 1870 there were 134; in 1895, just 80. It is stated also that the younger portion of the population do not keep up their proportion of the prison population. Incurable old criminals compose an increasingly large proportion of convicts. The criminals under 16 years of age who, in 1860, numbered 88 in every 100,000 persons under 16, and 113 in 1870, had fallen, in 1894, to 48. If the rate of increase which prevailed from 1860 to 1870 had been unchecked, instead of 6,000 criminal youth, as enumerated in 1894, there would have been 15,000. Much stress has been placed upon the fact that the proportion of illiterate criminals diminishes. This is inevitable under systems of compulsory education. Upon this point, around which has centered much fallacious argument, the English statistics are instructive. They show conclusively that the 80 per cent of regular attendants at school supply only 3 per cent of the jail inmates, while the 20 per cent of "irregulars" are responsible for more than 96 per cent of criminals.

TALKS WITH TEACHERS.

The columns of the REVIEW bear constant testimony to the zeal and industry of many teachers, whose efforts add so much each year to the equipment of the schools in the way of apparatus and furnishings of all kinds. Many districts owe their complete outfit to such efforts as these, and it is a department of work that should be encouraged, not only because of the direct benefit to the schools, but of the no less important indirect advantage of uniting and interesting in the schools pupils and parents. There are indications, however, that in some districts this work is beginning to be taken for granted and to be presumed upon to lessen the responsibility of the ratepayer, and the tendency is not without danger. It is perfectly laudable and legitimate for a teacher to devise ways and means to add to apparatus, furniture, libraries, and even the improvement of house or grounds by painting or ornamentation; but when they are expected, or almost required, to pay off the district debt by such means, then the line should be drawn, and the usefulness of these efforts has ended. While every one

inside or outside the district may be willing to aid the teacher, few will be found to do so, in order to aid in discharging the liabilities of the trustees.

What this would lead to is very easily seen. Teachers would command positions, not on account of their professional abilities, but by reason of their talent to raise the money wherewith to pay their salaries, and there are so many objections to this that argument is not necessary. Disputes have arisen from time to time as to the custody and disposal of the funds raised at school entertainments. They are usually placed in the hands of the secretary of trustees, which is quite proper, as a matter of courtesy, but not as a matter of right, except the teacher be leaving the district. I know of no regulation giving school officers any title to funds so raised, as they may not have had a larger part in securing them than other ratepayers or non-residents. As the teacher is usually instrumental in raising money, I think he or she should have the chief voice in its disposal, always paying due regard to any objections of trustees. Teachers should absolutely refuse to be parties to the liquidation of district liabilities.

CORRECTION.—\$15,000, not \$1,500, as given in the last REVIEW, is the limit for districts in which third-class teachers in New Brunswick may be employed.

For the REVIEW.]

The Teaching of English Literature.

Among what are technically called "educational," as opposed to "information," subjects, a high place must be assigned to English literature. In the hands of an appreciative and earnest teacher, it will be a powerful instrument in, what Matthew Arnold calls, the "humanizing" of the child.

Professor Shaler of Harvard University, himself a great teacher of natural science, writes thus: "I think that education should begin with what we may, with a new and better meaning, call the humanities; those lines of culture that lead the mind out on the easy way to sympathy and affection for one's fellow-men. . . . There may be minds that can be immediately awakened to life by physical science, for in the infinite variety of man almost any peculiarity can be found, but no observant teacher can feel it safe to begin the intellectual life of the child with things so remote from the old channels of the human mind. Man has had the world opened to him by the gateway of his sympathies, and by that portal he should always be led on his way into life."

The first essential in teaching any subject is to have a distinct aim before you. What are you trying to do? Be sure of that before you begin, and stick to it.