

American. Newspaper enterprise and rivalry have put a special premium on sensationalism of a coarse and prurient type. Whether evil deeds happen in the crowded dens haunted by the criminal classes, in the luxuriant abode of fashion and wealth, in the staid provincial town, in the quiet country district, in the south-western cattle rancho or in the unconventional mining camp, the telegraph transmits the record of crime, and the ready scribe, a trained adept at spicily writing, presents it to many thousands of readers who follow all the details, real and imaginary, with an avidity that cannot be concealed. It is the unusual and the abnormal that attracts general attention. The quiet home life, the substantial virtues of Christian people of the United States do not obtrude themselves on the public gaze. They are undemonstrative. The people who live reputable lives pursue the even tenor of their way, and do not come into the glare of publicity now so ubiquitous that nothing can elude its search.

While not closing our eyes to the good that happily prevails, it would be folly to imagine that at present many forms of crime are not alarmingly prevalent. In high places and low, lawlessness is holding high carnival. It is enough to make people seriously ask the question "Whither are we drifting?" It may appear remote from us in Canada. This, however, is a delusion. Whether we will it or not, influences at work among our neighbours make themselves felt throughout the Dominion. The plagues so visible in their destructiveness south of the boundary may not be so rampant nor so widespread here as there, nevertheless their germs are amongst us, and they develop with wonderful rapidity.

In one recent issue of a leading New York paper, there were no fewer than fifteen cases of juvenile crime reported. A wave of wild lawlessness is apparently sweeping over the country. A little boy, neatly dressed, was sitting on the steps of a church door. Three eleven-year-old footpads attacked him, stripped him of a valuable watch, and made off. Three masked boys, aged fourteen, fifteen and sixteen respectively, waylaid a pedlar and robbed him of \$900 and a gold watch. These lads were caught. In their possession were found gold-mounted revolvers, and a goodly stock of dime novels. Another band of juvenile bandits were caught in an attempt to plunder a store. Their ages ranged from nine, to twelve years. Some of them had just returned from a low theatre, where the plays are usually of the same stamp as the dime novel. A fourteen-year-old adventurer was captured at Baltimore on his way to the great West. He was a fugitive from his uncle in Brooklyn. He, too, was a diligent student of the dime novel. In the town of Quincy, seven young boys attending one of the schools, composing the "Jesse James Gang," were tried for several cases of burglary. At their trial it came out that another school in the same town had furnished a similar gang with a no less sensational appellation. Then, at Cape May, there was the eighteen-year-old lad who attempted to kill his father, mother, two sisters and two brothers with rat poison. He was a youth of ungovernable temper. A boy was sent to prison for assaulting his parents. A brother of his was also sentenced for a similar offence. At Boston, an organized gang of young burglars, ranging from twelve to sixteen years of age, were captured by the police. They met in a cellar, and had made a language for themselves. And so the sickening record continues to wearisome length.

It does not necessarily follow that all these hare-brained juvenile buccaners will become hardened criminals when they reach manhood. Some of them, no doubt, will live to be heartily ashamed of the miserable escapades in which they have figured, and may be enrolled in the ranks of reputable citizenship. But not all of them. The criminal instinct so prematurely developed, will hurry them on to scenes and exploits of lawlessness, where child's play has no place. They have been sowing the wind; they will have to reap the whirlwind. If these seminaries of wickedness are turning out such numbers of recruits to swell the criminal ranks, what must be the danger to society at no distant day?

There is a cause for this startling phenomenon. It is easy enough to trace it to the pernicious dime novel, and the penny theatres, where crime and vice are meretriciously glorified, and the uninformed minds and passions of silly lads are inflamed with glitter thrown around the heroes of the robbers' den. But why do the boys read such books? and why do they visit such

haunts? Were parents and guardians properly alive to their responsibilities, and ordinarily watchful, not one in ten of those who now indulge their taste for baleful literature would have the chance.

There is another obvious cause for this startling outbreak of juvenile depravity. Parental authority is relaxed. It has, in too many instances, sold its birth-right and abrogated its functions. In human society, parental rule is the primary authority. There has been a recoil from the over-severity and rigidity of former times. We are fast rushing to the opposite extreme. Youth is permitted to dominate home. Its conveniences, comfort, caprices and whims exact deference. It will have its way. There is no need, on the other hand, of the mere enforcement of authority for its own sake. Let the fulness of love rule in the hearts of parents and children, and where this is, home will be happy. Parental oversight will not be indifferent as to where and how the young spend their evenings, nor what books are read by the members of the household. Make home joyous, and let healthful and varied reading be provided, and instead of young Canadians being fascinated by a lazy vagabond hero, who graduates for the gallows, they will be trained to appreciate and admire the true heroes and heroines who have served God and ennobled their race. Instead of the wild excitement of the blood-and-thunder romance, they will learn to enjoy the grand achievements of those who have fashioned English literature. The dime novel, like the pestilence, must be put beyond the reach of Canadian youth. It must be exterminated.

## BOOKS AND MAGAZINES.

**HARPER'S MAGAZINE.** (New York: Harper & Brothers.)—Part of Paul Murillo's "Immaculate Conception" forms the frontispiece of the April number. The illustrated articles are: "A Visit to Sardis;" "The Hohenzollerns," by Herbert Tuttle; "From the Fraser to the Columbia," by Ernest Ingersoll; "Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton," by C. Kegan Paul. "The Second War for Independence," by T. W. Higginson; "Working Men's Homes," Several of the poems, stories and serials have handsome and appropriate illustrations. Professor Trowbridge contributes a useful paper on Modern Sanitary Engineering." In addition to several good short stories, Charles Read, E. P. Roe, and William Black continue their respective works now running in the pages of *Harper's*. The Easy Chair, Literary and Historical Records and Drawer contain much varied interesting and instructive reading.

**THE CENTURY.** (New York: The Century Co.)—The frontispiece to the April number is a portrait of Sydney Lanier, at the age of fifteen. There is another portrait of him in Dr. Ward's paper on "Sydney Lanier; Poet." The illustrated papers are: "The White House," by E. V. Smalley; Mrs. Sarah Freeman Clarke's concluding paper "Notes on the Exile of Dante;" "The New York City Hall," the third paper by T. W. G. Benjamin; "Among the Magdalen Islands," "Progress in Fish Culture;" and "New Zealand in Blooming December," by Miss Gordon Cumming. Other noteworthy articles are: "How Wilkes Booth Crossed the Potomac," and John Burroughs's "Arnold on Emerson and Carlyle," "Uncle Tom without a Cabin" and "The Destiny of the Universe." "Dr. Sevier," and "An Average Man" progress in interest, and "Marse Chan" is a good short story in negro dialect. Poetry is plentiful and good, while Topics of the Time and Open Letters are varied and interesting as usual.

**THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY.** (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.)—The April *Atlantic* opens with the second and last part of "Drifting Down Lost Creek," one of the most striking short stories recently published by Charles Egbert Cragdock. Mr. Crawford's serial, "A Roman Singer," and Dr. Mitchell's "In War Time" both have two new chapters, and deepen the impression already made of the unusual power and interest of these stories. Henry James contributes another of his charming French travel papers, this time describing Avignon and Orange. "The Return of a Native" is an engaging short story by Edith M. Thomas, one of the most attractive of the younger writers for the *Atlantic*. Professor N. S. Shaler discusses "The Red Sunsets" and their probable causes. "Annina" is a story of a pretty Waldensian girl, by Charles Dunning. Oliver T. Morton writes about "Presidential Nominations." Mar's Louise Henry

contributes a sketch of Madame de Longueville. Bradford Torrey has an interesting bird article, entitled "Phyllida and Coridon." There are poems by G. P. Lathrop and Helen Gray Cone; reviews of several noteworthy new books; and the Contributors' Club has some delightful extracts from a "Rhymed Letter," by James Russell Lowell, not included in his volumes.

## KNOX COLLEGE—CLOSE OF SESSION

The closing exercises of Knox College took place on the 2nd inst. The Convocation Hall was crowded with the students, alumni, and friends of the college. Principal Caven presided. Among those present were Dr. Daniel Wilson, President Toronto University, Principal Sheraton, of Wyclif Hall, and Dr. Castle, of McMaster Hall, Professors, McLaren, Greig, and Proudfoot, Rev. Dr. Laing, of Dundas, Rev. Dr. Reid, and Rev. Dr. Wardrope, besides many ministers both in the city and from a distance.

After prayer by the Rev. H. M. Parsons, Principal Caven expressed the gratitude of the Faculty for the blessings that had been granted to the College during the session just closing. All the progress made was attributed to the Heavenly Father's kind care. The health of the students during the session had been good, but at the commencement of the session one of the most beloved and promising students had been cut off suddenly. The Principal announced the following list of

## SCHOLARSHIPS AND PRIZES.

**FIRST YEAR.**—Bayne Scholarship, \$50, Hebrew, on entering theology, Wm. Farquharson, B.A. James McLaren Scholarship, \$60, general proficiency—Wm. Farquharson, B.A. Alexander Scholarship, No. 1, \$50, systematic theology—John McKay, B.A. Goldie Scholarship, \$50, exegesis—S. S. Craig and A. McD. Heig, B.A. Gillies Scholarship, No. 1, \$40, Church history—A. N. Campbell, B.A. Dunbar Scholarship, \$50, apologetics—J. L. Campbell, B.A., and R. Haddow, B.A. Gillies Scholarship, No. 2, \$40, Biblical Criticism—J. L. Campbell, B.A., and R. C. Tibb, B.A. Hamilton Scholarship, \$40, best average—R. Haddow, B.A., and A. H. Drumm, B.A.

**SECOND YEAR.**—J. A. Cameron Scholarship, \$50, general proficiency—J. M. Gardiner. Knox Church (Toronto) Scholarship No. 1, \$60, Systematic Theology—J. C. Smith, B.A. Knox Church (Toronto) Scholarship No. 2, \$60, Exegesis—W. A. Duncan, M.A. Huron Scholarship, \$40, Church History—W. L. H. Rowand, B.A. Alexander Scholarship, No. 2, \$50, best average—R. C. Howard. Loghrim Scholarship, \$50, Apologetics—A. Blair, B.A.

**THIRD YEAR.**—Bonar-Burris Scholarship, \$80, general proficiency—J. S. McKay, M.A. Fisher Scholarship, No. 1, \$60, Systematic Theology—J. Campbell. Fisher Scholarship, No. 2, \$60, Exegesis—G. E. Freeman. Torrance Scholarship, \$50 best average—A. Hamilton. Boyd Scholarship, \$40, Biblical history—Thomas Nixon.

**SECOND AND THIRD YEARS.**—Central Church, Hamilton, Scholarship, \$60, Church government—W. S. McTavish. Cheyne Scholarship, \$40, past. theology—W. M. Fleming. Smith Scholarship, \$50, essay on "Love of God"—John Campbell. Boyden prize, \$30, special examination in Calvinism—J. Campbell.

**FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD YEARS.**—Clark prize, No. 1 (Lange's Commentary), New Testament, Greek—A. Hamilton. Clark prize, No. 2 (Lange's Commentary), Old Testament, Greek—J. S. McKay, M.A. Gaelic Scholarship, \$40—Duncan McColl. The Prince of Wales prize, \$60, is held this year as last by J. A. Jaffray, B.A.

The following stood first in the classes of the several years:—

**FIRST YEAR.**—Systematic Theology—John McKay, B.A. Exegesis—W. Farquharson, B.A. Apologetics—W. Farquharson, B.A. Church History—A. N. Campbell. Biblical Criticism—W. Farquharson, B.A. Biblical History—W. Farquharson, B.A., and R. C. Tibb, B.A.

**SECOND YEAR.**—Systematic Theology—J. M. Gardiner. Exegesis—W. A. Duncan, M.A. Apologetics—J. M. Gardiner and W. A. Duncan, M.A. Church History—J. M. Gardiner. Church Government—J. M. Gardiner. Pastoral Theology—J. M. Gardiner.

**THIRD YEAR.**—Systematic Theology—John Campbell. Exegesis—John S. McKay, M.A. Church Government—John S. McKay, M.A. Pastoral Theology—J. S. McKay and W. S. McTavish. Biblical History—J. S. McKay.

The following gentlemen were invested with the degree of Bachelor of Divinity.—W. G. Wallace, M.A., and John Gibson, M.A.

In the evening a large and interesting meeting was held in St. James' Square Church, at which Principal Caven presided. After devotional exercises, Dr. Caven delivered an excellent practical address to the students. Mr. W. S. McTavish delivered an able and appropriate valedictory, which was gracefully and fittingly responded to by Mr. J. S. McKay, B.A.

Dr. Laing, of Dundas, then addressed the students in a forcible and telling manner. The subject of his address was timely "The Maintenance of the Law of God."

The College Glee Club enlivened the proceedings by rendering several appropriate selections.

The meeting was brought to a close with the doxology and benediction.