

"The Trumpet Major," republished in Macmillan's Colonial Library, makes the round dozen of Hardy's works that have appeared in this form. Those who have already read it are aware that while it is inferior in power to some of the other works of the same author it is written in pleasing style and appeals to the large class of readers who enjoy a fresh, wholesome romance free from soul-harrowing incidents. The scene is laid in a village near the south coast of England at the time of the threatened invasion of Napoleon early in the present century. Its interest turns upon the varying fortunes of a soldier, a sailor, and a young country squire in their race for the hand of an attractive English girl. A trace of the writer's pessimistic and, alas! not altogether false view of life is seen in the harum-scarum sailor winning the prize, while his high-souled soldier brother is sent off to die in the Peninsular war.

"Disturbing Elements." This is a very pretty, wholesome story. We have a female villain in it, and she is a Frenchwoman, and she does not say or do anything like what she would probably have said or done in a French novel, and then she is completely defeated. But there are other characters besides hers, and although the end of the story looks sad, it yet offers an outlook for something better. To those who are weary of sensational stories, and society novels, and the new woman, and bad reflections of the detestable French novel, we can recommend this wholesome book. The volume is one of the series known as Macmillan's Colonial Library, and is sold for 75 cents in paper covers.

"Maureen's Fairing and Other Stories." We should prefer to say "sketches" rather than "stories"; for, although these sketches are stories, their merit seldom consists in the story which they tell. As sketches, they are nearly all good, and to those who know and relish Irish language they may have a greater charm than for ordinary English readers. Still some of the stories, such as a "A Formidable Rival," "Mac's Luncheon," and "The Murphys' Supper" are distinctly good, and "Stopped by Signal" is very Irish. As we said before, some of the sketches are probably more entertaining to Irishmen than to mere Saxons. For ourselves, "Maureen's Fairing," "A Cream-coloured Cactus" and some others are distinctly above us.

"The Redemption of the Brahman." We have already noticed, with approval and commendation, this striking story of Indian life, and need now only note that we have here a new and cheaper edition in paper covers.

* * *

Letters to the Editor.

NOT PROVEN.

SIR,—I observe in an editorial paragraph in THE WEEK a somewhat hasty criticism of Sir Richard Cartwright's statement that the Royal Military College was founded on the model of Westpoint. I do not know on what supposed authority you attack this statement, but I can assure you, on what I think unimpeachable authority, that the contradiction is a mistake, and that the Royal Military College was, as a matter of fact, founded on the model of Westpoint, which, at that time, at any rate, was considered to be better equipped and organized than either Sanhurst or Woolwich. Whether the College should have been founded at all is open to question, but certainly it was the business of the Government which founded it to take the very best model possible, wheresoever this was to be found. Sir Richard Cartwright is usually pretty careful as to his facts, and he was not likely to make a mistake in regard to matters with which he is naturally so familiar.

Most people will think that the critics of the Liberals must be pretty hard put to it for proof of the absurd and stale cry of "looking to Washington," if the simple statement of a historical fact over twenty years old is to be taken as "confirmation strong" of such a "weakness!" I thought THE WEEK had a higher regard for its old-time reputation for fairness and freedom from partisanship? And does it mean to imply that we are to ban and boycott everything American,—that we are to deprive ourselves of the advant-

age of adopting their numberless improvements in all directions? If so, what traitorous developments we may find in our railway and tram-cars, our American bicycles, type-writers, sewing machines, printing presses—nay, even in our church bells and organs. Don't let us have one rule in talking politics and another in private life.

FAIR PLAY.

OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

SIR,—In THE WEEK of April 24th Mr. Galt has an article in which he deals somewhat trenchantly with our Ontario System of Education. Mr. Galt has two complaints to enter against it: (1) The system is too costly. (2) It accomplishes too little.

In support of this first contention he gives the total amount expended during the past twenty years on public and high schools, viz., seventy-nine millions of dollars, and if italics mean anything, he affects to be amazed at the magnitude of this amount. A point of very great importance he fails to mention—that this represents the amount expended on the education of nine million pupils, which by simple division gives in round numbers, a cost of nine dollars per pupil per year, an amount which cannot certainly be considered either costly or excessive; and yet with this amount Mr. Galt is dissatisfied because of the lack of "production of scholars and great men." In might occur to other readers that this amount is excessively small for the accomplishment of the purpose Mr. Galt desires. To other readers who believe that "poeta nascitur non fit," the presence or absence of any system of education is immaterial.

The second charge that our system accomplishes too little, Mr. Galt assumes to be proven by two statements: a negative—we have produced no scholars and great men; and a positive—we are a nation of newspaper and novel readers. Whether these are the correct and only measures of what a system of education should or should not accomplish seems open to question. There are many people who think that the development of the executive ability of the boy or girl is a serious and important function of education. Measured in terms of this unit, will Mr. Galt declare that the people of Ontario are in any way inferior to any other people in their ability to initiate and carry through reforms or in their management of their commercial and legislative affairs? That Mr. Galt is quite positive of the value of his standards of measurement also appears doubtful. There is a gleam of consolation in the clause "when we do produce a Gilbert Parker" (the italics are ours) and of regret in "he is compelled to become an exile in order to make a living" on account of "the narrowness of our market even for works of fiction." Mr. Parker is known as a pleasing novelist—but to read novels is an evidence of the failure of our system of education. It is true also that we have a narrow market, only five millions of souls; but surely that is not the fault of our educational system. It gives very many a great deal of pleasure to read THE WEEK, another evidence according to Mr. Galt of the pernicious effects of our system of education. The point I wish to make is, that it is a very difficult thing to say specifically what a system of education should accomplish, and a much more difficult thing to correctly measure its results.

The remedy proposed by Mr. Galt is "to restrict our efforts to public schools only, and by making the course of study more interesting and less pretentious we would impart a more thorough education and would stay the annual expenditure of millions of dollars." How make the course of study more interesting? Mr. Galt would not have music or temperance, algebra, geometry, bookkeeping, physics, or botany, but the plain and simple three R's. If Mr. Galt knows any way of making reading, writing, and arithmetic alone interesting for seven years of school life, he would be indeed a benefactor to thousands of teachers if he would let them know how it is to be done. He also speaks of lopping off millions annually. How many millions? The annual expenditure is four and one-half millions. Taking away the least possible number of millions, we have two and one half millions for the education of four hundred and fifty thousand pupils; about six dollars per head, and for this amount we are to expect a yearly crop of "scholars and great men!" Is it worth while discussing the question further from Mr. Galt's basis?

W. H. JENKINS.