

Young - Friends' - Review.

"NEGLECT NOT THE GIFT THAT IS IN THEE."

VOL. IX.

LONDON, ONT., SEVENTH MONTH 15TH, 1894.

NO. 14

THE SOUL.

Scatter the germs of the beautiful
On the holy shrine of hom ;
Let the pure, and the fair, and the graceful there
In the loveliest luster come.
Scatter the germs of the beautiful
In the depths of the human sou ;
They shall bud and blossom and bear fruit
While the endless ages roll. —Sel.

PURE LITERATURE.

An Essay, by Carrie F. Zavitz, read at Coldstream, Ont., at the session on Philanthropic Study, in connection with Lebo First-day School, 6th mo. 24th, 1894.

"Of making many books there is no end," and if all were *good* books how much greater the power for improvement they would wield. But too often by the side of the good we may find the evil, and blest is that mind capable and strong to choose the pure and ennobling, and to shun that which is of an opposite character.

It has been truly said that if one leaves a book with desires for a better life, if wishes to do some good fill the mind, that is a book worthy to be his companion, silent, but influential. How sad that the influence exercised over one by books which instill wrong desires is equally strong. But, it is true that we become like our associates. "Evil communications corrupt good manners," is applicable to the communications which our minds may receive from evil books. Many a lesson we may learn from the records of our newspapers, instances in which we may profit by the sad experiences of others. I read of a young lad of fourteen being arrested for failure to attend school, and at the request of his mother sentenced to the Industrial School. He had been a good boy—his mother's fondest hopes centered

in him, but he fell in with evil associates. These boys had built a shanty in a secluded spot, where their evenings were spent in card playing, dime novel reading, and cigarette smoking. Thus many a fond parents' boy gathers false views, and becomes lost to a life of usefulness, if not a criminal, through the evil effects of bad books.

The following, taken from a magazine, forcibly illustrates the effects of evil reading :

"One day a gentleman, in India, went into his library and took down a book from its shelves. As he did so, he felt a slight pain in his finger, like the prick of a pin. He thought some careless person had left a pin in the corner of the book. But soon his finger began to swell, then his arm, then his whole body, and in a few days he died. It was not a pin among the books, but a small and deadly serpent."

There are many serpents among books nowadays. They nestle in the foliage of some of our most fascinating literature ; they coil around the flowers whose perfume intoxicates the senses. People read, and are charmed by the plot of the story ; by the skill with which the characters are grouped ; by the gorgeousness of the word painting, and hardly feel the pin prick of the evil that is insinuated. But it stings and poisons. When the record of ruined souls is made up, on what multitudes will be inscribed : "Poisoned by serpents among the books." Let us watch against the serpent, and read only that which is instructive and profitable.

We, in this neighborhood, are very favorably situated in regard to freedom from temptation on this point. The Mechanics' Institute furnishes to all