

facility has been given to trustees by the Educational Department to furnish their schools with suitable library books at the least possible cost to the neighborhood. It is gratifying to know that so many of the trustees have cheerfully availed themselves of these facilities, but still there are yet many parts of the country in which no free public school libraries have yet been established. From an interesting library map of Upper Canada, recently compiled in the Educational Department, it is curious to see how whole districts of the newer parts of the country have largely availed themselves of their library privileges, while many of the older parts have literally done nothing at all. What may be the future fate of the children of the schools thus deprived of the blessing and companionship of good books during the long winter evenings, it is difficult to tell; but the risk in their case is more than should be incurred by intelligent parents or trustees.

## II. Papers on Youthful Crime and its causes.

### 1. YOUTHFUL CRIME AND CHEAP PERIODICALS.

It was Sir Walter Scott who, according to Lockhart's *Life* of him, said, that to teach a child to read and then not to provide books for him, was like teaching a person to seek good food, and then bring him to an empty larder. Sir Walter's own beautiful writings undoubtedly helped to banish the trashy novels—the *Pamelas*, &c. of a former age, wherefore we respect his memory; but the two cases which he mentions differ greatly. A child who has been taught to read, and to love reading, if not supplied with books or papers that are good, will exercise his power on those that are bad. Reading of some kind he must and will have. His is not, as in the case of the hungry person, a question between food and no food, but it is a question between good reading and bad reading. How often, when walking the streets of this great metropolis, if you are only moderately observant, may you see youths, evidently intelligent in countenance, quick in sensibility, their arms entwined around each other's neck, dead to all outward signs of life, to the passing crowd, to the roll of vehicles, to the flowing tide of business, gazing intently into a shop window, where hang many cheap periodicals, adorned with rough woodcuts, setting before the bodily eye the burden of the letterpress, which relates how deeds of violence were done without detection, how a free and easy way of life was secured by some bold stroke for money, and how the assertors of the law were outwitted and baffled by an unscrupulous use of nerve. No one will say that the children whose attention is bound and taste fascinated by such literature as is here described, do not slowly imbibe poison. Yet they have been taught and well taught, in Church schools, perhaps, and having the power of reading given to them, they exercise it. The Church is liberal towards her children. It is not her fault if any of them grow up in ignorance. She spends large sums of money on schools, colleges, teachers, books. But the church leaves too much to the enterprise of private publishers, when she neglects the work of publishing cheap periodicals for children. Private publishers have one object, and only one, namely, to sell their publications and make money, and they will accomplish their object by following, but not creating, the public taste. Of course the result is certain. We have the cheapest editions of *Jack Sheppard*, and a succession of such books as *Charley Wag*. The poison is first set flowing in towns, but it soon affects villages. We have endeavoured on every suitable occasion to draw attention in this *Paper* to the evil which we deplore. Proofs of the evil are not wanting. One was furnished a few days ago.

"*Robbery by a Page*.—Wm. James Faver, page in the service of Lady Caroline Thynne, of No. 15a Upper Brook Street, Grosvenor Square, was charged before Mr. Knox with stealing some gold bracelets and a quantity of other property, belonging to her ladyship.—Serjeant John Mulvaney, 24 A, said: "On the 21st instant I went to the residence of Lady Caroline Thynne, 15a Upper Brook Street, and found that the prisoner, who was page in her ladyship's service, had absconded, taking with him a quantity of jewellery and other valuable property. I found the woodwork of a drawer had been cut and forced. Yesterday, from information I had received from the superintendent of police at Dover, I went there, and took the prisoner into custody. On telling him the charge, he said it was all true, and that he had done it through reading the *Life of Jack Sheppard*. On searching his box I found in it the book in question. If remanded I shall be able to produce the whole of the property."—The prisoner: I have no question to ask. It is all true.—Mr. Knox remanded the prisoner."

William James Faver fell a victim to the *Life of Jack Sheppard*, but he is not a solitary instance of the debasing effect of a great mass of the current cheap literature. *Charley Wag*, the *Wild Boys of London*, and other cheap publications, are quietly doing their inevitable work, working out a vast plan of demoralisation. Ed. Breese fell a victim in the following week.

"*Attempt to set Fire to a House*.—Edward Breese, a youth of fifteen, was charged with attempting to set fire to his master's premises, 523 Oxford Street.—Mr. W. Andrews, the prosecutor, deposed that he was a tailor, and the prisoner was a porter in his employ at eight shillings a week and his board and lodging. He had been about four months in his situation. Having missed a considerable quantity of cloth, &c., he had lately suspected the prisoner of robbing him, and this impression was confirmed by his seeing the boy with a silk handkerchief in his possession belonging to witness. This was on Sunday. He told the boy he must go, and on Monday morning at about eleven o'clock he placed a placard in his window, intimating that another lad was wanted. Shortly after this there was a strong smell of smoke all over the house, and on going to the shop he asked prisoner what was the cause of it. He said he did not know. Witness then proceeded down stairs to the back kitchen, and found that the smoke proceeded from a little room under the shop, a dresser which was still burning and very much charred. He then accused the boy of having purposely set fire to the place, and he denied it; but he afterwards admitted the fact, saying that he set light to it with some paper. Witness, reflecting upon the serious nature of the offence, thought it his duty to give the boy into custody, although he had previously told him that he should simply discharge him. Such was the position of the dresser, that if the flames had been fanned by a draught, the whole house must have been speedily burnt down. I told him I should let him go before he confessed, but I afterwards considered that I was wrong in letting him off.—Police constable 42 E said he found the dresser charred and burnt for about three feet, as described by Mr. Andrews. The boy admitted that he did it to be revenged upon his master for having given him notice to leave. He found that the prisoner had been in the constant habit of reading such publications as *Charley Wag*, the *Wild Boys of London*, and other cheap publications, several copies of which he found in the boy's possession, (produced). The prisoner, on being asked if he had anything to say to the charge, replied, without any sign of contrition, 'nothing.'—Mr. Flowers: I must remand him for a week, and consider how I shall deal with the case."

Surely cheap periodicals, to counteract the bad ones, which are now so numerous, ought to be issued by the organs of the Church; and when issued, ought to be patronised, encouraged, and circulated in every possible way. While we have one such periodical, for example, as *Pleasant Hours*, we ought to have half-a-dozen. It ought to be possible to furnish reading as fascinating and powerful in an opposite direction, as *Jack Sheppard*. There surely must be and is a simple, manly, affecting way of telling a tale, and the story of a life, and as good a mode of relating an adventure, as are to be found in any bad periodical. But the great fault of most persons who write for good periodicals is, that they are either too sermony, or else witty, without the power of being such, and hence they become too smart, too flippant, and therefore unreal; or the style which they adopt on paper is so mawkish, so enfeebling, that the reader, however young, feels that he is an artificial atmosphere. He is made sad. He cannot sympathise with sorrows which are as the sorrows of babyhood; he pines for something more chilling and real, like a man who is condemned to spend hours, on a hot evening, in a crowded saloon, when he thinks of the cold bath at home which would restore him. This question of cheap Church periodicals is important. May such periodicals be multiplied, and when multiplied, encouraged!

This is our earnest wish. The object is pressing. The influences of the schools are being undermined. We want many good cheap periodicals to counteract the effects of bad ones; but the writing in such should be manly while it is simple. In one word, it must be real.

### 2. PERNICIOUS READING FOR BOYS WHO CAN READ.

A few weeks ago, a boy was charged with stealing an article of small value, and one such as boys would scarcely begin to take. The little fellow was bright and intelligent. There was a natural ingenuousness in him which was engaging. Yet he stood at the bar of the police court, a thief! He was not poverty stricken. Idle fellows had not used him as their easy tool, and deserted him when he became their "conscript on whom the lot fell." Kind relatives, to save their pockets, had not turned him out upon a stirring world. He had a home humble and obscure, down a