

of the school buildings throughout the Province. We wish it were possible to say as much for their equipment and æsthetic adornment. The frequent absence of wall-maps, globes, and apparatus, and above all, of a good reference library attached to each school, is a serious drawback to its efficiency and usefulness; while, in the unrelieved ugliness, in many cases, of the school surroundings, the eye and taste of the pupil is left wholly uncultivated.

The percentage of pupils attending the schools for a portion only of the year, and the large number that leave them before their schooling can by any stretch of courtesy be said to be over, are facts brought to light by the report, and upon which neither our educational authorities nor the people of the Province can plume themselves. Before the Legislature and the municipalities are asked to increase the grants to the Public Schools—and agitation with this object in view has begun to show itself—this matter of school attendance should be minutely investigated.

The gatherings throughout the year at the County Teachers' Associations are referred to in the report with approval, though to get the full benefit of these professional conferences, the presence of every teacher should be compulsory, and the greatest care be taken to provide interesting themes for discussion, and programmes sufficiently attractive to ensure a full attendance.

Turning to the Reports of the Inspectors, we come to material more provocative of comment than that which we have so far dealt with. The reports show the inward working of the schools, with remarks by the supervisors of the educational machinery on many points which have been and still are subjects of heated controversy, in connection with the curriculum of studies, the text-books in use, and the methods of teaching. But this section of the Minister's Report opens so large a field for criticism that we shall have to defer to a future issue the task of handling it.

G. M. A.

["BUT YET A WOMAN," BY ARTHUR S. HARDY, BOSTON: HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & Co.]

This novel, by a hitherto unknown writer, disputed with "Mr. Isaacs" the honour of being regarded as the hit of the season of 1883. Professor Hardy's characteristics as a writer are altogether unlike those of Mr. F. Marion Crawford. Such prodigality of genius as has enabled Mr. Crawford to pour out from unjaded brain four stories within the year, could be expected of Mr. Hardy by no reader who had made himself acquainted with Mr. Hardy's methods and the distinctive qualities of his work. "But Yet a Woman" has as yet had no successor. It is a story carefully elaborated, polished *ad unguem*. It must have been written slowly. It displays neither the charm nor the ill-effects of the running pen. There is no haste in it, neither is there very much unnecessary loitering. Still the story is to us a little disappointing. We can hardly understand the enthusiasm which it has excited—an enthusiasm quite comprehensible in the case of "Mr. Isaacs". Mr. Hardy observes microscopically; he analyzes with delicate skill; dissects with the keenest of lancets. He has clear judgment, and, therefore, justly relates his causes and effects; he has poetic feeling, imagination, and hence can vivify his creations, can cast the purple of ideality over his scenes and happenings. With such fine excellences he has made a book which every one ought to commend, but over which few could be expected to rhapsodize. Yet such cynics as editors have certainly rhapsodized over it; whence our wonder! To us it seems a book to please, not to absorb one. Its life moves through fine blue veins; it throbs not warmly enough, not redly enough. Only here and there, in the Spanish episode, are we suffered to be conscious of a pulse. As a consequence, our feelings are not very ardently enlisted upon the side of any one of the characters, unless it be old Antonio. On this account also our sympathy is less with the sweet maiden Renée, than with the beautiful and self-sacrificing young widow Stéphanie Milevski, who has lived and endured, and whom we are almost permitted to think of as endowed with like passions to ourselves. It is a certain pleasure to point out that the work does contain one slip; we discovered after a lynx-eyed search, a plural subject with an unjustifiable singular verb. We cannot conclude this notice, however, without giving a specimen of Mr. Hardy's accurate and original character painting:—

"There are some men who reach the downward slope of life without succumbing to Penelope, Phyllis, or Phryne. Such men are rare; nevertheless they exist, for M. Michel was one. During the forty years that had elapsed since he left the Lycée Louis-le-Grand many women had crossed his path, of whose charms he was not ignorant and to whose influence he was a debtor. More than once they had softened his convictions and purified his ideals, for he was neither a hermit nor a scoffer. \* \* \* Still, for M. Michel, woman existed as it were *en masse*, as says the proverb, 'he admired the forest without seeing the trees.' Indispensable to society as the flowers of the Luxembourg to the gardens in which he took his daily walk, it had never occurred to him to appropriate either the one or the other. He admired neither one nor many women, but only woman. Indeed, some of M. Michel's friends had affirmed that it was precisely this eccentricity which rendered him so agreeable. In his society they escaped for a time that mania of appropriation which even a coquette tires, at times, of provoking; with him one could lower one's guard without danger, and indulge in a certain *abandon* with security."

["ENGLISH LYRICS." D. Appleton and Co., New York.]

A curiously-assorted collection of lyric poems from the pens of great English writers forms the ultimate volume of the "Parchment Library," to which are appended some useful notes by the Editor.

THE BIOGRAPHY OF LUTHER, by Mr. Froude, which appeared in the *Contemporary Review* has been reprinted in volume form by Charles Scribner's Sons, of New York.

## MUSIC AND THE DRAMA.

At the warerooms of Messrs. Mason & Risch, this evening, will be given the third "Evening Concert" of the Toronto Quartette Club.

MISS CARRIE REEVES, daughter of the famous tenor Sims Reeves, is said to have scored a success in her *début*. This will somewhat compensate for the great disappointment Herbert Reeves has been to her father.

THE Chicago critics have been saying that there is genius in every wrinkle of Mr. Irving's eyebrow, and that god-like power is manifest in the bendings of his little finger. Also that Ellen Terry has a plastic soul, as responsive to emotion as an Æolian harp, and that her wind-blown tresses do not bear the marks of moral crimping-irons. Is there not poetry in the City of Pork? In one week Irving was able to wrinkle that eyebrow and to run that little finger over 17,000 dols.

A MAN shall be judged by the company he keeps. So the tastes of a community may be estimated by the companies (theatrical) it most liberally supports. Measured by this standard, the city of Toronto contains a large sprinkling of amusement seekers who have a preference for spicy performances; for the "Devil's Auction" had crowded houses during the whole of last week. No legitimate play has been attended with such success for a long time. The Queen City seems to be cultivating a taste for naughty shows, with a strong preference for such as include a ballet costumed to the verge of indecency.

In Toronto general complaint is made of the extortionate prices demanded for seats at the forthcoming Irving-Terry performances in the Opera House. The management have sold a large quantity of tickets to speculators whose rapacity has raised the prices from 100 to 150 per cent. over the advertised rates. This has naturally excited the indignation of lovers of legitimate performances, who protest against being charged fancy prices each time a good company comes along, after steadily supporting the average indifferent ones at ordinary rates. The remedy is in the hands of the play-going public. Let them on all similar occasions refuse to pay more than the billed prices, and neither management nor speculators will repeat the experiment.

## LITERARY GOSSIP.

ON DIT that a Toronto evening journal is moribund, and is not expected to last many days.

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE has in its last issue judicious selections from the greater magazines and reviews.

At the meeting of the Canadian Institute on Saturday evening a paper was read by Professor J. B. McMurrich, on "The Skeleton of the Cat-Fish."

ARTEMUS WARD's mother, Eli Perkins, and Josh Billings have each had a legacy of \$35,000, left by Colonel Hunt, a millionaire lumberman of Michigan.

THE current number of *Manhattan* contains a very readable article on "What will become of Egypt" by William W. Loring, Pasha, and a paper on "Creation or Evolution" by George Ticknor Curtis.

MR. JOHN T. HAWKE, manager and editor of the lately defunct *Hamilton Tribune*, has purchased the *Palladium of Labour*, recently started as an evening Hamilton labour organ, and will shortly transform it into a two-cent daily.

In *The Continent*, for February 20th, is an exceedingly interesting, compact, biographical essay, entitled "The Friend of the Dyak," by James Macdonald Oxley, of Ottawa. The friend of the Dyak, of course, is Rajah Brooke.

HERBERT SPENCER complains of the inexcusable misrepresentations of the Duke of Argyll in criticising Spencer's "Data of Ethics." He charges the Duke with twisting this language until it does not bear the remotest resemblance to the text.

THE JOYS OF LIFE, Emile Zola's new book, is in press and will be shortly published by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia. It is the literary curiosity of the season, being a novel of passion, whose interest, it is deemed, lies in its truth and pathos.

"THE CONFESSION OF AN ENGLISH HASHISH-EATER," is the title of an unpublished work by De Quincy, which will shortly be issued. It was written in the last years of the author's life, and the MS. was discovered on the backs of some illustrations, in a book which was for many years in De Quincy's possession.

THE autobiographies of George Augustus Sala and Edmund Yates, which are promised for an early date, are looked forward to with great interest in London. It is to be hoped they will not cause so much disappointment as Serjeant Ballantyne's "Reminiscences," which were expected to be so very spicy and entertaining, but which were merely the perfunctory writings of had man who d promised a work he afterwards "funked."

THE Messrs. Stoddard, of Philadelphia, have had the enterprise to project and bring out the first of a series of four quarto volumes, under the title of "The Encyclopædia Americana," which is in the nature of a supplement to the ninth edition of "Encyclopædia Britannica." The design of the publication is to extend and complete the articles in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," which deal with American subjects, so as to make them more satisfactory and more serviceable, supplying what that work has designedly or otherwise omitted, and adding what has come into view by the lapse of time since the volumes of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" left the press.