

but nothing so utterly absurd as the talk of the St. Albans school respecting its religious significance. According to these seers the Duke's marriage will result in an approximation between the Russo-Greek and the English churches. Nay more; the Duchess is to conform to the Church of England—the High Church branch, we presume—and that with the permission not only of the Czar, but of the Holy Synod. And thus, the Ritualist casuists argue, the practical union of the churches will have been effected. The whole thing reads very much like the story of Alnaschar, or the fable of Perrette and her milk-pail.

Dr. Rae, the well-known Arctic voyager, has been lecturing on the Saskatchewan as a field for emigration. He is personally acquainted with the district, and gives it as his opinion that it is at present too remote from civilization to be fit for English settlers. He admits the fertility of the region and the general salubrity of the climate, but considers that the enormous distance from any town is one great drawback, while the long winter is another. Then, too, the rivers are difficult to navigate, and flow in the wrong direction. Add to this the danger of trouble with the Indians, and Dr. Rae's picture is complete.

The Hamilton Spectator has introduced in its columns a novel and very creditable feature. Under the heading, "The Unemployed; Men Who Want Work and Can't Find It," it publishes in a conspicuous place the names and addresses of poor mechanics and labourers who are out of work. We recommend the example for imitation by newspaper proprietors who are in the habit of charging unfortunate operatives in search of employment full rates for the advertisements in which they make known their wants.

The rumour that three regiments are about to be ordered to Canada has created not a little stir and given rise to several absurd reports. Among the ladies it has caused quite a flutter, and tradesmen in garrison towns are beginning to look hopeful. It seems, however, that there is very little ground for the statement, and that the ladies and the shop-keepers are doomed to disappointment.

Truly humorous lecturers are rare, though pseudo ditto are as thick as blackberries. A gentleman of the former class, Prof. De Cordova, lectures in this city on Monday and Tuesday next, under the auspices of the University Literary Society, whose untiring endeavours to provide entertainment for the Montreal public are worthy of imitation by similar bodies elsewhere.

"THE UNSPECIFIC SCANDAL." Persons desirous of obtaining this famous extravaganza in pamphlet form can do so on application to A. S. Woodburn, Elgin Street, Ottawa.

A CANADIAN VETERAN.

The following biographical details respecting an old Canadian settler, recently deceased, are worthy of being placed on record:

On the 9th December last, at the Seigneurie Daillebout, Province of Quebec, occurred the death of Colonel William Bent Bercey, whose history was considerably connected with Upper and Lower Canada during his life. He was born in London, England, on the 6th January, 1791, and was the elder and surviving son of Albert William Bercey, Esquire, of Saxony, Germany, (née William Albert Ulric, Baron Von Moll) who came to this country in 1792, bringing with him eighty-four German families and established a settlement in the Township of Markham, near Toronto (then York), and in the year 1795, became a settler at the same place.

In 1794, this gentleman executed a project of Governor Simcoe for building a military road called Yonge Street, leading from Toronto to Lake Simcoe, a distance of thirty-six miles. He subsequently went to New York, probably with intention of proceeding to Germany for the purpose of bringing out more emigrants, and died in that place in the year 1813.

The deceased was this gentleman's elder son, and served as a Captain in the Corps of Canadian Chasseurs, otherwise known as the 5th Battalion of Incorporated Militia of Upper Canada, during the war of 1812, and subsequent years. He was present at the battle of "Chrysler's Farm" in 1813, receiving for his services there, the medal granted by the Queen in 1848, "To the British Army, 1793-1814."

In 1855, he received the rank of Colonel Commanding Military District No. 8, Lower Canada. He was permitted to retire in 1863, and to retain his rank of Colonel.

In the Militia General Orders of Canada, is the following entry of date 16th January, 1863:

"His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief cannot allow Colonel Bercey to retire without recording the sense he entertains of the long and valuable services that officer has rendered to the Province during the period he has served in the militia dating from last war."

He held the Commission of Judge of the District Court of the Western District of Upper Canada, was a member of the House of Assembly of the same Province; for many years a Justice of the Peace in both Provinces, and Lieutenant Colonel Commanding one of the Battalions of Militia of Lower Canada, and co-Seigneur of the Seigneuries of Daillebout and De l'amezay, in the same Province.

In 1819, he married the eldest daughter of the late Honourable Pierre Louis Panet, one of the Judges of the Court of King's Bench for the District of Montreal, and one of the Executive Councillors of Lower Canada, by whom he leaves no issue.

He was much beloved and esteemed by his numerous relations, friends and tenants, and was one of the few of those remaining who took an active part in the stormy times of the early History of Canada.

WRONG TEACHING.

In our schools there is one-sided study, a hobby which is made to override all others—arithmetic and copy. If a pupil is a neat penman it is very well, but if he has nothing to write about, *quid ergo?* Many will say they are satisfied if their children are good mathematicians, but there is a deal more than that lore necessary, and spelling should be a *sine qua non*—besides, he who has the least sense is the most satisfied, always.

Our negro George prayed regularly, "lead us not onto a plantation," and the sound satisfied him, but teachers should impart sense as well as sound. A pretty maiden of fifteen years who had been at several seminaries of learning, was required in a plain, simple school, recently, to write a composition descriptive of her dinner. The exercise was in ten words, which are given *verbatim et literatim*, nine of which were misspelled:—

"For diner, cranbery, rost beef, soop, sallard, aple dumpler, sorce." She could spell *valetudinarian* as well as we can from her speller, and might have "graduated" without writing the long word. A child must be made to write his spelling by hook or by crook, with every reading lesson, and to write out unexpected sentences, for no reading and speaking in the educational world can take the place of writing. It is very well that our daughter can find the difference between 2 73-7ths and 3-11ths of 71½, but she ought to spell coffee with a double e.

Does the person who may stand before her mirror an hour and more, turning her head like a China Mandarin of a special button,—does she imagine that she can ever in reality be a lady minus good spelling? However, it is hard work to teach the young while so constantly hearing the carelessness and idiom of neglectful elders, who would find it well to conjugate the verbs do and see prior to saying, "I do it," "I see it," and fifty other errors wholly inexcusable in persons who should know better. To occupy the mind of the young is an easy task, when made to write early. Precepts and rules are repulsive to a child, but happy illustration wins him, and the commonest mind is full of thoughts, some worthy of the rarest, and could it see them fairly writ, would wonder at its wealth.

Children are more capable of being well educated than many are of educating them well.

Parents are apt to think their little ones should learn according to the price paid, as a writer once complainingly said, "I pay liberally." O, what an—a foolish man! If parents would think a little at home, they would find that making a recreation of proper education requires no more brain stimulus than the learning little Bo-Pe-p.

Our English cousins formerly and now are guilty of frequent grammatical blunders.

"That is a small matter between you and I," is one of them, and they do much disregard the personal pronouns.

"Can England spare from her service such men as him," is another violation by a smart speaker, and either Wesley or Watts-his-name long ago perpetrated this:

"He hath died to redeem such a rebel as me."

But let us study grammar as well as Euclid, and write oftener and better than we do.

THE PLAGUE OF BOOKS.

We find that in the course of last year there were published five hundred and seven new fictions and two hundred and twenty-one new poems. Let us reflect for a moment on all that is implied in this statement. How many poets and novelists are there in existence whose work has the smallest pretensions—we will not say to immortality—but to be read by any but the author's friends? If a foreigner were to ask a well-informed Englishman for a list of the most distinguished of those seven hundred writers, how many could he mention off-hand? We will leave it to our readers to suggest the particular names which would occur in either department of art; but it would be extravagant to say that during the last year twenty poems or fifty novels were published which any rational human being would care to rescue from the waste-paper basket. That is to say, if we were as charitable as possible and extended the limits of our toleration far beyond the really excellent down to that which has the barest possibility of some sort of vitality about it, we could not mention one-tenth of the publications in question as deserving of a moment's notice. Of the two hundred and twenty-one new poems we may say with tolerable confidence that two hundred represent utter failures, and that it would have been good for their authors if they had never seen the light. We may of course reconcile ourselves to the reflection on the general principle that waste is the law of the universe. As millions of herring's eggs are produced for every herring that comes to life, so it is inevitable that hundreds of poems should be printed for every one that is read. We could not trust any censor to slay these innocents before their publication; a great deal of printer's ink would be saved, but, on the other hand, a Keats or a Wordsworth would every now and then be suppressed; and the gain would not compensate the loss. We must suffer the production of any quantity of rubbish in the hope that here and there some good material may turn up. But the necessity of submitting to this clumsy process cannot blind us to the magnitude of the suffering which it causes. The precedent of Keats has been, we suspect, very mischievous to youthful authors. The statement that the critics once made a terrible blunder is improved into the assertion that critics are always wrong. The youth who has mistaken his halting verses for poetry is rather confirmed in his belief when the critics tell him unanimously that he has made a fool of himself. Gradually, however, the delusion disappears, or the writer becomes convinced that the vindictive nature of critics will always prevent him from obtaining a fair hearing. In either case, the result to a sensitive mind must be a good deal of bitterness and disappointment. It is almost equally painful to discover you are not what you thought, or that the world is so spiteful that it will never admit you to be what you are. One of these lessons has been forced upon some two hundred English poets in the past year. Two hundred young men and women have discovered themselves to be simple impostors or geniuses doomed to neglect. Most young people of any ability begin by writing verses; but to get to the point of publication implies a considerable amount of self-confidence and ambition. Though we would not assume that two hundred young lives are annually blighted, we may assume that two hundred clever youths—for the versifying impulse generally implies some talent as well as some vanity

—have been misled by foolish ambition in this particular direction.

To write a novel generally implies less vanity than to write a poem; but in some respects we feel more sympathy for the four hundred and fifty persons whom we have assumed to have failed in fiction. They often have to suffer in more than in their vanity. There is a popular impression that anybody can write a novel who can obtain a sufficient quantity of paper and ink: and moreover that the product has a certain pecuniary value. Even an ardent poet is generally aware that his chances of making an income out of his genius are moderate; but many women take to novel-writing as women in a different class take to dressmaking, with a vague belief that it is the easiest mode of making bread and butter. A lady who loses her fortune generally proposes to take in the children of Indian officials; and if that scheme fails, she makes an effort to support herself by fiction. A good many of the novels published represent, we fear, such pathetic efforts of slowly sinking people to keep their heads above water. They are not the products of vanity, but a despairing clutch at the last means of making a respectable livelihood. When, therefore, an utterly and irredeemably bad novel comes before us, we are sometimes moved by a certain sense of respect. There is a pathos about its very stupidity. It suggests a whole record of prolonged family suffering. One sometimes hears in the street a ragged couple with two or three half-starved children attempting to sing a dismal ballad. Assuming that they are not impostors, we pity them in proportion to their utter ignorance of the whole art and theory of music. The greater their incapacity, the more desperate the straits which must have driven them to such a resource. A detestable novel suggests a similar inference. We see behind it the poor widow left with a large family and a bottle of ink; we think of her desperate attempts to make both ends meet: the gradually increasing difficulty of keeping up appearances; the hopeless canvassing of the patrons of charitable institutions; the declining patience of rich relations; the feeble attempts to rub up old literary recollections; the elaborate diplomacy to circumvent some publisher of more good-nature than acuteness; and we feel more disposed to weep than to laugh at the lamentable result. There is not, it is true, a character or an incident in the novel that has not been worked to death a thousand times over; no two sentences hang together: and we feel that the most genuine kindness would have been to crush the whole affair in its manuscript stage. Still it is an attempt to find some more respectable means of livelihood than beggary, and therefore the design, if not the execution, deserves some respect. We have, indeed, no means of knowing how often this charitable hypothesis is realized; but editors of magazines report that their compassion is often invoked by such pretences. The mention of magazines, moreover, suggests that beyond the mass of published nonsense, there are further masses of presumably still greater nonsense which does not get as far as publication. When one reflects that the stuff which actually makes its appearance is in some sense a selection, that in the lowest depth there is still a lower depth, the mind is almost appalled by the result. It is melancholy to think that necessity or vanity should compel so many people, who might be doing something really useful—washing clothes, for example, or keeping sheep in Australia—to pour out the masses of nonsense which offer themselves for review.—*Saturday Review.*

Literary Notes.

Proverbial Philosophy Tupper has received a pension of \$600 a year.

M. Michelet's "History of the Nineteenth Century" will shortly be completed.

Queen Victoria is said to be writing a book, the scene being laid in Germany.

Paris possesses twenty-three fashion journals and seven religious newspapers.

From Longfellow's library at Cambridge comes a rumour that the poet is engaged on a work which is not to be given to the public until next autumn. *Aftermath* has had an exceptionally large sale, both in Europe and in America.

Bret Harte, it is said, can command a higher price for his work than any literary man in the metropolis. *Scribner's Monthly* has paid him as much as \$100 a page, and like a sensible man he would take more if he could get it.

Messrs. Harper & Bros. are about to publish Sir Samuel Baker's history of his last expedition under the auspices of the Khedive to Central Africa. It will be embellished with many maps and engravings illustrative of a region which is all but unknown.

Mr. Hill Burton, in his work, "The Book Hunter," calls attention to the index of a law book, "Mr. Justice Best, his Great mind." On turning to the pages the reader finds that in delivering the judgment of the court, Mr. Justice Best said "he had a great mind to commit the defendant."

A new life of Edwin Forrest is about to be brought out by Messrs. Lippincott & Co. It will be a volume of some five hundred pages, and will be illustrated with ten engravings of the actor as he appeared in different characters, with two portraits of Mr. Forrest and one of his mother. The value of the work will be much enhanced by the fact that the biography is based on material furnished by Forrest himself.

An interesting publication may be looked forward to, in time not very distant. In compliance with a clause in the late Prince Metternich's will, a gentleman of acknowledged literary accomplishments, Baron Kinkowstrom, is now engaged in examining and arranging the family archives, preparatory to the publication of the late Prince's memoirs, combined with a selection of State papers in his son's possession.

The publishing firm of Chatto & Windus, successors to the late John Camden Hotten, are arranging for the publication of a new illustrated edition of the works of Sir Walter Scott, which is to surpass in accuracy and elegance any of the former editions. Upon the illustrations alone of this work they propose to expend £15,000; and they say they will make it in every way the best and finest edition of the Waverley Novels ever yet issued.

The *Riverside Bulletin* has been incorporated in *Every Saturday*, one of the very best of the literary weeklies. All who take an interest in literature should patronize it. A new feature has been added to its numerous attractions, in the form of a couple of pages of thoughtful and carefully prepared editorial matter. In a recent number the serial "Far From the Madding Crowd" is commenced. The authorship of this clever story was at one time attributed to George Elliot, but it has been lately discovered that the writer is a Mr. Hardy—a new light among novelists.