

one morning, and when he came he said to him. "Master, take my measure for a pair of boots."

"With pleasure, your reverence," answered the shoemaker, "please take off your boot."

The clergyman did so, and the shoemaker measured his foot from toe to heel and over the instep, noted all down in his pocket-book, and then prepared to leave the room.

But as he was putting up the measures the pastor said to him:

"Master, my son also requires a pair of boots."

"I will make them with pleasure, your reverence. Can I take the young man's measure?"

"It is not necessary," said the pastor; "the lad is fourteen, but you can make my boots and his from the same last."

"Your reverence, that will never do," said the shoemaker, with a smile of surprise.

"I tell you, sir, to make my son's on the same last."

"No your reverence, I cannot do it."

"It must be—on the same last."

"But, your reverence, it is not possible, if the boots are to fit," said the shoemaker, thinking to himself that the old pastor's wits were leaving him.

"Ah, then, master shoemaker," said the clergyman, "every pair of boots must be made on their own last, if they are to fit; and yet you think that God is to form all Christians exactly according to your own last, of the same measure and growth in religion as yourself. That will not do, either."

The shoemaker was abashed. Then he said.

"I thank your reverence for this sermon, and I will try to remember it, and to judge my neighbours less harshly in the future."

ADVANCED THINKERS.

However it may be, in these days, with a few clever men who keep together, stand by one another, puff one another up with the belief that they are the "elite of humanity," and utterly delude themselves as to the extent to which their teachings are accepted, the vast majority of decent folk believe in a future life just as firmly as in a present. The brilliant sceptics of the day would be aggrieved if they were told that they "think the cackle of their bourg the murmur of the world;" but this is exactly what they do. A little slice cut from the vast society of a vast metropolis is a provincial hourg just as really as any little country town or village. And the talk of a few clever men, some of them morally disqualified in any degree to discern religious truth, and all of them egging each other on to more daring suggestions, is nother better than cackle, though it be expressed in arrogant tones, and printed in good type on decent paper. Outrageous self-conceit quite incapacitates to see the most vital truth. A man who, whether in book or sermon, never loses the thought, nor misses the chance of obliquely pushing himself, is not likely either to see far into things, or to tell us anything much worth hearing, unless, indeed, he have bagged it from some simpler and nobler soul; and surely it is very obvious that almost all unbelieving philosophers and scientists are blown up with self-conceit, and a good many liberal theologians (self-styled) are blown even tighter. One recalls with grim amusement the university standing of some of these. For at two or three and twenty, men are (in most cases) ranged for life. And it is amusing in like manner to note how some of these have made arrangements to have their doings puffed up in two or three newspapers. Sometimes this is done by a humble retainer or faithful dog, whose sufficient reward is to be permitted to do it. Sometimes a tacit but well understood contract has been made with another mortal for mutual puffer. However this be, I suppose that we all have occasion, in these days, sometimes to read pages which remind us of the wise words of Sir Henry Taylor—"We see every day that talents are easily divorced from wisdom and charity; and when this separation takes place there is no pride which is more tyrannical, more insolent, more wantonly aggressive than the pride of intellect." If the pride of real intellect be thus offensive, much more the pride without the intellect. One has known conceited blockheads

who fancied it made them intellectual to be sceptical, just as one has known persons who thought that to wear the livery of some little social, political, or oracular caste would make them "genteel."—*A. K. H. B. in Fraser's Magazine.*

A BLESSED COMMUNION.

Dr. R. L. Stanton, in a letter to the "Herald and Presbyterian" from Basle, Switzerland, where the World's Evangelical Alliance has recently adjourned, after a session of eight days, says:

Outside of the more formal work of the Conference there were many entertaining things. Basle is rich in associations of the Reformation. The old cathedral, which contains the bones of Erasmus, received us, with hundreds more, in the service of the Lord's Supper. It was an event in one's life to be permitted to go to the Lord's table with Christians from so many churches and nations, speaking so many languages. The fashion in the Zwinglian churches is to receive the bread and wine standing, a procession, four abreast, walking up, and, after receiving the elements, two abreast turning to the right, and two to the left, and resuming their seats. The time for this occupied an hour and a half. The women went up first by themselves, and then the men. My companion happened to be a Norwegian minister. An American and a Norwegian thus brought together proved to be a mutual gratification. We received the bread from the hand of a Zwinglian minister, and the wine from the hand of a Moravian. On that occasion Germans, Swiss, Frenchmen, Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese, Danes, Swedes, Norwegians, Austrians, Belgians, Hollanders, Englishmen, Americans, and men from Turkey, Egypt, Palestine—well, pretty much men of all nations, many of whom could not understand a word of any language but their own, joined in the Lord's Supper; but the Supper itself spoke the same language to every heart, and all could understand it alike. Such occasions are rare on earth!

WHAT IS THE REMEDY?

We have recently been calling the attention of our readers to the evils of that flood of debasing literature for the young that is so abundantly poured forth. Now let us ask, What is the remedy? Remedy we believe there is, but it must be applied, and that right speedily.

The remedy will be found, first of all, in parental vigilance. The parent is bound to know not simply *that* his boy reads, but *what* he reads. Cultivate the boy's confidence, and lead him, if possible, to bring to you for your approval what he would peruse. That is the best way, certainly. But in any way and at all hazards you must know what he is reading. A great part of this evil comes from the fact that so many parents are utterly careless as to what intellectual food their boy is taking in—careless rather as to whether it be food or poison. "My boy is a great reader," they say fondly and even proudly; "he almost always has some book or paper about." That is enough, they think; of the character of the book or paper they are ignorant. Such ignorance is culpable. There must be perpetual parental vigilance. You are careful to put arsenic or paris green out of your children's reach. This literature is unspeakably more harmful to the moral nature than arsenic or paris green to the physical.

Another point where the remedy may be applied is in the way, as in so many other things, of overcoming evil with good. It is a good thing for a boy to have a taste for reading, when that taste has not become morbid. But if he has that taste it is utter folly to attempt to control it by mere repression. Give him plenty of healthful intellectual food. He has indulged to some extent, we will suppose, in this sensational literature. It has awakened more or less of a craving in his nature for a further supply. He would be a very exceptional boy if, having read some of these wildly adventurous tales, he did not long to read more. But that longing is unhealthy, and will likely lead to evil. How shall you overcome it? It will not do simply to forbid any further acquaintance with the trash. Justice to the boy demands more than this. Forbid it, of course, and give him the reasons for so doing. Do not be a tyrant even in doing a right thing. But go further than this; give the boy good in place of the evil you forbid. There is abundance of wholesome, healthfully stimulating literature. There are periodicals, both weekly and monthly, which are full of good things. There are books of history, of travel, of biography, of real adventure, that will do any one good to read. Provide these for your boy, in your home or through the circulating-library. Encourage him to read the right things, and give him opportunity of doing so. Club with your neighbours in taking periodicals and books and exchanging them among yourselves, if you have no circulating-library accessible. Any of the periodicals noticed from time to time in this paper may be advantageously taken by any family. The point is to provide such a supply of wholesome reading that there will be no room left for a craving for that which is hurtful.

A good deal of responsibility rests with those who man-

age the libraries, and reading, especially in smaller places. The librarian, under such circumstances, can have much influence in suggesting as to the choice of books, or even in withholding unsuitable books from young applicants. We do not advocate the exclusion of all works of fiction from the library-shelves, but we do advocate the endeavour to interest young readers in other things besides fiction, and this can be done. The free library of Germantown, Penn., as we are informed, excludes all novels from its shelves, but works on science, manual occupations, history, travels, natural history, biography, and poetry, are readily accepted by the young readers. This shows, what we believe to be the fact, that with care and painstaking a healthy literary appetite can be cultivated in the young. But it will not be found without cultivation.

Lastly, we call attention to the fact that part of the remedy for the evil of which we speak lies with publishers. Many of them are doing excellent work. The religious publishing societies, denominational and otherwise, are sending out healthful streams, which, flowing through Sabbath schools, accomplish much good. Many of the private publishing houses are doing a like good, though not distinctively religious work. We need more of what we have in part, a literature for the young that is instructive without being tedious, stirring without being morbidly exciting, stimulating without being untrue to nature. We need a literature that shall interest and absorb and incite, while at the same time it instructs and educates. We need a literature that shall picture life as it is, and that shall give emphasis to the moral virtues even where it does not distinctively teach religion. We have a good body of such literature now; a part of the remedy against the evils of the sensational literature of which we complain lies in having that which is pure indefinitely increased.—*New York Christian Weekly.*

SCEPTICISM AND CRIME IN GERMANY.

Germany is reaping the harvest of advanced thought or scepticism; crime has increased during the last six years in Prussia from fifty to two or three hundred per cent., the imprisonments in Prussia, Hanover, and the Rhine Provinces alone (the statistics from the Southern States, as Bavaria, Wurtemberg and Baden, not being yet published), have risen from 102,077 in 1872 to 133,734 in 1876, and the number to-day is reckoned at 150,000. The prisons are all full, and patriotic men are urging the formation of a penal colony on some island of the Pacific or section of Western Africa. A few months ago the chaplain of the Imperial family, Mr. Bauer, in a sermon preached before the Emperor and Princess, said: "Affection, faith, and obedience to the Word of God are unknown in this country, in this our great German Fatherland, which formerly was justly called the home of the faith. On the contrary it really seems as if it were the father of all lies who is now worshipped in Prussia. What formerly was considered generous and noble is now looked upon with contempt; and theft and swindling are called by the euphonic name 'business.' Marriages are concluded without the blessing of the Church, concluded 'on trial,' to be broken, if not found to answer. We still have a Sunday, but it is only a Sunday in name, as the people work during church hours, and spend the afternoon and evening in rioting in the public houses and music halls; while the upper classes rush to the races, preferring to hear the panting of the tortured horses to hearing the Word of God, which is ridiculed in the press and turned into blasphemy in the popular assemblies; the servants of God are insulted daily." The Berlin correspondents of the English journals add: "The German clerical newspapers, Protestant as well as Catholic, are writing in a like strain." Berlin, with a population of a million, has only one hundred and ten ministers of religion, both Protestant and Catholic, and the average attendance at each place of worship is below one hundred. House to house inquiries show that in the same city "in less than one house out of eight is there any regular use or ever possession of the Bible." The state of religion and morals in the country is a cause of the greatest grief and anxiety to many of the best citizens. This social deterioration and increase of crime does not come from ignorance. Nor does the prevalence of immorality arise from a lack of artistic and aesthetic culture. *Not* is intemperance the cause. The one chief reason for the degeneration of a once noble people is the substitution of scepticism for faith in the Scriptures.

DR. CHALMERS ON PREDESTINATION.

It was during the winter of 1804 that Dr. Chalmers delivered his four celebrated lectures in the University of Edinburgh on Predestination, and wound up his series by a fifth on the pulpit treatment of the subject. In this lecture, he warned his students most faithfully against the danger into which they might be tempted in dealing with such a sublime mystery. He said, "Gentlemen, we have entered on this great mystery with regret, and we leave it without a sigh. The subject which we have been treating professionally from the rostrum you will be called upon to treat ministerially from the pulpit, but remember that the provinces are wide apart."

We are dealing with the heads of our alumni; you have to deal with hearts of sinners. Give me a band of men who never walked, as you have done, the halls of a University, whose only library is the inspired oracles of God, whose only tutor is the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and let them loose on some wild moral territory, and they will do more, ten to one, than our college-trained clergy, who must utter every truth and shape every gospel enunciation according to the rule and square of a rigid orthodoxy.