

gative the taste we have created. The library, therefore, is an admitted requisite. But very often there is also required a place where the library can be used—where, comfortably and undisturbed, books and cheap publications may be read and enjoyed. Owing sometimes to the crowded state of the living-room, sometimes to household operations, the small farm-house or village tenement is hardly the place in which quiet or comfort can be expected as consorts reasonably with the necessities of intellectual pursuits. Let it further be admitted that the persons for whom provision is wished to be made have some of those tastes or dispositions which have led in higher life to the establishment of clubs and literary societies. We shall then recognise in the reading-room the resource which many are now led to seek in the tavern. Very many young men go to this only in the first instance to pass the idle hours of a long evening, and because they find there, either in social converse or in the newspapers, that resource and relaxation their day of toil requires. Let us not be uncharitable concerning them. Even in their shortcomings—as much the fault of others as their own—one would take their part. What they began from necessity gradually grows upon them and becomes a habit. They cannot enjoy the resources they seek without drinking. It is for this class the well-lighted reading-room, with books and papers, chess and draughts, will prove the resource they otherwise seek elsewhere.

Many, of course, will at once admit the desirableness of such a resource, but doubt first, on the score of expense, and secondly, on the score of management, the practical application of such a scheme. With regard to expense, we have already said that, in many respects, this is an easier matter in villages than in towns. The school-room or the class-room of a Sunday-school can generally be had gratis, or at a trifling cost. Fuel and lights are a certain expense, but many persons would freely contribute some papers and publications, and others could be provided by small subscriptions. Where the expenses exceed the resources, derivable from the payments of the members, there are still means of increasing them by lectures which, when suitable to the population, will in many instances not only ensure receipts sufficient to meet the expenses of the reading-room, but advance the general cause which was sought to be promoted by its establishment.

In forming public libraries the first and most important step is to determine that there shall be a collection of books on a footing of practical usefulness to the locality for which it is intended. This must vary according to the circumstances of a district. The selection which would suit a mining population in the Black Country would hardly do for a purely agricultural portion of Devon. In local efforts in England the Society of Arts makes grants in aid of purchases comprehending both old and new works, and for the religious element, as also in connection with general requirements, the Christian Knowledge Society, the Religious Tract Society, and others, are ready to volunteer assistance without dictating the particular books or subjects to be included in the catalogue. In both of these Societies there is a large collection of historical, literary, and what in the language of the day are called secular works, from which there is a free choice. These and other resources, judiciously combined, enable any reading-room to start with a fair and sufficient library, which will of itself gradually diffuse a taste for better things and at the same time provide the aliment for it.

The different village associations are grouped into districts for the delivery of lectures on the mutual principle. Each village provides a lecturer who, getting up a lecture on some subject agreed upon at an annual meeting, delivers it in succession before the different Library Associations of the district, and, of course, receives those of the other lecturers in return. This arrangement may be readily made to provide a lecture monthly or bi-monthly, during the six winter months. While it affords a variety, it gives both support and life to the associations, materially benefiting the funds, and assisting to support the libraries.—*Toronto Mail*.

LORD DUFFERIN ON SPURIOUS LITERATURE.

Those who have read carefully the numerous addresses delivered by His Excellency the Governor-General, during his present tour through the Province, must have been struck by the elegance of diction and felicity of expression which characterized them all. He is quite "at home" on all subjects. In reply to the address of the Faculty of the new Wesleyan Female College at Whitby, His Excellency thus referred to a class of literature so common and popular at the present time:

"My views in regard to education are so sufficiently known that it is unnecessary for me to state them upon the present occasion, but I cannot help saying that I take it as a most happy augury that in the room in which we are placed there should stand the bust of one of the princes of European literature, of a man the healthiness

of whose mind and the high standard and perfect taste of whose compositions it would be well if his successors in literature would imitate. I allude to Sir Walter Scott. (Applause.) I do not know whether it would be out of place to remark that there are dangers against which it is advisable for all those who are interested in the healthy intellectual training of the youth of this continent, and particularly of its female youth, to guard. Of late there has sprung up a class of literature which in my opinion contributes but very little to the advancement of those higher aspirations which it ought to be the aim and object of all literature to promote. There has arisen of late a school of writers whose chief object seems to be to extract amusement and to awake laughter by turning everything that is noble, elevated, and revered by the rest of the world, into ridicule; to substitute parody for invention, and coarse vulgarity for the tender humour of a better day, or if this error is avoided, a sickly, morbid sentimentalism is substituted, more corrupting than absolute vice, or a historical sensationalism which is as bad as either. I cannot but think that it is a great matter that in our schools we should take the greatest pains to maintain a standard of healthy, robust, and refined taste." His Excellency concluded by thanking the authorities of the school for the flattering remarks contained in their address.

I. Papers on Ontario School Matters.

1. UNIVERSITY CONSOLIDATION IN ONTARIO.

The writer of "Current Events," in the *Canadian Monthly* for October, thus discusses a question of University Consolidation in Ontario.

"As the Academical year is opening, it is not unseasonable to call attention once more to the question of University consolidation which was mooted by us some time ago, and our view of which has recently received support in a very able address delivered by the President of Cornell University, at the Detroit National Education Convention in August. The fact is there is not room in Ontario for more than one University worthy of the name. Even England, with all her wealth and corresponding demand for high culture, finds room only for two. The so-called University of London is merely a central examining board; it does not teach, or discharge any other function of a University; and as it was called into existence solely by the obstinate retention of the Tests which excluded Nonconformists from Oxford and Cambridge, it is not unlikely that, the tests having been abolished, it may in time cease to exist. The attempt to found a new University for the benefit of the North of England, at Durham, has proved totally abortive, though the new institution was sumptuously endowed, both with buildings and funds, out of the colossal wealth of the Cathedral chapter. A similar fate appears to have attended the project of a special University for Wales. The calamitous dispersion of resources and the equally calamitous prostitution of degrees which the friends of the higher education in the United States deplore, and from which they are now struggling, with painful steps, to return to a better system, is the result of mixed causes. But the similar disaster in our case is traceable almost entirely to Church feeling, which was originally forced into its present channel by the exclusive Anglicanism of the University of Toronto. We have said before, and nobody, we believe, has denied, that a small University means an inadequate and under-paid staff, an ill-furnished library, defective apparatus, lack of vigorous intellectual life, depreciated degrees, inferior education in short, and a consequent loss of power to the church which thus allows the intellect of its young men to be starved by poverty of instruction and stunted by seclusion. Another result of denominational Universities is that the national University is apt to contract an anti-Church bias by contrast and antagonism; and as the national University is sure to be the real seat of intellectual power, the cause of religion receives a deadly wound from the instrument intended to promote it. President White calls for central and unsectarian Universities on the model of Cornell. We would qualify this demand. The student, to attend a central University, must leave his home and its influences, religious and domestic. For these a substitute is desired and the desire is reasonable. The student class at Paris, and even that at Berlin, presents a moral type which we are far from desiring to propagate, much as we must respect the thoroughness of their mental training. But we have already pointed to the plan of an undenominational University, with denominational Colleges—the University furnishing the general instruction, holding the examinations and conferring the degrees, the College furnishing the religious instruction and the moral discipline—as the natural solution of the problem. Let the different denominational Colleges migrate to the precincts of the University of Toronto, and enter into the