

Novels and Insanity.

In the annual report of the Mount Hope Institution for the insane, by Dr W. H. Stokes, he says, in respect to moral insanity,—"Another fertile source of this species of derangement has appeared to be an undue indulgence in the perusal of the numerous works of fiction, with which the press is so prolific of late years, and which are sown broadcast over the land, with the effect of vitiating the taste and corrupting the morals of the young. Parents cannot too cautiously guard their young daughters against this pernicious practice.—We have had several cases of moral insanity, for which no other cause could be assigned than excessive novel reading. And nothing is more likely to induce this disease than the education which fosters sentiment instead of cherishing real feelings—such as results from the performance of active benevolence, sacred duty of ordinary life, and of religious obligations—which awakens and strengthens the imagination without warming the heart; and, to borrow the language of an eloquent divine, places the individual upon a romantic theatre—not upon the dust of mortal life."

A Great Mistake.

It is a feeling too prevalent among the young and inexperienced, that mere personal charms alone—of which by a kind dispensation of Providence, no one fancies herself deficient—are sufficient to secure permanent attention and respect. No mistake can be more fatal. How many fair stars, who have burst as it were on the world with only their beauty to recommend them, have, when the novelty of their appearance wore off, been doomed to suffer the darkest neglect! "An accomplished woman never can become an object of neglect. She will always command distinction among her acquaintances. When she was young, she might please in vain; but as even then, she pleased chiefly by her mind, she will therefore continue to please. When declined in the race of years, she will still, from the superiority of her character, stand forth an exalted figure. Sense and capacity, joined by wisdom and sweetness, are exempted from the condition of all things, except, which is to lose their influence when they lose their novelty."

General Miscellany.

Rocks of Lake Superior.

Upon the southern coast of Lake Superior, about fifty miles from the Falls of St. Mary's, are immense precipitous cliffs, called by the voyageurs le Potrait, the pictured rocks. This name has been given them in consequence of the different appearances which they present to the traveler, as he passes their base in his canoe. It requires little aid from the imagination to discern in them the castellated tower and the lofty dome, and every sublime, grotesque, or fantastic shape, which the genius of architecture ever invented. The cliffs are an unbroken mass of rocks rising to an elevation of 200 feet above the level of the lake, and stretching along the coast 15 miles.

The voyagers never pass the coast except in the most profound calm; and the Indians, before they make the attempt, offer the accustomed oblation to propitiate the favor of their montas. The eye instinctively searches along the eternal rampart for a single place of security; but the search is in vain. With an impassable barrier of rocks on one side, and an interminable expanse of water on the other, a sudden storm upon the lake would as inevitably assure destruction to the passenger in his frail canoe, as if he were on the brink of the cataract of Niagara.

The rock is a sand-stone, which is disintegrated by the continual action of the water with comparative facility. There are no broken masses upon which the eye can rest and find relief. The lake is so deep, that these masses, as they are torn from the precipice, are concealed beneath its waters until it is reduced to sand. The action of the waves have removed every projecting point.

When we pass this immense fabric of nature, the wind was still and the lake was calm. But even the slightest motion of the waves, which in the most profound calm agitates these eternal seas, swept through the deep caverns with the noise of the distant thunder, and died away upon the ear, as it rolled forward in the dark recesses inaccessible to human observation.

No sound more melancholy or more awful ever vibrated upon human nerves. It has left an impression which neither time nor distance can efface.

Resting in a frail bark canoe, upon the limpid waters of the lake, we seemed almost suspended in the air, so pellucid was the element upon which we floated. In gazing upon the towering battlements which depended over us and from which the smallest fragments would have destroyed us, we felt, and felt intensely, our own insignificance. No situation can be imagined more appalling to the courage, or more humbling to the pride of man. We appeared like a small speck upon the broad face of creation.

Our whole party, Indians, voyagers, soldiers, officers and servants, contemplated in mute astonishment the awful display of creative power at whose base we hung; and no sound broke upon the ear to interrupt the ceaseless roaring of the waters. No cathedral, no temple built with human hands, no pomp of worship could ever impress the spectator with such humility and so strong a conviction of the immense distance between him and the Almighty Architect.

The True way to Wealth.

Deluded and deceived by phantom appearances, the farmer is often induced to leave his plough, the mechanic his workshop, the tradesman his store, and the student his books, to embark in some wild chase for wealth, some erratic scheme for gaining the an. les of the god of gold, instead of being content to plod along in the old way, adding month by month, to the increasing fund deposited in the bank or invested in stocks. Some brilliant chance is presented, by which it things work well, the hundred dollars which is on deposit, may be turned into a thousand. Filled with the hope of being rich at once, the little sum which has been earned by hard service, is invested, the note of the speculator is taken, and the dupe begins to dream of high houses, broad lands, swift horses—all his own. Months roll on, and he finds that the scheme was all the deception of a villain, and the little treasure which was placed within his hands is gone. If you will glance at the lives of those men who have amassed large fortunes, who have been eminently successful in commercial projects, you will find them to be of correct business habits, and of unwearied effort. You will find that they have arisen early in the morning, that they worked hard during the day, and remained up late at night. Their minds and hands have been busy, their whole attention has been given to the object of their pursuit, and they have been successful. Had they in early years substituted hazard and speculation for hard work, they would have failed of securing the object of their desires. Had they been deluded by some gold-mine manumana, and left their families and homes, and gone forth across the mountains and rivers and plains, and wild beasts and fiercer men, to dig for the shining ore, they would have dug into their own graves. Had they listened to the voice of every wild-brained money maker, their fortune would have consisted only of the notes of bankrupt speculators. Had they tried the gambling table, they might also have tried the penitentiary and the prison.—D. C. Eddy.

Don't Complain.

A merchant was one day returning from market. He was on horseback, and behind his saddle was a value filled with money. The rain fell with violence, and the good old man was wet to the skin. At this time he was quite vexed, because God had given him such weather for his journey. He soon reached the border of a thick forest. What was his terror on beholding on one side of the road a robber, who with levelled gun was aiming at him and attempting to fire; but the powder being wet with the rain, the gun did not go off, and the merchant, giving spurs to his horse, fortunately had time to escape. As soon as he found himself safe, he said to himself—

"How wrong was I not to endure the rain patiently, as sent by Providence! If the weather had been dry and fair, I should not probably have been alive at this hour. The rain which caused me to murmur, came at a fortunate moment to save my life and preserve to me my property."

Books.

Thousands of volumes which bear good titles are full of deadly errors, dangerous affirmations to folly, and fine spun apologies for vice.

Novels, plays, and romances are generally so written, as to captivate the imagination and corrupt the heart, and should therefore be avoided.

Literature.

(At the Anniversary Exercises at the close of the last Term at the Wesleyan Academy at Mount Allison, a very interesting address was delivered to the students by Mr. A. W. McLELLAN—of Londonderry—upon "THE PROPER EMPLOYMENT OF YOUTH."

At the request of "the Board of Trustees" the author has kindly furnished us with a copy of this address, from which, as it is not convenient to publish the whole in our columns just now, we take the liberty of selecting several passages which will enable our readers to form an idea of the train of thought pursued in the address, which was much admired by all who were allowed the privilege of listening to its delivery. (Ed.)

If man attained his full bodily stature in a single hour, and therewith the full force of those passions which depend for their maturity upon the growth of the body, and consequently should come upon the platform of life with those passions untamed and unbridled, this world would indeed be a sad one in which to dwell. But how beautiful is the present arrangement, with youth to lighten and cheer the labours of man—while the latter is allowed the high satisfaction of training the former for the station from which he must soon retire. But if youth is relatively beautiful it is no less important.—It is the most important period of our existence.—It is the season when almost invariably the course to be followed in life is marked out. And yet its importance is seldom felt until it is past. If you could look into the minds of those whose course is nearly run, and see the bitter repinings of such as have mispent youth, you would earnestly improve every opportunity and employ every moment of your youth in preparation for future usefulness in this life and to secure the approbation of Heaven.

Evidently education is the main employment of youth. This we must have before we become men. To be men is the engrossing thought and desire of the young, but in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty—in the present age of knowledge and advancement—it is no easy matter to become such in the proper sense of the word. Mind has been centuries at work raising higher and still higher the standard by which men are measured.

Now thoughts thus evolved have become in turn a part of the mental capital which employed by successive generations has been built up and carried forward the work of the preceding, and thus science has been raised to its present height.—Your duty—my young friends—is to employ your youth in examining the work which mind has already accomplished, that you may become prepared to carry that work forward still nearer to perfection. The temple of science is not yet finished. Education may be considered the scaffolding around the unfinished building, and unless you avail yourselves of that scaffolding you cannot take your place among the men at work upon the noble edifice.

To acquire such an education is no easy matter. Years of life must be devoted to the task, and youth is the time for the work, inasmuch as that period is not pre-occupied with erroneous ideas which must be removed ere doctrines which have stood the test of experience can be introduced. And furthermore, every day of manhood, spent in acquiring the knowledge which should be acquired in youth, will be just a day of valuable life lost. The individual who reaches the years and stature of manhood without being qualified for the duties of life may truly be said not to live half his days. He never takes his start in life fairly until he obtains the qualifications necessary, and these are scarcely obtained when his end appears in view.

But to suppose that if we neglect education in youth we may obtain it in after life is to take too favorable a view of the matter; for unless the energies of the mind be early directed aright, the individual will become so hedged about by evil habits and influences, that it will be little short of a miracle if the fetters are ever broken. And what a painful representation of humanity does such an uneducated man present! Look at the waters which running into some hollow find no outlet; they flow up to a certain height, and then are converted into a stagnant, putrid pool, destitute of all beauty as well as usefulness, all is lifeless in and around it except the frog that croaks as he revels amidst the impurities at the surface and the tadpole that delights in the filth which has accumulated at the bottom. So it is with him whose early years are not employed in securing direction of his mental energies into a proper channel. Faculties wherewith he is endowed for high and holy purposes will become dormant and stagnant within him, and he will grow up a blot and stain upon society, fit for nothing but to croak over the ills of his miserably useless life.

We say then to you if you would be useful in manhood, and have in old age the satisfaction

of knowing that you have done well in your day and generation, employ your youth in the acquisition of knowledge.

We do not however mean to say that nothing more than knowledge is necessary. Habits of industry and sobriety are essential to enable us to turn knowledge to a good account. But it is scarcely necessary to speak of these, as the labour requisite to obtain knowledge tends to the formation of such habits. But still there are cases in which this is not the result. Some immoral men have attained considerable eminence in science. In such cases knowledge is an evil to its possessor, as it renders him only the more skillful in wickedness. It should therefore be the care of youth not only to acquire knowledge, but to form such habits as will lead them to employ their knowledge, that their own honor and the good of their fellow men may be at the same time promoted.

Much that we have said is applicable when we speak of the formation of character as an important part of the proper employment of youth.

Riches we may inherit but character we must form for ourselves. It is therefore more exclusively our own than anything we pretend to claim in this world; and being so exclusively our own it has an important effect on us whether we make for ourselves a good or bad character.

He who erects for himself a bad character associates with his name that which tends the good and virtuous of society to shun him; whilst a deservingly good character testifies to all, that the possessor thereof is the "noblest work of God"—"an honest man." A good character will be your surest passport to society; for although the best of characters do not wholly escape the tongue of slander yet its effects are only momentary.

In the course of our experience behind the counter, we have often seen youth when selecting a knife, or other article of cutlery, choose with delight that which was of such good material and so fine a polish, that the breath when blown upon it would pass quickly off. Let it be your study and ambition to possess such a character that the breath of slander, when blown upon it, will pass quickly away. To have such, you must employ your youth in laying a good foundation; for be assured that however zealously you may labour in after life to improve it, the finger of the envious will delight to uncover and point to the defects in the foundation. The youth who lays the foundation of a bad character may, in after life, become impressed with the value of a good one, and may desire to possess it for a prompt recommendation to society, as well as an after memorial; and may for many years labour to accomplish his desire. He may throughout a long course of his existence do much to adorn his character, but he cannot undo what he did in youth. He may daily add new beauty and new lustre to its every feature—say, the very last act of his life may be like crowning it with a diadem of gold; but after all, it will be like Nebuchadnezzar's image; it will have the clay toes that were formed in youth. Hence if you wish a character fair in all its parts, with its beauty unmarred by spot or blemish, you must employ your youth in laying a good foundation. To do this just follow the simple rules of Truth. Yes! be true. In all the employments of life take Truth for your guide, truth as it is reflected from the pages of the Gospel, and it will conduct you triumphantly over the dangerous journey of life, and in due time lead your spirits, as the spirits of men and Christians, peacefully and quietly down the river of Death, to the ocean of Eternity.

Correspondence.

To the Newfoundland Readers of "The Wesleyan." No. 12.

DEAR FRIENDS.—I am now at Providence, Rhode Island. It is the second city in New England, being next to Boston in population and trade. It is 12 miles from Boston, and contains a population of about 40,000. The city is at the head of Narragansett Bay, where it receives the Moshassuck River. It occupies both sides of the river, connected by two bridges which have been thrown over the river near the head of the tide-waters which is 35 miles from the ocean.—On the east side are three principal streets running parallel with the river. On these streets are a number of public buildings, and many elegant private residences. On this side of the river, the land rises abruptly, and the cross streets have a steep ascent. On the hill, overlooking the City, is Brown University, a Baptist Institution, established in 1770. From this place is an extensive view of the surrounding country. On the west side of the river is Westminster Street. The finest shops in the city are in this street; here also is one of the fronts of the Arcade, one of the finest buildings of the kind in America. It is built of brown granite and fronts two streets, 80 feet wide—presenting colonades of the Doric style, of six columns each. These columns are 25 feet in height, the shafts being twenty-two feet in length. This building is 225 feet long, 80 feet broad, and 52 feet high, divided into three stories, containing upwards of 80 shops, the whole lighted by a