

of livid fire were seen glaring in the darkness for a minute, and then a shriek as of the damned, and the deacon disappeared." Mr. Fenwick also dies about the same time; but as he is not so strict a Calvinist as the deacon, he is permitted to die in his bed. Abijah, having renounced the doctrines, is allowed to live. Meanwhile the siege goes on. The men when not fighting in the trenches, discuss theology in the camp. The last assault takes place with the usual amount of "hissing," "shrieking," and "blaring." Then Duchambou surrenders. William is found in the fort, and is about to be shot as a deserter when a letter arrives from Mary to Gen. Peperell explaining the whole matter. Allen is at once arrested, and his papers being examined, the most conclusive evidence is found against him. Then the prisoner anticipates matters by shooting himself, leaving behind him a written paper, in which he claims that his misdeeds and death were all foreordained. All his Calvinistic enemies having now been killed off, William returns home to marry Mary, and the curtain goes down upon the scene of Abijah kissing the baby.

This book is a combination of Methodist sermon, namby-pamby Sunday-school book, sentimental love story, and dime-novel of the Buffalo Bill type. Of the theology we have nothing to say except that there is nothing here but what has been better said a thousand times before. It is not a Canadian but a New England novel, with an episode at Louisburg. We are left in doubt from reading the preface as to the author's real design. He first tells us that his object is to present the story of the siege of Louisburg in popular form, and next states that he aims to preach. Both ideas run through it, so that the book is a poor story lumbered with poor sermons. He wishes it to be understood, however, that "William and Mary" is "strictly moral." This is doubtful. In certain elements it approaches too nearly to what is immoral to have this claim allowed without qualification. If, as Ruskin says, "So far from art being immoral, little else but art is moral," then this book is immoral, for it is wholly inartistic. Is it true that in this case also, "*Le style c'est l'homme*?" Why then from such a style it must be argued—but it is unnecessary to draw the inference.

JOSEPH COOK's Lecture on sale at Baptist Book Room, Halifax.

## THE INFLUENCE OF POETRY.

POETRY has been defined in a great many different ways by those who have made it an object of earnest thought and study. Aristotle held that poetry consists in the imitation of nature; Bacon, that its essence is in the imagination. Some one has said that poetry is the 'natural language of excited feeling—intense and inspired'; and another has described it as, 'A work of the imagination wrought into form by art.' From all the various definitions what do we understand by *poetry*, as distinguished from *prose*?

Some, without deeply considering the question, would make the distinction rest upon the *form* of the composition, regarding metre as an essential factor in poetry. But we know that poetry of the highest order may exist without metre or rhyme; for instance, many of the Psalms, and other portions of the Bible are extremely poetical in their imagery and expression. Others, again, make the *object* of the composition the basis of the distinction between poetry and prose. The respective objects, however, cannot always be clearly defined; for they tend to merge into each other in a greater or less degree. Although we encounter some difficulty in defining poetry in the strictest terms, we nevertheless know and feel some of its attributes. It is the outward expression of passion, and emotion, apart from the mere intellect. It belongs to the heart rather than to the head. Calvert says:—"Subservient to the heart is the intellect, and when, itself strong and agile it serves a heart poetically inspired, it performs its most brilliant feats. It then soars highest, and dives deepest, has access to the grandest vistas, insights into subtlest secrets."

The aspiration for something beyond and above us, something purer and grander, more lofty and ennobling than the surroundings of our daily life afford, is a sentiment that is an entire stranger to few. To this loftiest sentiment of our being, poetry gives the fullest expression, and hence it is the divinest of all arts. We are confident that poetry is not an art whose influence is never felt; that it is not something ephemeral, whose life has vanished into the misty recesses of the past; but that it is a living power whose influence is ever increasing. We may liken poetic genius to a living, human being, of whom—"Good sense is the body, fancy the drapery, motion the life, and imagination the soul."

Such, in brief, being the nature of poetry, the question arises—"What are the influences of this divine art upon mankind?"

One of the most prominent and lasting influences of poetry is its *elevating power*, alike raising the individual, and society. The beauties of nature ever have the effect of ennobling our thoughts, and dispositions. Through them we look from 'nature up to nature's God.' The birds singing among the trees;