

THE CRITIC.

The future greatness of this Dominion depends upon the development of her varied natural resources, and the intelligence and industry of her people.

HALIFAX, N. S., FRIDAY, JULY 10, 1885.

HAS SECULAR EDUCATION A MORAL TENDENCY?

Occasionally we see statistics of crime used to shew that Education in itself has no tendency to check immorality. The number of criminals in the United States, for example, who can read and write, or the number who have even received a liberal education, is adduced as evidence of the immoral effect of secular education. Now the adage that "figures cannot lie" is true only when those figures are used in a perfectly logical manner; there is another maxim, equally true, namely, "there is nothing more untruthful than facts," when an improper use is made of them. This is the use which the opponents of secular education make of their figures. Does the fact that many who take physical exercise are still unhealthy, prove that exercise is not healthful? Or, because many who have received careful religious instruction and some who have even chosen the ministry as their calling, end their career in the prison or on the gibbet, are we to infer that religious training is no check to immorality? One-sixth of the population of the United States are said to be totally illiterate; quite as many more may be set down as practically so. If it were found that more than two-thirds of the criminals were fairly educated, our statisticians would have made a point in their favor; but this is very far from being the case. We are firmly convinced that the experience of all ages and of all countries, properly interpreted, will bear us out in the assertion that, leaving higher results out of consideration, the cultivation of either the moral or the intellectual faculties will act as a safety-valve for the whole nature of man.

It is a pity that the heads of educational institutions do not generally keep an account of the careers of their ex-pupils. We noticed in the *Journal of Education*, an extract from the New Haven School Report which ought to allay any anxious fears as to the moral effect of secular education. Speaking of the High School in New Haven, it says:—

"There are among the living graduates recorded in the catalogue issued last fall about one hundred and fifty men. The present occupations and positions in life of one hundred and thirty-six are known. Of these I can mention only six who are not now engaged in some prosperous and honorable calling, or in preparation for some profession. In the case of three of the six, ill health, either permanent or temporary, is the reason why they are idle. Does this look as if the school was turning out a regiment of idlers and duds, who are above earning their living?"

Can any one point to a leading educational institution which cannot shew a similar record? Then it would be interesting to know where the educated criminals all come from.

NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT.

Some time ago Mr. Maurice Thompson, in an article in *The Current*, of Chicago, wrote: "Literature is a paying profession in every enlightened country but ours. To write a successful French novel is to become famous and affluent. English authors, German authors Italian authors make money. Zola, Daudete, and a long line of Parisian authors live well by the pen; so do Wilkie Collins, William Black, Miss Braddon, and many other writers in Great Britain." Turning to the United States, we find a successful novel, like "But Yet a Woman," or "Mr. Isaacs," running thro' fifteen editions each—that is, a sale of about fifteen thousand copies each. If the retail price of the book is one dollar, the author gets ten cents on each volume sold, or fifteen hundred dollars! Compare this with the fact that Anthony Trollope could take a manuscript to his English publisher and demand and receive for it from five thousand to fifteen thousand dollars. This difference is not because Americans are not a reading people; it is because books by the very best American authors have had always to compete with stolen editions of the works of every other country, and consequently comparatively few of them are bought.

The difference between the recompense received by Anthony Trollope for his literary labors, and that received by successful American authors (if they publish only in America) is mainly due to the difference in the mode of publication. Many new novels published in Britain sell for about seven dollars, and reach the general public through circulating libraries alone. This price is based on the usual average sale—five hundred to eight hundred copies. It yields a very handsome profit on all copies that are sold in addition to the average number. There, a book that attracts much attention and passes thro' several editions in the course of a year, accumulates profits at a rate that is unknown in the great American Union.

The American edition of "Mr. Isaacs" sold remarkably well. In a few months fifteen thousand copies of it were disposed of. And it yielded the author about fifteen hundred dollars—not enough for a comfortable trip over Europe. Had thirty thousand copies been sold, the author would have received not more than three thousand dollars—about one-fifth of Trollope's fifteen thousand.

Again, an author in New York may expend months, or even years, upon a certain work; and it may happen that before he can it thro' the press, a

pirated edition of a new English book on the same subject, will ruin the early sale of his. Something very like this has already happened. And is liable to occur again while there is no international copyright law.

This disadvantage under which American authors labor, is also a disadvantage to American readers, and to American literature. It drives to ephemeral periodicals, some excellent writers who must be paid for their work as they do it; and it is well known that the man best qualified to write a valuable book very rarely succeeds in writing a valuable magazine article.

Tom Hood in an article which he called, "Copyright and Copywrong," wrote: "If, in countries where literary men, or certain classes of them, are not protected, their baker, butcher, grocer, etc., would supply them the ordinary necessities of life at half price, or thereabouts, I for one would not complain. It has indeed been urged frequently that an extended copyright would damage the public interest, would enhance the price of books; so that I was at one time half persuaded the public wanted to support us in a half-charitable way, if we would industriously work our brains to nothingness for their benefit. I was content. Accordingly I wrote to my butcher, baker, and other tradesmen, informing them that it was necessary, for the sake of cheap literature, and the interest of the public, that they should furnish me with their commodities at cost price or a very trifling percentage over. It will be sufficient to quote the answer of the butcher:

"Sir: Respectin your note. Cheap literater be blowed. Butchers must live as well as other pepel—and if so be you or the readin publick wants to have meat at prime cost, you must buy your own beastesses, and kill yourselves."

After that I began to think that authors must live the same way as other people.

The Incorporated Society of Authors, which held its general meeting in London last May, proposes to agitate during the current year: (1) to agree upon a fair international copyright law; (2) to get a bill passed to prevent the stealing of titles; (3) to compile and to publish full and accurate information relative to the respective methods of publishing.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IN BRITAIN.

The immense amount of business with which the British Parliament has annually to deal, can scarcely be realized by those not conversant with the daily proceedings of the Commons; and it cannot be denied that the volume of business to be transacted is greater than the House can possibly cope with, under existing circumstances. From this pressure of business and lack of time, many annoying delays have resulted; the direct outcome of which is a wide-spread dissatisfaction with parliamentary institutions; and to it may be traced the present discontent of the Irish people. It has frequently happened during the past twenty years, that measures affecting the welfare of cities and towns have been allowed to pass from session to session without any definite action having been taken upon them. And the delay, although perhaps unavoidable, has in one or more instances affected the municipal credit. Some years ago a prosperous Irish city, having through its council decided to extend and improve the water supply, borrowed the money for the purpose, at the same time forwarding to their representative in Parliament a bill to enable them to issue bonds for the required amount. Five years elapsed before this bill received the royal sanction and became law, entailing upon the city an expenditure, on account of interest, of about ten thousand pounds sterling; over and above that which would have been required, had the bill become law during the session in which it was first introduced. This is by no means an isolated case, and it may be taken as a fair illustration of the annoying delays which too frequently occur in the transaction of public business in the British Parliament. Local or provincial self-government is the only remedy which can be supplied, that will adequately meet the requirements of the country, and there can be no doubt if such a reform were introduced it would in time be found advantageous. Had the people of Wales been allowed to control their local affairs, prior to the toll gate outbreak, many lives and much valuable property would have been saved, and it would not have required seventeen years of bitter agitation to obtain from the British Parliament an act abolishing the toll gates in that section of the country. Had the northern portion of Scotland enjoyed a moderate degree of self-government, many Scotchmen who were forced to emigrate would have remained home by their own firesides. Local self-government would obviate the necessity of the Irish Crimes Act, and prevent the rupture between Great Britain and Ireland, which now threatens the United Kingdom. Lord Salisbury and his ministry openly avow their determination to carry this reform through Parliament; should they have the courage of their convictions, the outlook for the domestic prosperity of the British Isles is brighter and more hopeful than it has been during the nineteenth century.

The St. John Board of Trade are unanimous in their endorsement of the delegates from Jamaica, in fact, the business men throughout Canada are a unit upon the question of reciprocal trade relations with that island. With the Government it is a simple matter of dollars and cents, and if they can see their way clear to curtail their present annual expenditure, there is no reason why the agreement should not be ratified without delay. The Halifax merchants may be in the dark as to the shortest and most direct route to Montreal, but their knowledge of the fish and sugar trade should be sufficient to enable them to adopt a vigorous and determined policy with respect to this Jamaica question.