

trash with a little profound matter, they can secure a larger class of readers, and thereby fill their secretaries with orders and their safes with gold.

A new religious work, if purchased at all, is left to lie on the centre-table without any one knowing the truths it contains; while the latest novel, which has its place by its side, is caught up with eagerness and read by daylight and by lamplight till perhaps past midnight, when its 'intoxicated devotee' lies down to dream over its odious and insipid matter. Nor does its baneful influence stop here. The book is lent from one to another until a score or more have breathed-in the immoral miasma of its pages before it reaches the centre-table again.

The tendency of novel-reading is such as might be expected. It creates a thirst which is only satisfied by obtaining each new novel when published, and thus spending time and money for nought but trash. It sows the seeds of vice; it taints the imagination and undermines the foundation of virtue and morality. It corrupts the heart, obscures the reason, paralyses the conscience, depraves the intellect, and perverts the judgment. The foul principles imbibed and the images gathered will abide in the memory and extend their pernicious influence to the close of life.

It instills into the mind a habit of reading merely for amusement instead of for instruction. And this habit becomes so fixed that science loses its power to charm, and history becomes dull and tedious, philosophy distasteful, and whatever requires thought and study is laid aside; even the Holy Bible is left to lie in its quiet resting-place undisturbed, and religious works of every nature become insipid, although glowing with eloquence; and nothing except the odious, fascinating novel can gratify the perverted mind. Thus it tends to sap the strength of the intellect, and, like the 'drunkard's cup,' it brings along in its train of evils the natural consequences of a disordered brain—*mental delirium tremens*. Our insane asylums could furnish us with many a blighted intellect, many a dark picture of insanity, caused by the direful effects of novel-reading. Beware, then, gentle reader, of these worthless novels. There are thousands of good books of real value, written with taste by authors of the highest reputation. What apology, then, can be offered for devoting a single hour to a book absolutely worthless, and one which will weaken the understanding and corrupt the heart? Would you aid in the benevolent work of stopping these 'literary dramshops' from diffusing their stale and unwholesome fermented beverage broadcast over the land? Then buy no more novels. Every such novel that is bought encourages the guilty author and publisher to make another; and thus it not only endangers your own morals but pays a premium on the means of ruining others.

Would you be an ornament to society and a blessing to your race? Buy and aid in circulating good books and above all the 'Book of Life;' but beware of the contaminating influence of novels, these books of death,—shun them as you would a serpent or the 'drunkard's cup.'

II. Papers on Practical Education.

1. SIR JOHN B. ROBINSON ON LEGAL EDUCATION.

On the occasion of the presentation, by the law students, of an Address to the ex-Chief Justice of Upper Canada on his retirement from that office, the venerable Chief thus replied to them:—

You give me much pleasure by this expression of your respect and esteem.

I should have been wanting in a material part of my public duty if I had failed to treat with consideration and courtesy all persons, whether young or old, properly addressing themselves to me on any matter of business; and I should, besides, have been setting a bad example to a large class of young gentlemen out of whom our future Judges are to be taken.

Since I began the study of law, in 1807, there has been, as we must admit, time for many changes. I will notice a few which have taken place in the condition of law students.

In deference to the better opportunities of obtaining a superior education, and by way of inducements to youth to avail themselves of them, the period of pupilage, if I may so apply the term, has been shortened by two years in favor of graduates in Arts, or in Law—and students at the present day have the greater advantage of hearing lectures on the different branches of law, which encourages and enables them to study the science systematically, as other sciences are studied.

It is a great convenience to them also that they are saved both time and trouble by the manner in which our public Statutes have been consolidated and arranged, which was mainly the work of a late distinguished Judge, whose kind interest in the law students attracted in a particular manner their respect and regard.

I will mention as another advantage, and one most material, that much that was formerly difficult and embarrassing in the mere

technicality of the law has by late changes been swept away, which gives more time to the student for acquiring what better recommends itself to his reason and judgment, as being really necessary to the solution of questions of right.

But, as is commonly the case, the changes wrought by time cannot in this instance be made the subject of unmixed congratulation. There is now in the altered state of Upper Canada—its business, its society, its pleasures—more to distract the attention of youth than there used to be in the primitive condition of things at the time to which I have alluded; and these circumstances tend strongly, I have no doubt, to increase the risky failure in a career in which there is little chance of success without great labor and perseverance.

Thus, when the student has prepared himself as best he can, for the practice of his profession, he finds now a multitude in the field ready to compete with him not only for the honors and prizes which follow a remarkable career, but also for the moderate share of practice that is necessary to secure even a comfortable support.

I remember that for more than twenty years after I came to the Bar, any young lawyer of sound understanding and obliging disposition, though he were but moderately learned in his profession, might go into any of our towns or villages, and if he were but attentive, and honorable in his conduct, and usually to be found in his office when he might reasonably be expected to be there, he was sure to be able not only to live in comfort by his profession, but to acquire a position of influence in the community.

I am aware that at the present day this is by no means so certain. I fear, indeed, that largely as the number of clients has increased, yet the number of those who are relying upon the practice of the law for advancement in the world, or at least for independence, is increasing in a greater proportion.

Still, after all, the door is never closed to genius, or to constant and well directed perseverance. The laborious study, the patience and self-denial of a Kenyon or an Eldon, cannot always be depended upon for leading in any country to such eminence as they attained; but it is seldom that they fail to advance to honor and independence those who resolutely rely upon them.

If I may be permitted to offer a few words of advice on this occasion, where they may seem rather out of place, I strongly recommend to you to cherish a laudable ambition, to aspire to excellence, and to hope for distinction from studious application, and after you shall be called to the Bar, you should not be discouraged by a few months, or even years, of hope deferred. You would do wisely too, I think, to make some one branch of the law an especial object of study—resolving to know, so far as it may be possible for you, everything that can be known in it, meaning and hoping to become in time an admitted authority in that particular department of the law, whether your inclination and judgment shall lead you to select the criminal law, the law of real property, commercial law, or pleading generally, or practice generally.

Such a course would, I believe, insure to the person who pursues it, the advantage of soon being generally and favourably known. He would acquire a reputation which must advance him in his profession, secure for him the confidence and respect of his legal brethren, and make his services sought after by those who have valuable interests to protect.

I can remember too well, how difficult it is in youth to govern ourselves by the maxims of which we shall assuredly feel the truth in our maturer years, whether we shall have conformed to them or not. Those are happy who consider at the outset of life that every individual has his appointed time on earth, that years speed swiftly away, and cannot be recalled, and that to leave behind us some honorable proofs that we have not lived in vain should be our aim, and is what we should, if possible accomplish.

"Stat sua cuique dies; breve et irreparabile tempus,
Omnibus est vitæ; sed famam extendere factis
Hic labor, hoc opus est."

2. VISITING SCHOOLS.

Parents will walk the streets for hours, to examine fashions, to find the cheapest tailor, or to purchase a suit of clothes for the child, by which to adorn the body; but to enter the school-room to see that the proper encouragement and aid is given to adorn the mind, is another question, and one in which parents generally have not seen anything worthy their notice. They are too much engrossed in business, or they cannot understand what is right or wrong. The child is already further advanced than his parents, and thus the chapter is commenced and finished.

It never occurs to their minds, that their presence is an encouragement, whether they understand the study or not; they forget that teachers are encouraged by these visits; that altogether the child is greatly benefitted, and thus the parent rewarded for the little time spent in school. We hope to see a reform in this matter. Parents