

ature alone, the Bible is supremely vivid, varied, and entrancing.

Of the poets there are Keats, Tennyson, Byron, Burns, Edgar Allan Poe, Kipling, Bret Harte, and Stephen Phillips; but few others are adaptable to the bush. Of novelists, most profitable are Smollett, Sterne, Defoe, Dickens, Charles Kingsley (and his brother, Henry Kingsley), Thackeray, George Eliot, H. G. Wells, Bernard Shaw, Maurice Hewlett, and some dozen French and American authors. But most fruitful of all is the realm of the essay. Montaigne, Sir Thomas Browne, Swift, Charles Lamb, Landor, Emerson, Macaulay, Robert Louis Stevenson, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and, in our own time, the whimsical G. K. Chesterton, can all successfully defy sleep.

Another even more entrancing field is that of biography and of autobiography. To our mind the immortal Pepy's Diary stands far above all others. And the Diary can be read at all times and seasons. It can be opened at any page with the assurance that the attention will be held. Notable among biographies are Boswell's "Johnson," Trevelyan's "Life of Macaulay," Lockhart's "Scott," and the life of Tennyson, written by his son. Besides these there are a hundred and one biographies of men who attained fame in other professions than letters. But we must not weary our readers. The world of books is infinite in variety and in scope. We have indicated our own ideas and predilections. Each of us will differ widely or otherwise from his neighbour. But to each, the wonderful temple of literature is open. And the prosaic fact that nearly every good book can be obtained in cheap and portable form, removes all obstacles. All of us will be the better off if we widen our horizon not only in technical literature, but in the general field of letters. A generous knowledge of the humanities does not tend to emasculation; it ennobles, it frees from prejudice and littleness, and it is altogether worth while.

### ASBESTOS.

The principle of the "boycott," a device of Celtic origin, is not altogether bad. In its crudest form the boycott is a distressful combination of prejudice and violence. In its modern application the boycott may serve a useful purpose.

For years Canada was supreme in the production of unmanufactured asbestos. Through a combination of circumstances that supremacy is not so marked now. There is, however, one side of the present situation that should be known to every Canadian. Before touching this let us look briefly over the present status of asbestos production and asbestos manufacture.

In 1909, Canada produced 63,349 tons of asbestos, valued at \$2,284,587. In the same year the Russian output was 14,654 tons, or about 23 per cent. of the Canadian production. South Africa in the same period produced more than 1,700 tons, and the United States is

credited with 3,085 tons. The outputs of other countries are negligible.

As quality is a controlling element in the asbestos trade, it must be noted that the Russian asbestos is all of high grade, whilst that from South Africa, and the United States, is of lower grade. The Canadian output is reported officially at an average price of less than \$40 per ton. How correct this figure is it is hard to tell. But it gives some idea of the amount of each grade sold when we learn that the prices quoted for Crude No. 1, Crude No. 2, Mill Stock No. 1, and Mill Stock No. 2, are respectively \$270, \$152, \$53 and \$25 per ton. A third grade of mill stock sells at \$9.37 per ton.

It is apparent that Russia is our chief competitor and that this competition hits the most profitable end of the business. The outcome of this competition must be left to the future.

Meanwhile, it is timely to note that the manufacture of finished asbestos products is established in Canada. Heretofore, Europe and the United States have practically done all the manufacturing and Canada has been a fairly large consumer of finished products. Now Canadians have the opportunity of using Canadian-made commodities. And they should do so.

The prosperity of the asbestos industry concerns a large portion of the Province of Quebec directly. Whatever errors have been made in the financing of the chief asbestos corporation, have been sufficiently exploited. These errors, we hope, can be retrieved. The industry has a sound physical basis. The increased use of manufactured products will reflect at once upon the mining companies. And there is good reason why Canadians should call for wares made in Canada.

We can hardly expect even the most loyal Canadians to purchase asbestos goods for sentiment's sake. But we can expect them to be interested in the welfare of Canadian industries, and to give preference to Canadian manufactures.

This, we submit, is a rational and fair application of the boycott principle.

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Before closing we wish to urge once more the desirability of encouraging in every possible channel the use of fireproof mineral products in the construction of private and public buildings. This is a matter that should be put strongly before our civic, Provincial and Federal authorities.

### THE HAWTHORNE SILVER AND IRON MINES.

The career of Mr. Julian Hawthorne has been that of a literary acrobat. Some few years ago he deserted the legitimate field of letters and developed a talent for compiling lurid prospectuses. In these columns and in the columns of several of our contemporaries he has been slated with utmost severity. Yet he continues his amazing gyrations as a promoter. And, of all places in the world, he has chosen London as the scene of his latest endeavours.