

in the endless embarrassments of social life. Consequently such men are highly valued, and attain ere long to more or less celebrity, while the illfated buffoon, as soon as people have ceased wondering at his insane gambols, and have desisted from cursing his presumptuous impertinence, finds a berth for himself and his vagaries along with the crescent moustache and boarding house chicken jokes, in the time-honored retreat of oblivion.

A word here to those who aspire to eminence in the profession of Twain and Billings may not be inappropriate. If you are really gifted in this department of mental activity, you have long since become conscious of the fact, and it is certainly commendable to nurture and develop the talent to its highest stage of utility. If, however, such powers have never manifested themselves, be assured they do not exist; and conceive no vain project of achieving by effort what nature alone can supply. Nothing is more exquisitely ridiculous than the spectacle of one naturally reserved, and matter of fact, endeavoring to sustain the part of a humorist. Ability has other shapes than those necessary to the conception and successful presentation of a jest, and where the latter are wanting, we are pretty safe in concluding that the deficiency is balanced by the possession of the former. It is assuredly far more reasonable and judicious to toil with sound seed where the soil is fruitful, than to hope for a harvest where neither seed nor soil are found. In this way valuable time is squandered and nothing accomplished, while the more promising mental forces dwarfed and stunted by neglect, are rendered incapable of half the efficiency to which they might have been disciplined if their culture had been attended to in season, and the dupe of his own fantasies deteriorates to a mere cipher in the universe, or worse still a negative element detracting by his brusque nonsense, insensate freaks, and apish pranks from the physical happiness of any upon whom he may choose to bestow his society, and sadly shaking their peace of mind.

Let every one beware, lest protracted forgetfulness of those principles which should be allowed to control the deportment of every one, reduce him to that deplorable condition of mental feebleness and incapacity in which like the meddlesome irrepressible buffoon, he becomes a standing nuisance to his friends, unprofitable to himself, and thus renders life a complete and irretrievable failure.

## OUR LECTURE COURSE.

On Friday evening, April 27th, the public had the pleasure of listening to the very interesting lecture "Three weeks in London" by Rev. J. W. Manning, of Halifax. The President of the Athenæum Society, Mr. H. S. Shaw, in a few well-chosen remarks introduced the lecturer and in doing so took occasion to remark that the lack of lectures this year was not in any way due to the lecture committee.

The lecture was calculated to impart much information concerning London and was made very interesting by the pleasing interposition of amusing sketches.

"To night," said the Rev. lecturer, "I am to speak to you of three weeks spent in seeing London and as time will not allow me to give a minute description of all I saw there, I will try to describe what I consider the chief points of interest." "London is situated on both banks of River Thames, has a population of 5,000,000 and covers an area of 687 square miles. The streets are numerous, narrow and very crooked. Along these streets a living tide flows so large that it is said 60,000 people cross King William Street in the course of nine hours. Longfellow must have had some such picture as this before him when he penned:

"And I think how many thousands  
Of care-encumbered men,  
Each bearing his burden of sorrow,  
Have crossed the bridge since then."

"The parliament buildings are the first objects of interest; these buildings cover an area of eight acres, contain eleven hundred apartments and are in every respect imposing. "The principal parks in London are Hyde, Trafalgar and Albert, this last park is in many respects the finest. At each corner of the park stands an animal representing one of the four great continents. The statue of Prince Albert and Albert Hall surround this place with a halo of aesthetic light. "We spent one whole day in the Zoological Gardens and were amply repaid. Here are to be seen all kinds of animals, from the small mouse to the gigantic elephant. In the Botanic gardens grow plants, shrubs and trees of every description. Regent, Crystal and South Kensington parks should be visited as they are indeed beautiful.

"To visit the British and South Kensington Museums is of itself well worth all the hardships in crossing the Atlantic. The British Museum contains a library of 1,000,000 books. In this repository of curiosities among other things we noticed early editions of Scriptures and Shakespere, Cleopatra's coffin, statue of Diana and some very ancient fossils. "At the wax galleries are to be seen groups of all descriptions. In one corner we see a group representing the Queen and her husband surrounded by their happy children, in another we observe Scott, Dickens and other kindred spirits looking so natural that we can almost hear them talking. Here are collected Historic