

should possess an uniformity of class books in the various branches, yet we cannot help feeling that were the sanctioning power abrogated, and the teachers free to choose their own text-books, with the approval of superintendents, the schools would be better supplied; and the pupils would be sure to have in their hands the best treatises which modern scholarship and experience have prepared, or the competitive efforts of publisher or importer could procure.

Unfortunately the system under which our school-books are written and authorized is not such as either to insure the publication of good books, or to elicit first-class native talent in the production of them. The truth is, the Education Office business is conducted very much on the principle of Mutual Co-operative Societies, and that within a very narrow ring; and writer and publisher is patronized according as he may, or may not, be within the favoured circle; or, in regard to the publisher, as he may be found plastic enough to yield to the enforced lapsing of his copy² right to the Department, without consideration, although he may have paid the author-protégé of the Department handsomely for what he conceived to be a perpetual property. To expect, under such a system, that the country will be provided with the best possible school-books would be absurd. In the interest, then, of the country's educational wants, in the interest of the dissemination of really good text-books, up to the standard of the times, and on behalf of the youth of the country, let there be a reform in the administration of the Education office, and a re-organization of the Council of Public Instruction. We presume the Educational authorities would stand aghast at the idea of a Bookseller, say, of intelligence and capacity, being appointed a colleague of the professional gentlemen on the board; but, it occurs to us, that the appointment of one or more members of the Book-trade, of business capacity, disinterested mercenarily, and of liberal views, would not be amiss. Though, perhaps ignorant of school economy, and a heathen in the ways of circumlocution and departmental red-tape, yet his varied bibliographical information, and practical acquaintance with the best school literature of the day, would be of service at the Council board; and, moreover, his presence would be likely to check-mate any absorption of "casual advantages," and any tendency to the formation of literary and educational rings. Accustom yourselves, my masters, to this thought, and let the mind linger on the probabilities of this suggestion being acted upon.

Another cause of complaint on the part of the public we have to refer to; and we desire to touch on the matter lightly, as in doing so we shall be bringing discredit on the Book-trade, and reflecting some-

what on the lustre of its enterprise: we refer to the difficulty the trade experience in getting supplies of the approved text-books from the native publishers of such, or, in the case of English books, of those who enjoy a monopoly in their importation. There is an evident lack of capacity in their production, which is not creditable to their publishers, and is the cause of much annoyance and loss to the trade. The proverb hath it "there cannot be too much of a good thing"; and if the commodity is good, as there seems occasion emphatically to allege, let there be an abundant supply.

LORD BROUGHAM'S AUTO-BIOGRAPHY.

In the third and concluding volume of the "Life and Times of Lord Brougham" just reprinted by the Messrs. Harper, we find the following touching apology for any imperfections found in the work:—"If I have imperfectly performed my work,—if I have appeared to dwell too diffusely on some subjects whilst others of equal importance have been passed over,—if many statements have been feebly, and some inaccurately, rendered,—let it be recollected that I began this attempt after I was 83 years of age, with enfeebled intellect, failing memory, and but slight materials by me to assist it. Above all, that there was not left one single friend or associate of my earlier days whose recollection might have aided mine. All are dead. I alone survived of those who had acted in the scenes I have here faintly endeavoured to trace."

HUMOUR AND SATIRE.

The functions of humour and satire are, in these days, varied and important; and in the economy of the reading world, both have their uses: the one sharpening the intellect in the zest and pungency which is given to the page; the other affording a play-ground in drollery and fun, for the wearied mind to disport itself.

The part they play in contemporary literature is no inconsiderable one—satire as a weapon, the caustic fangs of which are needed to reach conceit, bigotry, sham, and ignorance; while humour, more genially, though often as effective, "shoots folly as it flies." The present month gives us a budget of works in both of these, a few of which we will notice:—MESSRS. CASSELL originate a magazine entitled, "The World of Wit and Humour,"—selections in the broad fields of jokes, epigrams, conundrums and facetiae.

MARK TWAIN'S "ROUGING IT."

A new work by the author of the "Innocents Abroad" is announced as nearly ready, and in the preface the author says:—"Take it all around, there is quite a good deal of information in this book. I regret this very much, but really it could not be helped: information appears to stew out of me naturally, like the precious atar of roses out of the otter. I would it were otherwise, but the more I talk up the sources, and the tighter I get, the more I leak wisdom."

"LORD BANTAM," BY THE AUTHOR OF "GINN'S BABY."

A cheaper edition of this work has been issued by Messrs. Dawson Bros., of Montreal, by arrangement with the author, and of which the *British Quarterly Review* says:—"The whole story is recited with the rarest humour and the most telling satire, topics and persons of the present time being ever and anon significantly glanced at. * * * It is a book to laugh over, but a book to think over, too; for some of the gravest questions of the day are dealt with significantly."