

THE CANADA
EDUCATIONAL MONTHLY
AND SCHOOL MAGAZINE.

FEBRUARY, 1883.

MR. GLADSTONE'S SCHOOL-DAYS.

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE entered Eton in September 1821. His two elder brothers, Thomas and Robertson, had already been some time at the school, and Thomas was in the fifth form. William was soon to be his fag. When the London coach had set down the three brothers at the door of the Christopher Inn, they had not far to go to reach their boarding-house, which was just over the way. It was kept by a dame, Mrs. Shurey, and, by reason of its vicinity to the famous inn, was looked upon by the boys as most eligibly situated. It was, however, the worst of all houses for study; and it doubles the merits of Gladstone's achievements at Eton that he should have been able to work in such a place. To the "Christopher" came many times a-day coaches and post-chaises from all points of the compass; on Fridays, which were market-days in Eton, the farmers held their ordinary there; and squires, drovers, pedlars, recruiting-sergeants, and oc-

casional village wenches who came in to be hired as servants, clustered under the porch. From their barred windows the boys at Shurey's, who were idly disposed, would often watch diverting sights, and not unfrequently their slumbers would be disturbed at nights by the untuneful choruses sung in the coffee-room after hunt dinners.

"UNCONTAMINATED AMID CORRUPTION."

It had apparently been fated that the soundness of Gladstone's moral nature should be tried at the very outset of his school life by the perilous character of his surroundings. But he passed quite unscathed through temptations, and so did George Selwin, the future bishop of New Zealand, who boarded at the same house, and who became early one of his best friends. These two and their brothers—for the two Selwyns and the three Gladstones all deserve the same praise—remained uncontaminated amid corruptions which are known to have had