their manifold talents. They are on the surface in every city of Europe and America where they have gathered in any considerable numbers. But in proportion as we seek among the less brilliant avenues to renown, among the slowly rewarded workers and students, we shall find fewer and fewer representatives of the race.

The distinguished Belgian publicist, M. de Laveleye, says:

"The rapid rise of the Jewish element is a fact which may be observed all over Europe. If this upward movement continues, the Israelites, a century hence, will be the masters of Europe. * * * This fact is popularly attributed to usury, rapacity, hard-heartedness, and what not of the sort. This is a complete error, a baseless prejudice. When all transactions are free, no one is forced to submit to more onerous conditions than those of the general market. Christians do not neglect to profit, like every one else, by whatever favorable opportunities are accidentally presented to them. In the great financial scandals of our day, especially in Belgium, only Christians have figured. * * * The Jews have a very keen and very just sense of reality, which they seize and render with extreme precision; and at the same time a strong ideality, a powerful imagination. Heine seems to me the type of this rare combination of apparently antagonistic qualities. Apply this genius to business, and their success is explained. Imagination and invention discover advantageous operations, solid good sense enables them to see the good and bad sides, and protects them against illusions. Among us, business-men with imagination ruin themselves through optimism, and those without it crawl in routine."

We hear much of their achievements in art, but among no modern people has the loftiest embodiment of any single branch of creative art been a Jew. In music, for which they are peculiarly gifted, the high-water mark of the art was reached by the three Christians, Bach, Beethoven, and Handel. In poetry, their most brilliant exponent, Heine, must take his seat at the feet of Goethe, and even of Byron, to whom he is more nearly related. Neither in painting nor in sculpture can they bring forward any supreme name. The great modern revolution in science has been carried on without their participation or aid. Thus far, their religion, whose mere preservation under such adverse conditions seems little short of a miracle, has been deprived of the natural means of development and progress, and has remained a stationary force. The next hundred years will, in our opinion, be the test of their vitality as a people; the phase of toleration upon which they are only now entering will prove whether or not they are capable of growth. In the meantime, the narrowness, the arrogance, the aristocratic pride, the passion for revenge, the restless ambition, the vanity and the love of pomp of Benjamin Disraeli, no less than his suppleness of intellect, his moral courage, his dazzling talents, and his triumphant energy, proclaim him, to our thinking, a representative Jew.

THE BLESSINGS OF PIRACY.

In the good old romantic days, when pirates wore top-boots and cutlasses, and bore down upon their victims with ships instead of printing presses, the trading-place of the buccaneers was Jamaica, where they spent in riotous living and the outfitting of their vessels the greater part of the wealth taken from merchant ships and wrung from the inhabitants of captured towns by torturing men and frightening women. There was naturally a party in the island opposed to the suppression of freebooting. That did not seem to Jamaicans so very bad a business which brought gold and silver plate and other precious stuffs, rifled from Panama or the coasts of South America, to be sold at low rates to Jamaican traders, and which afforded a liberal market for the rum and other commodities of that favored island. Those planters in Jamaica, if any there were, who opposed this sort of unlawful privateering, were, no doubt, deemed unpatriotic. Great fortunes were amassed indirectly from the trade, and to abolish it was to blight forever the golden prosperity of the country. The people who were plundered and tortured were, after all, only foreigners, Spaniards, and, above all, Papists. Piracy was not so very bad; it served to depress the Spanish power and to exalt that of Protestant England, and so promoted the glory of God, even though the means were most devilish.

One is forcibly reminded of this state of moral and intellectual fuddle into which the church-going English colonists of Jamaica fell through the seductions of trade, by the attitude of some of our publishing-houses on the copyright question. There are prominent publishers who are at length, after so many years of delay, in favor of granting to the foreign author some more definite interest in his book than the courtesy-money paid voluntarily of late years, but even these publishers continue to higgle for certain restrictions. They are not yet willing that literary theft shall be wholly suppressed, though they would like to see it reformed, now that a

race of bolder and more predatory publishers are sailing the literary ocean, and disregarding all the traditional rules of genteel buccaneering. But simply to give an author control of the book he has made, as a wheelwright controls the wagon he has built, as a farmer controls the potatoes he has grown, or, to borrow from Mark Twain, as a distiller controls the whisky he has distilled, this our reformed publishers regard as quite out of the question. An unrighteous trade always warps the conscience and the judgment at last. What the old sermonizers used to call "a judicial blindness" has smitten some of the book-sellers.

The English and American publishers are now wrangling over the question of how authors can be in part protected, without giving them a simple property-interest in, and entire control of, the product of their work, such as all other workmen have. This only will satisfy justice, and justice is a horse pretty sure to lead by a length or two in a very long race. In this whole discussion, the intrusion of the book-seller's claims into the question is a curious illustration of the way in which a wrong, when long tolerated, puts on the airs of an abstract right.

The most amusing thing that has been said or done in this discussion is not Mark Twain's funny speech. For once, the Hartford humorist has been fairly outdone by a piece of American humor from a publisher. A book-house of Philadelphia, a few months ago, sent to a number of authors a circular, in which it was proposed that they should give countenance to a proposition to forestall the pending book-sellers' treaty on the copyright question by a general law that should be more restrictive (and, consequently, less honest) than the treaty. One of the arguments in favor of this barefaced suggestion was that Belgium had lost her "flourishing reprint business" by making a copyright treaty, and it was urged that the same might happen to America. Authors were, therefore, solicited to petition against the moiety of justice that this treaty would afford them, with as much suavity as a man in Japan is asked to commit hari-kari. No doubt, the South Carolina Legislature, in colonial times, felt about piracy just as this patriotic Philadelphia book-firm feels about reprints. The Carolina proprietors wanted the colonists to chase away the pirates who flocked into Charleston to buy sea-stores and sell booty, but the Colonial Assembly refused. The Carolinians, no doubt, said as the Philadelphians do now: "See what will come of driving away a lucrative trade." The proposed treaty will not seriously restrain the reprinting of foreign books,—in fact, it leaves open a wide door for plunder, but even if it were calculated to break up the business of reprint, it would be no worse than some of our existing laws. Some people on Long Island a while ago carried on a most "valuable reprint trade," which would have made money more plentiful, and enriched some of the islanders, if the Treasury detectives had not rudely seized the plant and sent the printers to prison, from a prejudice against counterfeiting. It seems hard to deal thus with men who were only trying to get other people's property without paying for it,—a thing perfectly legal in another branch of the reprint business.

It is worth while to repeat and emphasize the fact that the greatest damage from any system of pillage, or complicity in pillage, is that it confuses the moral judgment and tends to retard the general enlightenment of a people. No amount of "cheap literature" can atone for the disturbing effect on the public conscience of a dishonest system. I have heard a gentleman of culture and usually clear ideas talk about "the great heritage of cheap literature," which the pirated "libraries" had brought to the American people. Which reminds me of the saying of a West Virginia chaplain, when recounting his capture by bushwhackers: "They cast lots, to decide who should inherit my horse."

Entering a shop in London, in 1880, I found the book-seller in a rage against America and Americans. He was resolved on vengeance and was swearing, in round old-fashioned Saxon oaths, that he would reprint some valuable American illustrated work—no matter whose—to revenge himself on America in general for the piratical act of one of the American book-houses,—perhaps the one in Philadelphia which esteems so highly "our valuable reprint trade,"—or, possibly, some other firm, composed of church-going and entirely respectable buccaneers,—deacons, as likely as not, and pillars in the church. The American book-lifter had robbed the English publisher of the money he had invested in works of art for his book, and had used the result of the toil and talent of the author and the artist without any compensation whatever. I might have blushed for my country's shame, but I knew that all true Americans ought to sustain the valuable reprint trade, and the benefits of cheap literature, which does as much for Philadelphia as the worship of Diana did for Ephesus. I therefore retorted upon the angry Briton, that he had not suffered so much from Americans as I had from English publishers. Indeed, our publishers have practiced privateering for so long a period that a sort of "honor among" themselves prevails with the more prosperous ones,

which is unknown to English book-sellers, who do not even rifle your pockets politely, as bandits always do, in romances.

The chief sufferers by the reprint trade are not British publishers, for whom I have no great sympathy, nor even British authors, whom I should like dearly to see righted. The American author suffers more than either. While other forms of industry are protected in this country by an almost prohibitory tariff, it marks the lowness and materialistic character of our civilization that the highest kind of production is discouraged by being subjected to direct competition with stolen wares. The wonder is that we have any literature. A reader must pay a dollar and a half for a novel by an American, while he can buy "Middlemarch" or "Daniel Deronda"—incomparable offsprings of genius—for twenty cents.

"But the public gets the benefit," says some hasty philosopher. Public-spirited people are always willing to have the public benefited at the expense of others. But does the public get benefit from this literary loot? For what is the office of literature? To refine our daily life—to show us the ideal aspects of the world in which we live. Foreign literature, drawing its materials from foreign life, cannot do the work of American letters. It is important that we see our own life idealized and analyzed in literature. Our aspiring people seek in Europe relief from the rawness of our new country, and feel when they land in England that they are walking in a country whose highways or hedge-rows are consecrated in works of genius. We ought by this time to have had a literature ennobling our thoughts of home and field and shop; and indeed, if we had had an honest and equitable copyright law, we might have had more than reaping and sewing machines with which to mark the advance of our civilization. Literature is like other industries; it is affected by the law of demand and supply—the law of relative recompense. Authors are not, usually, men who write for the fun of it, or because they cannot help it, or because they are incapable of other pursuits. Literary ability is not inconsistent with business sense. Shakspere and Voltaire were so far from being incapacitated for affairs by genius that they both grew rich by shrewd investments. Nearly all American men of letters have earned money with other implements than their pens. Irving was a merchant, Bryant and Willis were newspaper proprietors, Longfellow and Lowell, professors, Holmes is a physician and professor of anatomy, Stedman a broker, and so on. Ability of a large kind is not shut up to one pursuit, and, other things being equal, talent will seek the best market as certainly as wheat or salt pork. Men of first-rate power go to commerce, to the professions, even to politics, rather than court comparative poverty by writing books in competition with the pirated productions of transatlantic genius. Our life is thus left in a measure without the refining influence that can come only from a home-grown literature of advanced development. Notwithstanding the success we have made in some lighter forms, our literature cannot, in the more thoughtful departments, hold up its head alongside the current literature of England, France, or Germany; and our life is by consequence yet somewhat more crude and material in its aims and methods than that of older nations. This is apparent in the way in which we regard literature and art, either as useless luxuries, or as vehicles conveying morals or sugar-coating information. Since I began to write this little paper I have received a letter asking me to contribute to a live-stock paper a serial story that shall, "in an attractive form, treat of the breeding of meat on the plains," the slaughtering, cutting, and family marketing, with a lot of other kitchen ideas. This is the way literature looks to some people. I once heard an English woman say, with malice in her tone, that America was a great country *for machines*. We are not, of course, wholly destitute of the higher forms of intellectual life, but it is true that lower kinds of activity offer great temptations in America, and that in the present state of the book-trade the higher sort of literature is not an inviting profession to a man of gifts who has a decent regard to the provision he is to make for his family.

The chief sufferers from this state of things are the people at large, who lose the inestimable benefits which any nation derives from a body of men in its midst following thoughtful and studious pursuits, and thus helping the people to see their own business, society, and politics by the lamps of history, poetry, and philosophy. For our partial loss of these benefits we have no compensation, unless we can find it in the large wealth accumulated by a few men in a reprint trade like that once carried on by the publishers of Brussels, who managed by this means to plunder the intellectual men of Paris, and to make their own people, like ours, consumers of second-hand wares.

It might be well to recall the fact that the "literary fellows," so much despised by the lower grade of politicians, are the final recorders, and in some sense the ultimate arbiters, of the reputations of men of action

and affairs. The function is not second to any other in an enlightened country. Men of letters are the intellectual judiciary, and the whole tone of public and private life is lifted up when the character of the literary guild is improved. The statesmen who now find their account in yielding to the vulgar desire to get pillaged literature at a low rate, must themselves go down to history by means of the recording pens of men of letters. It is not in the training of the true literary man to seek mean revenges—half the merit of literature lies in sincerity and impartiality. But there were English statesmen of great figure in the last century, who repelled colonial overtures for the abolition of the slave-trade, without argument, simply and selfishly saying: "You must not meddle with a trade that brings so much money to England." These men do not appear well in the light which our later culture holds up to them. The historian in the twentieth century, who shall set himself to the task of analyzing the degree of enlightenment attained by us, will not admire those public men of our time who obstruct so great a reform, in the interest of a dishonorable trade, any more than we applaud the mercenary decisions once made in favor of piracy and the slave-trade.

If the present movement should fail, the next will probably be a far more comprehensive one, made by men of letters themselves, who are the real principals in the case. It is hard to organize authors as such—there are too many questions of literary position involved. But we can readily organize, on a business basis, an association of producers of literary property, which shall include writers of every rank and grade, who have a property-interest in copyrights. Such an association would seek to reform the whole theory of literary property. For it is a disgrace which the law-makers of America will have to bear, that men of letters in this late age should have to persuade reluctant legislators to give, through an intricate diplomacy, a partial protection from pillage to the productions of brain labor, that ought to stand on the common footing of all other property. The nineteenth century is drawing toward its close while yet Jews in Russia and writers in America are alike excluded from the equality before the law accorded to other classes.

TOPICS OF THE TIME.

A New Kind of "Boss."

SINCE the close of the war, various attempts have been made in Southern States to set on foot independent political movements through a division of the negro vote. None of these has met with much success except the Mahone movement in Virginia, and that has had a complete triumph. By the aid of the local Republican "machine" and the support of the negroes, Senator Mahone has created a new party, beaten the Democrats at the polls, and secured possession of the State Government. The movement of the Virginia Re-adjusters has been watched at the North with much distrust, owing to the fact that re-adjustment appeared, at first, to be merely a new name for repudiation. Had the Democrats ever shown a serious intention to provide for the payment of the debt of the State—had they appealed to their followers, not merely in the name of honesty, but with a practical declaration of an honest political programme, the Re-adjusters would have been placed in a very awkward position. As it was, the professions of the Bourbons amounted to little more than solemn asseverations that they were more honest than their opponents; but as they did not promise distinctly what they would do with the obligations of the State, if successful, their declaration was easily met by the Re-adjusters' denial that, so far as integrity went, there was anything to choose between the two parties. This made it easy for many organs of opinion at the North to urge that on other grounds there might be reasons for wishing the new party success, and these grounds were found in the possibility that the defeat of the Democrats would make a break in the "Solid South," teach the negroes the value of their power as voters, help to accustom them to combinations for political objects of their own, and thus pave the way for what the South so much needs for its prosperity and security, the destruction of the old party lines.

It seems now to be doubtful whether the chief practical result achieved by Senator Mahone and his followers is not simply and solely a new demonstration of the fact that the negro vote can be used by unscrupulous leaders who know how to influence it, no matter what their objects may be. It hardly needed a re-adjuster party or the repudiation of Southern debts to teach us this; for the carpet-bag governments set up throughout the South at the close of the war had proved it already. The demagogues of the reconstruction period cast the negro vote as they pleased, and they cast it, too, for purposes as directly antagonistic to the true interests of the blacks as any for which the Bourbons since their disappearance have used it. It has now been "voted" by Mahone in Virginia in precisely the same way. The fact is, and the sooner the fact is recognized the sooner we shall be rid of many dangerous illusions with regard to the future of the country, that the negroes constitute a peasantry wholly untrained in, and ignorant of, those ideas of