Isaacs," pleasing from the unusual scenery, by which he made a name.

Mr. Crawford may be said to have already met the request for romance which he has denied to us in "An American Politician"; for his last book, "Zoroaster," returns to the general vein struck in "Mr. Isaacs," only that it is completely Oriental, and that it is historical to boot. The author moves with much ease in the difficult field of the historical novel, difficult not to make learned but to make interesting. Here Mr. Crawford succeeds admirably, for much of the "tall talk" he indulges in accords well enough with the scenes of Persian and Babylonian court life he depicts, a life that recalls the pageants of the opera, as if Mr. Crawford had taken the hint from the musical boards, while the passages where he goes beyond the mark are condoned by the rapidity and interest of the story. "Zoroaster" is one of Mr. Crawford's best romances, if not the best.

The romantic element is noticeable also in Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge's latest story, "Donald and Dorothy," which might be called a novelette for young people, as it combines the complications and suspense of a definite plot with some charming pictures of home life. Though ostensibly for young people, the story, like its author's well-known "Hans Brinker," is of a kind to interest children of a larger growth. Not that there is any great resemblance between the two stories, however, as they are really written on widely different lines.

Mr. Julian Hawthorne has reprinted several stories which are practically new to us. "Archibald Malmaison" is perhaps the best thing he has produced, having an intricate plot which turns on a peculiarity of the brain of the hero. "The Pearl Shell Necklace" is a lovely story, with a good deal of plot and strong impressions of Nathaniel Hawthorne,—something that the son does not often have, notwithstanding all that easy-going reviewers may say, while "Archibald Malmaison" is, if anything, more akin to Edgar Allan Poe. Mr. Hawthorne writes like a man who has never yet found the place, the surroundings, the leisure to do his best; he is one of those workmen who impress you as capable of far stronger, deeper, more important literary work.

New as a writer of novels, but a journalist of some note, is Mr. Henry F. Keenan, author of "Trajan," which began to appear in a magazine that afterward suspended publication. The romantic element is strong in Mr. Keenan, so strong as to cause him sometimes to lose the perspective of to-day, but on the other hand giving to his work no little color and movement. The descriptions of Paris in the beginning of "Trajan" are picturesque and yet true; the characters are very uneven, often approaching silliness, and then startling one with an epigram, a thoughtful word, or a truth freshly and charmingly expressed.

Another journalist is Mr. Howe, author of "The Mystery of the Locks," a romance dripping with wet and murder, plunged in darkness and decay, redolent of ruined houses and tears. Mr. Howe manages to be readable, in spite of the lugubrious glasses through which he views everything; did he but know it, the strain of melancholy is so long drawn out that it loses its effect. His ostensible aim is realism, but were there such a pessimistic situation anywhere, the river, the halter, and the knife would soon remove the citizens of his dreary town to another world. Mr. Howe's pessimism is too artificial to be hurtful.

A. B.

A Boy's Appetite for Fiction.

SOME time ago the papers reported the suicide of a young boy whose mind had become disordered through dime-novel reading; while more recently at Freehold, New Jersey, an organization of boys, calling themselves the "Jesse James Gang," were indicted for larceny to which they had been prompted by the same pernicious stuff. By way of remedy a bill was introduced in the New York Legislature prohibiting "dime" publications; but the bill was not passed, and it is doubtful at any rate whether the difficulty could be solved in this way.

Even if a boy does not incline to the dime novel or the weekly "penny dreadful," he is hardly less in danger from what we call the standard fiction, if he uses it—as too many do—without moderation. Dickens, Scott, and Charles Reade are not in themselves demoralizing; but to read half a dozen of Reade's largest novels in as many weeks, as I have known a boy to do, is a mental dissipation which cannot fail to be injurious. The prevalence of this form of dissipation is obvious, but hardly any one realizes the extent to which it prevails; and it is for the enlightenment of parents and teachers on this point that I propose giving the results of some inquiries which I have made among thirty or forty boys in a private boarding-school in the State of New York.

Of these, five or six confess at the start that they do not read at all. "I have never read a book," one small boy of ten writes, "but my mother has read some to me." Half a dozen more merely state their preferences in the various departments of literature, while eighteen or twenty furnish in addition a very full list of all the books, so far as they can remember, that they have ever read in their lives. It is from these that I have drawn my conclusions, which I feel justified in doing from the fact that the boys are fairly representative, in point of age, intelligence, and social position, of the school-going class all over the Eastern States. Some of them, I am sorry to find, are addicted to the pernicious literature of which I have already spoken. One has read the life of Jesse James, and prefers it to that of Garfield; four have perused one of Zola's vilest novels; the same number read the "Police Gazette," and two the "Police News"; a number indulge in dime novels, of which one has absorbed as many as fifty or sixty. I have no doubt, however, that as these boys have their taste educated they will abandon Beadle, Tousey, and Fox, for Scott and Dickens, as one of their companions has done already. "From the age of thirteen to fifteen," he says, "I read a great many half-dime novels, but now I have found out that it spoils my taste for solid reading, besides being a great waste of time, so I shall *never* read any more of them. I have begun to read Walter Scott, Dickens, etc., and shall try to read a good many of them."

What this lad proposes to do, however, in his reaction against sensationalism, may not be an unmixed benefit. Walter Scott and Dickens are, of course, vastly preferable to "Jack Harkaway," "Roaring Ralph Rockwood," and "Dick Lightheart"; but the

danger is that he will over-indulge himself, as many of his companions seem to be doing. Here, for instance, is a boy of fourteen who names sixty-nine books which he has read — all of them fiction — and mentions that he could give ninety-seven more. Another furnishes a list of seventy, also fiction; another, of forty; another, of fifty; another, of one hundred and thirty-six; while the most astonishing exhibit is made by a lad of seventeen, who enumerates the titles of four hundred and seven books which he has read, of which three hundred and ninety-five are novels. Assuming that he began when he was nine years old, he must have read one new book every week of his life since that time; and probably more than one, since after the four hundred and seven he adds the comprehensive words, "and many others." The eighteen boys, it appears, have read in the aggregate about thirteen hundred books, of which twelve hundred are works of fiction; while the histories, biographies, etc., all told, number but one hundred, and of these as many as forty were read by one boy.

Now this is a startling disclosure, and yet it only presents in the concrete facts of which most people are already aware. The circulating libraries report the same state of things. Volumes of history, biography, travels, and essays lie on the shelves and accumulate dust, while Optic, Castlemon, Alger, Jules Verne, Dickens, and Scott change hands fifty-two times in a year, and are worn out with constant use. It is not my purpose to discuss the situation, or its threatening aspects. Every one agrees that too much fiction is as unwholesome as too much cake; the problem is to make the boy eat bread and butter. How are we going to solve the problem?

No one, of course, can present any solution that will cover every case, because the problem varies with the individual boy. With some it will be easier than with others. One lad naturally drifts toward study and investigation, and it will be necessary only to give his mind impulse in that direction to divert it from too much light literature. Another cares nothing about literature of any kind; it will not be difficult to keep him away from the danger. There are those, however, like the one mentioned, who are ravenous readers of anything from Ouida to Gaboriau, and in their case the problem becomes difficult and important. Without professing to solve it, I may be able to furnish one or two suggestions which lie in the way of its solution.

It is important, in the first place, to keep the boy employed. His lessons occupy him during the five or six hours he is at school. What engages his attention afterward? How many parents make any provision for the unemployed hours? How many know what their boys do in the afternoon? How many choose their sons' companions, or make sure at any rate that the boys do not fall into bad company? It is simply miraculous that so many grow up pure and honest, when one considers the temptations to which they are exposed, and the little pains taken by the parent to shield them from attack. One father whom I know, and whose case I take the liberty of citing because of the example which he sets to others, provides his son with a complete gymnastic apparatus in the grounds of his house, private telegraph wires to his friends' houses, and all sorts of mechanical appliances and games for indoor use, in the enjoyment of all which the boy's friends and companions are made as welcome as himself. The lad himself plays the violin, and one or two others of his friends the banjo; several of them are addicted to chess; and for the more systematic pursuit of these employments they are encouraged to form clubs, of which I think there are as many as four in active operation. With all this occupation it may be imagined that the boys have little opportunity to read forbidden books, or engage in forbidden pleasures, even if they wanted to, which I do not believe they do. It may be urged, indeed, that they do not have much opportunity to read anything; and this is no doubt true, but for a school-boy occupied all day with his lessons reading is not an essential exercise, and as between sitting in the house over a novel or playing tennis out-of-doors, the latter is decidedly preferable.

If, however, the boy must be left to provide his own occupations, or if he does not take to out-of-door sports at all, and insists on spending his leisure over his books, then it becomes necessary to counteract the tendency toward too much fiction by stimulating his spirit of inquiry in other directions. There are few boys, however dull, indolent, or volatile, who cannot be interested in serious subjects if the attempt is only made in the right way. To illustrate this, let me give a bit of experience.

Not long ago a literary club was started among a small circle of boys in Brooklyn by their Sunday-school teacher, with a view to giving him a little closer access to his scholars in their secular pursuits. In a year and a half it grew from six members to fifteen,— at which the membership is limited,— and excited a degree of interest among the boys and their friends which fills the teacher, who is also the president, with constant gratification and surprise. Its meetings are held fortnightly in the president's house, and the exercises comprise readings, essays, declamation and debates, and the presentation by some previously appointed member of the current events of the fortnight gleaned from the newspapers, from which the organization takes its title of "The Newspaper Club." In anticipation of the closing meeting before the summer vacation, the president distributed among the members a series of history questions, promising a prize to be awarded at that meeting to the one who should answer the greatest number within a fortnight. The queries, numbering twenty in all, have already been published in one of the newspapers, but two or three may be quoted here to show their general character: "What celebrated character after spending sixteen years in writing a history burned it up, and why?" "Who was the best of the Cæsars; when and how did he die?" "Who was called the White Rose of Scotland?" "When was a lunar rainbow supposed to foretell the death of a Prince of Wales?" etc., etc.

Difficult as they were, the boys attacked them with undismayed courage, took them to their teachers and friends, invoked the assistance of editors and literary men, besieged the Brooklyn, the Astor, and the Historical Society libraries, made the librarians' lives a burden, and in every possible way sought to obtain the answers. It is no exaggeration to say that for a fortnight the questions were the uppermost thought in their minds; and not so much for the sake of the prize as

from an ambitious desire to excel in the competition. The president was simply amazed. Boys who were not naturally studious spent hours over books which they had never opened before in their lives; others who were fond of reading left fiction for history and biography; a few who did not participate could not fail to be interested in the efforts of their companions; while one who had watched the contest carefully did not hesitate to assert that the competitors got more knowledge of history out of it than they would get out of a year's study at school. It does not concern the discussion particularly, though it may be an interesting fact, that one boy answered correctly fifteen out of the twenty questions; another, fourteen; another, thirteen and a half; a fourth, thirteen; a fifth, twelve and a half; a sixth, twelve; and the seventh and eighth, eleven each.

Now this, it seems to me, suggests one antidote to the novel and the story-paper. It is only a suggestion, of course, and might not work with equal success under other circumstances. Methods of this sort have to be adapted to the exigency, and one who goes into the business of an educator — though only in an amateur way — must be fertile in expedients. But here, at least, is a single instance in which historical study became, for a time, of greater interest than fiction. And I think it may be taken for granted that whenever the boy becomes interested in the identity of the White Rose of Scotland, or the fate of the last Cæsar, or in the historical lunar rainbow, or in like subjects, the novel and the "penny dreadful" will have lost something of their charm.

Eliot McCormick.

Archæological Study in America.

In past ages, despite such phenomena as the archæizing tendencies of late Egyptians and Greeks, and of the Romans, who were devoid of artistic originality, men did not interest themselves in old-fashioned details of custom or art — in antiquities. When the Greeks had repairs to make to an old temple, they did not seek, as we do now, to put back careful copies of the injured work; they added, as at Selinous, sculptures and columns in the prevailing style of the day, thus, to a modern eye, injuring the unity of the monument. So, in mediæval Europe, the majestic round-arched naves of Vézelay and Le Mans were completed a century or more later by the graceful lancets and soaring vaults of their magnificent choirs; and in 1514 the slender pinnacles and luxurious ornament of the lofty north spire of resplendent Chartres arose beside the noble simplicity of the companion spire, nearly four hundred years older. Archæology, discovered by Winckelmann in the last century, has become a science only within a few years, and is a characteristic acquisition of this encyclopædic age of patient research and reasoning endeavor — logical, if not always, unhappily, possessing the inspiration attending sincere conviction within narrower bounds.

Archæology is a purely intellectual science, without direct influence upon increase of material prosperity, and devoid of political affiliations. Hence, its pursuit is slow to gain foothold in a new civilization such as ours. Recently, however, American interest in archæology has been increasing very rapidly. This interest is fostered particularly at Harvard — where for years the artistic and æsthetic side of the subject has been admirably expounded — and at Johns Hopkins. It is manifested by the growing popular concern in the aboriginal antiquities of our own land, now carefully preserved and intelligently studied, not without important aid from the Government. It is promoted by a number of local societies, such as those of Baltimore and New York, recently organized as component parts of the Archæological Institute of America, which has become, under amended regulations, a federation destined to unite the interests and energies of smaller bodies scattered throughout the country. The Institute, though young in years, has by the thorough work of its expedition to Assos rendered a service to classical study of which the acknowledged value will not be appreciated according to its full merit until the publication of the final report. It has brought to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts the first Hellenic sculptures of capital importance which have crossed the Atlantic; and these have now taken their place beside the admirably selected collection of casts which renders that museum, as Mr. Stillman has pointed out, one of the best schools in the world to-day for the study of classic sculpture. The Institute has rendered a still greater service to American learning in becoming the parent of the school at Athens, supported by a league of colleges formed in the common interest of knowledge. The school, though only three years old, has begun already with fruitful results its work of training a band of practical young archæologists to emulate their fellows who have done honor to France and Germany, and to follow in the footsteps of our own Stillman, Clarke, Bacon, and Waldstein. Our growing appreciation of antiquities is illustrated by the popular favor with which were received last spring the archæological lectures given in Baltimore and in New York, by the general prosperity of our museums, and by the foundation at Baltimore, with much enthusiasm and a bright prospect for success and usefulness, of the new "American Journal of Archæology," which aims to cover all departments of the science — prehistoric, Oriental, Egyptian, classical, mediæval, and American — more completely than they have been covered heretofore in any one periodical.

To turn to more active American work: As is well known, the Wolfe expedition to Babylonia is now in the field; the school at Athens has just published its first volume of Papers and a preliminary report of a journey through unexplored regions of Asia Minor by one of its students — a journey rich in geographic and epigraphic gain; and the Institute has issued a most valuable volume giving the results of the labors in Mexico of its representative, Mr. Bandelier, who in considering American aboriginal problems brings to bear common sense and scientific method, and sweeps aside with little ceremony the fanciful glamour in which such problems have been enveloped by untrained explorers. It is hoped, too, that means may soon be found by the immediate initiative of the New York Society of Archæology to continue the honorable record of Assos by sending out a thoroughly equipped expedition to some such site as Cyrene, rich in history and in ruins, whence may be brought not only credit, but notable increase to the scanty national store of original antiquities.