

TOPICS OF THE TIME.

Western Careers for Eastern Young Men.

EDITOR OF THE CENTURY MAGAZINE.

DEAR SIR: Why the young men who in the East are crowding by thousands into the professions and mercantile pursuits which are already so full, don't come out West and tackle farming or stock-raising, I cannot, for the life of me, see; and I'm sure that if the matter was properly placed before them, they would whistle at the pursuits named and come out to the free and independent life of the Western farmer and stock-raiser with an enthusiasm which would insure success. I don't know why college-bred men seem to have a low opinion of agricultural life. Perhaps it is because they get their ideas of what it is from the hard-worked farmer of the East, certainly not from his brother of the West, whose life, if he is at all forehanded, is the easiest and most independent in the world.

Why don't the fathers in the East, who, after having expensively educated their sons, spend additional thousands in setting them up in business or starting them in a profession, give the boys a few hundred dollars (the more the better) and send them West to become farmers or stock-raisers? They can soon make themselves independent; and then the law, medicine, banking, or any other pursuit, is open to them. The policy which keeps them at the East in a long and expensive probation is silly; out West they can become self-supporting, and therefore proportionately more manly and self-reliant from the beginning. It costs but a trifle in money to take up a quarter-section of land and put up a comfortable shed in which to live, and buy the necessary tools and stock to work with; after which, cheerful work does the rest. No especial knowledge of husbandry is required at the start that cannot be acquired by a few questions, which any one will cheerfully answer, and if the beginner does make mistakes they are not costly ones.

Young England seems to see this question in a proper light, for there is in this State, at Le Mars, a very large colony of young men from England—mostly college-bred—who are making successful farmers and stock-raisers; I cannot give any details, but can only say that there are some six hundred or more of them, and that they look successful, contented, and happy. They certainly are healthy, as any one would be sure to be, leading the life they do. They work hard, but they have their play with it, as the great number of greyhounds and sporting dogs of all kinds seen in that section, as well as the spring, summer and fall meetings of the Le Mars race-course—where they enter and ride their own ponies and horses—will abundantly testify.

Why should not the young men of Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, and the other colleges of the East, organize colonies in the West, and, while making homes and careers for themselves, assist in building up this new country?

Yours truly,

NEWTON, IOWA.

W. B. D.

The suggestion of our correspondent is not very novel. We are quite sure that we have heard this kind of advice before,—notably in the days of Mr. Greeley. In fact, there have been times when this

advice, being put forth by some as a sort of social panacea, suffered the ignominious fate of all panaceas. Just now, however, there is a renewal of the Western furore, and our correspondent naturally wants to see educated young men follow the example of some recent English educated colonists. A great many of our young men of education are undoubtedly taking part in the movement, though not in groups like the English, perhaps, and we dare say there are many more who would be wise to follow.

According to a recent report from the General Land Office in Washington, the United States disposed of 15,699,848 acres of public lands during the year ending June 30, 1882. Of this vast area nearly one-half, or 6,347,729 acres, were taken by settlers under the provisions of the Homestead Act,—more than one-third of the Homestead entries being in Dakota. The Western migration of 1881 was regarded as phenomenal, but it has probably been exceeded in volume by that of the season just closed. It is hardly an exaggerated estimate to say that a million of people have transferred themselves, during the past eight months, from the Atlantic seaboard States and the older States of the Mississippi Valley, and from the perennially swarming hive of Europe, to the prairies of Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Texas, the valleys of the Rocky Mountain system, and to the farther regions of the Pacific slope. So rapidly have the vacant spaces in the center of the continent and on its western shore filled up in recent years, that there is no longer a frontier. Even in the least accessible and least attractive regions some sprinkling of population is found, and there are few sections where one could now travel a hundred miles without coming upon the habitations of civilized men.

The young man in the older communities of the East, reading of the marvelous growth of this new western country, often asks himself whether he could not wisely join the ranks of the next annual migration. No doubt the question, "Shall I go West?" is the uppermost problem in the minds of thousands of the young men of the East, who have still their careers to make, and have not yet gained a secure and promising footing in the business world. It is a question which each must answer for himself, and concerning which no advice can be given that would be of universal application. It would be a grievous mistake to suppose that a change of longitude alone insures success. Idleness, incompetency, and a nerveless, drifting disposition, have no better chance in Montana than in Massachusetts. Indeed, there are some men who run along fairly well in the East, in the grooves of custom and of established acquaintance and business connections, who would make lamentable shipwreck if set adrift in a new Western community.

On the other hand, the chances for a young man of average pluck and energy are unquestionably much better in the West than in the East. He shares the advantages of being among the first to open a fresh

store-house of natural wealth. He gets the first dividend on the increase of value resulting from bringing population upon the soil. The land he buys for three or four dollars an acre, or gets for nothing by homestead settlement, soon becomes worth ten or fifteen. If he embarks in trade or in any mechanical pursuit, his wares or his services are in brisk demand, because all the new-comers around him require goods and implements. Then there is a certain stimulus in the moral atmosphere caused by the ambitions and energies of a new community full of hope and activity, which makes hardships easy to bear and causes buoyancy of spirits.

Western people find it hard to make their friends in the East understand just what they mean when they speak of the difference in the business and social tone of the two sections. It is a difference to be felt rather than defined. There is vastly more energy and more hope *per capita* of the population in new communities than old, and the immigrant feels at once the resulting stimulus. It braces up the listless and the desponding, and makes even the most active man conclude that there is a deal more in him in the way of work and ideas than he supposed. Many a young man who would have remained a clerk or small-salaried employee of some kind all his life, had he stayed in the East, becomes, amid the larger opportunities of the West, a "leading citizen," and the owner of a fine farm or a prosperous business.

The young man going West can, therefore, count upon the opportunities of obtaining good land at small cost, the business openings growing out of the wants of a new community, and the moral incentive that comes from contact with hopeful, enterprising people. If he does not succeed in gaining a full measure of independence in the course of ten years, the reason will lie in his own disposition. He will either lack energy and capacity, or he will be so much a creature of habit and so thoroughly the outgrowth of an older civilization that he cannot adjust himself to the new environments. There are men, as well as trees, that will not thrive when transplanted. The intending emigrant would do well to study his own disposition carefully, and make sure that he is not of that kind.

Finally, the Western emigrant must expect to miss many of the agreeable conditions of life in his own home: to work hard and live plainly, to get along without a hundred comforts and pleasures which have been almost as much a matter of course to him as his three meals a day. He will have to find his enjoyments, for a few years, largely in anticipating the rewards which the future is to bring. He will not have to endure the rude physical hardships suffered by the last generation of pioneers who cleared the forests of Ohio and Indiana, for the railroads now go in advance of settlement, and bring the appliances of comfortable living to those who can pay for them. He can ride on a sulky-plow, sow his grain with a patent drill, reap it with a harvester, and thresh it with swift machinery driven by a straw-burning steam-engine; but, for all that, there are many deprivations to be borne, and trials enough to be endured to test his manly qualities. A feeling that he is building up the country and his own fortunes at the same time will bring him safely through them all, however, if he has the stuff in him for a successful pioneer.

The Late Dr. Pusey.

THE death of Dr. Pusey has already drawn from his countrymen, of all theological opinions, an expression of admiration for his character, which, in many quarters, was withheld while his living presence lent a luster to the ritualistic movement which claimed him as one of its fathers. For a moment, at least, his character has become a center of unity in the English Church. The partisanship of religious ideas gives way before the fact of a good life appealing through death to the judgment of the universal moral sense which never refuses its homage to actual righteousness. The unanimity with which opposite Church parties are now pointing to Dr. Pusey's sincerity, courage, singleness of purpose, fairness, gentleness, and practical religion, in which all see the Christian ideal almost realized, ought to admonish theological antagonists that the real issues of spiritual life move far away from their disputes. In England, however, this universal desire to express admiration for his character may delay, for a time, any real estimate of his mental powers. His warmest admirers will soon have to admit that his intellect was inferior to his spirit. Keble in his poetry, and Newman in his exquisitely disguised logic, showed greater ability, and perhaps both did more to enforce "Puseyism" than did Pusey himself. Pusey was not the first reformer whose mind was unable to take large views of really great things. The great ideas of catholicity and spiritual life, when revived by the High Church movement of fifty years ago, found in him a narrow, though intense, expositor. He seemed incapable of conceiving of that true catholicity which includes in the kingdom of God every one faithful to Divine truth, as revealed in every age. For him, "Catholic truth" spoke its last word from the lips of the Church Fathers of the first few centuries. He was among the first to recognize and denounce the deadening provincialism of the Established Church of England; but he sought to escape from it, not, like the poetic Keble, by rising into the ideal aspect of its doctrines and worship, nor, like the courageous Newman, by entering the historic repose of the Roman Catholic communion; but like a practical Englishman, by emigrating to the earliest centuries of Christianity. Amidst the contradictory voices of that troubled epoch, his intellectual narrowness enabled him to hear only the few which happened to be in agreement with one another, and to gather from their somewhat thin harmony that principle of "Catholic authority" which led him to ignore all truth revealed ever since. While men like Dean Stanley rejoiced to hear the voice of God in every age, — a living voice appealing to the living soul through every event in history and in individual experience, — Pusey's faith in divine illumination shrank up into an exclusive attention to the partial truths spoken in the Church's prattling days. To men like Maurice, the formulated doctrines of Christianity were but openings into principles and truths in harmony with the universe itself, and, therefore, too large to find complete expression in any dogma; Pusey regarded Christian doctrines as final verities relating only to a supernatural life and deposited in the Primitive Church, to be guarded by a perpetual succession in the ministry. The true historic spirit which, to so many