

feeling. But the practice seems to have taken a worse form, and instead of gentlemanly criticism, false stories and willful slanders have been circulated, without the least shadow of fact upon which to have built a foundation. Free expression of ideas is something to be cultivated, and above all, by a college student, but this should not be used to cover up or excuse mud throwing; at those whose acts and opinions we should respect. Nor should the student who indulges in this pernicious practice feel that he is setting up the standard of free thought and independence or pose as an intellectual giant in doing that easiest of all things—finding fault. Our proneness to find fault with the doings of all others than ourselves should rather be restrained than cultivated, and students, of all persons, should guard themselves against imputing wrong motives, or circulating unsubstantiated reports of low or mean acts of those who, presumably, are men of experience and education, thoroughly capable of choosing that which will tend toward the advancement of their pupils. When students and faculty work in harmony far more will be accomplished than when the student stoops to the low practice of dirt-throwing, and we would welcome the reform of certain well known and influential students who have engaged in such work.

LITERARY THIEVES AND THEIR BOOKS.

One of the most convincing evidences of a writer's success and popularity is seen in the eagerness with which his methods are seized upon and worked for the benefit of inferior writers, who have perhaps failed in their own work, and therefore take these means of bettering their fortunes.

If any one cares to assure himself of the truth of my statement, let him walk into any book store and glance over the titles of many of the latest publications. Such titles as these will strike his eyes: "He," "It," "Her," and "He and She" and many others of a similar nature. All these, of course, seek to attract attention by the similarity of their titles to that of Mr. Haggard's "She," which none of them resemble save in name only. The writer of one of these books in particular, which I lately noticed, went beyond his brethren in ingenuity, and so arranged the title of his book as to leave the public in some doubt as to whether he or Mr. Haggard was the author. Now of course the latter gentleman must, if he saw these books, feel immensely flattered by this tribute to his ability as a writer of fiction; but after all, I very much doubt if he would be greatly pleased at having his works placed on a level with those I have mentioned.

This practice of appropriating unique titles is, to my mind, little short of theft in one of its most insidious forms. I say insidious, because there is no way of effectively punishing the offenders and of teaching them a salutary lesson. The victim must endure it, whether he likes it or not. Those who are mean enough to take advantage of another's success may do so to their hearts' content, so far as any restrictions are concerned. If their sense of shame is not awakened in the committing of the theft, it will hardly be aroused at some later time. And why is it not? For no other reason whatever than because the public, by its action, sanctions the practice.

If the general class of novel readers are so blind as not to see the deception imposed upon them, and will keep on buying up worthless trash because of its gaudy appearance, how can the unprincipled producers of this stuff be expected to cease their nefarious work?

Plainly, then, the remedy lies with the public, and, by means of its disapproval, if rigidly persevered in, I believe that before a great while we would cease to be troubled with this disreputable class of literature, and would not be wasting our time in poring over reams of vapid nothings, which, having read, we are always ashamed to confess that we have done so. I may seem to be trying to make a mountain out of an ant-hill; but I am thoroughly convinced that the reading of such books is more wide spread, and the effects of such reading,—particularly upon the minds of children, who are most easily influenced—than many people are willing to admit. I very well remember the quantity of dime novels—which I class in the same category with those of which I have been speaking—that I used to smuggle into the cellar and devour hour after hour, sitting upon an old barrel in the furnace room. I can also now see, though I then did not, what a demoralizing effect such literature had upon me, in giving me a distaste for books of a better class. While I do not care to intimate that most boys are as foolish as I was in this respect, I am still sufficiently well acquainted with a boy's inclinations to know that many are unfitting their minds by reading such books for the reception of better and purer knowledge, and are thereby saddling upon themselves a habit which, when they have grown older, they will deeply regret having formed, and one from which they will find it exceedingly difficult to free themselves.

THE EXCHANGED CRUSADERS.

The above is the title of a story in the June number of *Lippincott's*, written by Mr. Conway G. McMillan, a graduate of the U. of N. Our genial friend with characteristic modesty, has seen fit to sign a name other than his own to his interesting story; so we were considerably surprised and greatly pleased when we learned who was the author. For the benefit of those, therefore, who evince a kindly interest in Mr. McMillan's welfare, we take this opportunity of giving a short sketch of the story without further comment.

The story is peculiar, in that it has to do with peculiar people, and is supposed to have been the experience of a young English nobleman with a taste for philosophical studies and plenty of time and money to enable him to gratify his taste. Sir William Ashcourt, a diseased ancestor of the young man, seems to have led a rapid life while in the flesh, and in consequence, upon departing hence, was doomed to haunt the earth in penance for his past misdoings. Sir William, it should be remarked; was a Crusader in the service of Richard Coeur de Lion, and held quite an important position at that valiant prince's court, being knighted by him as a reward for his bravery in an engagement with the forces of Saladin, Prince of the Saracens. It can therefore readily be seen that our young nobleman—who, by the way, had the honor of being named after Sir William—would be somewhat proud of having such a distinguished ghost inhabit his castle, though this, like every other luxury, had its drawbacks. Sir William is not a happy ghost. Indeed, we may go farther, and say that he is distinctly unhappy. The pangs of remorse are eating into his—we were going to say, his heart, but it occurs to us that ghosts as a rule don't possess that troublesome organ—at any rate into the place where his heart ought to be, and he has taken up his abode in the halls now inhabited by his