

## THE EFFECT OF LITERATURE ON YOUTH.

A GREAT factor in the formation of the character of our youth is home literature. Suppose the library, to which the younger members of the family have free access, to be stacked with numerous volumes of trashy reading, can we not readily conceive a youthful character to bear a close resemblance to the character represented in the library? Impression succeeds impression, until finally, in the inclinations and habits of those thus situated, we begin to notice the effects of some ruinous influence. Like some narcotic, after these impressions have once become instilled, it is next to an impossibility to dislodge them. Almost daily the papers present to us instances of boys scarcely in their teens, who becoming animated by a desire for some heroic (?) adventure, have departed for the wide west or the boundless deep, armed with a revolver or some similar weapon, to carry into effect their desires. Now are such desires innate, are they the natural inclinations of the boy? No, there is something back of them, and this something can in nine cases out of ten be traced to trashy literature. Let us if we fail to realize the importance of pure literature, look back a few years, and we will behold with a shudder, the danger to which we were exposed, while perusing the pages of some very low grade literature. What our experience has not taught us regarding its influence, observation has abundantly supplied. We realize that a few low grade books whose contents are a disgrace and a discredit to their authors, and whose value lay in the printing alone, have been the price of our childrens' characters. After we have provided such a library through our unseemingly carelessness, depraved characters are presented, then we realize to our sorrow, our great error in placing such literature within the children's reach. Can any parent, desirous of impressing given thoughts or deeds, more effectually accomplish his purpose

than by rearing his children with free access to an abundance of literature of a given character. If he be a disciple of Ingersoll, and desire his children to follow in the parental footsteps, he tolerates in his library, the presence of a trashy miscellany. Should he desire them to become christians, he places before them works of a christian nature. If we would do justice to our children, we will select for them such literature as will form only good impressions.

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## THE PLACE OF CHEMISTRY IN CIVILIZATION AND EDUCATION.

IN a recent number of *The Forum* there appears a brief but note-worthy article entitled the Role of Chemistry in Civilization, by Professor W. Crookes. The contributions of chemistry to the list of those creature comforts with which civilized man delights to surround himself, and which may be said to be the mark of his civilization, are noted among the bleached, dyed and printed textiles of which clothing is composed; the leather of shoes, paper of books, and sugar and other prepared foods; while gun-powder and dynamite may be named as powerful agents in securing that sovereignty over nature which Professor Crookes regards as the extent of civilization. The important bearing of chemical research upon the development of nearly all our industries is forced very strikingly upon the minds of all who are in the least acquainted with them.

Interesting as is the study of the intimate connection of chemical operations and product with all that contributes to the material welfare of mankind, the views which Professor Crookes gives of the influence of chemical discoveries and methods upon the most fundamental ideas of humanity, is especially interesting.

Little more than a century ago, ideas of matter were very vague, and the chemical changes then observed, were often explained