

his work by Mr. Magath, a recent convert from Judaism. This good work is carried on without the glare and noise of imposing organization, yet it is quietly, unostentatiously, doing an important work. Obscure as it may appear, it has aroused the hostility of the Jewish press and pulpit. Nothing daunted, the zealous workers keep perseveringly in the line of duty, and are fully entitled to the prayers, the support and the sympathy of all who believe that the Lord will bring again the captivity of Israel. Those interested in this work can correspond either with the Rev. Jacob Freshman, 25 Seventh street, N.Y., or with the well-known publisher, A. D. F. Randolph, 900 Broadway, N.Y.

BORROWED FEATHERS.

THE decadence of the modern pulpit is a theme on which certain people love to descant with unctuous fervour. The sermons of to-day, they tell us, are not comparable to those of bygone generations. These candid critics do not generally condescend to point out specific defects in the average presentation of Gospel truth, far less do they profess to suggest a remedy for the blemishes that are so painfully obvious to them. The question, however, is a relative one. The present generation is but imperfectly acquainted with the style of pulpit discourse common half a century ago. The published sermons of the distinctive preachers of that time do not convey an adequate idea of the average preaching then prevalent. The eminent preachers of the last generation form a noble galaxy, but the men at present most conspicuous on Zion's watchtowers are exercising as potent an influence on their own generation as the great and the good of bygone days wielded on theirs. The pulpit of this age is exposed to a fuller and a fiercer light than that which beamed upon it in former times. The press is everywhere on the alert. If a discourse is more than ordinarily stupid, the fact is chronicled and the dullness disclosed; if a sermon is noteworthy in any particular, it finds a place in the columns of the next morning's paper; if the preacher panders to a rampant sensationalism, his notoriety is assured, and he becomes a competitor with the popular athlete and the reigning histrionic celebrity of the hour, as a fitting subject for the people's gossip.

It must, however, be admitted, that the conditions of effective preaching have changed. Popular education has produced important results among the people. The demands on the ministry are more exacting. The preacher has more efficient helps to study than were ever possessed before. The great advances in Biblical science place valuable stores for the elucidation of Scripture at his disposal, but he has too little time to avail himself of such a wealth of material. The many and pressing demands on his time preclude the useful process of gradual assimilation, far less the quiet elaboration needful to original, independent research. The claims of the pastorate encroach on those of the pulpit, not to speak of the multifarious calls on a minister's time and energy which public and philanthropic objects necessarily entail. It is hard for the active minister of these days to fulfil adequately the Pauline precept, "Give attendance to reading."

Is not, therefore, the hard-worked minister of our time exposed to special temptation? Those that serve in sacred things are but human, and consequently fallible. Might not an overtaxed brother lighten his labour by an occasional reaping where he has not sown? A distinguished Scottish professor, on being asked how a certain brother fared, responded, "That man keeps the Sabbath better than any one I know." "How?" "Well, he neither thinks his own thoughts nor speaks his own words on that day." This method of Sabbath observance is getting a little too common, it would seem. Dr. Talmage last week took occasion to complain that several ministers, noticeably in the West, were in the habit of preaching his sermons to their people. Such offenders are to be blamed. Some, no doubt, would be disposed to question their taste, since there are men who, however willing to concede the merits of the Brooklyn orator, are disinclined to regard him as a model preacher. However these western divines who speak with the mouth of Talmage may palliate their practice to their own consciences, most people who prize honour and honesty cannot help heartily despising the degradation of their sacred functions. Though on the occasion of Beecher's residence being burglarized, his sermons were untouched, it is nevertheless conceded that such compositions are covered by the eighth commandment.

The messenger of truth should be manly enough to preach his own sermons, and nobody else's. The sacredness of his office ought to stimulate him to serve the Lord with his best, not with that which costs him nought.

THE GLADSTONE JUBILEE.

ON the completion of his fiftieth year of public life, the Hon. William E. Gladstone, though declining ostentatious and formal celebrations, has received the cordial congratulations of those who esteem and admire him. These spontaneous demonstrations have not been confined to the political party having the honour to claim him as its leader. Prominent representatives of Conservatism have been fervent in their expressions of goodwill. Congratulations have been tendered him from almost every capital in Europe. On this continent the organs of public opinion have vied with each other in their expressions of admiration for one of the greatest statesmen of our time.

Mr. Gladstone has been subjected to severe and hostile criticism by those who entertain political convictions opposed to his, but the uprightness and rare conscientiousness of the man, the marvellous grasp and versatility of the statesman are fully recognized throughout England, and wherever transcendent ability and exalted personal worth are recognized as the chief characteristics of an administration. Not alone in the history of our times will the name of Mr. Gladstone occupy a conspicuous place, but generations yet to come will study with grateful admiration the many services rendered to his country and the world throughout his long and honourable public career. May the declining days of the grand old man be peaceful and happy!

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES.

THE SCRIPTURAL FORM OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT. By the Rev. C. C. Stewart. (Toronto: James Bain & Son; Montreal: W. Drysdale & Co.) Amid the number of new books constantly issuing from the press, we are in danger of forgetting older ones of real merit. Such a book is that named at the head of this notice. This admirable compend of Presbyterian polity is of permanent value, and a pleasing memorial of its lamented author.

THE CANADA SCHOOL JOURNAL for December. (Toronto: W. J. Gage & Co.)—As usual the "School Journal" is up to time in the value of its contents. It admirably fills the special sphere in which it moves. The large amount of reading provided in its pages bears directly upon matters of special value to those interested in the important work of education. Well written editorials discuss the question of "The Bible in Schools," and the merits of the late Father Stafford as an educationist, the former eminently judicious, though not very pronounced.

THE GIRL'S OWN ANNUAL. (Toronto: William Warwick & Son.)—This handsome volume is the yearly issue of a delightful periodical that comes as a welcome guest into so many of our homes. The varied and instructive nature of its contents remove it from the transitory character of much of our periodical literature. After the volume of the "Girl's Own" has found an honoured place on the library shelf it will often be resorted to as a companion in spare hours. This standard publication fully merits the popularity to which it has attained. The illustrations in number and excellence have kept pace with the marked advance of the engraver's art within the last few years.

THE BOY'S OWN ANNUAL. (Toronto: Wm. Warwick & Son.)—It is difficult to say whether the publishers, the contributors, or the wide circle of readers of the "Boy's Own" experience most pleasure on looking at the completed volume for 1882. It maintains the high place it has reached among the competitors for public favour, if, indeed, it does not take the lead. Evidently its contributors thoroughly understand boy nature at its best. It is a most pleasing task to cordially commend this admirable work. It has a mission, and it thoroughly fulfils it. "The Boy's Own" has nothing "goody goody" about it, no maudlin and weekly sentiment, it is pure, healthy, and robust in tone. The readers of "The Boy's Own" will have themselves to blame if they do not grow up honest, God-fearing, manly members of society.

OUR New York contemporary, THE INDEPENDENT, is rich, racy, and varied as ever. It ranges over a wide field and comments freely and forcibly on most questions of public interest in theology, politics and morals. Careful readers of the "Independent" cannot fail to be well informed on current events, as its conductors select a large array of facts, and present them in concise form, thus saving the time of those who cannot always command leisure for extensive reading. The publishers announce that they have specially arranged with the Rev. Joseph Cook for the publication of his forthcoming series of Boston Monday Lectures and Preludes, which no doubt will be highly interesting, since he intends utilizing the results of his recent extensive travels. This will doubtless be an attractive feature of the "Independent" during the coming year.

THE CENTURY MAGAZINE. (New York: Century Co.)—It is not so very long since the saying was current that America had no distinctive literature. That assertion can no longer be repeated. "The Century" has ungrudgingly gained for itself a place in the first rank of serial literature. The varied character of its articles, thoughtful and reliable, written in a careful and finished style, delight and interest the most cultivated class of readers. In addition to the literary contents of this magazine, its pages are enriched with a profusion of engravings that appeal impressively to every lover of the beautiful. They leave nothing to be desired. The December number of "The Century" contains, among other articles of much interest "The Supreme Court of the United States," by E. V. Smalley, "My Adventures in Zuni," by Frank H. Cushing, and a delightful paper on "Rab's Friend," by Andrew Lang, in which a great many genial things are said of that most genial and unique writer, the late John Brown, M.D. Henry James, Jun., contributes clever sketches under the title "The Point of View." The stories by May Hallock Foote and Mrs. Burnett are continued. Both "The Let-horse Claim" and "Through One Administration" are growing in interest. The poetry is up to the usual high standard of "The Century." The number throughout maintains its characteristic excellence.

OUR HERITAGE. A sermon by the Rev. C. B. Pitblado. (Winnipeg: W. D. Russell.)—Though notice of this publication has been somewhat late, the delay is owing to extra pressure on our space incident to the season, not to any misgiving as to the merits of the sermon now before us. It was preached in St. Andrew's Church, Winnipeg on Thanksgiving day. Mr. Pitblado has thoroughly identified his interests, affections and patriotism with the Province of his adoption. He speaks in glowing terms of the resources and capabilities of the great North-West. He expresses dispassionately and eloquently his convictions, and embraces the opportunity presented by the occasion to express in a manly way his convictions on some of the burning questions now agitating the people of the West. If he claims the right—and why should he not?—to speak his mind freely on topics bordering on politics, he certainly does not exhibit a narrow partisanship, but speaks out plainly as an honest man should. That the preacher was requested to publish his sermon excites no astonishment. We regret that we can only find room for a brief extract of its closing sentences:

"No land richer in soil and minerals, in pasturage and fishing grounds, in climate and productions, in agricultural resources and manufacturing facilities—no wider domain of mountain and plain, of lake and forest, of river and seaboard, ever became the heritage of any people than this Canada of ours. We are unworthy of our heritage if we do not aim to make our country a land where peace reigns, where righteousness dwells, where oppression is unknown, where Christianity has triumphed, and the true God glorified."

"Then shall we be worthy of the legacy bequeathed to us by our forefathers. For we must not forget that our Canadian heritage as it comes to us is a British inheritance. By birth and connection we are children of that mother that sits mistress upon the sea and girdles the globe with her colonial possessions. We are the heirs of an historic inheritance which has been the growth of centuries and the price of blood. We are the owners of a literature that is leavening the world with its thoughts. We are the possessors of a language in which the commerce of the whole earth transacts its business. We are the subjects of an empire whose national life-currents in every quarter of the globe throb with the power of Christian truth. We to-day take our place among at least 200 millions of the human family of different nations and kindreds and tongues, who, with loyal hearts can unite in singing 'God save the Queen.'"

REV. DR. KEMP, Principal of the Ottawa Ladies' College, is reported to be suffering from illness.