

Current Thought.

Methodist Review—January and February, 1896. New York: Hunt & Eaton. The Editor announces a new departure in this veteran review which has now entered on its seventy-seventh year. Without lowering its dignity and without incurring any risk or having it classified with light literature, he will promote the advantage and pleasure of its readers by adding to the range and variety of its contents, and especially by giving to each number something of a distinctly literary and interesting value.

The Editor, in our judgment, is quite right in this new departure. The days of ponderous quarterlies, written in "dry-as-dust" style, has passed. Events move so rapidly that more frequent issues are necessary, and more short and crisp treatment of living topics in touch with living people is demanded. Some of the reviews are even adopting the serial story, and some of the best short stories we have ever read appeared in the dignified *Princeton Review*.

The purpose of our own *MAGAZINE AND REVIEW* will be to strike the golden mean between the ponderous and the trivial. We have been urged not to make it too bookish, nor to overlook the needs of the common people. "God must have specially loved the common people," said Abraham Lincoln, "He made so many of them." Of the great Teacher and Preacher we read, "that the common people heard Him gladly." We hope that every page of the *METHODIST MAGAZINE AND REVIEW* will interest, not only the cultured scholar, but every household in Canadian Methodism.

In referring to recent politics in America, the *Methodist Review* urges the better observance of historical perspective. "The American people are too largely ignorant of their own past. In Britain, public men and the intelligent portion of the population are more thoroughly grounded in and familiar with the history of their own nation. They seem to know their thousand years better than we know our one-fifth of a thousand. . . . The Monroe Doctrine, of which so much is just now heard in connection with the Venezuela trouble, is purely a piece of history; but the most wildly contradictory notions are uttered about it, for want of taking time to refer to the his-

toric records which show the nature, scope, and bearing of that doctrine. . . . That stately craft, the British Empire, steers a steadier course, through all successive administrations, because the statesmen who man her keep one eye on that great past of which they are so proud, and feel bound to preserve essential consistency therewith."

The literary article in this number of the *Review* is one on "Edgar Allan Poe." Dr. Mudge writes an inspiring chapter on "Methodist History," and gives an account of the rise and growth of the Primitive Methodism, to which we refer elsewhere. Dr. Graham discusses "The Divine Immanence," President Plantz, "The Doctrine of the Future Life in Job," Dr. Tuttle, "The Moral Influence of Balzac," and President Super, "Reason and Sentiment as Factors in Social Progress."

Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. November, 1895. Philadelphia. Price, \$1.

The present number of this scholarly and able publication is rich in very able articles. We must congratulate Professor James and his associates on the very high character and wide influence of their work. We can only briefly describe the first article in the present number, "Recent Political Experiments in the Swiss Democracy." The article is a review of the process by which the Swiss Government has passed from the form of "Representative Government" to that of "Direct Government" by the people through their *comitia*. The foundation of this unique result is laid in the comparative independence of the twenty-five cantonal divisions into which the Republic is divided. The unity of Switzerland is that of a Confederation. It has thus its federal and local politics, each having its own sphere, but embodying the same broad political principles.

But in this matter there is an important difference between their constitution and that of federalism in the United States or Canada. In both these countries the members of the federation receive their constitution from the central government. The British North America Act fixes the power and general form of our Provincial governments. In Switzerland, on the other hand, the cantons enjoy almost per-