

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES.

Appleton's New Handy-Volume Series.

New York: D. Appleton & Co.

We have received Nos. 31 and 32 of this cheap, convenient, and at the same time tastefully got up series of publications. One is entitled "An Attic Philosopher in Paris," and is a translation from the French of Souvestre; the other is Wilkie Collins' story, "A Rogue's Life."

The International Review.

New York: A. S. Barnes & Co.

The "International" for June contains: "The Present Condition of Greece," by Thomas Davidson; "The Indian Question," by J. D. Cox, of Ohio; "The Supreme Court and the Currency Question," by Brooks Adams; "The Shakespeare Revival in London," by Julian Russell Sturgis; "England and Turkey," by Rev. George Washburn D.D., President of Robert College, Constantinople; "Some of the Remedies for Socialism," by E. L. Codkin; Contemporary Literature; Recent English Books.

The Eclectic Magazine.

New York: E. R. Pelton.

The June number of the "Eclectic" supplies its readers with what may be called the cream of such periodicals as "The Fortnightly Review," "The Nineteenth Century," "The Spectator," "The Cornhill Magazine," "Blackwood," "Fraser," "The Saturday Review," etc. One of the most startling headings is that of an article from "The Cornhill": "Bodily Illness as a Mental Stimulant;" and some of the "modern instances" adduced in it are perhaps even a little more startling than the heading; nevertheless, the subject is thought out with some vigour and a well-marked point made in the science of psychology. The writer of a short and pithy paper in "The Saturday Review," comforts those who complain of being engaged in "Uphill Work," by shewing pretty plainly that in every department of exertion—physical, mental and moral—this sort of work is the best, both as being best calculated to develop the worker's powers, and as leading to the most desirable results.

The Fairy Land of Science.

By Arabella B. Buckley. New York: D. Appleton & Co.

This handsome volume is intended for children, and young folk of indefinite age—in fact we would be very sorry to state with any great degree of exactness the age which the person must be whom we would prohibit from reading it. A very slight examination of the book evinces it to be at once entertaining and instructive. Many are the writers now-a-days who popularize science. But the author of this book has done something more than merely to translate the learned utterances of scientific discoverers into the language of common life; she takes the hard, dry facts and throws them into the most inviting and interesting form, beautifully bringing out, what we might call the poetry of science or the unexpected relations which those endowed with the necessary perceptions can find among its different facts and principles. And all this we think she does without giving her readers any distorted views of the subjects with which she deals. The numerous illustrations will greatly assist the reader in performing the experiments to which he is introduced. The book is well-printed and bound, and embellished with exquisite taste.

THE IDEAL SUPERINTENDENT.

I.—PIETY.

The first qualification, that of piety, need not be dwelt upon further than to remark, that it should be that "reverence for God and devotion to His service" as is recognized by the Protestant body of Christendom.

II.—CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

There is room for discussion here, for a case may be imagined—probably there are such cases frequently occurring—in which the very man wanted to take a superintendency is not a member of a Christian Church, but whose piety is undoubted.

Our schools are most of them intimately connected with a Church, even mission schools have some such connection. If at all practicable, therefore, the superintendent should be a member of a church. Moreover, the Church is to a large extent one of the themes of our teaching; and this I urge as another support to

the proposition. It may be regarded as a rule, but as subject to exception as most rules are.

III. EXPERIENCE IN SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHING AND WORK.

A man would not generally receive the appointment of superintendent of a railway, or any other position involving the care of life or property, unless he had acquired experience in management by a sort of apprenticeship. In Canada, political appointments are not, I am sorry, always made upon this principle. In Sunday school matters they should always be so made.

Taking the day school system as an example, the course would be this: Infant-class, Intermediate-class, Bible-class, Teacher, Librarian, Secretary, Superintendent.

If statistics of the superintendents of Sunday schools were taken with the object of ascertaining their training up to the point of their assumption of office, I believe it would be found that the large majority had been through this curriculum.

The principal reason for this qualification of experience, lies, however, in the fact, that unless a superintendent has suffered the disappointments, endured the trials, and participated in the triumphs and joys of a teacher, he would not in the discharge of his duties be able to direct and sympathize with his teachers.

A teacher sometimes needs help or sympathy; a class is often vacant through the sickness or absence of a teacher—of course he never stays away but for one or the other of these causes or the secretary or librarian may be absent.

In each of these cases the knowledge acquired in these departments would be called into practical use.

Moreover, his inner life as a teacher, especially if he be a man of honourable ambition, will affect his management very noticeably. He will not act as a pope or sway the iron sceptre of a despotic ruler; but he will take counsel with his teachers, submit to them his proposals, and ask them for suggestion and help. Money will be collected and used on a plan agreed upon and probably suggested by the teachers. It will be a teachers' suffrage, and by this means our ideal will win his way to the highest esteem and affection of his helpers.

Superintendents are not born with all their powers fully developed: a course of training in the college of the class first as scholar, then as teacher—may be considered, therefore, as essential.

IV. A FAIR ENGLISH EDUCATION AND BUSINESS TRAINING.

A fair English education and business training gives a superintendent an almost inestimable advantage. Our system of education in Canada is generally conceded to be one of the best in the world. The sons and daughters of the dominion are in this respect highly privileged, and the boy or girl who at the age of twelve or fourteen is unable to speak grammatically is far behind the age.

I maintain, therefore, that the superintendent should be at least on a par with his scholars in this respect.

Instances might be adduced that would illustrate the effect of ungrammatical deliverances from the desk. A superintendent is often called upon to represent his school at public gatherings, and the character of his speech often affects the idea of those whom he addresses as to the educational standard of his teachers, and of his school.

Business habits are also prominent in the ideal superintendent, especially in his elaboration of a system, and in the conduct of teachers' meetings.

V.—PROMPTITUDE.

The fifth point, viz., ability to speak to teachers and children publicly, and the exercise of quickness, promptitude and tact in the direction of the school machinery has already been incidentally alluded to. A slow superintendent should not be tolerated. Probably most of us have seen superintendents late at school,—altogether oblivious of the clock,—ringing the order bell when it should not be rung, and forgetting to ring it when it should be rung, reading passages from God's word foreign to the subject of the lesson, and praying at inordinate length—the teachers consequently fidgety and pulling out their watches, and the little-ones playing, reading, or meditating in the land of Nod. Now all this would not be were the qualities of quickness, promptitude and tact, possessed by the superintendent.

VI. FIRMNESS AND KINDNESS.

Firmness of character, amiability of temperament and kindness of heart are so necessary, that I need scarcely do more than mention them. It will occur to some of the friends here, perhaps, that the ideal superintendent would always be acceptable to his teachers when free from the obligations of business life. If he had a house, he would open it to his teachers, and would encourage his teachers to open theirs to others.

VII. SYMPATHY.

The seventh and last essential cannot be dispensed with in the ideal we have before us. He is sympathetic. He weeps at the side of the little coffin, and helps in strewing flowers over the sleeping dust. He joins in the loud and merry laughter at the picnic, and helps the fairy hands in the twining of wild flowers on the hillside.

Our ideal loves his Sabbath school with all the warmth of his heart's best love. He clings about it with ivy tenacity, and should death or circumstances sever him from it, the joy or the sorrow would reveal the proportions of his heart.

Next to the pastorate of a church, I know of no office so important and responsible as that of superintendent of a Sunday school; and as sympathy and an earnest desire to preach the Gospel are pre-eminently essentials in the former, they are certainly not less so in the latter. If our ears are attuned, we shall hear the child in innocent pleading ask,—

"A fountain to wash in," where is it? what is it? "A crop," who bore it? "Suffer little children to come unto Me," who said it? The manger cradle, the "growth in wisdom and in stature," the life of love and mercy, the tears of dark Gethsemane, the cross, the tomb, the throne, what has all this to do with me? Listen to this heart-cry, brethren, in the toiling. The ideal superintendent cannot help listening; and he tells out of the fulness of his heart the story again and again. He thinks of, prays for, dreams of his school. Songs in the night break upon his ear: "I hear thy welcome voice," and yonder, "Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole," and yet again, "Beautiful Zion built above." These are his "votes of thanks," for his life-work. Well may such a superintendent say, when his triumphs and toils here are ended: "I have finished the work Thou gavest me to do."

We now have our ideal—the picture is before us. Let teachers help their superintendents in striving to reach the ideal, in their endeavour to copy the picture.

NEARER VIEWS OF GOD.

Humility and repentance are the result of large acquaintance with God. Job said: "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee." It expresses two kinds of knowledge—the one speculative, the other practical. He had formerly a distant and vague acquaintance with God, without contemplating Him by that faith "which seeth Him who is invisible." He now had an intimate, a deep and practical sense of God, very different from the mere vague conceptions he had when he only heard of Him; that knowledge which is practical, deep, intimate, and profound. The two effects were humility and repentance. Humility is produced by the sight of His greatness, repentance by a knowledge of His purity. It is the union of these that forms the idea of God.—Robert Hall.

THE condition of the negro in the Southern States is not improving. News comes all the while of barbarous, inhuman treatment of the blacks by the whites, and the African exodus continues; and it seems as if there was no power anywhere to remedy the evils which exist.

If a man surrender himself to avarice, he provides for a service that shall increase in rigour and pain during his whole life. Each day will but add to the intolerance with which he shall be ruled until no faculty or sentiment of his nature will be free from the revolting slavery.—United Presbyterian.

AT a conference held in the city of Sao Paulo some months since, by the Presbyterian ministers who are labouring in Brazil, it was decided that the Confession of Faith and the Book of Discipline and Church Order be translated into the Portuguese language, with the view of their adoption by all the Presbyterian Churches of Brazil.