

CARNEGIE LIBRARIES.

AS the idea of free public libraries is as yet only beginning to take root in Canada, it may perhaps help the advance of what we believe to be a most important movement, to give some account of the system of free public libraries which may be said to owe its existence to Mr. Carnegie. The name of this gentleman has been much before the public of late years, and not seldom has he been roundly abused, charged with inordinate vanity, cutting down his employee's wages, enriching himself by means of a highly protective tariff at the public expense, and with sundry other things. We are no apologists for Mr. Carnegie, if he needs any, and we have no intention whatever of entering upon any judicial estimate of his qualities good or bad. Frankly we abominate any economic principle of fiscal policy in any country, which enables one class of the people to enrich itself at the expense of their fellow-citizens. But if, after their fellow-citizens by their free votes giving them this privilege, they devote a part of their gains to advance the public weal by founding or endowing colleges and universities, or establishing free public libraries, so far, well, we say. That Mr. Carnegie has shown an admirable example in this respect to men of wealth, no one will deny who knows of his benefactions to his native town and other places in Britain, and more particularly to Pittsburg, Ohio, and its vicinity in the United States, where he has chiefly made his millions, and in which district he is specially interested.

The opening of the Carnegie Library, which took place the other day in Pittsburg, has furnished the occasion of an article appearing in the *Review of Reviews* for October, to which we are indebted for the substance of what follows. The gifts of Mr. Carnegie during the past few years to establish, or in support of libraries, have amounted, it is said, to not less than three millions of dollars. The library in Mr. Carnegie's idea is only the centre, round which, wisely we think, are grouped other educational agencies for the spread of knowledge among the people. The establishment and equipment of the Pittsburg free public library, is the last, and crowning one of a series of measures, which, within the past few years, Mr. Carnegie has devised and carried out for the public good, in a region of the country and among a people who may be said to have special claims upon him. Across the river Monongahela from Pittsburg is Allegheny, ten miles south-east is Braddock, where the employees of the famous Edgar Thomson Steel works, with their families, make their homes; opposite to it is that place of evil fame, a few years ago, Homestead; and four miles beyond it is McKeesport, the whole region containing a population of about half a million. "Thousands of that half million fire the furnaces, mine the coal, burn the coke, operate the oil and gas wells, blow the glass, and carry on all the manifold industries which have made Allegheny County, measured by its products, one of the most important regions on the face of the globe." Hundreds, besides Mr. Carnegie, have coined their wealth in this same district, and he was under no greater obligation, except that he has been more fortunate than any of them, to lay out his gains in the way he has done. But, in doing as he has, he has shown an example to men of wealth as to what they owe their employees, which if generally followed would result only in the mutual advantage of employers and employees, and disarm largely the prejudices which, among ordinary people, naturally arise against millionaires.

In 1881 the first steps were taken which mark the origin of the free library system in the towns we have mentioned, and which has just been practically completed by the opening of the Pittsburg library. In that year Mr. Carnegie offered that city \$250,000 for the construction of a public library, if it would annually appropriate \$15,000 for its maintenance. Legal difficulties lay in the way of the city's making any appropriation for such a purpose, which, however, were not long in being removed. Through apathy the offer was not acted upon for some years by Pittsburg; but Allegheny bestirred itself, and by offering a site for a library and an annual appropriation of \$15,000 for its maintenance, Mr. Carnegie gave \$300,000 to construct a building containing library rooms to accommodate 75,000 volumes, a concert hall with a \$10,000 organ, and an art gallery. This was formally opened by President Harrison in February, 1890. It now contains 30,000 volumes; its latest reported

circulation reached 125,000 volumes, and the property now represents a capital of \$850,000.

Before the opening of this library, a smaller work had been begun and carried out at Mr. Carnegie's expense at Braddock, ten miles from Pittsburg, the seat of the principal steel works, chiefly owned by him, and containing a population of 10,000, mainly his employees and their families. Here last year the circulation of books of various classes amounted to 49,013. "Statistics show the reading of history at Braddock has increased 120 per cent., language and literature 130 per cent., and biography 93 per cent. Its reading room is much used during the day and is filled in the evening. The attendance in the main reading room averages about 100 a day, and in the boy's and girl's reading room about 75 a day. The library constantly works in co-operation with the public schools, the superintendent and teachers of which consult with the librarian in directing the reading of the pupils."

Pittsburg was naturally stimulated by the sight of such results, and it now sought to avail itself of Mr. Carnegie's former offer which had not been wholly lost sight of. But when a committee of citizens went to confer with him, to their great surprise they were informed that that offer must now be withdrawn, but still more surprised were they to hear that, the reason of this was because he now considered a quarter of a million dollars too small a sum to meet the requirements of the case, and that he now proposed to give the full million dollars, on condition that the city would appropriate \$40,000 annually for maintenance, and that the Board of Directors should be composed half of municipal officials, and half of citizens of his own, naming. When all preliminaries were arranged and it was proposed to build of stone instead of brick, Mr. Carnegie added \$100,000 to meet the added expense. We cannot enter upon any description of the building except to say that, utility has been considered equally as much as, if not more than, artistic effect. In a word there is the main library room to hold 150,000 volumes with adjoining rooms for purposes connected with the library. One end of the building is occupied by the music hall which seats 2,000 people, with a stage capacity for 60 musicians and a chorus of 200. Here two recitals will be given each week of the year wholly free to the public. There is an Art wing, and in another division of the building are lecture rooms and rooms for the meetings of scientific societies; apartments for museum purposes, and in the basement are class-rooms. Great care will be taken in the selection of books, as experience at Allegheny and Braddock shows that people will read the best literature if it is provided for them. With this main building, seven branch libraries, or distributing stations, are to be erected, for which sites have been located and will, when all is finished, have suitable buildings erected on them.

Such, briefly, is the system devised largely, and still more largely provided, by Mr. Carnegie for the people of Pittsburg and surrounding districts. Its wisdom, beneficence and far-reaching influence for good none can deny, and the liberality which has provided the means for it is conspicuous, and praiseworthy, and, whatever the donor's failings may be, it is exemplary.

We cannot resist the temptation to close this article with the words of Mr. Carnegie himself, since, as he has grown up from being a poor boy to be a millionaire, it may serve to show others how, if they may not become like him in his wealth, they may at least learn how to enter upon an honorable career, and in their way use their wealth to some good purpose.

"The result of my own study of the question, 'What is the best gift which can be given to a community?' says Mr. Carnegie, 'is that a free library occupies the first place, provided the community will accept and maintain it as a public institution, as much a part of the city property as its public schools, and indeed, an adjunct to these. It is no doubt possible that my own personal experience may have led me to value a free library beyond all other forms of beneficence. When I was a boy in Pittsburg, Colonel Anderson, of Allegheny, a name I can never speak without feelings of devout gratitude, opened his little library of four hundred books to boys. Every Saturday afternoon he was in attendance himself at his home to exchange books. No one but he who has felt it can know the intense longing with which the arrival of Saturday was awaited that a new book might be had. My brother and Mr. Phipps, who have been my principal business partners through life, shared with me Colonel Anderson's precious generosity, and it was when revelling in these treasures that I resolved, if ever wealth came to me, that it should be used to establish free libraries, that other poor boys might receive opportunities similar to those which we were indebted to that nobleman."

Books and Magazines.

ELECTRICITY FOR EVERYBODY; ITS NATURE AND USES EXPLAINED. By Philip Atkinson, M.A., Ph.D., author of *Elements of Static Electricity*, etc. New York: The Century Co. Toronto: The Copp Clark Co. Ltd.

This should be an exceedingly interesting and useful book, as well as attractive from its excellent make up in paper, type and illustrations. The object of Mr. Atkinson's book is to meet the public demand for information in regard to the nature and uses of electricity, and the various kinds of apparatus by which it is generated and employed, and to make each topic so plain that by a careful perusal of the book one having no previous knowledge of the science may obtain a good general knowledge of it in all its details. For this reason the style has been adapted to the needs of the general reader rather than to those of the student. It is thoroughly up to date, and an excellent index greatly facilitates the use of the book.

THE HORSE FAIR. By James Baldwin. Richly illustrated. 8 vo., 120 pages. New York: The Century Co. Toronto: Copp, Clark Co. Ltd.

This is in every way a charming book for a child with some fancy and imagination. Its style, matter and manner are all bright, wholesome and improving. It is a delightful explanation in part of the mythology of the Greeks under the guise of a glorified horse show. There are races between the steeds Day and Night, chased by the lean wolf Skol, and Helios's Four-in-Hand and Selene's Silver Grays were among the fleet couriers. There are countless entries in this marvelous fair,—Pegasus, Mazeppa, Bucephalus, Bayard, and Rozinante; Tom O'Shantei's Maggie, and the chargers of Caesar, Napoleon, Washington, Grant, Sheridan, and Lee. Many of these are tales of brave adventure and stirring battle pictures. This book will appeal to all who love horses, and to wide-awake boys in general.

PELOUBET'S SELECT NOTES ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS FOR 1896. Twenty-second annual volume. W. A. Wilde & Company, 25 Bromfield street, Boston, Mass., U.S.

Peloubet's notes on the International Lessons have become a synonym for good work, none better. It might be sufficient therefore to say that the volume for 1896 is not inferior to any one of its predecessors. The matter of a book of this kind being good, and it is good in this case, its next most important feature is its convenience for use. This has all that could be wished in this respect. In addition to a very full index the publishers have embellished the book with eight splendid full-page original illustrations from photographs secured this spring in Palestine. They will prove both interesting and instructive as being absolutely correct views of the subjects illustrated.

THE STORY OF JACK BALLISTER'S FORTUNES. By Howard Pyle. New York: The Century Co. Toronto: Copp Clark Co Ltd.

The continuation of the title of this book is all that is necessary to add to make the subject of it known. It runs thus in old style: "Being the narrative of the adventures of a young gentleman of good family, who was kidnapped in the year 1719 and carried to the plantations of the Continent of Virginia, where he fell in with that famous pirate Captain Edward Teach or Blackbeard; of his escape from the pirates, and the rescue of a young lady from out their hands." Here is material enough for a story told in a goodly sized volume which will be read with interest by boys and lovers of adventure.

The *Biblical World* for this month is one of special interest and value. A fine likeness of Dr. Sanday is given as frontispiece, and accompanying it is a sketch of the distinguished biblical scholar and writer by Rev. Wm. Horace Day. The editorial notes, which are always suggestive, follow. "Why Callest Thou Me Good?" is a valuable theological essay by Dr. Benjamin W. Bacon. "What Higher Criticism Is Not"; "Biblical Theology: Its History and Mission" is continued by Professor Gilbert; "Aids to Bible Readers"; "Paul's Letter to the Roman's," by Professor Burton is a valuable article on a difficult book and gives an excellent analysis of it. Professor Bruce's lectures at the University of Chicago are discussed by Dr. Edmund Buckley. Notes and Opinions and Book Reviews contain the usual varied amount of information. The announcement for 1896 contains the names of many eminent writers in the old world as well as in the new, and many important subjects are to be treated by men of the highest ability. Altogether this religious magazine is growing in interest and importance. [The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill., U.S.]

The *Presbyterian College Journal*, Montreal, being that for November, number first, volume fifteenth, is excellent, and if the promise of this number is fulfilled in succeeding ones it will do well. In addition to the usual melange of a college journal, it contains the following articles all worthy of reading. "Spiritual Dejection," a sermon by Rev. W. T. D. Moss, B.A.; "The Minister's Working Theology," Professors Scrimger's address at the opening of the college; "The Unity of the Bible"; "Home Mission Work"; a French essay by Professor Coussiart on "Sincerity"; on the "Comparative Study of Religion," by Rev. Dr. Barclay and Professor Campbell's racy "Talks on Books." P.O. Box 42, St. Catherine Street, Montreal, Qu.

The November *Knorr College Monthly* contains in full the address at the opening of the college by Professor MacLaren on the important subject of "The Witness of the Spirit in Relation to the Authority and the Inspiration of the Scripture." Rev. Louis H. Jordan, B.A., concludes his article of last month with one on the Western Reserve University and its President. Two other valuable and suggestive articles are "The Improvement of our Theological Seminaries;" "Confession of Faith vs. Confession of Love." The missionary department contains three interesting communications, and altogether this number is one above the average in excellence of matter. [F. N. W. Brown, Toronto.]