

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES.

Vick's Illustrated Monthly Magazine.

Rochester, N. Y.: James Vick.

Vick's September number contains the usual quantity of useful and pleasant information regarding the cultivation of flowers and plants—among the rest, a timely article on the climate and capabilities of the island of Cyprus. Pansies seem to be a favorite with the poets; the number contains two pretty little pieces in their praise.

The Tree of Life.

By W. O. Perkins, and A. Byron Condo. Boston: G. D. Russell & Co.

A new book of bright, attractive music, such as the book now before us, is always acceptable. It contains many pieces of a superior class, while the whole seems to be fresh, pleasing, and suitable for Sabbath schools. There are pieces for S. S. picnics, teachers' classes, adult classes, infant classes, S. S. concerts, temperance meetings, gospel meetings, etc.

The International Review.

New York: A. S. Barnes & Co.

The "International" for September contains: "The Cry of Labor—What Answer?" by President Chadbourne, of Williams College; "Only the Shadow of a Gourd," by Allan Brodrick, M.A.; "Ex-Premier Gladstone," by an American; "European Politics from the French Stand-point," by E. de Pressensé; "An Epicedium for Queen Mercedes," by Joel Benton; "Russia," by Karl Blind; "Pilgrim Caravans in the East," by Selah Merrill; "The Centenary of Rousseau," by Samuel Osgood, D.D.; "Recent Changes in American State Constitutions," by Wilmot L. Warren; "Mr. Stanley as an Explorer," by General F. F. Millen; "The Spelling of Shakespeare's Name," by Edward S. Van Winkle; Contemporary Literature.

Through the Dark Continent; or the Sources of the Nile, around the Great Lakes of Equatorial Africa, and down the Livingstone River to the Atlantic Ocean.

By Henry M. Stanley. Portraits, Maps, and Illustrations. Toronto: J. B. Magurn. 1878.

This is perhaps the book of the year. It is the record of a great stride in the progress of geographical knowledge. It removes the veil from a vast territory, formerly unknown; makes us acquainted with fresh phases of barbarism; introduces us to new tribes, with manners, customs, and institutions hitherto unheard-of; and relates, as matters of fact, adventures which in a work of fiction would perhaps be condemned on account of their extreme improbability. It determines the limits of great lakes and traces the course of mighty rivers; it measures the length of the Congo and brings within very narrow limits the long sought source of the Nile. Mr. Stanley's merits as an author should not be lost sight of in the glare of his fame as an explorer. Some of the enchanting scenes and thrilling incidents of his adventures are sketched very graphically, and his knowledge of botany and natural history seems to be quite extensive. He has enriched his book with a number of interesting pictures, which are particularly valuable because of their being faithful illustrations of the beautiful scenery of Central Africa, and of the manners prevailing among her savage tribes. The accounts of his arduous travels, and his copious maps of the great African lakes and rivers, will be especially acceptable to those who are interested in diffusing the light of Christian civilization over the broad extent of the "Dark Continent." Mr. Magurn, the Canadian Publisher of this work, has manifested considerable enterprise in bringing it out so speedily and in a style not inferior to that of the English edition. Considering the rich binding, the copious illustrations, and the elaborate and finely executed maps, the price is remarkably low. Mr. Magurn's is the only Canadian edition of this work. The other edition advertised is not another edition but another book—a hash of extracts from Stanley's letters to the "Herald," Baker's account of his expedition up the Nile, and other writings, connected by badly-written and inflated panegyrics and blundering geographical dissertations. It would be impossible within the limits of such a notice as this to give any idea of the contents of the book now before us. There is an introductory chapter covering almost everything worthy of notice which historians and travellers have said of the Nile country, from the time of Herodotus down to that of Stanley

himself. The rest of the book is occupied with an animated account of the great "Anglo-American Expedition," which under the leadership of Stanley, left Bagomoyo, in Zanzibar, on Feb. 17, 1874, and reached Boma, near the mouth of the Congo, on the 9th of August 1877, after spending 999 days, \$100,000, and 173 lives on the march.

BIBLE REVISION.

It is well known a number of the ablest Biblical scholars of Great Britain and this country are engaged in revising our present authorized version of the Bible. Just what is aimed at, however, or what is proposed to be done, is not so well known, and hence, probably, in the minds of many there has been from the beginning more or less of suspicion or prejudice in regard to the whole work. No man, probably, is better able to explain all this than the Rev. Dr. Schaff, of the Union Theological Seminary, New York, and who has been identified very actively with the movement from its earliest stages. For the satisfaction of our readers we will give a statement of the things sought to be done in it, as they are reported in the New York "Evangelist" from an address made by him recently in the West:

First. The aim is to have a more perfect translation, as may be readily made from a greatly improved text that may now be used, several hundred manuscripts of the Greek Testament having been discovered since our present version was made, under King James, between the years 1604 and 1611.

Second. It is to have errors of typography and grammar, which are often observable in our present version, removed, and inexact translations, which are found in many instances in the Bible, corrected.

Third. It is to expunge words that are obsolete, if they have a meaning that is not understood, and words which are still used though with different significations, such as *prevent* and *let* taken away and proper ones substituted.

Fourth. It is to have a new arrangement of the matter of the Bible made, so that the prose portions will be printed in paragraphs, as the sense shall require, and the poetical portions set in the form of poetry, according to the laws of Hebrew parallelism. In doing this the present division of the Bible into chapters and verses will not be given up or changed, only that they will be clearly and fully placed in the margin.

From this it will be seen there is not a change proposed that can in any way, probably, affect the sense of the Scripture, or the real meaning of the Holy Spirit. The only effort is to bring out in some words and passages more clearly, more truly, and more entirely, the mind of the Spirit. The lapse of over two hundred years, and the vast attainments in Hebrew and Greek studies, and especially in manuscripts of the Scriptures in that time, furnish, as never before, the facilities for having a version secured that will be worthy of the divine origin of the Bible—not that a new version as a whole is aimed at—but a corrected and improved one, to be, as it ever should, the best that can be made.

We may say that in the prosecution of their revisionary work the company engaged in it held their first meeting on the 30th of June, 1870. Since that time they have held fifty-two meetings, sitting 460 days, working six hours each day, and in that time have revised the whole of the Old Testament for the first time, with the exception of a part of Esther, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Songs of Solomon and Daniel. They have been a second time through the Pentateuch. At their last session they completed the revision of the twelve minor prophets, and carried on that of Esther to the end of the second chapter.

This is the work of the British portion of the company. The American portion are equally busy and thorough, and the two will make as thorough revisions of each other's work, that thus every possible aid may be had to have the work as nearly perfect as the best intellects and labor of men can make it.

Dr. Schaff is quite confident the work will be given to the public in two or three years, and will be found to commend itself decidedly to the judgment and the good will of all.—*Christian Instructor.*

OUR customs and habits are like the ruts in roads. The wheels of life settle into them, and we jog along through the mire, because it is too much trouble to get out of them.

CURRENT OPINIONS.

DISCORD is, after all, not the worst thing in the world. Disobedience to God is a greater evil than discord among brethren.—*Christian Guardian.*

THERE are two tendencies in church as in civil government—toward too much and too little government. The two extremes are despotism and anarchy. That is the happy church that steers clear of both.—*Christian Observer.*

WE never could see how the belief in the near coming of Christ could create any new obligation or motive to duty, not enforced by the belief of the common truths of Christianity. The shortness and uncertainty of life render devout watchfulness and diligence the imperative duty of every follower of Christ.—*Christian Guardian.*

THE model woman described in the last chapter of Proverbs had her tongue under law, and a good one too. "In her tongue is the law of kindness." This is a royal law for the tongue—for the tongue of children, for the tongue of parents; a royal law for the tongue at home, on the playground, in business, everywhere.—*Church Union.*

A LETTER-WRITER speaks of \$5,000 ministers, and \$1,000 ministers. It would be curious to see the scales in which men are weighed, and the standard by which they are measured. It is doubtful whether the \$1,000 men would admit that the scales were true, or the standard just. Is there not a better way of estimating men than by the amount of salary they receive?—*Watchman.*

THERE never was a time when there was a stronger faith among Christians or more devoted activity in church work, and more real progress in building up the kingdom of Christ. It can not be denied that infidelity and skepticism in every form are more and more demonstrative and virulent, but their success does not keep pace with the progress of the gospel.—*Herald and Presbyter.*

THE fact that so large a proportion of the inmates of our houses of correction, jails, penitentiaries, state prisons, etc., are incarcerated in consequence of crime committed under the influence of intoxicating liquor, is both startling and significant, and is worthy the most careful consideration not only of the Christian and the philanthropist, but also of the political economist.—*Church Union.*

WE may go back from phenomenon to law, and from law to antecedent law, and from antecedent law to primordial law; but at the end of the series we shall find God, the same God found by the philosopher that was found by the savage whose ignorance could not see the intermediate steps, and whose piety by a single bound reached the Great Cause, from whom under all philosophy or all credulity all must proceed.—*N. Y. Independent.*

RELIGIOUS conversation, if it be really conversation, and if it be religious, can hardly fail to be useful to all who take part in it. The wisest can often derive wisdom from the humblest and simplest. We learn in imparting. Our ideas and feelings become more defined as we express them. And often, in the contact of two minds, ideas are brought out that were not in either, as the sparks are struck out between the flint and the steel.—*National Baptist.*

THE high-pressure method resorted to in securing pledges for the payment of church debts is not a wholesome method. It is hard enough, in these days, to secure the fulfilment of obligations that are deliberately assumed; how hard it will be to collect some of these notes that have been made under great excitement, the churches will find when the notes come to maturity. The only principle on which such proceedings can be commended is that on which a pint of whiskey is sometimes given to a man who has been bitten by a rattlesnake.—*Sunday Afternoon.*

HERE is, therefore, as crooked a business as ever was in the world. An old missionary tells us that the Hindoos have a saying among them to the effect "That though we should soak a dog's tail seven days in oil and bind it with seven splints, it still will retain its crooked inclinations." This is the character of our traffic in strong drink. It has been soaked in the oil of mistaken Christian charity, and we are sure it has been bound with legal splints twice seven times, and yet it is to-day as crooked as before.—*Canada Christian Monthly.*

CERTAIN passions give a dark look to the countenance. How do they do that? Is it merely by a re-arrangement of the ultimate atoms of the skin and of the external parts of the eye? The astute materialist admits that certain emotions are accompanied by such displacements of the atoms of which the body is composed as permit the exterior of the countenance to reflect light only imperfectly. How is it that the bad passions thus relax us? It is incontrovertible that earthy passions give an earthy look to the countenance. The bestial man acquires an opaque and peculiarly repulsive complexion. . . . Men may be made of floss-silk, and have æsthetic luminousness in their faces, and yet no solar light. It is a wholly incontrovertible fact that an earthy look comes from an earthy mood, and a solar look from a conscientious.—*Joseph Cook.*

THE natural sciences in their second childhood are crooning baby songs. Great and learned volumes of physiology are devoted to proving by microscope and scalpel that what we have been in the habit of calling mind is nothing more than the register on the fibres of the brain of the molecular changes which it undergoes under nutrition, and that thought and consciousness and knowledge are but the twists, or bulgings, or currents in cerebro-spinal matter. And great schools of biology are devoted to the development of the chimera that by so-called evolutions nothing can become something, death can become life, and matter mind, and then that the life thus developed is not conscious and intelligent, but that it runs by clock-work, with wheels and cogs, self-wound up and automatically, in a manner that is at the same time intensely active and utterly inert. To this bewildering result, completely destructive of all our instinctive beliefs and contradicting all our innate certainties, does this science, grown mad and childish by too much study, try to lead us.—*N. Y. Independent.*