

Literary Notices.

THE Reports of the last two Provincial Conventions of the Sabbath School Association of Canada, held in 1884 and 1885, at Brockville and Stratford respectively, included in one pamphlet, is on our desk and will be sent post-paid to any address on the receipt of 25 cents, by J. J. Woodhouse, Secretary pro tem. S. S. Association of Canada, Box 525, Toronto, Ont. These reports, though late in appearing, are not untimely, as the excellent papers contained therein have permanent interest. Mr. J. Wood, of Ottawa, has a suggestive paper on "The Bible, the world's light and guide," and Mr. H. D. Hunter, one on "The Superintendent, his duties and difficulties." Mr. H. J. Clark, a former Editor of the paper, has been wisely chosen as chairman of the Executive Committee.

THE SEPTEMBER CENTURY comes as ever fraught with biographical and other matter. An article on Liszt, the musician, and two portraits of him have a melancholy interest seeing he too has passed away since the number went to press. From an article on "Amateur Ballooning" we quote: "As nearly as could be judged, I was more than a mile high, and all sounds from the earth had ceased. There was a death like silence which was simply awful. It seemed to my overstrained nerves to forbode disaster. The ticking of the watch in my pocket sounded like a trip-hammer. I could feel the blood as it shot through the veins of my head and arms. My straw hat and the willow car snapped and cracked, being contracted by the evaporation of the moisture in them and by the fast-cooling temperature. I was compelled to breathe a little quicker than usual on account of the rarity of the atmosphere. I became sensible of a loud, monotonous hum in my ears, pitched about on middle C of the piano, which seemed to bore into my head from each side, meeting in the centre with a pop; then for an instant my head would be clear, when the same experience would be repeated. By throwing out small pieces of tissue paper I saw that the balloon was still rapidly ascending. While debating with myself as to the advisability of pulling the valve-rope (I was afraid to touch it for fear it would break) and discharging some gas, the earth was lost sight of, and the conviction was forced upon me that this must be the clouds! It made me dizzy to think of it. Above, below, and upon all sides was a dense, damp, chilly fog. Upon looking closer, large drops of rain could be seen, silently falling down out of sight into what seemed bottomless space. I was alone, a mile from the earth, in the midst of a rain-cloud and the silence of the grave. Moreover, I had sole charge of the balloon; if it had not been for this fact I could have taken a little comfort, as I had no confidence in my ability to manage it. A rainstorm upon earth is accompanied by noise; the patter of the rain upon the houses, trees, and walks always attends the storm; while here, although the drops were large, they could not be heard falling on the balloon or its belongings. Silence reigned supreme. The quiet spoken of by Dr. Kane and other Arctic explorers as existing in the northern regions, was a hubbub beside this place. More tissue-paper was thrown out; seeing that it seemed to ascend, I knew that the apparatus was slowly descending, being brought down by the weight of rain upon it. Soon the earth was in view. How peaceful and quiet it looked! Imme-

diately the whistling of railroad trains could be heard. Now mountains could be distinguished from valleys, and the cawing of frightened crows and the shouting of men could be heard. I passed immediately over Tallcott Mountain tower, where there were some two hundred people enjoying the day. I could plainly hear one of them blowing a horn. As the balloon slowly descended men could be seen running from all sides to the place of landing. Now the hum of insects could be heard, and the grapnel, with a hundred feet of rope attached, was thrown out; it soon struck the ground, and dragged lazily through the turf and over the stones without getting a secure hold. I approached a man weighing three hundred pounds, who was sitting upon a stone wall all out of breath from running. Without the formality of an introduction I asked him to catch on to that anchor and stop the business. With a woe-begone look upon his honest face and an ominous shake of the head, he replied: 'It's no use, young fellow; I can't work my bellows.' But as the rope twitched along near him, he fell upon it, and my journey was ended."

ST. NICHOLAS for September is on our desk. From the frontispiece, which is a reproduction of Landseer's celebrated portrait of himself and his two dogs, "The Connoisseurs," to the Riddle-box with its ingenuous puzzles, ST. NICHOLAS is crowded with bright and interesting matter for girls and boys and all who love them. Read the following on Landseer's Lions. Landseer had an extreme fondness for studying and making pictures of lions, and from the time when, as a boy, he dissected one, he tried to obtain the body of every lion that died in London. Dickens was in the habit of relating that on one occasion, when he and others were dining with the artist, a servant entered and asked: 'Did you order a lion, sir?' as if it was the most natural thing in the world. The guests feared that a living lion was about to enter, but it turned out to be the body of the dead "Nero," of the Zoological Gardens, which had been sent as a gift to Sir Edwin. His skill in drawing was marvellous, and was once shown in a rare way at a large evening party. Facility in drawing had been the theme of conversation, when a lady declared that no one had yet drawn two objects at the same moment. Landseer would not allow that this could not be done, and immediately took two pencils and drew a horse's head with one hand, and at the same time a stag's head with the other hand. He painted with great rapidity; he once sent to the exhibition a picture of rabbits painted in three-quarters of an hour. Mr. Wells relates that at one time when Landseer was visiting him, he left the house for church just as his butler placed a fresh canvass on the easel before the painter; on his return three hours later, Landseer had completed a life sized picture of a fallow deer, and so well was it done that neither he nor the artist could see that it required retouching.

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All communications concerning the subject matter of the paper, all books, etc., for review, and all exchanges to be sent to THE EDITOR, CANADIAN INDEPENDENT, Box 2648, Toronto, Ont.