

BOOK THIEVES.

Several public librarians have recently reported to The Library Journal their experiences with book thieves. In the June number is a letter from E. W. Gaillard, librarian at the East Side House, New York. Mr. Gaillard had advertised for a copy of March's Thesaurus, and had been notified by another librarian that a copy of the same work had been stolen from his library, and could be identified, if it turned up, by a private accession mark. Before Mr. Gaillard got through with March's Thesaurus, he had learned of ten copies that had been stolen from different libraries; had recovered three of these; and had turned over to the police a courteous, affable, and apparently ingenious man, who must stand trial in New York and then be turned over to a neighboring state to answer to the same charge. Mr. Gaillard says: "I am inclined, to believe, from what has been brought to my notice, that at least three men operate together. One investigates, one steals, and one sells. The territory covered seems to extend from Boston to Washington, perhaps further. Books are so treated that identification is extremely difficult. Where library marks cannot be effectually removed the pages are cut out and replaced by others. Book plates and embossed stamps are removed with great skill." The actual thief is an expert. One library lost both volumes of the large Rand & McNally atlas; one bookseller lost six copies of the Webster International Dictionary in one afternoon. I have heard of first editions which have been loaned for reference, and a few days after it was found that dummies were substituted and the real first editions were stolen.

"In consequence of my investigation I am convinced that there is an organized body of men who know book values, library methods, and who are skilled in book alteration, who prey upon public and semi public libraries."

Since this letter was written an accomplice has been caught and plead guilty, but the expert thief is still at large.

From the Public Library at Somerville, Mass., about two hundred books, valued at \$1,600, had been stolen since last November, and the librarian, Mr. S. W. Foss, finally traced them to a "special research" student supposed to be writing a history, and therefore allowed the freedom of the Americana room, which he frequented with his bulky manuscript. He was finally caught by the identity of his registry signature with that on a receipt given by him to a bookseller. Many of the books have been recovered, and the thief was held to the grand jury and sentenced—The Literary Collector.

The Royal Historical Society of London is planning publication of a scientific bibliography of British history from 1458 to 1901. The details of the undertaking were set forth in a recent address of Dr. G. W. Prothero, President of the Society. The bibliography will begin at the point at which Charles Gross's bibliography of mediaeval England ended.

The chief ecclesiastical dignitary of the Established Church of England has been spending some days in Quebec, Montreal and Toronto, on his way to the United States, where he has gone to attend a conference of the American Episcopalian church. There is the more interest in this visit from the fact that it is the first time an Archbishop of Canterbury has ever left the shores of Britain. Dr. Davidson is Scotch by blood; and at one time his name was mentioned as a possible friendly arbitrator in the recent celebrated Scottish Church law case. He is an able, upright, broad-minded, tactful man, and has demeaned himself while in Canada in a manner befitting the scope and dignity of his high position.

The people of Canada of all classes and creeds will wish the Archbishop a visit not only personally pleasant but instructive to his hearers and to himself.

A GOODLY TREE.

In the late meeting of the Pan Presbyterian Alliance, the secretary, Rev. Dr. Matthews, presented an elaborate statistical report of Presbyterian Churches of the world. The following are some of the main items of the exhibit: European continent—Ministers, 5,106; communicants, 947,258; Sunday-school scholars, 366,045. United Kingdom—Ministers, 5,313; communicants, 1,536,807; Sunday school scholars, 1,041,334. Asia—Ministers, 216; communicants, 62,844; Sunday-school scholars, 8,779. Africa—Ministers, 352; communicants, 211,724; Sunday-school scholars, 54,110. North America—Ministers, 15,557; communicants, 2,289,485; Sunday school scholars 2,234,610. South America—Ministers, 41; communicants, 6,000. West India Islands—Ministers, 28; communicants, 12,017; Sunday-school scholars, 12,283. Australasia—Ministers, 751; communicants, 80,793; Sunday-school scholars, 100,650. The total of Presbyterian communicant members now found in the whole world is 5,137,128. Since the organization of the Alliance this total has stood as follows at its successive sessions: 1888, 3,721,680; 1892, 4,125,66; 1896, 4,627,149; 1899, 4,852,096.

Literary Notes.

The most noteworthy book discussed in the September Current Literature (Current Literature Publishing Company, New York) is undoubtedly that entitled A History of Marmonial Institutions, by George Elliot Howard, Ph. D., Professorial Lecturer in the University of Chicago. This is a large work in three volumes, and of it the reviewer says: "An *opum magnum* so deserving of the name as this does not challenge our attention once a year. Its extent, the long patience which its preparation has required, the careful, and effective presentation of the great mass of its material, the nice balance of its judgment at many critical points—all these particulars will elicit profounder admiration in proportion as the reader understands the seriousness of such labor as is here involved." From the review given we can understand that this is a valuable work of its kind.

The Magazine of Art whose term of life has been long and whose contents were of a high order, has suspended publication, the July number being the valedictory.

Dodd, Mead & Co., have issued a facsimile reprint of Thomas Hariot's A Briefe and True Report of the New Found land of Virginia, from the first edition, 1583. Only seven copies are known of this, "the earliest printed original book in English language relating to the region now comprised within the limits of the United States." An introductory note is inserted by the editor, Luther S. Livingston.

The Pillar of Light, by Louis Tracy, author of The Wings of the Morning, McLeod & Aller, Toronto, Publishers. This is a bright, readable story suitable for a warm summer day when one does not care to think nor be moved too much in anyway—simply to be interested for the time being. Without being trashy the book is quite improbable, and all the most approved coincidences of the old fashioned romance happen. The setting, however, is original for the scene is laid almost entirely in a light-house. A terrific storm is raging when the story opens, and the light-housekeeper, who by the way is a man of wonderful educational gifts and of course turns out to be a nobleman in disguise, with his daughter and her adopted sister, manage to save some hundred passengers from a wrecked vessel. Of course each of the girls finds a lover and the adopted child discovers her father, an American millionaire, but then all Americans in the world are millionaires. With all its extravagance in the way of plot the tale is well told and should find plenty of readers.

The Studio for August (44 Leicester Square, London, England) opens with a criticism of Mr. Moffat P. Lindner's water-colours of Venice, by C. Lewis Hind. The first paragraph is as follows: "What art does for us, what it has done, what it should do, are questions to which there can be no final answer, for the solution of the problem must always depend upon the personality of the inquirer, and till the last man asks the last question of the universe such questions will be repeated. Nobody will deny that the power to feel and to express beauty is one of the essentials of the artist's equipment, although a vast number of painters flaunt their want of this gift every year at the Royal Academy, the New Gallery, the saloons, and at Munich. But beauty of line, of form, of quality, of tone, of colour, if it be inherent in the artist, must be expressed although he be skied, intermittently rejected, or left altogether to his lonely dream. Beauty occurs anywhere, any time, and when it occurs joy uprises and passes from the work to the observer. If he feels it to be beauty, it is beauty. With many artists this power of communicating beauty would seem to be an occasional gift; they use it unknowingly. Others turn naturally to the expression of beauty as young birds to the air, working slowly, selecting from nature, synthesising their impressions, content to produce only from an artistic impulse, disregarding of exhibitions with their temptations to show something that will outcream the neighbouring canvasses. In this category artists, who see nature across a temperament, in Zola's fine phrase, and who strive to interpret the beauty of the world, I should place Mr. Moffat P. Lindner."