

come, if true to its mission, a man pleasing institution. It was appointed for the proclamation of God's saving truth to men. Faith and morals are inseparably connected, and God's word has its message for every relation of human life. So long as ministers confine their attention to abstract or speculative questions, men generally will, with undisturbed equanimity, let it say its say, much as Tennyson's Northern Farmer was in the habit of doing. Let them but speak boldly as they ought to speak about present visible existing evils, then those that are hit are sure to cry out and be very virtuously indignant about the abuses of the pulpit. One thing is perfectly evident these days, and that is that those to whom wrong-doing has been clearly brought home desire nothing better than that the pulpit should remain silent concerning the wide-spread corruption that has admittedly infected Canadian political life. Is it merely that exposure makes them feel uncomfortable, or is there a latent desire for a continuance of opportunity for pursuing the courses by which the public chest is plundered and the public conscience benumbed?

Many of the prominent occupants of the Presbyterian pulpit, irrespective of their individual political leanings, have felt it to be their duty to enter an earnest protest against flagrant public immorality. As a proof that their merited rebukes have gone home, we had a vehement attack on Protestant ministers last week from no less a personage than the Secretary of State. Unfortunately for his contention he asserted too much. One reason he gave why ministers should be silent on the matter of the scandals was that they had not read the evidence. In view of the facts this is simply a monstrous assumption. All the leading journals on both sides of politics gave detailed reports from day to day as the evidence was educed. The addresses of counsel before the committees, the reports presented to Parliament and the able debates thereon were read by all who desire an intelligent acquaintance with current affairs, and especially those relating to the principal interests of the country. To assume that ministers rushed to conclusions without taking the evidence into account is, to say the least, not very complimentary to a well-educated class of men. Who that know anything about the habits of the average minister will be prepared to accept the sweeping assertion of the Secretary of State?

He was, if possible, more unfortunate in the parallel he sought to institute between the action of the Protestant ministry and the Roman Catholic priesthood. He claimed it as a meritorious act of his that he had gone to Rome to beseech the Pope to prohibit priestly interference in election contests in his native province. Interference in elections whether by Pope, priest or parson, is an indefensible thing, one that no clergyman who realizes the obligations of his sacred office would seek to be chargeable with, but this a few years ago was what many Roman Catholic authorities in Quebec Province were in the habit of doing. It was no uncommon thing for the priest from the altar to tell the faithful for whom they were to vote, and to threaten them with the direst spiritual pains and penalties if they disregarded the priestly monitions. It was high time to end this state of matters and to insist on a more seemly attitude in relation to ordinary political contests. There is, however, no parallel between ministers denouncing public dishonesty and priests in the interest of an individual politician launching the thunders of the Church against those of their flocks who were disposed to favour his opponent. It will be time enough to muzzle Protestant ministers when they incur the odium of perverting their office to the worst possible forms of political partisanship.

The Presbytery of Montreal promptly took up the challenge so recklessly thrown out by the Secretary of State, and have answered it in just such a manner as free citizens and stalwart Presbyterians might be expected to answer it. At a Presbyterial Conference Rev. A. J. Mowatt, of Erskine Church, read a paper of exceptional ability on "The Pulpit in Relation to prevailing Evils." It was a powerful plea for the "liberty of prophesying," and marked by the manly force and pithy expression which characterize his public utterances. The ground he took, that the pulpit should give the people faithful warning against prevailing forms of iniquity, will commend itself to the general conscience. The spirited discussion—if discussion is a permissible term where entire unanimity prevailed—that followed indicates a healthy state of feeling, and an earnest desire that as a people we should be done with the mode of doing things that bring disgrace on Canadian public life. Dr. Campbell, Mr. R. Stanley Weir, Mr. Walter Paul, Rev. James

Fleck, Principal MacVicar and Professor Scrimger all spoke emphatically on the immediate need of insisting upon a higher standard of public life than that under which an undisguised immorality can flourish. As an indication of the tone of the Conference the following resolution, passed unanimously, may be taken:—

In view of the great public evils prevalent in our country, the Presbytery sees great cause for alarm and humiliation before God, and resolves to express its abhorrence of the political corruption which has been revealed by recent investigations, and its dissatisfaction with the failure of Parliament to deal adequately with them in the punishment of the guilty, and, therefore, calls upon the people to express their condemnation at the earliest opportunity at the polls.

THE METHODIST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL.

THE tendencies of the time, and by these the Christian Church does not remain uninfluenced, is towards larger unity, greater concentration. Many indicate a desire for the corporate union of all sections of the Protestant Church. Whether that is attainable or not cannot now be determined. Before it is possible many things must be changed. At all events at present an inclusive union in Protestant denominations is to all appearances a great way off. The union of the separate Churches embracing the same theological beliefs and ecclesiastical polity is not now so difficult or improbable a thing as it appeared a few years ago. No intelligent reader of Church history may be prepared to say that all the divisions existing among Presbyterians, Methodists or Baptists were unnecessary or culpable when they first arose. They have been the occasion of giving emphatic testimony to certain aspects of religious truth in danger of being obscured or virtually denied. The existence of these separate branches of the same Church have secured for various important principles a due recognition. That there is the same reason now for the continuance in their separate forms of these various branches of the same Churches, many will now be unable to affirm. It has also to be borne in mind that different denominations have not originated solely in a pure love of truth. Human ambitions and human weaknesses have had an influence in their formation. The prevailing tendency now, however, is for union, not separation.

There can be no doubt that the Alliance of the Reformed Churches has quickened the desire for union in all sections of the Presbyterian Church. Neither is there any doubt that it will in the future become still more influential in bringing about a fuller union among all the Churches that accept the Westminster Confession as their symbolic standard. The same thing may be affirmed of the Methodist Ecumenical Council now sitting in Washington. This is the second of these Councils, the first having assembled in London ten years ago. It has been the means of visibly fostering the spirit of union in the various branches of the Methodist Church throughout the world. In Canada since the meeting of the first council the different sections of Methodism have been merged into one compact, powerful and united Church, and there is no doubt that the present Council will give an impetus to the movement for a union of the Methodist Churches throughout the world.

The proceedings of the Washington Council will be followed with great interest by evangelical Christians generally. Denominational interests, as is to be expected, will have a prominent place assigned them, but from the programme of the ten days' session it is evident that there is a desire to consider fully the great questions of general public interest, such as the essential unity and genuine catholicity of the Christian Church; the relations of the Church to scientific thought; the various agencies of the Church; religious training and university education; the Church and public morality; the Christian resources of the new and the old world; the relations of the Church to Temperance. The principal sociological questions will also come up for discussion, so that the attitude of the Methodist Church on these matters of paramount practical interest will be keenly followed.

The freedom of intercourse, now yearly extending between the European and American continents, and largely helped by these Great Conferences, will bind more closely the religious life of both hemispheres, and it is hoped will deepen the love that ought to exist among all who profess the same common Christianity. These large interchanges ought also to quicken Christian zeal and develop practical effort for the accomplishment of the work with which the Church universal is entrusted, to preach the Gospel to all nations.

Books and Magazines.

BABYHOOD (New York: Babyhood Publishing Co.) A number of short papers of great practical value to mothers will be found in the October number of *Babyhood*.

THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL (Philadelphia: The Curtis Publishing Co.) continues to hold worthily the high place it has made for itself. The October number presents many and varied attractions, and gives much valuable and useful information for its ever-widening circle of readers.

THE RELIGIOUS REVIEW OF REVIEWS (London and New York: International News Co.)—The plan of this monthly is comprehensive. All that is of prominence in the religious world finds recognition in its pages. In its treatment it appears to be eminently fair. An interesting department and one that could profitably bear expansion is that devoted to the foreign religious reviews.

THE ANGLO-ERNIAN and other poems. By Hubert Newton, D.D., Vicar of St. Michael's, Southwark. (London: Kessell, Paternoster Row.)—Dr. Newton is an evangelical Church of England clergyman. He presents his views, and they are strong, in verse versification. He hates ritualism and Romanism in every form, and it is evident he has no love for Gladstone and Home Rule.

THE SIDERAL MESSENGER (Northfield, Minn.: W. J. Payne.)—For all interested in the study of the sublime science of astronomy this monthly magazine, ably edited by Mr. Payne, director of Goodsell Observatory, Carlton College, will be found of great service. In addition to valuable papers bearing on general aspects of astronomical science, there are most useful details of current celestial phenomena, which will be greatly prized by the practical astronomer.

THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT STUDENT (Hartford, Conn.: The Student Publishing Co.)—The more noteworthy papers in the October number of this helpful and suggestive monthly are: "The Modern Jew and the Synagogue," second paper, by Professor Davies, of Haverfordwest, Wales; "The Self-Consciousness of Jesus in its Relation to the Messianic Hope," the first of a series by Rev. Albert W. Hitchcock, Berlin; "The Bible in English Life and Letters," by Rev. J. T. McClure, D.D., and "The End of the World," by Rev. Benjamin Wisner Bacon. Drs. Harper and Goodspeed continue their studies in "The Gospel of John."

BOOK NEWS (Philadelphia) for October has for frontispiece a portrait of Sara Jeannette Duncan, author of "An American Girl in London" and "A Social Departure." This Canadian literary lady, now Mrs. C. E. Cotes, resides in Calcutta, India, where her husband has a Government appointment. No hint is given of her future literary work, but among the things likely to happen we can at least hope that she will touch with her pen more of her experiences of life and travel, and convert them into a book as readable as her earlier ventures. Another author's picture published here for the first time is of Mr. A. T. Q. Couch, known to readers on both sides the ocean as "Q." *Book News* has always pictures from the new books, supplemented to the descriptive price list, notices and reviews.

THE REVIEW OF REVIEWS (New York: Astor Place.)—Already this great monthly is a monument to the energy, enterprise and firm purpose of its founder, Mr. W. T. Stead. There is now an English and American edition published simultaneously. The October number, in addition to the usual features, is chiefly noticeable for the space it devotes to the Methodist Ecumenical Council, now in session in Washington, and to interesting contributions relating to James Russell Lowell. Mr. Stead has a vivacious and very interesting paper on Mr. Hugh Price Hughes, the most distinctive exponent of present day Methodism. It has the characteristic insight, clear grasp and enthusiasm characteristic of the former editor of the *Fall Mall Gazette*. Portraits of men and pictorial illustrations of events of timely prominence are highly appreciated features of this monthly. The value of this publication to busy readers, who desire to obtain an intelligent view of current thought and action, is visible at a glance.

THE TREASURY FOR PASTOR AND PEOPLE (New York: E. B. Treat.)—The October issue is full of excellent, timely sermons and articles well adapted to aid pastors and others in their work. The portrait of Dr. Conrad, of Worcester, Mass., with a view of his church, form the illustrations. His sermon and a sketch of his life will amply repay perusal. Two full sermons for Thanksgiving services are given, and in the Living Issue department "The One Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church" is discussed with great ability by Professor J. Heron, D.D., of the Presbyterian College, Belfast, Ireland. There are nine sermons in their: Leading Thoughts, by eminent preachers in various lands. Dr. T. L. Cuyler sketches Rev. Charles G. Finney in his own inimitable way. An excellent article on "Old Testament Inspiration" and one on "The Science of Preaching," by Archdeacon Farrar, are worthy of careful reading, as also "Equipment for Christian Work," by Rev. J. E. Denton, "The Annual Roll Call," by Rev. J. W. Waddell, and "Old Age," by Oliver Wendell Holmes. The standing of this magazine is always an elevated one.

THE ARENA (Boston: The Arena Publishing Co.)—There are a number of noteworthy papers in the *Arena* for October, which magazine readers will appreciate. Such for example as Dr. George Stewart's paper on "Lowell." It is critical yet very entertaining; a fine portrait of Mr. Lowell taken from the last photograph of the great poet forms a frontispiece of this number. Mr. Henry Wood writes on "Healing through the Mind." Hamlin Garland contributes a brilliant and entertaining paper on "Mr. and Mrs. James A. Herne." This paper is illustrated by ten finely-executed photographs. Theodore Stoughton discusses "Some Weak Spots in the French Republic." Moncure D. Conway writes on "Madame Blavatsky at Aljar." Thaddeus B. Wakeman defends Nationalism. H. C. Bradby discusses our present political outlook under the caption, "Leaderless Mobs." Will Allen Dromgoole furnishes the story of the month, which is entitled "A Grain of Gold." The editor contributes two strong editorials, one dealing with our present social conditions, the other discusses religious persecution. The contents of this issue of the *Arena* are as usual marked by variety in subjects, while all the papers given are able, entertaining and in touch with the living thought of the hour.