

seven schools religious instruction is given during school hours; in twenty-two it is given either before or after school, and in eighteen no religious instruction is given. This instruction is given by the teachers from a catechism prepared for children of the Roman Catholic Church, and it is to the teaching from this catechism that reference is made in the schedule and summary when religious instruction is spoken of. In some of the schools special instruction is given from this book, for a certain portion of the year to children who are preparing for their first communion. The prayers in use, in addition to the Lord's Prayer which is used in almost every school, are taken from the Roman Catholic books of devotion. These prayers are, in some schools, used at the opening and close of the school, both in the forenoon and the afternoon. In some of the French text books in use, which are elsewhere referred to in this report, the tenets, peculiar to the Roman Catholic Church, are more or less prominently introduced. In addition to these methods of inculcating religion, there were found, in many of the schools in the county of Essex, pictures of a religious character—the crucifix and small statues or images of saints. In two instances in the county of Prescott, altars were found in the schools. It was stated that these were erected during the month of May for services of a special nature for the people of the neighbourhood, who assembled in the school houses for evening prayers, as the churches were a considerable distance from the localities. The prominence given to the Roman Catholic religion in these schools is objectionable to the English-speaking Protestants generally. The regulations provided by law on this question are ample to give protection to the religious convictions of all classes of people. They allow sufficient liberty to Protestant and Roman Catholic alike for imparting religious instruction without infringing upon the ordinary work of the school. In order, therefore, to remove all ground of complaint against the existing state of things, it is only necessary that the schools be brought into harmony with the law.

To remedy the acknowledged defects in the French schools in the several Ontario counties where they exist, the Commissioners make the following recommendations:

In the counties of Prescott and Russell the French candidates for teachers' certificates have, in most cases, only an imperfect knowledge of English—too imperfect to enable them to take with advantage the prescribed course, as given in English in our high schools and model schools. They do not therefore attend those schools to prepare for teachers' examinations. To provide competent teachers of English for the French schools, and to meet some of the difficulties mentioned in this report we have to recommend: 1. That a special school be established for the training of French teachers in the English language. This school should be placed under teachers who can speak both English and French, and who are thoroughly competent to give instruction in these languages. It should provide the ordinary non-professional course, and should also furnish facilities for professional training as given in county model schools. Candidates on completing their course in this school should be prepared to take the regular examinations in English prescribed for teachers' certificates; and only those who have passed such examinations should receive a licence to teach. 2. That special institutes be held for the immediate benefit of the teachers now employed in the French schools. 3. That the attention of the teachers be called at once to the necessity of making greater use of the oral or conversational method in teaching English. 4. That a bi-lingual series of readers—French and English—be provided for the French schools in Ontario. If this were done parents would be saved the expense of purchasing two sets of books, of which many now complain. The work of both teacher and pupil would be simplified, and there would be placed in the hands of the pupils books that would aid them materially in acquiring a knowledge of both languages. Under competent teachers, with such books, the pupil should, on completing the second book, be sufficiently familiar with English to enable him to receive instruction in this language in the various subjects prescribed. We recognize the difficulties inseparable from the introduction of another series of readers, but we believe they would be more than counterbalanced by the advantages to be derived therefrom. 5. That the use of unauthorized text books in these schools be discontinued. 6. That the attention of trustees and teachers be called to the provisions of the law governing religious instruction in public schools, as there seems to be a general lack of information on this subject.

It is well that public attention has been called to what is an obvious perversion of our national system of education. It is never wise through mistaken notions of leniency to permit grave infractions of a well-understood law. To suffer the continuance of the laxity which has so long prevailed would be culpable. The Minister of Education has for some time past been endeavouring to correct abuses relating to the neglect and inadequate instruction in English and the surreptitious introduction of sectarian and unauthorized text books, and it is to be hoped that the inquiry that has been instituted will lead to such measures as will tend to the removal of what is now so obviously objectionable in the French-Canadian schools of Ontario. That the work is a difficult one can readily be understood; that it is by no means however to be regarded as hopeless may be gathered from the following remarks by the Commissioners:

The object aimed at in the Public Schools of the Province is to give to the youth attending them such an education in the common branches of knowledge, as will fit them to occupy creditably the positions in life they may be called to fill, and this education should be imparted in the English language. Any departure from this rule should be only partial and in accommodation to the peculiar circumstances of certain sections of the country, in order that the end sought may thereby be more fully attained. There can be no question as to the fact that in all the French schools in the several counties visited, notwithstanding particular cases of backwardness or inefficiency, an effort is being made to impart a knowledge of the

English language; and not only so, but this work is receiving a larger amount of attention at present than in former years. There are some of these schools in which English has been well taught for many years, so that they are practically English schools. There are also some, as will be seen from the statistical statement forming part of this report in which the English language is largely used in the work of the school. This is the case more particularly in the counties of Essex and Kent. There are some schools in which the time given to English and the use of that language in the school is too limited; but even in these, more attention is paid to English than formerly, and the use made of it in the work of instruction is greater than it was a few years ago. In dealing with these schools, in order to raise them to a higher standard, and to secure a satisfactory teaching of the English language in them, time must be allowed, and patience must be exercised. For many years, the French people were allowed to conduct their schools in their own way, no exception being taken either by the Education Department or by the public. Special provision was made to secure French teachers for them and French text-books were authorized for their schools. They have lived for a long period in the localities where they are found, enjoying the use of their native language. They are strongly attached to it. It is the language of their fathers, and the language used in their homes and spoken by their children. It is natural that they should cherish it with affection, and desire their children to acquire a knowledge of it. If the schools are dealt with justly, and with due consideration for the feelings of the people, and if the recommendations made in this report are adopted, we believe these schools, within a reasonable time, will be raised to a degree of efficiency that will be satisfactory to both the English and French people. We have reason to believe also, that whatever changes may be necessary to render these schools more efficient, and to advance the children more rapidly and intelligently in the knowledge of English, will be welcomed by the French people themselves. We have found, that, on the whole, the people take a deep interest in the education of their children. In many of the rural sections in Prescott and Russell, the school houses are inferior and poorly equipped and the salaries very small, yet in some sections and villages, the people have manifested their appreciation of the importance of education, by providing excellent buildings and paying fairly liberal salaries to the teachers.

## Books and Magazines.

**LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.** (Boston: Littell & Co.)—This most valuable weekly continues to present its readers with varied and timely contributions of the best literature of the day.

**OUR LITTLE FOLKS AND THE NURSERY.** (Boston: The Russell Publishing Co.)—Picture and story, good advice and entertaining reading generally, such as little folks love, are regularly presented in this most charming monthly.

**HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE.** (New York: Harper & Brothers.)—The same conscientious and intelligent effort that marks all the Harper publications is conspicuous in this weekly magazine specially designed for young readers. Its pages are replete with excellent and varied contributions as well as numerous and finely executed illustrations.

**ST. NICHOLAS.** (New York: The Century Co.)—This admirable magazine for September is unusually full of good things. Every legitimate variety of taste is consulted and every reader will find much to instruct, entertain and delight. Its illustrations are numerous and of a high order of excellence, and the tone is well fitted to elevate and refine those to whom this magazine makes its special appeal.

**THE METHODIST MAGAZINE.** (Toronto: William Briggs.)—The September number opens with the first part of what appears to be a most attractive series of articles, finely illustrated, "Here and There in Europe." "Memorials of Lady Brassey," also illustrated, will be read with interest. "Vagabond Vignettes" are continued. Dr. Carman continues the discussion of "Methodist Itinerancy," and Erastus Wimar contributes a paper on "Canada and its Resources." Jerry McAuley's interesting story is told by James Cooke Seymour. The other contents will also find admiring readers.

**HARPER'S MAGAZINE.** (New York: Harper & Brothers.)—The more attractive papers in the September number of *Harper's* are: "American Artists at the Paris Exhibition," by Theodore Child, with numerous illustrations. "The Religious Movement in France," by Edmund de Pressensé, D.D., Paris; "Kentucky Fairs," by James Love Allen, copiously illustrated; and "Holy Moscow," by Theodore Child, with illustrations by Thulstrup; "London Mock Parliaments" is amusing. Rev. John F. Hurst has a short paper of unusual interest on "The Oldest and Smallest Sect in the World," being an account of a Samaritan community visited by him in Nablus, North Palestine. Fiction is well represented by Charles Dudley Warner, and Constance Fenimore Woolson, whose "Jupiter Lights" is concluded in this number, and there are several attractive short stories and good poems. The customary departments are as vigorous, racy, and varied as usual.

**SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE.** (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.)—The new number of *Scribner's* is very attractive. It opens with a characteristic paper by Andrew Lang, on "Alexandre Dumas," illus-

trated by a fine portrait of the great French novelist, and a striking figure from the monument sketched by Gustave Doré. "The Nepigon River" is finely illustrated and interestingly described. Professor Ladd of Yale writes on "The Place of the Fitting-School in American Education." A carefully prepared article full of information, is by H. G. Prout on "Safety in Railroad Travel." "The Master of Ballintrae" will be completed in the number for next month. Harold Frederic, the accomplished and accurate London correspondent of the *New York Times*, in this number begins a new serial, "In the Valley," the scene of which is laid in the Mohawk Valley over a century ago. Other papers, poems, and short stories make up a decidedly good number.

**THE CENTURY.** (New York: The Century Co.)—In the September number of the *Century* there are several papers of much more than average interest. Among them may be mentioned one in which the closing portion of the great Napoleon's career is described in contemporary account by British Officers who attended on him in Elba and St. Helena. Another noteworthy paper by Mr. Paine presents much interesting information concerning the Pharaoh of the Exodus brought to light by recent monumental discoveries in Egypt, the paper being profusely and appropriately illustrated. Other papers of solid interest are Mr. Kennan's concluding paper on "The Kara Political Prison," the instalment of the Lincoln history, dealing among other things with Lincoln's re-election. An ingenious paper on insect and plant life will interest greatly those who delight in the study of nature. In the department of fiction the number is attractive. Joel Chandler Harris' serial advances in interest, and there are numerous racy and original short stories; poetry is also plentiful and good. The number as a whole appears to be of more than average excellence.

**THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY.** (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.)—"La Nouvelle France," in the September *Atlantic* is an interesting pendant to the paper on French-Canadian literature in the August number; and it will, no doubt call out some rejoinders. "The Isthmus Canal and American Control," by Stuart F. Weld, is a consideration of the policy promulgated by the United States Government in its desire to control the Inter-Oceanic Canal, with "some animadversions thereon." In fact the magazine runs toward political questions, since Mr. Frank Gaylord Cook has an article on "James Wilson," a Scotchman who settled in Pennsylvania, and whose services in behalf of the Constitution of the United States are too little known. Still another sketch, of the "Americans at the first Bastille Celebration," by J. G. Alger, completes the more important articles. Miss Jewett is at her best in a pretty sketch, "The White Rose Road," and two stories, to which that much-abused word "weird" can actually be applied seriously, will be found in "Voodooism in Tennessee" and the ghostly little story of "The Gold Heart," in its way not unlike Wilkie Collins' "Moonstone." Mrs. Preston's poem "Phryne's Test," an odd paper on "The Black Madonna of Loretto," and Messrs. James' and Bynner's serials (the latter with a scene in the old Philipse Manor house, New York) go far toward filling an excellent number.

**THE MISSIONARY REVIEW OF THE WORLD.** (New York: Funk & Wagnalls; Toronto: William Briggs.)—The current number of this most admirable monthly is on a par with any of the preceding numbers. "The Waldensians and their Bi-Centennial," by Professor W. H. Hulbert, is a paper of extraordinary eloquence and power, and is just in time to remind us of the celebration of their 200th anniversary which is now being celebrated. Dr. Ellinwood's article, "Buddhist Doctrine of Salvation by Faith," is a highly valuable contribution to the literature of Buddhism. The two editorial articles on "Prayer and the Ministry of Money," "Korea and her Religions," by Prof. Hulbert of Korea; "Our Extant Sydney Smiths," "Missions among the Jews," by Prof. Pick, as well as Starbuck's translations from foreign magazines, and notes from James Johnston of England, all furnish timely and valuable information. The other seven departments of the Review are crowded with Intelligence, Correspondence, brief articles, Monthly Concert matter, Editorial Notes, some of length and of marked interest. Reports of Missionary Societies, tables of Statistics, and five pages of condensed items of information from the world-field—the whole tenor and make up of which is informing and inspiring in the highest degree. Such a mass of missionary thought, discussion, and burning impressive facts, put in so scientific and telling a way each month cannot fail to have a stimulating and salutary effect upon the church.