

LITERARY NOTICES.

THE CENTURY for this month promises to be fully up to its own self, which is saying a great deal. A coloured frontispiece portrait of ex-President Thiers is promised, and an artotype copy of the portrait sent by Mrs. Garfield of her late husband to Queen Victoria. No literary monthly is more worthy of a place upon our tables than THE CENTURY and ST. NICHOLAS—of the latter, 8,000 copies are circulating in England alone.

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE continues its weekly visit of choicest review reading, creaming the standard magazines and reviews. We shall notice in our next issue some of its articles.

I. K. FUNK & Co. have issued "HUGHES' COMMENTARY ON MARK." It is divided into forty-eight sections, corresponding with the forty-eight lessons of the International Series; each section is carefully analyzed, words and phrases explained, persons and places accurately described, errors pointed out, and rendering of recent revisions indicated. It is emphatically a Sunday school commentary—suggestive, simple, brief, with evident marks of unobtrusive scholarship, and of full trust in the Scriptures as the very Word of God. Its "practical lessons" are really the framework of sermons, and the overtaxed pastor or earnest layman may find efficient aid therein for homiletic work. We cordially commend it as filling a place of its own.

THE DECEMBER number of the HOMILETIC MONTHLY, by the same house, fully maintains the character already earned of affording at a minimum cost reliable and select homiletic matter of the very best order. Pernicious literature is vigorously handled, and there are many valuable hints to preachers and Bible students in this number.

PEARLS FROM THE EAST, by Dr. R. Newton (American Sunday School Union), is a very appropriate gift-book for the young. It is a selection of such Scripture topics as "The Prince in Midian," "The Unseen Army," "The Transfiguration," etc., each illustrated. The tone is simple, scriptural, reverential—a children's book that older ones may read with pleasure, and profit.

THE SPRAG BOY, by the same house, is the story of a little boy who, tenderly reared, had to perform hard duty in a coal mine of which his dead father had been part owner. We are told how the little hero learnt often by hard experience to conquer self, to be more than a time server, and to be a teacher of good things. Boys may learn how to conquer more truly than by blows, remembering that a soft answer turneth away wrath; and, as in the Bible history of Joseph, know how a man may become a nobler man by bearing the yoke in his youth.

WIDE AWAKE, an Illustrated Monthly Magazine for Young People. (D. Lothrop & Co., Boston.)—Must certainly grow in favour with the young if it at all keep up to its present excellence. "Wee Willie Winkie," the little urchin that would not go to sleep, with his night ramble through the city, followed by all the children in night-gowns arrayed, in the December number, is a charming "John Gilpin" ballad, which, with its five illustrations, keeps the nursery and evening fireside ringing with merry voices till sleep claims the little ones.

THE PANSY and LITTLE FOLKS' READER, by the same firm, are equally good, being more in the paper form—the former fitted for Sunday schools, the latter for a pleasing text book—making reading even to children a pleasure. All are worthy of patronage.

STORIES FOR LANGUAGE LESSONS is another children's book by the same publishing house as "Wide Awake," in which blanks are left in very simple stories for the children to fill, an illustration being always there to suggest the needed word. "Oh! mamma," said Nellie, "I am no more afraid of a bear now than of my own —," and a little kitten is sleeping cozily on a mat. A charming exercise book for youthful learners how to read. Remembering the good old times and hard seats of our young days, we almost envy the easy and pleasant road of learning now.

THE TEMPTER BEHIND, from the same house, a neat volume, contains a thrilling story, not of love and adventure, but of the struggle with alcohol; the o'er true tale of wine suppers and happy companions; the revel, the riot, and the hell that certainly follows. The battling of life with death, of conscience with a will that has been paralyzed, is not more vividly described than true. Let those who read learn wisdom.

D. LOTHROP & Co. are also issuing a series of tales for the young, under the title of the "Pansy" Books. "ESTER REID" is before us. If all in the series equals this one—and the publications we have above noticed from this house seem to warrant the expectation that they do and will—the name of D. Lothrop & Co. will become justly a household word, and no library designed for the young can afford to put aside their catalogue. The little card Ester Reid found in the corner of a fashionable store, inviting itself to be taken from among its companions, is worthy of being copied in letters of gold, and children of a larger growth will be the better for observing:

I SOLEMNLY AGREE, as *God shall help me*—

1. To observe regular seasons of secret prayer, at least in the morning and evening of each day.
2. To read daily at least a small portion of the Bible.
3. To attend one or more prayer meetings every week, if I have strength to get there.
4. To stand up for Jesus always and everywhere.
5. To try and save at least one soul every year.
6. To engage in no amusement where my Saviour could not be a guest.