

Dr. J. Robertson.

BY REV. PROF. JORDAN, B.D.

It will take a little while for the Church to realise all that she has lost through the removal of Dr. Robertson. When we think of large interests involved we solace ourselves with the old saying, "God buies the workman, but carries on the work." True that is, God gathers the weary workers home to himself; when the measure of strength allotted to this mortal sphere is spent the faithful workers learn that 'there is a rest that remaineth for the people of God;' and when even the greatest worker is taken the work goes on. When we have pondered the deep meaning of the words, "It is expedient for you that I go away," the mystery of even our greatest bereavements is lessened. Yes, the work goes on; the Christian church springs into being, learns to fight God's battle and do His work even when her Lord is absent; but that is because He is not 'absent' in the deepest spiritual sense. "The work" is not a soulless mechanism that "goes on" with the automatic action of blind fate. This work of worship to God and service to humanity which is so dear to the devout believer in the life of God's saints passing down through the ages, the work abides and the spirit of the worship still lives. It we turn to God in prayer and if we have faith in the promise, "Lo I am with you alway," we shall have grace and guidance given to face the new problems and bear new burdens. That is a glorious truth to which we must hold fast, and which we must proclaim with ever new energy to our own hearts and to our fellowmen. These gracious truths, however, are not meant to deaden the sense of loss. It is good to feel our loss that by it we may be drawn near to the Heavenly Father and cherish a fitting sense of what we owe to those who have gone before. God gave to our Church an apostle of the West when the West needed him and the church needed him. One result has been that the Presbyterian church of Canada has been able to bear a full share of the burden in relation to the evangelization of a new and large section of our country. Hence, our church today occupies a leading position in that important part of our land. Already a rich harvest has been reaped. But that only brings with it increased obligations according to the increase of power. We cannot rejoice in mere numbers or rest in the past. Dr. Robertson's ideal was that of unresting service. Those of us who met him at close quarters know that he lived for one great work. But we know also that he had a great idea of that work. He was no mere Ecclesiastic; the aggrandisement of a church was not his final aim. He had the old prophetic idea of righteousness; his religion was a force to link men to God, and to bind them in true fellowship so that the whole of life might be made clean, wholesome, spiritual. We know also that though he regarded his own work as one of the greatest importance to the country, one that united piety and patriotism in a supreme degree, he recognized the need and importance of other branches of the church's work. Though at times, as was necessary, with a specialist, the Home Mission field seemed to him to fill the whole horizon, on right occasions and in graceful ways he could acknowledge the service of those who work in very different ways. While

we feel sorrow at the loss of a strong, noble man who did a great work which will have an abiding, far-reaching influence, we have joy in hearing this testimony and offering this tribute to the memory of one who rendered that service for which we owe thanks to all the saints, namely to incarnate in undeniable form the Spirit of the Cross, to prove the reality of religion, and to show that missionary enterprise in the church is not a matter of history but of living present experience. Such rich memories and noble traditions ought to stimulate us to more faithful service in the service of Him "who went about doing good."

Literary Notes.

The winter number of the Western Quarterly Magazine, "The Hesperian," is devoted for the most part to the discussion of Christmas topics, though it also contains articles on 'Wild Life in the West,' and 'Trollope as a Novelist.' Under 'Current Literary History' and 'Contemporary Science' both fields are reviewed.—The Hesperian, St. Louis, Mo.

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHICS for January contains some very able articles. We may mention particularly "The Dark Ages and the Renaissance," by B. Bosanquet; "Philosophy and Life," by H. Hoffding; "The Temperance Question," by James H. Hyslop, of Columbia University, should have special interest for Ontario readers just now. There are also the usual number of book reviews which serve as a guide to recent movements in Ethical philosophy.

The January number of the Ladies' Home Journal contains the usual variety of reading matter. Rudyard Kipling has one of his animal stories 'My Personal Experience with a Lion,' while John F. Mitchell writes of "James Whitcomb Riley's 'Home Folks.'" Two serial stories are finished in this number, and "The Russell's in Chicago," is continued. The various departments are most helpful, especially those having reference to dress-making.—The Curtis Publishing Co., Philadelphia.

Table Talk for January opens with a most helpful article on "The Conventional Setting of the Table," by Mrs. Burton Kingsland. An interesting article is that on "Housekeeping in Mexico." The subject "Mumps and Chicken-pox," so timely a one to all mothers, is discussed. The daily menus, with suggestions for following them, are as usual excellent. Table Talk is probably the most valuable magazine of its kind published, and the subscription price is only \$1.00 per year. Address, Philadelphia, Pa.

The Cosmopolitan for January opens with a seasonable article well illustrated on "Winter Sports." This is followed by a short essay on "The Last of the Red Race." "Picture Photography" is profusely illustrated. Perhaps the most noteworthy feature of the number is the article written by Elbert Hubbard on his own life and work. All Philistines will wish to read this. Several good short stories, together with other short articles, complete the number.—The Cosmopolitan, Irvington, New York.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER, for December 1901, contains the usual varied and interesting articles bearing mostly on the life of today. The first

place is occupied by an important contribution "A Message from America" by Sir Charles Wemyss Reid. There are of course two or three articles bearing on South Africa. Mr. W. S. Lilly gives a mournful account of "Marriage and Modern Civilization" from which it appears that the Roman church is the real and only support of marriage. Mr. J. G. S. Cox, Editor of the Tablet, explains "Why the Religious Orders leave France"; while Mr. Mallock throws New Light on the Bacon—Shakespeare Cypher; and Sir R. Anderson discusses "How to Put an End to Professional Crime." Thus the interest is maintained, and life viewed all round.—Leonard & Scott Publishing Co., New York.

We have before us a copy of St. Margaret's Chronicle, the first issue of the pretty Magazine gotten out by the pupils of St. Margaret's College Tor. The Magazine is neat and attractive in form and reflects great credit on the school and the five young editors, a portrait of whom adorn the first page. We wish the Chronicle every success, and feel confident that it will do much to bind the pupils, old and new, in a common interest.

The Ladies' Magazine for January opens with an amusing story, "A Case of Mistaken Identity." Under the title "The Not Impossible He" the members of the Girls' Club discuss platonic friendship and many other questions of a similar nature. Edith Murray has a good article on "The Country Minister and his Wife." The illustrated article on "The Northwest Girl" is of special interest to all Canadians. The various departments are being carried on in such a way that they afford many helpful suggestions to housekeepers and all who are interested in the proper management of the home.—The Hugh C. McLean Company, Toronto.

The table of contents for The Fortnightly Review for December, though not tempting, has some items that will appeal to the tastes of not a few. The veteran Demetrius C. Boulger writes "Li Hung Chang—Statesman or Imposter?" and the verdict of those who read the article will be that the notable Chinese statesman was a juggler. Richard Davey gives "A Few More French Facts" and compares the France of today, with her State Atheism, her pornographic literature, her often generous but ill directed impulses and her incendiary journalism, to the Rome of the Satirists. As in all ages and in all countries the religious sanction for moral law has been found to be of absolute necessity, and the decline of Roman greatness began when religion and morality were separated, his contention is that if we set aside the Bible and the Christian ministry of all denominations from the people of these realms we shall take away from them that visible and authoritative standard for duty which has made the greatness of our Empire. Very different in tone from the article on the French is that of the closing chapter (and in many ways the best) of "Anticipations" by G. H. Wells. Itching ears will lend themselves readily to the new things set forth in this vision of the Faith Morals and Public Policy of the New Republic that is to be. The concluding article is an interesting and powerful short story by Maxime Gorki, undoubtedly the Kipling of Russia.—Leonard & Scott Publishing Co., New York.