

Literature.

New Books and Periodicals

A MERCHANT PRINCE. Life of Hon. Senator John Macdonald. By Rev. Hugh Johnston, D.D. Toronto: William Briggs, Wesley Building.

THE promise made in the advance notices are more than fulfilled in this book which has issued from the press this week. A neatly got up, well bound and well printed volume of over 300 pages, the mechanical part leaves nothing to be desired, and when the contents are examined the kernel is found to be as attractive as the coating. The arrangement of the material first attracts attention. A chronological order is not followed absolutely but the chief events and phases of Senator Macdonald's life are grouped and a chapter is devoted to each setting. Dr. Johnston has had access to the papers, diaries, etc. of the subject of the book and the assistance of the family, consequently the narrative is invested with accuracy and interest peculiar to itself. Of the record too high praise cannot be bestowed. Mr. Macdonald's life was an eventful one, full of interesting passages; his character was writ large in his life-work, and the biography is fraught with inspiring incidents, with stimulating aims, and with examples worthy of imitation. The senator was a Highlander of the Highlanders. Born in the city of Perth, of Stratherrick and Aberdeenshire parents, he inherited the impulsive nature of the Celt and the more practical habits of the Teuton. He was born in the 93rd Highlanders, in which regiment his father rose to be a staff-sergeant, and he received his early education in the regimental school. The regiment having taken up quarters at Halifax, young Macdonald attended Dalhousie College, and later on in the Bay Street Academy, Toronto, where he acquired a good general education and carried off the medal in classics. At the age of fifteen he left school, the regiment having returned to Britain, and he entered as junior clerk in the mercantile house of C. & J. Macdonald & Co., Gananoque. His business career, now fairly begun, soon became prosperous, and the great house he established in Toronto is a tribute to the ability which he possessed as a business man. But his talents were varied, as the biography amply shows. He was an able legislator, a man of no mean literary powers, and a platform speaker of attractive parts. His benevolence was the outstanding virtue of his character. It would be difficult to describe or to enumerate his multifarious and munificent benefactions, but a grateful city will not soon forget what he has done for her institutions and for her poor. Dr. Johnston has done his part admirably. The story of a good life is lovingly told in a style of literary elegance and warm tone and the book will not fail of its object because of the biographer's execution.

THREE GENERATIONS OF ENGLISH WOMEN. MEMOIRS AND CORRESPONDENCE OF SUSANNAH TAYLOR, SARAH AUSTIN AND LADY DUFF GORDON. By Janet Ross. A new, revised and enlarged edition. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. London: T. Fisher Unwin. \$2.00.

THIS volume is for people who love good company and good reading and are willing to take it slowly. The Taylors, of Norwich, have been a wonderful family in themselves and in their associations. Sarah Austin, the prominent figure in this volume, lived as if she held *salon* every day and every hour in the day. She made no show and had no means to be lavish with; but she knew how to achieve the two points useful for the maintenance of a *salon*, to draw the right people to it and to keep the wrong ones away, both of which she managed with exemplary skill and firmness. In this second edition considerable additions have been made to the correspondence, which is, after all, the striking feature of the book, both for the intrinsic interest of the letters and for the extraordinary number and variety of distinguished persons who appear in it. In fact, the book is one of those rare ones which take you into the library of nearly every man or woman of distinction living at the time, and give you

some sort of an introduction to them on a comfortable footing of acquaintance, if not of intimacy. Between Susannah Taylor (1770) and her granddaughter, Lady Duff Gordon, lay a long interval of nearly a century, a century of such changes and revolutions that it began in mediocrity. One needs only to go through this book to see what a large fraction of the world's history three generations are, and what an extraordinary number of great characters have been on the stage in these particular three generations. Few families have remained so long a centre of attraction to men and women of this class as the Taylors. The charm of this volume lies in the fact that it represents not one or two but three generations of continuous, brilliant intellectual life, now in England now in France, Germany or Italy, and occasionally revolving around the tent of Lady Duff Gordon in Egypt. Such a book is not intended to be systematic except as it follows a chronological order. Any page, opened at random, makes a good beginning. We advise our readers, however, to begin at the beginning, to take time for it, and to go through rejoicing to the end.

WHAT IS INSPIRATION? By John De Witt, D.D., LL.D., Litt. D. New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Company. \$1.00.

IS IT possible to adjust our theory and definition of the inspiring grace that has given us the Bible to the facts that have been ascertained by its critical and conscientious study during the last half century? This is the question which Professor De Witt discusses in his newly published book. He seeks to formulate a definition of inspiration consistent with undeniable fact, and the test by which every proposed definition must stand or fall is that the theory accord with the observed phenomena of revelation. There should be no conflict between our ideal and the actual. "Whatever it has pleased God to give us as suited to our need should be gratefully accepted. Our ideal, if different, is a delusion." The book is ably written, the product of a scholar, and will prove a useful essay on the subject. Yet the definition arrived at will fall before the author's own test. The problem is grappled with very fairly from the professor's point of view, and there can be no doubt of the sincere earnestness of the effort, but while the book can be taken as a good contribution to the literature of inspiration, the conclusions do not, in our opinion, cover the ground aimed at by the author. Even so far as they go, they will not convince quite a number of readers whose intelligence and scholarship entitle them to consideration. On the other hand, however, the book is not without its value and it ought to be extensively and carefully read.

JERUSALEM THE HOLY CITY. By Mrs. Oliphant. New York: Macmillan & Co.

Perhaps the most marvellous thing about Mrs. Oliphant's books is the frequency with which they appear. Few writers known to the history of literature can sum up the number of her books. For more than fifty years she has been before the public and still her work goes on undiminished in quantity or in quality. Her brain is many-sided, her pen ready in many fields. Fiction, biography, history, antiquities, criticism, all yield to her touch and she has won glorious laurels in them all. Her volume on Jerusalem will not add to her literary fame, but that fact does not take away from the interest or value of the work, which is admirably written. It will maintain an honoured place on the shelf and will be read long after, in the course of nature, the talented and versatile authoress has passed the bourne. The get-up of the book has all the excellencies looked for in productions which issue from the Macmillans.

COUNT CAMPELLO, and Catholic Reform in Italy. By Rev. Alexander Roberts in San Remo. Toronto: The Fleming H. Revell Co.

Few subjects are of deeper interest to the student of reforms than that with which the author of this work so ably deals. Then the personality of Count Campello and the fortunes of the Italian Catholic Reformed Church, of which he is the founder, are replete with special interest to the religious

world. The author has given a well-written book on this subject, which can be unreservedly recommended to the public.

THE firm now known as Macmillan & Co. is in its fiftieth year, its first issue being "The Philosophy of Training, by A. R. Craig, late Classical Master in the Glasgow Normal Seminary." "Published by D. and A. Macmillan, 57 Aldersgate Street" (1843). From 1844 to 1863 the headquarters of the firm were at Cambridge, with a large list of Cambridge men as authors, among whom were Haro, Kingsley, F. D. Maurice, Trenoh, Colenso, James Payn, F. W. Farrar, etc. In 1863 the headquarters of the firm were transferred to London. The present members of the London house are: Mr. Alexander Macmillan (one of the founders), Mr. George Lillie Craik (admitted 1865), Mr. Frederick Macmillan (1874), Mr. George A. Macmillan (1879), and Mr. Maurice Macmillan (1883). The founder of the firm, Mr. Daniel Macmillan died in 1857. The branch house in New York was opened in 1869; and on the death of Mr. George E. Brett, who had held its management, it became an independent firm, consisting of the members of the London house, with Mr. George Platt Brett as American partner. The New York office is now removed from Fourth Avenue to its new quarters, No. 66 Fifth Avenue.

"THE Bronte Family," by Dr. William Wright, will be published by D. Appleton & Co., with illustrations. This remarkable book contributes absolutely fresh information to the history of the Bronte family, and it presents certain romances of family history, almost as strange and thrilling as anything in the novels of the gifted sisters. The complete book will prove a work of absorbing interest, and one which will be indispensable for those who wish to understand the influences which directed the development of the Bronte sisters.

THE Church at Home and Abroad (Presbyterian Church U. S. A.) in addition to a number of special articles of great merit, contains a copious supply of news of Foreign and Home Missionary operations. The leading place is given to an article on the American Sunday, which at the present time is opportune. Rev. Alexander Robertson writes of Venice and the Bible, in his usual pleasing style; the work at Northfield, and Asheville is described and an article on the Christian Endeavour Convention at Montreal are the special features of the number.

THE HOMILETIC REVIEW for September (Funk & Wagnall Co., Toronto, etc.) is altogether excellent. The articles are fresh and able, the subjects timely and important. They are learned, varied, apt and practical. The general reader, the minister and the worker in the Church will find much to interest, instruct and elevate in its pages.

THE MISSIONARY RECORD (Funk & Wagnall Co.) is always welcome. The September number is strong in good contributions. From all over the world intelligence is furnished, problems discussed and interest aroused. To know the mission problem well is a requisite of the present day, and no better means can be recommended than publications such as the Missionary Record.

THE September Missionary Review will publish as a leader an article illustrating the power exerted by missionary physicians entitled "Medical Missions in Syria and Palestine," by that pioneer of medical missions the Rev. George E. Post, M.D., of Beirut, Syria.

THE September number of Scribner's Magazine will contain from Andrew Lang a "Letter" to Samuel Pepys, being one of four to be added to the new edition of his "Letters to Dead Authors." In the same issue will appear a study on the home life of Richardson, author of "Sir Charles Grandison," by Austin Dobson.