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THE MAGAZINES.

The English magazines for January are to hand, but their contents suffer slightly when compared with the excellent reading matter contained in the Christmas numbers.

The United Service Magazine opens with an excellent military article on the duties of partisan cavalry, in which is exemplified the utility of such a force by narratives of the exploite of the 2nd and 4th Prussian Cavalry division during 1870 and 1871 in the Franco-German war, their uses for reconnoitring purposes being favourably commented on. This paper is followed by a review on the military ;and political aspect of Europe lit the end of last year by Major "W. P. Jones, who denis with the question in nn exhaustive and rn-»'f"1

manner, and gives a category of the r.nicipnl political chants that occurred i» -nous continental mittons durbi"thalperioci Lieutenant C. II. Low publishes his . ("festing history of the Indian navy, mid is followed I .»continuation of the desciiptive narrative of the exploits of the 20th dragoons, both being well worth reading Some attractive matter is found in Military and Naval Notes, Life Risk on Active Service; mid War Ships is sufficiently interesting. All these articles are agreeably varied in character, and are backed up with the usual list of promotions and appointments.

Mrs. Oliphant takes advantage of Macmillan to introduce her "Young Musgra\c"to the lovers of literature, and, as far as can be gleaned from a perusal of the first few chapters, the story will prove attractive. Sir. Goldwin Smith publishes in the same periodical an essay on the ascent of man, and Dr. Lyon Play- fair contributes his views on Universities. Herr Augustus Pcterman writes on the Eastern Polar Basins, and a description is given of Marko Kralie ritch, the mythical hero of Servia. Mr. Thomas Hughes offers a paper on National Education, in which be combats the idea that the system of 1870 had fastened ecclesiasticism on the 'English schools, and maintains that the proofs, as far as could be ascertained, showed the contrary. A modern Greek war song, by L. Campbell, ana " The Election for the American Presidency," close a very useful number.

In Cassell's Family Faper, " Paid Knox, Pitman," has run to the ninth chapter. It precedes several light articles, one of which, " Commercials," is very amusing and well written. A family doctor contents himself with giving some capital advice in regard to healthy exercise. Another article appears on the aims and deeds of the Arctic Expedition, and " Gold and Gudt" is commenced by the author of " Bibbs," while there is rather a superabundance of poetry.

In London Soeiety, " Proud Massie," a. novel, is commenced, and followed by a description of Nice as a winter resort of London society. " Behind the äcenes " in London Society is well worthy of perusal, ind "Married by Accident" is somewhat interesting. The illustrations in this number are a decided improvement on those in the last, and some agreeable poetical pieces are given. The " Piccadilly Pap ers " deal this time with the Eastern Question.

In Temple Bar, the initial tale "Cherry Ripe," by the authoress of " Coming through the Rye," runs to the fifth chapter. A lengthy, but interesting story on the "Life of Emanuel Swedenborg" is given in this number, and will no doubt find many readers, although the description is scarcely flattering to the so-called dreamer. The most attractive feature to lovers of peaceful contests of skill will be found in Mr. II. A. Giles's description of Wei-ch'i, the Chinese game of war. This game, which requires as much patience, skill, mid attention as chess, and is far more engaging than draughts, was devised two thousand years ago by a Chinese philosopher, and will form an engaging adjunct to the domestic pastimes of European homes, as it has to the recreative diversions of the most intelligent Chinese. In that land of mysteries, the Chinese empire, a knowledge of its difficulties stamps a person as having a mind far above the ordinary average of intelligence. Its subtleties are beyond the reach of the lazy, and its triumphs too refined for gross material tastes. It is played upon a board divided into squares representing territories, and its object is to take up and surround the greatest quantity of them by men, or what are called pips, possible. Skill in it implies that astuteness and versatility so much prized by the Chinese. All those who enter upon a literary career make a point of attempting to loam it, but it is only by continual perseverance, and playing it day by day, that at last the great scheme of the game suddenly dawns upon them in all its fulness and beauty. From that day they are ardent enthusiasts of its unquestionable merits. It is truly a noble game, and in theory of movement and combination of action has the advantage of chess. This number of the periodical also contains contributions on " Ministers and Maxims," Lord Eldon, by A. C. Ewald. A short poem on modern syrens as compared with those who bothered Ulysses so much is pretty, and decidedly flattering to the ladies of the present day. It 'is written by Mr. Stanley Hope. "The Old Man's Darling" is continued, and so is Anthony Trollope's " American Senator."

Fra-ser's contains a novelty in the shape of an Ice- land story, entitled " Jon Jónsoun's Saga," written hy himself, and giving a description of Iceland cus- toms, exemplified in' his own life, home, and work since 1829. It is followed by "Field Sports and Fields in Madras," and " Considerations of Muni- cipal Government," two very readable articles ; and there is also a very entertaining paper on " Quarter Sessions under Charles 1.," relating the mode in which licensed public-houses were required to be conducted, and describing the arrangements of the markets at that time.

In Good fVords a new tale, " Davis Barugh," is com- menced by the author of Pattey, and is likely to prove of interest. The first of a series of articles, entitled "To Moscow and back," also appears, written by Canon Thorold, and illustrated. After describing his journey to Moscow, the writer, speaking of the Emperor of Russin, says his Majesty's sad thin face bears evident marks of immense care and incessant Btrain of mental power, and the constant remarks of abdication would probably be soon verified it his strong sense of duty jjermitted him to be free. Only in Russia is it ' possible to form an adequate opinion of the tremendous power wielded by the Emperor-a power none the less burdensome from the feeling of the people that he is something almost divine and at crises like the present unbearably weighted with tremendous responsibility. In Russia there is no such thing as a Government jointly respousible for the administration of affairs. Each Minister is answerable only for his own department, and the Emperor oversees and overrules all. In a dominion which stretches from the Gulf of Finland to the Aiuoor River, which has been exactly doubled in the last hundred years, mid which contains so many provinces won by the sword even within the present century, what skill and firmness must be needed to hold them together and gradually weld them into one united and organic whole. Finland, Poland, Cireassia, Tnrkestan-each is a world in itself having combustibles enottgli to set the rest of the Empire in Haines. Then there are eignty millions of people, ignorant, superstitious, impulsive",

and enthusiastic to a degree ; without a free Preis to | be the mouthpiece of all their aspirations ; without public meetings to blow off their sudden steam by fervent and heated speech. What are the conse- quences ? That everybody is in the dark as to the state of public feeling up to the moment when an explosion is imminent, and it is too late to lock up the powder ; and that the country, honeycombed by secret societies, maddened by zeal", intoxicated by the \»ssession of an enormous army and the laemory of every great-conquest, sometimes forces the iJeptre out of the sovereign's hands without knowing It is doing so, and, itself lung, plunges into an abyss how and when to emerge who shall say. Although.it sounds reasonable to say that Russia cannot fight without money, and ask who is there to find it for lier, there are still great resources within the country, and a great loan at Moscow for a religious warf aie "might be placed to-morrow. No doubt there is an annual deficit ; no doubt a great deal of the trade has fallen off of late ; no doubt there have been some serious failures ; no doubt the change of currency has been a great embarrassment to the exchequer ; rio doubt that for years past the interest on the public debt has been partially paid out of capital. But sucli drawbacks have happened before to States far more heavily burdened than Russia, and they h»ve righted them- selves again ; and the probability is that, unless she miii3 herself oy a long wars, Russia will right herself too. With her enormous though un- developed resources, her sufficiently completed railway system, the shrewd commercial instincts of her great trading communities with the astute diplo- macy of her foreign office, the grand traditions and inexhaustible ambition of her imperial family ; the value of her bonds may go down below selling value, but it is very unlikely that the mte'est will cease to be regularly paid, and Russia is about as likely to .ink into the degraded insolvency of Greece or Spain as Bank of England stock to fall below nar. This

Eaper, valuable as it is at the present time, is followed

y". Walks in London," and a most interesting trea- tise ona 'biography by Mr: Smiles of Thomas Ed-' wards, an indefatigable Scotch naturalist. There is also a biographical sketch of Colin Campbell, a Scotch minister living .between 1G67 and 1770,-a sketch on on Esquimnux dog, an article on " Forlorn females versus working women," some poetry by the writer of John Halifax, and Sunday evening readings by the editor. Mr. James Robertson treats on the Eastern

question by stating that the penal codes in regard to apostacy and proselyteism in Russia are still more severe 'than in Turkey. He quotes to the fol- lowing effect on the authority of an American missionary of long standing :-As to the benefits im- mediately following the Hattie Humaioun only u few years ago the headless bodic« /-\* apostates from the Mahonimerlim faith '»¿.nt be seen, ly>«S m ^e sti-Aot. of the gieat city, but now such apostates may bo seen walking these same streets without any apparent danger, urging the claims of Christianity, even in the very courts of the royal mosques, and n'll this wonderful security is now owing entirely to the Hattio Humaioun. In Russia' the following is'law : Whoever endeavours, by preaching or writing, to seduce members of the orthodox Church to join any other Christian community will be punished, the first time with \*«?\*?\*\* and the third time with loss of personal, social, and civil right and status, and transportation for life to Tobolsk or Tomsk. Article 207.) " No- native who is a member of the Russian Greek Church can change his or lier religion." This number also contains " Reminiscences of a Yorkshire

Naturalist." " The story of the Isles," by H. B. Tristram, LL.D., F.R.S., and concludes with a piece of sacred poetry of great beauty by Mr. G. S. Outram, and entitled "The Wheels of God," the lout ensemble worthily representing and supporting the excellent moral and intellectual standard to which Good Words has attained.

The Contemporary Review contains "Modern Atheism and its attitude towards Morality," by W. II. Mallock ; u paper on Friendly Societies, by W. W. Edwards; "Imperfect Genius," by H. G. Hewlett; "An inner view of the Vatican Council," the Buddhist doctrine of Nirvana, by T. W. R. Davids; an article comparing Weimar under Schiller and Goethe, by II. S. Wilson-, "Ethics of Belief," by W. K. Clifford ; and " Economic Fallacies," by Sir Anthony Musgrave, K.C.M.G.

Blackwood opens with "A Shadow on the Door," in six chapters. The best thing in the book, and perhaps in all the magazines is " Inside the House of Commons." The writer is evidently well acquainted with the mannerisms, proceduie, and life of Parlia- ment, and deals with it in a humourous, interesting, and decidedly mstruetive style throughout. Ile

is an enthusiastic admirer of the venerable insti- tution, and concludes his well written article after introducing a variety of anecdotes of popular and prominent members by affirming that no written description can give a just idea of the lofty tone of honour and fairness which distinguishes it. It is the grand inquest of the nation, where every grievance is sure to receive patient hearing, and if it is real and redress ia possible, the wrong will be set right. There is no tribunal, the writer says, before which he would prefer to be judged in a matter not political, which required candour, equity, and good sense in the judges. Perhaps as an Englishman he may be allowed to state that the British House 'of Commons is the first assembly of gentlemen in the world. In " A Woman's Hatred" the interest is sustained more than ever.

This is followed by a paper of an interesting character on Georges Sand ; " Weariness," and a review on the European political aspect.

AU the Year Round is excellently varied in its sub- jects this month, and contains an extra Christmas number, entitled "When the Ship comes home." "Doubleday's Children" is commenced, and " What

he cost her" continued.

The Fortnightly Review has some very good papers ; and opens with one by the Hon. Robert Lowe on the proposed Birmingham plan of public-house reform. This is followed by a review on the " Life of Charles Kingsley;" "Economic Land and English Land ownership," dealing with continental and English land schemes ; " Free Schools," by J. Chamberlain, M.P., well worth reading ; " The Geographical As- pect of the Eastern Question ; " and " Three Novels " a review on "Madcap Violet," " Thomas Wingfield,"

and " Joan."

The remainder, consisting of Belgravia, Once a Wecle, The Argosy, and Tinsley's, fill the- somewhat attractive list, with thë^average quantity of agreeable reading

matter. - -