

'Dorothy Forster'; and we may wonder at the omission of the pretty verses in 'Their Wedding Journey.'

The songs are arranged in what seems to be a sort of irregular chronological sequence—by the death dates of the authors—and so not altogether happily. There is a detailed table of contents and a final table of first lines; there are excerpts from the novels to explain the circumstances of the story in which they were supposed to be sung, and these appear as foot-notes; and in an appendix there are such other and more ample explanatory notes as were called for.

*Madame Mohl. Her Salon and her Friends. A Study of Social Life in Paris.* By Kathleen O'Meara. Boston: Roberts Brothers. 1886.

To say that this is an extremely interesting book would be faint praise. Perhaps no one has an easier task, in entertaining the reader, than the author who writes of people who spent their lives in making life socially agreeable in a brilliant sphere; and, indeed, one must be very ill-furnished with taste and discretion to make any account of the famous salons stupid. In the case of Mme. Mohl, there is a good deal to give special character to the old story of the evenings of the conversationalists. In particular, she was an English woman, and the eccentricity of the race was markedly developed in her. She was, in fact, a character, and the frankness of her expression gave full effect to her peculiarities. It was not merely in her dress, which seems to have been frightful, nor her deportment, which was often surprising, but in her qualities, that her originality was most pronounced. The secret of the attraction which gathered about her for so many years the intellectual society that was at Paris, either permanently or temporarily, is not easily discovered; and those who submitted to the charm gave the most diverse accounts of its power. It is not unlikely that from the time when she alone could chase the *ennui* from Chateaubriand's old age, to that when the venerable Thiers confessed to her that he was her too timid lover in his student days, the fascination passed through many changes; yet the testimony is strong that it never failed. She had prejudices, as was proper to her island extraction, and these led her into the most inexcusable rudenesses, as in her notorious insult to Ristori, though this was unpremeditated; but she does not seem to have had ideas, nor are any witty sayings of hers remembered. In herself she was very variously compounded, and not a few disagreeable traits entered into her personality: clearly she was mistress of the art of displeasing. In the midst of the piquant anecdotes and situations which enliven the volume, one finds that his sense of comedy is not infrequently appealed to—not ungraciously, but greatly to the damage of Mme. Mohl's dignity. In spite of all faults, she maintained her empire; and her affections, which were quick, strong, and faithful, bound to her some of the most distinguished of her contemporaries. She would not have been the Englishwoman without this strength of heart in conjunction with her force and oddities of character. Her old age is presented as singularly devoid of charm. Generally speaking, the lines of the portrait are drawn too much from her later years; but it is extraordinarily lifelike, and a valuable addition to the salon gallery.

*What We Really Know about Shakespeare.* By Mrs. Caroline Healey Dall. Boston: Roberts Bros.

THIS tasteful volume is issued as a popular handbook of the results of scholarly research into the facts of Shakspeare's life. One-half of it is occupied by an "outline biography," made up of the

documentary evidence in regard to the Shaksperes' station in life, business transactions, and family affairs, in which the only novelty one remarks is the certainty with which the author "feels" that Shakspeare was on the Continent from 1587 to 1592. The rest of the volume is filled with a bundle, rather than an arrangement, of abstracts, notes, tables, quotations, etc., which involve some repetition. The entire book contains, in one place or another, mention of about every document or contemporary reference having relation to the poet, and a large part of the references to him in the literature of the next century; and is a sort of digest of the special scholar's volumes of Halliwell-Phillips and of Ingelby's 'Centurie of Prayse,' to which Mrs. Dall makes no secret of her indebtedness. With regard to this she says in her prefatory declaration: "As my outline pretends to little originality. I have not paused to use quotation marks, even when I use the very words of better authorities." The book is really aimed at the "Baconians," and is meant to show that Shakspeare was a man of substance, position, and character, incapable of such a part as is assigned him by the adherents of Bacon. But those who are blind enough to be "Baconians" are deaf to argument, and lack indeed no deficiency except the sole one that would grace them—to be dumb. This publication is really serviceable as a book of reference, a kind of encyclopædia of the facts of Shakspeare's life, so strangely heterogeneous and disconnected.

*Rocky Mountain Botany. Manual of the Botany of the Rocky Mountain Region, from New Mexico to the British Boundary.* By John M. Coulter, Ph.D., Professor of Botany in Wabash College, and Editor of the *Botanical Gazette*. Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co. 1885.

THIS is an offset, as it were, of Gray's 'Manual,' planted in the virgin soil of the Western Plains and the Rocky Mountains. It was much wanted and is to be of great use—first, to the botanists of this newly settled but now populous region, and to the many tourists who visit the mountains in summer; next, to the schools and colleges which are springing up in all the principal places. All these scattered folk are like sheep without a botanical shepherd when they get beyond the range of Gray's 'Manual,' and so it is needful and most fitting that they should have a manual of their own. This which is now provided for them will be all the more natural and convenient for being conducted, as it is, on the lines of the familiar model, both in substance and in typography. And we note one decided improvement, in that—the flora of the region being still so largely in the state of nature, and the introduced weeds few—the author has kept the intruders out of the body of his fair pages, relegating them to foot-notes. We wonder there are so few of them; indeed, we suspect that their presence has in a degree been ignored. But the unwelcome foreigners are coming nevertheless; and by the time the second edition is called for, like the "tall buttercups" which an English poetess sings, "they will be seen, whether we will or nay." Still, as long as we can have a flora of pure native Americans, let us enjoy it.

The present work, which, so far as we can judge, seems very well done, comes naturally from Professor Coulter. He was the author, conjointly with Professor Porter, of a synopsis of the flora of Colorado, which was published ten years ago as one of the Hayden Geological Reports, has been in great demand, and has long been out of print. So that, as the preface states, "in the wonderful development of the decade since then lies the confidence that a more convenient book, covering a greater range, will be welcome to many."

*French Student and Self-Instructor, and Ready Speaker Assistant.* By Alfred Sardou. Boston: Carl Schoenhof.

ALTHOUGH as a rule the various "Self-Instructors" in the modern languages are merely catch-pennies for the ignorant, an exception must be made in favor of the work before us. In spite of the awkward title and overcharged title-page, the book is what it professes to be, a complete and condensed method for beginners as well as for advanced pupils. Of course the author has been obliged to have recourse to some method of transcription for the French sounds. Those who know how difficult it is to transmit or to acquire these even with all the help of oral instruction, may smile to see "Vous ne voulez pas de pommes de terre" represented by *Voon-voo-lay pahd pom duh tair*; but it must be admitted that M. Sardou has done his best to overcome the impossible. He is careful throughout in his representation of the unaccented *e*, and of the linkings and groupings of words. The treatment of the pure diphthongs, in such words as *bien, juin*, is not quite satisfactory. The book is in five parts, bound in three volumes, but it very much needs an index to make it really useful to an unaided learner. The grammatical portions are clear and the diagrams well arranged. The conversational parts are progressive and comprehensive, with an extensive, well-chosen vocabulary, graceful and varied constructions, useful phrases, interesting allusions to Paris, and incidental explanations of French customs.

*Our Young Folks' History of the Roman Empire.* By William Shepard. Illustrated. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1885. 8vo, pp. 478.

MR. SHEPARD has told the story of the Roman Empire in a manner well adapted to interest the young people for whom his book is designed. He has the art of entertaining without sacrificing the "dignity of history"—a quality which is worth maintaining, after all. The book is excellently printed, too, in good clear type; but we cannot praise the illustrations, very few of which have any historical merit. They are for the most part "made-up" pictures, composed with neither knowledge nor imagination. In this the book is neither worse nor better than most histories written for the young. We shall continue to protest against this style of illustration—which does not illustrate—until publishers begin to have some conception of what their duty is in the matter. The account given by Mr. Shepard is for the most part the traditionary one, and does not indicate any familiarity with the latest results of scholarship. We would not, of course, burden a book for children with the details of recondite learning; but even children have a right to be told the truth, and not to be put off with exploded fables. They ought not, for instance, to be told (p. 44) of Tiberius that "he was mean and cruel, and wicked enough to sacrifice anybody that stood in the way of his ambition. But he knew how to hide his real character under a cloak of pretended meekness and humility." Now Tiberius was not mean, but throughout his reign displayed a wise liberality. Neither was there any pretence of meekness in him—humility, perhaps, whether pretended or not we will not undertake to say. Even cruelty, as a characteristic, it is hardly fair to attribute to a man who displayed no traces of it up to the age of nearly seventy. The summing up of Tiberius's character (p. 91), and the comparison of him with Augustus, are on the whole very fair. But the statement (p. 44) that Agrippa Postumus (not *Posthumus*) was slain by his order, has not a particle of evidence in its favor. The word *principes*, spelled correctly on page 27, is three times printed *principus* on page 68. On the same page

it is incorrectly stated that the Senate wished to call Tiberius *Dominus*. On page 284 Ctesiphon is spelled Otesiphon.

*First Year of Scientific Knowledge.* By Paul Best. Pp. 344. 8vo. Paris: A. Colin & Cie.; New York: Christern. 1885.

THE well-known French ex-Minister of Public Instruction owes much of his popular reputation to a little book which he prepared on the rudiments of Natural History and what used to be called Natural Philosophy, for the use of children. This book, we are informed, is in use in all French schools of the lower grades, and many editions have been sold. An English edition has been issued, printed in France, and translated by Mme. Bert, who is a Scotchwoman. For children and beginners in general it is, of course, necessary to sketch such matters in broad outlines without regard to minor detail. This being understood, we find the book well adapted in plan and contents for its purpose. It treats of animals, plants, stones, and soils, elementary physics and chemistry, animal and, lastly, vegetable physiology. It is clearly printed and fully illustrated. It will require a certain amount of intelligence in the teacher, whose relation, in French schools, to his scholars is more intimate than in most of our public grammar schools; but there is nothing which is not clearly set forth, and nothing to which the most fastidious could take exception. The illustrations are good, but so small that some of them are rather obscure. The translation is now and then defective in giving the French rather than the real English equivalent for a French word, but not sufficiently so to constitute a serious fault. We have no work which fills the place this is intended for, and should be glad to see this one in general use.

*Elementary Algebra for Schools.* Hall and Knight. Macmillan. 1885. Pp. 308.

THE authors of this book have had an experience of twelve years in fitting pupils for the army and university examinations, and the result is that they are convinced that algebra can be most easily studied in an order different from the most logical order. There is always a strong presumption that a subject will be most readily taken in by a youthful mind in the order in which it actually had its rise. Algebra was from the beginning the science of the equation. Complicated operations in fractions and in factoring were only subsidiary to the solution of the equation; there is no reason why they should be forced upon the rebellious student at a time when he sees no reason for their existence. We have no doubt that these authors are quite right in putting the easy and interesting parts of algebra first, and that the student will make quite the most rapid progress in this way. His tender reasoning powers, which have remained wholly unexercised in arithmetic as usually taught, should not be subjected to too sudden and severe a strain when he first enters upon a real branch of mathematics.

The book contains an excellent collection of examples—3,500 in number.

#### BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

- Bert, Paul. *First Year of Scientific Knowledge.* Translated from the French by the author's wife. London: Reife Bros.  
 Felch, L. K. *Poultry Culture.* Chicago: W. H. Harrison, Jr. \$1.50.  
 Frank, H. *The Skeleton and the Rose, and Gems by the Wayside.* Brentano Bros.  
 Murray, J. E. *Essential Lessons in English Composition, Analysis, and Grammar.* Philadelphia: J. E. Potter & Co. 75 cents.  
 Morison, J. C. *Madame de Maintenon: An Étude.* Scribner & Welford. 50 cents.  
 O'Meara, Kathleen. *Madame Mohl: Her Salon and her Friends.* Boston: Roberts Bros. \$2.50.

- Robertson, C. F. *The Louisiana Purchase in its Influence upon the American System.* [Papers of the American Historical Association.] Vol. 1. No. 4.] G. P. Putnam's Sons. 50 cents.  
 Saintsbury, G. *Marlborough.* [English Worthies Series. Edited by Andrew Lang.] D. Appleton & Co. 75 cents.  
 Savage, M. J. *Evolution and Religion from the Standpoint of one who Believes in Both.* Philadelphia: G. H. Buchanan & Co. 25 cents.  
 Scott, Sir W. *The Tallsman.* Edited by Dwight Holbrook. [Classics for Children.] Boston: Ginn & Co. 60 cents.  
 Scherer, W. *A History of German Literature.* Translated from the Third German edition by Mrs. F. C. Conybeare. Edited by Max Müller. Charles Scribner's Sons. 2 vols. \$3.50.  
 Smith, W. R. *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia.* Cambridge: University Press; New York: Macmillan & Co. \$2.50.  
 Schücking, L. *Lebenserinnerungen.* 2 vols. Leipzig: S. Schottlander.  
 Sidgwick, H. *The Scope and Method of Economic Science.* Macmillan & Co. 60 cents.  
 Shedd, W. G. T. *The Doctrine of Endless Punishment.* Charles Scribner's Sons. \$1.50.  
 Stebbins, Genevieve. *Deisarte System of Dramatic Expression.* E. S. Werner. \$2.  
 Stephen, L. *Life of Henry Fawcett.* G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$3.  
 Sturge, J. H. *A Child's Version of Aesop's Fables.* Classics for Children. Boston: Ginn & Co. 40 cents.  
 Stephen, Leslie. *Dictionary of National Biography.* Vol. 7. Macmillan & Co. \$3.35.  
 Stevenson, R. L. *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.* Charles Scribner's Sons. \$1.  
 Spencer, Herbert. *Ecclesiastical Institutions; Part IV. of the Principles of Sociology.* D. Appleton & Co. \$1.25.  
 Sorel, A. *L'Europe et la Révolution française.* Paris: Plon; Boston: Schoenhof.  
 Stryker, M. W. *Christian Chorals for the Chapel and Fireside.* Biglow & Main.  
 Tate, T. *The Philosophy of Education, or the Principles and Practice of Teaching.* E. L. Kellogg & Co.  
 Tenneyson, L. *Tiresias, and Other Poems.* Harper & Bros. 25 cents.  
 Thayer, S. H. *Songs of Sleepy Hollow, and Other Poems.* G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$1.25.  
 Thayer, S. H. *Songs of Sleepy Hollow.* G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$1.25.  
 Thompson, Sir H. *Food and Feeding.* 4th ed. Frederick Warne & Co. \$1.25.  
 The Broken Shaft. *Tales in Mid-Ocean.* Edited by Henry Norman. D. Appleton & Co. 25 cents.  
 Varley, J. P. *Sylvian, a Tragedy; and Poems.* Brentano Bros. \$1.25.  
 Worthington, Sophie. *Under the Apple Trees.* Phillips & Hunt. \$1.  
 Waite, H. R. *College Songs.* Boston: Oliver Ditson & Walker, J. S. *Landlords' and Tenants' Guide for New York.* Walker & Co. 50 cents.  
 Werkmeister, Maria. *Vergebens: A Romance.* Chicago: The Franz Gindele Printing Co.  
 Zeller, Dr. E. *Outlines of the History of Greek Philosophy.* Translated. Henry Holt & Co. \$1.75.

## Fine Arts.

### AMERICAN WATER-COLOR SOCIETY.

THE Water-Color Exhibition is always one of the pleasantest picture shows of the year, and the nineteenth annual exhibition, now open at the National Academy, is no exception to the rule. The white and gold frames and the pale colors are always agreeable in general effect; and, for the same reason that it is almost impossible for any work, however good, to detach itself from the others and make a powerful effect, it is equally difficult for any work, however bad, to impose its badness upon one in the imperious fashion of some bad oil pictures. There is a common notion that water-color painting is an easier art than painting in oil, which is expressed in the old rhyme:

La peinture à l'huile  
 Est bien difficile,  
 Mais c'est beaucoup plus beau  
 Que la peinture à l'eau.

But the truth is that the facility of water-color is in its difficulty. The difficulty of attaining full tone or elaborate modelling in water-color approaches impossibility, and the result is that, when they are wise, water-color painters hardly attempt these qualities at all, but confine themselves to the rapid and facile sketching which is easily within the powers of the material. For the greater number there is safety in this limitation of aims, and therefore, while one seldom sees a very impressive work in an exhibition of water colors, one is seldom shocked by the atrocity of failure attained by bad painters in oil.

These remarks apply more particularly to pure wash drawing, or what is generally known as "legitimate water color," and less strictly to gouache or distemper. Why these latter are more or less "legitimate" modes of working it is hard to see, but they are different, and have only deadness of surface, and consequent paleness of

color, in common with pure water color. The most prominent examples of opaque water-color work in the present exhibition are certainly Mr. Chase's two large distemper paintings. One hears some murmuring against them as not "legitimate" water colors, but surely, if Mr. Chase finds the material suited to his aims, he has a perfect right to employ it, and since there is no special exhibition for works in gouache and distemper it would seem that the hanging committee have done well to stretch a point, rather than to deprive the public of a view of two works of such importance. The larger of the two, "A Summer Afternoon in Holland," is one of the very best things Mr. Chase has done, and, apart from some questionable drawing in hands and ankles, is almost entirely satisfactory. The justness of observation and sureness of eye and hand displayed in it are quite wonderful, and as a study of light (and that is undoubtedly what Mr. Chase intended it for) it would be hard to imagine it bettered. The absolute truth of relation between the broad shadow and the glowing spots of sunlight, and the dazzling play of reflections among the tea-things, are specially remarkable, and scarcely less so is the translucent green of the foliage overhead. Mr. Chase's other contribution, the "Madrid Dancing Girl," is much less interesting, having little of the swing and movement that the subject requires, and comparatively little charm of color. Is it possible that at its perspective distance the fan upon the stool (or is it a table?) should appear so large?

If these are the most important examples of opaque water color in the exhibition, Mr. Abbey's "Old Song" is certainly the most important example of transparent water color to be found there. It is Mr. Abbey's "old song"—the song we all know so well and do not tire of—full of gentle refinement and sweetness, and only better sung than ever. Mr. Abbey is evidently constantly increasing in technical mastery, and apart from its beauty as a picture this is as fine a piece of water-color painting as one could wish to see.

An importance of another sort, the importance of a very celebrated name, belongs to Detaille's large military picture—an importance only partially justified by the actual performance. The composition is confused, the color unpleasant, and the values are non-existent. There are many things in the exhibition by young Americans which are better in everything but drawing than the work of this too celebrated Frenchman. His drawing is indeed sound and good, but even that is somewhat uninteresting and mechanical, and he seems to owe his fame largely to the choice of subject which flatters French pride and love of military glory.

There are 846 numbers in the catalogue, and it is inevitable that in reviewing such a mass of work one should have many sins of omission to answer for. Abandoning any attempt at much system, we will note here and there such works as for any reason have attracted our attention.

Mr. Weir has six contributions in the exhibition, mostly flower pieces in his well-known manner. They are, as ever, very handsome in sober tone—exquisite in color, though approaching almost to black and white—and they are also, as ever, rather formless. One could desire to see flowers better drawn, but scarcely to see them better painted.

Mr. Murphy has a number of his facile and not very profound landscapes, of which perhaps the best is entitled "November." The distance in this picture contains more nature than most of his work, and is very handsome in color, but the left-hand side of the picture is decidedly artificial. To the artificial style of landscape belong also Mr. Crane's numerous contributions, with their thin trees which grow altogether too