

The manner and the spirit of these recollections are very kindly, with the touch of the gentleness and human patience, as well as of the transforming regret, of old age. One more memorial has been added to days which will long retain a place in New England history; and if any one, not born to the tradition of the privateers and the merchantmen of this coast, has a taste for the events and aspects of quiet, picturesque, provincial life, he cannot find a book more pleasantly and richly suggestive, or one that will lead his fancy more agreeably to the old days.

*Legends and Popular Tales of the Basque People.* By Mariana Monteiro. With Illustrations in Photogravure by Harold Copping. A. C. Armstrong & Son. 1887. 8vo, pp. vi, 274.

THE title of this work is very misleading, for one would suppose from it that he had before him a collection of stories such as are told by the Basque people. The truth is, that the authoress has dressed up in a very un-English garb a few local traditions, and translated a few ballads of doubtful popularity. Two examples will show the utter worthlessness of the book for the student of popular traditions. One of the most common themes in popular tales is that of a person who, overhearing the secret of a witch, learns the means of curing a princess who is at the point of death. A second person, who tries to follow the example of the first, is discovered by the witch and torn to pieces. Versions of this theme may be found in Grimm's "The Two Travellers" and Crane's "Italian Popular Tales," p. 325, and a genuine Basque version in Rev. Wentworth Webster's "Basque Legends," p. 66. Now, Mme. Monteiro has taken this theme, located it on a certain mountain in the Basque country, and turned it from a fairy tale into a tradition of the neighborhood. What the Basque story really is may be seen from Webster's collection or from Cerquand's "Légendes et Récits populaires du Pays Basque," Pt. iv, p. 48. The other case is that of the legend of Roland at Roncevaux. Mme. Monteiro might easily have given some interesting popular legends of Roland, who is still the hero of a romance in the Basque land (see Cerquand, iv, p. 14), but she has preferred to give a modern hunting adventure, to which the legend bears the smallest possible relation.

Those who wish to learn something about Basque popular literature will still be obliged to look for it in the works above mentioned, and in J. Vinson's "Le Folk-Lore du Pays Basque." The reader in search of entertainment can spend a pleasant hour over a book that will transport him to a fresh locality, and which is full of charming poetic feeling, although not always expressed in very smooth English. The four illustrations by Mr. Copping do not call for any special mention by way of praise.

*A Practical Rhetoric for Instruction in English Composition and Revision,* in Colleges and Intermediate Schools. By J. Scott Clark, A.M., Professor of Rhetoric in the College of Liberal Arts, Syracuse University. Henry Holt & Co. 1886.

THERE is no study commonly taught in schools

for which it is more difficult to provide a serviceable text-book than the much-abused one of rhetoric. The older manuals are full of disquisitions, no doubt admirable in comprehensive and searching criticism of the principles of composition, but unprofitable for the grade of pupils whom it is meant to reach. The failure is the common one which attends on all attempts to teach a practical art by words instead of by use of the tools; for the end of rhetoric is to instruct pupils how to do something—namely, to speak and write in proper form—and the older text-books sought to effect this mainly by elaborate and usually wordy expositions of past methods, instead of by direct and fruitful practice. Of late years rhetorics have been improved by the insertion in them of pages of examples to be corrected, and this is the principal gain that has been made. Prof. Clark has adopted this plan on a very extensive scale, and he has also had the sense to cut down the disquisition portion, which is largely a matter of tradition, to reasonable limits, and has certainly relieved it of its worst redundancies. His new text-book is of about the same bulk as the traditional one, but it includes the whole subject, from punctuation and capitalizing to metres, and treats it under the old heads—Clearness, Purity, Persuasion, etc. The text proper, however, consists of brief, clear, and well-worded rules, with an illustrative example under each; and each chapter is supplemented by pages of excellently chosen examples to be corrected, by the application of the preceding set of rules. The method is very rigorously adhered to. The result is, what the author puts upon the title-page as the characteristic description of his text-book, "A Practical Rhetoric," and the adjective is well deserved; for while it contains the rules, its object is to instruct by working them out, just as in arithmetic. For the basis of correct writing there can be no better preparation; and as to style, ornament, and the graces of expression, all that may well be left to the individual's growth in taste, out of which it must come spontaneously, unless it is to be artificial, pretentious, and worthless. We cordially recommend the volume to the attention of teachers.

*Nordafrika im Lichte der Kulturgeschichte.* In gemeinverständlicher Darstellung von Gustav Diercks. Munich. 1886.

SINCE the conquest of Algeria by the French, the author remarks in his preface, the interest of civilized nations in the northern coast-lands of Africa has constantly been growing, keeping pace with that enlisted in colonizing purposes by the gradual unlocking of the unknown interior of the continent, and in commercial enterprises by the opening of water communication between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean through the Suez Canal. These latter achievements have rendered the possession of the North-African territories more valuable than ever, and a knowledge of their present condition and historical development very desirable. Special works on Egypt, ancient or modern, on Carthage, Algeria, etc., of course, abound; but a connected picture of the history of all these countries, of their advances and relapses in the course of ages, has

been wanting in general literature, and to supply it is the aim of this book. It is not intended to be exhaustive, learned, or in any way "doctrinaire." It means to group the most marked events, to point out salient characteristics, to illustrate the successive unfoldings, and especially to define clearly the latest developments.

This plan has been strictly adhered to, and very creditably carried out. In a popular and pleasantly animated manner, the writer sketches the North-African races in general; the Egypt of the Pharaohs, its character and wondrous achievements; the Carthaginians and their struggles with Rome; the culture of Cyrene and Alexandria, and the growth of Christianity, under Roman sway and Jewish influences, in the Nile lands; Vandals and Byzantines in their contests for Christianized Carthage; the Arab conquest, and the sway of Islam over the whole coast, from Pelusium to Morocco; Corsairs and Turks in the Barbary States, and the European expeditions against them, down to the conquests of Algeria and Tunis by France; Egypt under Mehemet Ali and his successors, down to Tewfik; and the present rivalries of the European Powers for predominance on the African coast. The picture is exceedingly varied, but it does not lack unity, and symmetry is preserved throughout. Characters and traits apt to strike the imagination are preferably selected, but sensationalism is avoided, and so is every display of erudition. A rigid abstention in this regard, coupled with general correctness in what is popularly presented, almost disarms criticism. The "gemeinverständliche Darstellung," however, has here and there caused some vague talk about conditions of culture, and occasionally too light a touch upon grave matters—as, for instance, when the author, in the beginning of the chapter on "Christianity and Vandals," hints, in scanty words, at the theories deriving the origin of the Christian religion from the speculations of the Stoics, and "especially of Seneca, who created an abstract ideal of a perfect godlike man, whose embodiment Jesus so completely appeared to be that modern criticism might dare, on this ground, to deny his personality." This may also serve to illustrate the wide range of the book.

#### BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

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Boselli, le Comte. La maison d'Armagnac et l'unité française depuis le xve siècle. Boston: Schoenhof.  
Bourciez, E. Les Mœurs polies et la littérature de cour sous Henri II. 8vo. Boston: Schoenhof.  
Burnley, J. The Romance of Invention: Vignettes from the Annals of Industry and Science. Illustrated. Cassell & Co. \$1.50.  
Calthrop, Rev. G. Eden to Patmos: Scenes and Incidents in Bible History. Illustrated. Frederick Warne & Co. \$2.  
Chadwick, J. H. The Whole Truth: A Novel. Cassell & Co. \$1.  
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Crosby, Prof. W. O. Tables for the Determination of Common Minerals, Chiefly by their Physical Properties, with Confirmatory Chemical Tests. Boston: J. Allen Crosby.  
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