

is a sad caricaturist would not harmonize with the cult vowed to Plato's memory. Perhaps, also, a demurrer might be entered against the preference given to Gorgias before Protagoras as a gentleman. Surely nothing could be more gentlemanly than the way in which Protagoras closes the discussion, and the effect of the dialogue that bears the name of the Abderite is, on the whole, more pleasing. The 'Gorgias' is doubtless the more important work philosophically, and the meaning is not so concealed in the form as is the case with the 'Protagoras'; but to the lover of the artist Plato there is something too suggestive of the big drum in the 'Gorgias.' But the impression which a given dialogue of Plato produces, like the impression of a landscape, is very much an affair of mood and of light, and cannot communicate itself through translation.

American Literature, 1607-1885. Vol. I. The Development of American Thought. By Charles F. Richardson. G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1887.

THE reason why Mr. Richardson has put the least attractive portion of his work foremost was, presumably, because it is a law of historical narrative to begin with the beginning. It is apparently a history that he means to write, although this volume exhibits also the characteristics of a critical survey, an enlarged manual of facts, and an encyclopædia with authors' biographies and illustrative extracts. It is not a straightforward consecutive narrative, and yet it is more a history than anything else namable. The author excludes from treatment all fiction and poetry, which he reserves for subsequent examination. There remains to be considered the literature of thought as distinguished from that of imagination, and no one needs to be told that American thought was at first theological, then political, and passed slowly into its present literary and scientific stage. Mr. Richardson, who desires to treat literature in a large way, has analyzed the race inheritance of the colonists and the influencing environment of soil, institutions, and religious faith, and has traced the development, by expansion and assimilation, of the original English stock into the American nation. Consequently, as was natural, he adopts in his narrative the order of history: first, the records and diaries of the colonists; secondly, the works of the theologians; thirdly, the writings of the statesmen and orators; and then, in a somewhat mingled array, Irving, Emerson, the critics, historians, humorists, ending inevitably in the "miscellaneous."

The plan is too large for the materials. The nation has not expressed its life in literature so fully that its organization and growth can be summed up in a history of its literature. In the colonial period, where the facts are few and simple, the author sets them forth excellently, with theology as the thought-product of the age; but no one knows better than he that these sermons and treatises are no part of literature. On the other hand, when the times of Webster and Lincoln, of Irving and Emerson, are reached, where the facts are many and complex, the author's grasp of them relaxes, his reference to them is meagre, and he silently drops history for criticism. In proportion as he ceases to be a sociologist, he becomes a reviewer. His work, after he gets into it, is truly no more than an account of the principal books written on this side in all departments, with some details of the lives of their makers and some excerpts by way of sample. It is a valuable work; and in being less comprehensive than an avowed encyclopædia, and less exclusive than a history of pure literature, it fills its place as a useful larger manual.

One thing, however, is very noticeable in its pages, and confers distinction upon it. In his in-

roduction the author discusses what he calls the perspective of American literature. He deprecates the illiberal patriotism which exalts our books because they are ours, and he repeats the obvious truth that our authors must at last measure with those of other lands and of past times, no less now, when it is the English fashion to praise us, than in the early days, when it was so much in vogue to blackguard us; and he sets out to pass judgment in this catholic way on the dead and the living. What he says is admirable in truth and in temper; it is a sign of enfranchisement from colonialism, of a genuine culture spreading in the community, when conviction and purpose of this sort are found in a work of the secondary class; and the author keeps his word, but not quite heroically. He frequently remarks that the books with which he is dealing are not literature, but he includes them; and though he reprehends Mr. Stedman's good nature in allowing the names of the lower ten thousand to constitute literary annals, he is not wholly blameless in this same matter. In particular he has a weakness for burdening his pages with a theological weight, until one fancies that the fossil age in our literature never came to a happy end.

After making all allowance for one who is attempting to write five hundred octavo pages on American literature, and yet exclude all works of imagination from view, one cannot but think that, to reverse the poet's line, Mr. Richardson knew better than he builded. He, too, has exhibited the genial temperament, the large toleration, the easy-mindedness which he deplores in others; but rather, be it said, in admitting the candidates than in allowing their claims. The discriminative spirit, the sense of what the English and other nations have accomplished in letters, the honesty to admit that dead and dying names are in fact perishable, always enter into his criticism. Our literature began with Irving, and the debt due to him is justly felt to be large; but it is a new thing to find a writer compressing his voluminous works into the narrow compass of the 'Sketch-Book,' and deciding that this small and early book is what survives. And if Irving is thus looked on, what becomes of the Knickerbocker School? It is not, however, so hard to tell the truth about the wholly dead, as about those who, though buried, still live in the memory of friends. It takes more courage, humorous as it seems, to doubt that Ripley was a fine critic than to deny that Irving was a great historian; and he must be brave indeed who would pluck a Pleiad from the starry crown of Margaret Fuller. But as to Dr. Ripley, Mr. Richardson modestly suggests that "one can hardly assign to this veteran American critic a high or permanent place in our literary history," and, growing bolder, ventures to speak of "the essential hollowness of one who for so long a time seemed 'the Nestor of American criticism.'" With Margaret Fuller the writer's caution is almost comical: "Of the influence exerted by Dr. Ripley, who did not write a single book of high rank, I have just spoken. *Equally notable* . . . was that exerted by Margaret Fuller." Mr. Richardson is anxious to do justice to individuals, and at the same time not to discredit the Muses; and between the two he has as hard a task as any critic need wish to be delivered from. It is not often that he has the pleasure of pointing out some service to our literature which has been forgotten or underestimated; but once he does so, and very justly, in calling attention to Longfellow's early influence as an expository critic in making foreign literatures known here and arousing an interest in them.

This temper, this trial at writing a history of American literature which shall be truthful and set forth our achievement in just comparison with

that of other countries, this willingness to submit to a universal standard of criticism, are invaluable traits; and for their sake we would gladly have said nothing but good of a book which seemed to us so defective and unfortunate in its plan. The useful results which may follow when this method is applied frankly to our works of imagination, as it will be in the second volume, one need not forecast. In this volume the greatest reputations are not dealt with, except Irving's and Emerson's, and the latter is not shorn of its halo, though the direction of future criticism is to be discerned in the remark upon the essential narrowness of view involved in his religious revolt. The historians are admirably treated, with fulness, distinctness, and vigor; the critics, except for Lowell, would make a poor showing; and the humorists are dismissed with scant grace. It is upon the sentences, not too softly turned, which remind Frank Stockton and Mark Twain of their mortality, that attack might easiest be directed; yet the utmost of the author's contention seems to be that humor cannot dispense with literary art if it would be lasting. For the faithful investigation which is everywhere patent, and for the sound judgment and excellent proportion of the work, one must make due acknowledgment; but much more for the spirit of its criticism. What the writer has to say of our poets and novelists will be awaited with interest; but without that supplement, the present volume offers a broad, sensible, and scholarly view of American books which have won distinction in any field, and will be very helpful to the study of our literary past.

The Synthetic Philosophy of Expression, as Applied to the Arts of Reading, Oratory, and Personation. By Moses True Brown. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

THIS eccentric work is another illustration of the fact that every science has to pass through a stage of vague mysticism corresponding to alchemy and astrology. For although Mr. Brown prints the names of Darwin and Mantegazza on his cover as a sort of motto, he adds—evil omen—the name of Delsarte; and his book does not remove the peculiar impression made on the mind by this ill-assorted triad of names. The author has carefully read a number of modern scientific works, and often quotes from them so felicitously that one cannot but wonder that a mind which evidently appreciates the import of facts, should constantly indulge in wild flights of rhetorical nothingness, and weave a network of artificial and complicated distinctions and classifications that almost out-Hegel Hegel. After noting the assertion of the author's belief that the pendulum of evolution will ultimately swing back from Darwin to Swedenborg (!), the reader is quite prepared to find his physiognomic theories about on a level with the discredited bump-phrenology and the vagaries of Carus and Lavater. The author's hobby is a certain trinitarian formula, which is made to do service everywhere in defiance of common sense, psychology, and physiology. He tells us that man "manifests three natures," the vital, the mental, and the emotive—notwithstanding the fact that modern psychologists agree in using the word mental as comprehending all phenomena of the mind. Then he goes to work and divides every part of the body into "zones," one of which has a "vital," another a "mental," and the third an "emotive" significance. To take a few illustrations: "The natural language of the head is Mental, of the torso Emotive (!), of the limbs Vital." Then the torso is again divided into three zones, with corresponding differences of expression. Concerning the arm we read that "the Vital moves all parts of the arm from the centre at the shoul-

der," "the Emotive from the centre at the elbow," "the Mental from the centre at the wrist." This sort of thing is continued with amusing naïveté on every part of the body. But there is a point at which even Mr. Brown feels tempted to "draw the line." After noting that some of Descartes's pupils represented the master as teaching that "in expression, the eyebrow is Mental, the upper lid is 'Moral,' the lower lid is Vital," he, though with awe and trepidation, ventures to suggest that this may possibly be a case of blind adherence to "the universal formula." These are specimens of the quasi-scientific puerilities that make up the greater part of a book which, if condensed to a twenty-page essay and freed from all metaphysical jargon and efforts at cosmic generalization, would have been readable and suggestive.

The Functions of the Brain. By David Ferrier, M.D., LL.D., F.R.S. Second edition, rewritten and enlarged. G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1886.

THE first edition of Dr. Ferrier's work, noticed in the *Nation* of June 14, 1877, page 355, contained references to eighty-eight writers. That the second refers to two hundred and thirty-eight is evidence of the intense cerebral activity which has characterized the last decade. It may seem that this is sufficient reason for the increased bulk of the present volume; yet, while the additional illustrations are mostly welcome, and more space was undoubtedly needed for the presentation of the results of the author's own later experiments and reflections and for the discussion of controverted points—as, for example, "the visual area" and the question of "functional substitution"—much might have been compressed or even altogether omitted so as to keep the book at a convenient size. For neuro-physiologists and most members of the medical profession, much of the anatomy is needless, particularly the elementary and practically repeated accounts of the fissures and gyres of monkeys and man on pages 235-240, 470-480; on the other hand, the details are inadequate to the needs of the laity, especially with the omission of the "Diagrammatic Summary" on page 290 of the first edition, which might have been easily made acceptable. It is equally difficult to account for the omission of the unique and instructive "Crowbar case," since it would seem to accord with the author's views respecting the inhibitory function of the prefrontal lobe. An even less commendable reduction is in the index, which was admirable in the first edition, but, excepting the names of writers, extremely defective in this. A well-known American clinician is not cited at all; another's careful contribution is hastily and unfairly said (page 293) to be "characterized by numerous gross inaccuracies;" and the volume is literally disfigured by contemptuous allusions to the opinions of a German neurologist whose works are commonly held in respect. There are, indeed, too many passages which might well convince the disinterested reader that the pursuit of experimental physiology does not insure appropriate methods, careful manipulation, accurate observation, logical deduction, scrupulous recognition of adverse results, or even courteous treatment of antagonists.

Mathematical Teaching, and its Modern Methods. By Truman Henry Safford. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co. 1887.

THIS little brochure, one of the earliest of a series of monographs on education, prepared, or to be prepared, by distinguished instructors for the use of the teaching profession, should be read and pondered by every professor and teacher of mathematics in the land. The author has two qualifications for writing on the subject which

are not often combined in one person: he is a skilled applier of mathematics in that branch of science where most extensively used, and he is a practical teacher of the subject. We might add a third qualification, that of a philosophic observer, able to analyze the current defects of teaching as shown in the work of his pupils, and to see how they should be cured.

What he tells us is already well known to all who have had to train graduates of our schools and colleges in the practical use of any branch of mathematics, whether arithmetic or the calculus. All our teaching of the subject is too abstract and unpractical. The very bias toward instructing the common boy in nothing but the useful, which we see so strongly developed in school boards, defeats its own object by leading to a system that cramps more than it enlarges the mental powers. The wearisome passage through a graded series of arithmetics in which the subject is taught over and over on the same plane, changed only by the introduction of more perplexing problems as the pupil advances, is not so conducive to an understanding of numbers as half the quantity of teaching might be when combined with elementary algebra and graphical representations of the principles involved.

The only fault we find with Prof. Safford's discussion is one which it is difficult to avoid in such a work—a lack of explicitness and point in showing how mathematics should be taught. The teacher who goes through the book will see well enough what is wrong in our present system, but we fear he will be perplexed in deciding how he is to correct the wrong. He will find many good words about Grube and his method, but how is he to find out who Grube is and what his method is? Some of our teachers think that a student of solid geometry ought not to use a material figure to represent the lines and planes he is reasoning about, because he ought to have all the necessary conceptions ready-made in his own mind. These teachers will find very wholesome instruction in the importance of "objectivity" in teaching, and the necessity of object lessons; but it hardly suffices to have the author suggest the use of the stereoscope, the walls of the class-room, the magic lantern, etc. We question whether Prof. Safford does not lay too much stress on teaching the facts of geometry, as though mere facts were any more fruitful here than in any other branch of knowledge. The greatest defect in all our mathematical teaching, so far as immediate results are concerned, is that it does not give the student a clear and ready conception of the numbers and magnitudes he is working with and talking about. Such expressions as "seven per cent.," "three-thirteenths," and "two right angles," are to him little more than meaningless phrases, which he knows how to use, but which do not represent any accurate quantitative conceptions in his own mind. What we want is a system of quickening such conceptions; and we cannot but wish our author had shown more explicitly how this is to be done.

A Tramp Trip. How to See Europe on Fifty Cents a Day. By Lee Meriwether. Harper & Bros. 1887.

THE author of this very interesting and instructive volume visited Europe apparently for the purpose of investigating at first hand the condition of the laboring people of the Continent, and has made a formal report to the United States Labor Bureau. In order to mingle with the people more directly and intimately, he made a large part of the journey on foot, or by water in the steerage, and lived as inexpensively as possible. In this narrative, which is always sprightly and alive, he tells the incidents of his tour from New York to Naples, thence north through Switzer-

land to South Germany, down the Danube to Constantinople, and north again through Russia to St. Petersburg, and by the Berlin and Amsterdam route to England. The bulk of the book is made up of his experiences in Italy, the Danubian provinces, and Russia; and, seeing these countries in so unusual a way, he naturally has a large number of adventures and strange incidents to relate. The object he had in view, however—the condition of the poor, the rate of wages and scale of daily subsistence—is always before his eyes; and he seems to have done his work very well. The chapters, consequently, afford an admirable illustration of Mr. Edward Atkinson's recent statistical articles, and are profitable reading in connection with them. What the state of the peasantry of Europe is, one knows well enough in general terms, but it is always a surprise to find the special features of it; and when they are set forth with such directness and plainness as they are here, it is an invigorating surprise. One could quote hundreds of facts, were it useful, from these pages; and could select particular characterizations—the Roman shepherd, the Bulgarian peasant, the Neapolitan foreman—admirably drawn without any literary art or philanthropic feeling to color the simple facts seen by a young American observer. The bearing of the tariff and of military expenses is constantly borne in mind also, so that the work is unfairly represented by its title, which does not give the right idea of the nature of the contents. As a book of mere travel it is very practical and readable. When the writer ventures on the ordinary tourist topics of museums and antiquities he is less successful, but such passages are few, and there is comparatively little of journalistic sensationalism. The actual life of the country and its prominent phases, seized in a rapid journey (for though on foot the writer made brief stops), are the substance. The description of the steerage passage down the Danube and the chapters on Constantinople are particularly vivid.

The book is, altogether, quite out of the range of and above ordinary volumes of travel, and will give a fair, comprehensive idea of the hard labor and miserable poverty of the European masses. To do this was worth all the trials and hardships of the plucky explorer, who seems to have enjoyed his uncomfortable days with a light heart. A comparative tariff table is affixed in an appendix, and, from the frequency with which the author ridicules the idea that a tariff makes high wages, it would appear that he hopes his observations will enforce the gospel of free trade. Certainly, protectionists will get no comfort from him or his facts.

BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

Alexander, A. W. Grant as a Soldier. St. Louis: The Author.
 Channing, Ellery Grace. Dr. Channing's Note-Book. Passages from the Unpublished Manuscripts of William Ellery Channing. Selected by his Granddaughter. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$1.
 Clark, Rev. F. E. Young People's Prayer-Meetings in Theory and Practice. Funk & Wagnalls.
 Creighton, Prof. M. A History of the Papacy during the Period of the Reformation. Vols. III. and IV. The Italian Princes. 1494-1513. London: Longmans, Green & Co. \$4.
 Dawson, E. C. James Hannington, First Bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa. A History of his Life and Work. Author's Edition. A. D. F. Randolph. \$2.
 Downey, E. In One Town: A Novel. D. Appleton & Co. 25 cents.
 Field, G. W. Medico-Legal Guide for Doctors and Lawyers. Banks & Brothers.
 Gordy, Prof. J. P. Fischer's History of Modern Philosophy: Descartes and his School. Edited by Noah Porter, D.D., LL.D. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$3.50.
 Homans's Banker's Almanac and Register and Legal Directory for 1887. Homans Publishing Co. \$4.
 Hunt, Prof. T. W. Representative English and Prose Writers. A. C. Armstrong & Son.
 Lockyer, J. N. The Chemistry of the Sun. Macmillan & Co. \$4.50.
 McCosh, Dr. J. Realistic Philosophy Defended in a Philosophic Series. In 2 vols. Vol. I. Expository: vol. II. Historical and Critical. Charles Scribner's Sons.
 Mommsen, Th. The History of Rome. Translated by Prof. Wm. P. Dickson. The Provinces, from Caesar to Diocletian. 2 vols. With maps. Charles Scribner's Sons.
 Oliphant, Mrs. Lucy Crofton: A Novel. Harper's Handy Series. 25 cents.