

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE NUMBER AND NATURE OF VOWEL SOUNDS. By M. L. Rouse. Rowsel & Hutchinson, King St. East, Toronto. 1885. Price, 25 cents.

This pamphlet of 16 pages is an essay read before the Canadian Institute recently. The author has taken the four principal languages of western Europe (English, French, German and Italian) giving an analytical comparison of their vowel sounds including diphthongs. He finds 8 pairs of vowels in these tongues and they are put in tabular comparison on p. 8. German has the whole 3 pairs, while English, according to Mr Rouse, has but $6\frac{1}{2}$ pairs. How far he means his pairs to be exact pairs is not plain. By an exact pair we mean two vowels which differ in *quantity* only. If different in *quality*, they are not exact pairs. To a, the vowel in *father*, he denies the short half to make a pair, therein agreeing with or confirming the statement made by Max Mueller (*Science of Language*, volume ii, page 131, note.) He teaches that vowel in *pare* is a and that it is diphthongal owing to "the *sutl r* after it. He hears the obscure vowel *el* between the *a* proper and the *r*—a probable confounding of what has been called the "vanish" of this and other vowels. (*i* appears to vanish with an *i* (as in *it*) sound represented often in our current spelling by *y* (as in *pay*), also vanishing with the obscure vowel, or neutral escape of tones of breath, rather, differing but slightly from *u* (as in *bun*.) One pair of Mr R.'s vowels are those in *burn* and *bun* whose equivalent he finds in French *œ* and in final *e* of Ger. *liebe* with nothing to correspond in Italian. The truth is that no European tongue except English uses the sound in *burn* or *bun* as a main vowel as we do, altho it is so in certain Oriental tongues (as Afghan, Persian, Indian.) Vietor's sign for vowel in *but* is *æ*. He uses *æ* for that in *hurt* also and very properly, as we think, since they differ in quality alone. *V.* does not use *æ* in representing either Fr. or Ger., at any rate, we have not found it in looking over his examples of Fr. and Ger. The final *e* in *liebe* he gives as *æ*; the obscure vowel in Eng. *better* or *drama* as *a*: but says that

æ is very nearly equal to *a*. His *æ* has to our ear a faint *e* (as *pet*, quality (*u* in some cases and speakers.) Languages with accent have necessarily an obscure vowel. It is represented by *e* in our words *the*, *better*, etc.; by *o* in *doctor*, *editor*, etc.; by *a* in *drama* *idea*, etc.; but often without sign when occurring before the so-called liquids *l, m, n, r* as in *bottle*, *criticism*, *sceptre*, etc. It is but an escape of breath (unintended as it were) occurring in changing position of vocal apparatus from that for preceding to that for following sound. During escape, the vocal cords do not vibrate, are not tens. They are more or less tens and always vibrate with every regular vowel including that in *but* or *burn*. Vibration is essential to every vocal note. A blast from the organ belows gives no note but a mere puff unless it sets a reed in vibrational motion. In the human organ, vocal cords correspond to the reed of the organ pipe. Altho inclined to question our author's treatment of another pair of vowels, those in *dawn* and *don*, space forbids discussing it. His farther treatment of the vowels is commendable in general, showing a masterly grasp of subject. The pamphlet contains a comparison of vowel sounds with the notes of music. The vowels used as interjections, as the scale runs from below up, express the different emotions anger, surprise, wonder, sorrow, disgust, inquiry, contempt, pain—so our author claims. Mr R.'s residence on the continent of Europe and his knowledge of languages entitle him to be heard in this very important matter. We commend thoro study of the subject and pamphlet to all interested in Phonics, Comparative Orthoepy, or in Alphabetic.

ELEMENTARBUCH DES GESPROCHENEN ENGLISCHEN. Von Henry Sweet. Clarendon Press. 1885.

This book Prof. Sweet has written for Germans to acquire English Pronunciation. It is too abstruse goes too far for popular use. It is valuable to the scientific as a contribution to Orthoepy. Colloquial pronunciation is given—deliberate pronunciation appears to be a basis for purposes of Revision. Mr S. professes to represent London dialect.