

DISCUSSION.

TO THE EDITOR :

DEAR SIR,—There appears to be a rapidly spreading interest in the teaching of French and German conversation in the High Schools, if I may judge by the number of enquiries I have received, usually accompanied by requests for information regarding methods and useful manuals for the teacher.

With your permission, I should like to insert in THE MONTHLY a few words in reply to these enquiries, so that whatever information I am able to give may be found in a form easily accessible to all who care to see it.

The most of what I shall say will apply to French, and only incidentally to German, for which I had rather leave some one else to speak.

We shall begin with pronunciation, which is the very first essential, and yet is so difficult, in French especially, that, for my own part, I can as yet find no end to the learning of it. The best aids are those recently prepared by Passy and Beyer, which now, by a simple system of phonetic symbols, differing not very materially from those given in the H. S. French Grammar, enable the learner to make sure of attaining a fairly correct pronunciation ; but only upon one condition, that he really can produce the sounds denoted by each phonetic character—not so simple a matter as most teachers suppose. Every teacher should have the *Elementarbuch des Gesprochenen Französisch*, by Franz Beyer and Paul Passy, published at Göttingen, by Otto Schulze, 1893, and its companion volume, the *Ergänzungsheft* zu Beyer-Passy, by Franz Beyer (same publisher). These books are intended for Germans, but they suit us equally well, and the *Ergänzungsheft* gives the same text in ordinary type, followed by some thirty pages of explanations.

The price of the first is 2½ marks, (bound, 3 marks), and of the second 1 mark (bound 1½ marks). The French given is that of *every day*, and it contains more than one surprise for the foreigner, not only in pronunciation, but also in the use of tenses, and the like. In connection with these books there may be mentioned two others which are cheap and contain valuable information : 1. *Le Français parlé*, by Paul Passy. 3rd ed. Leipzig : Reisland. 1892. 1m. 80 (bound, 2m.). It contains selections of various sorts, with phonetic transcriptions on the opposite page ; 2. *Les Sons du Français, leur formation, leur combinaison, leur représentation*. 3rd. ed. 1892. Paris : Firmin-Didot. 1fr. 50.

A very remarkable book is *Les Parlers parisiens*, by Koschwitz. 1893. Paris : H. Welter. 4fr. 50 ; but it is almost too minute to help the beginner.

I should very much like to see every Modern Languages teacher in Canada a subscriber to the excellent little review, *Le Maître phonétique*, published monthly by M. Paul Passy. Anyone may become a *membre adhérent* of the Association phonétique des professeurs de langues vivantes by sending in his name to M. Passy. The annual fee is sixty cents, and the *Maître Phonétique* is sent free to all members. I shall be happy to send M. Passy the names of all who wish to take this most useful little journal. It contains specimens of German as well as French. For German an excellent little book is *German Pronunciation : Practice and Theory*, by W. Victor. Leipzig : Reisland. 2m.

For purposes of conversation in the schoolroom (I am speaking of works for the teacher's private use in preparing his lessons), the chief requisite is a good collection of materials,