

would hopelessly demoralize every student of pure English. Throughout the books, there are pages of impenitent grammar and a shoreless sea of incorrigible orthography and uncontrite syllabication. In the process of adaptation, from "English Readers" to "Canadian," the grossest liberties have been taken with the text, and the most ludicrous patch-work is the result. Yawning chinks here and there disclose the interior rents, and unassimilated matter is scattered about as if Stromboli had refused the uncongenial stomachful, and had incontinently belched it forth. While the Natural History lessons we have referred to are poor and threadbare, their writers, it must be confessed, are entitled to high place in the ranks of original observers. The goat, the beaver, and the ass, are credited with a wider range of intelligence than they are generally supposed to possess, and with a skill in performing feats, which must be news to those who know anything of the habits of these unassuming mammals. To read these lessons one would suppose that they had been written by Mark Twain or Artemus Ward, and were intended for the sole perusal of incredulous youth, and for the instruction of minds preternaturally guileless. Such a wicked mixture of platitude and hoaxing, it would be difficult to parallel, and for any sane child's reading, it would be a most trying educational performance.

As was the case with our criticism on the "Practical Speller," many of the defects we pointed out in our previous notice of Gage's "Canadian Readers," (see the Monthly for April 1882,) have in later editions been remedied, and some of the more flagrant inaccuracies corrected. The latest issues of the Readers, however, perpetuate blunders so gross and misleading that their presentation to the schools would be an affront to education, and an everlasting stumbling-block to the scholar. There is no call to use disparaging epithets towards the series, or to say an unkind word against its publishers. Messrs. Gage's enterprise, in the present case, has not been tempered by good judgment or discretion. The books, on almost every page, voice their own condemnation; and

we can scarcely conceive of their being seriously offered for the approval of Canadian school authorities, whose desire is for but *one new set of readers, and that the best.* Adaptations are always perilous experiments, and the publishers, in the present instance, had better have let the series remain "English." The attempt to Canadianize it has been a sorry failure, and the only successful naturalization for the books will be to begin with a new birth. Take up any of the series at random, and five minutes will satisfy the examiner that they are not the books for this hemisphere, nor can they, short of the most radical changes, be made to suit the schools of Canada. A glance at the Fifth Reader will satisfy anyone of this. Of its 384 pages you go over 350 before you reach any native matter. In all these pages, throughout lessons that deal with history, biography, science, travels, etc., there is no reference to Canada, or the circumstances or wants of its people. On the contrary, the references are often most misleading, and sometimes utterly unintelligible. Take, for instance, the statement on page 13, where, in speaking of earthquakes, it is remarked that "even in our own island," (here, Great Britain), "near Perth, a year seldom passes without a shock." On the same page, in the notes on the lesson, the pupil is told (as previously cited by us) that the Pyramids cover "as much ground as Lincoln's Inn Fields"—an explanation by no means helpful to a Canadian youth. In the same lesson, the pupil meets this exclamatory sentence, "Look at our chalk cliffs, which once extended across the Channel;" on page 128, he will learn that apples, in the olden time, are said to have cost 1s. per 100, or about 12s. of our money;" on p. 162, he meets the statement that "we have no mountains which are 5,000 feet high;" and on p. 188, he is told that, during the Middle Ages, Rome "sank to the size of a fifth-rate English town." Again, take the lesson on Temperance (pp. 258-9) where the pupil will read that "we spend 150 millions of pounds a year on alcoholic drinks," and that "we have probably about 500 million pounds invested in the trade"—a reference to the social condition of Britain,