

QUESTION DEPARTMENT.

1. Why do the "Northern Lights" always appear in the North or Northeast to us?

The aurora is an electric discharge passing from one magnetic pole to the other and following the terrestrial magnetic curves. This discharge leaves the North pole in the form of clouds of electrified matter, which float southward through the atmosphere at the height of forty miles or more from the earth. It need create no surprise that it is generally invisible in the intermediate Zone of low latitudes, since this is well accounted for, not only by the large surface over which it is spread at great heights, but because this part of its course is at right angles to the line of sight, while in higher latitudes we look at the streamers "end on" and thus have before our eyes a very great depth of luminous gases. [Ency. Brit.]

2. Explain: "The half is greater than the whole".

Hesiod makes use of this epigram when showing the very great advantages of simplicity of life. A moderate income is generally accompanied with more true enjoyment than a fortune.

3. Where could a person obtain a book on book-keeping that would fit him to take charge of the books of an extensive mercantile establishment?

Mr. J. C. P. Frazee recommends Goodwin's improved Book-keeping and Manual, twelfth edition. J. H. Goodwin, 1215 Broadway, New York City. Order from the Halifax or St. John booksellers. Price, \$3.50.

4. How would you deal with the words "cease" and "are" in Dalgleish's Introductory English Composition, page 22, Ex. 14, par. 5?

In the indirect form these words remain unchanged, because they refer to classes which still exist.

BOOK REVIEWS.

THE PERFUME HOLDER: A Persian Love Poem by Craven Langsworth Betts, New York, formerly of St. John. Saalfield & Fitch, publishers, New York. For sale by J. & A. McMillan, St. John. It has been said that whatever transports us from our present surroundings into the imaginary realms of the future, or into the shadowy regions of the past, is a help, a benefit, a gain. If this be so, then ought we warmly to welcome this dainty poem by Mr. C. L. Betts, "The Perfume Holder", with its pathetic tale of love and sorrow. Rarely do we find ourselves so quickly and so completely isolated from modern experiences, so thoroughly absorbed in the varied phases of oriental life, as when we are reading Mr. Betts' smooth musical verse. We would especially emphasize the scenes in the bazaar, its bright-hued crowd, its hot noon-tide when

"Silence with its solemn reverent grace
Softly down spreading from reposeful space
Rested an hour upon the market place."

The truly oriental heroine in her "white cymar" and her lover, the dark eyed Selim, are graceful figures, but we doubt whether the widest interpretation of eastern etiquette would have allowed her to remain so long in the brass-worker's booth. The ride across the desert in "the breeze of early evening" and the visit to the astrologer afford good instances of word-painting, and very vivid is the picture of the rich luxuriousness, and yet utter emptiness of Zenana life behind the fated "Pardah."

The poem closes with a description of ruthless oppression and bitter suffering, the hideousness of which is not softened even by the poetical language in which it is related, but the whole volume is pervaded by the sweet incense-aroma of undying love, the enjoyment of which is greatly enhanced by the quaint oriental "Perfume Holder" in which it is presented to the reader.—FRANCES E. MURRAY.

GOLDTHWAITE'S UNIVERSAL ATLAS for 1892 is exceptionally full, complete and accurate. The maps are clear, the lettering distinct and easy to read. Every country on earth is shown; and in addition some parts not on the earth, which appear in the astronomical charts and maps, and a history of astronomy. Geography, history and astronomy are the subjects treated of in the book, which is a regular encyclopedia of useful information. A very interesting feature is a compendium of history for the last thousand years, relating to the discovery, settlement and political events of North America and the States, with maps elucidating and explaining the text, presented in a novel and instructive way. A lot of colored diagrams are also given, showing in an attractive and comparative form, a wealth of information and statistics from the recent census. A good atlas, like a good dictionary, is daily needed in every home, school and office, for reference and study. The Universal Atlas is cheap enough for any one needing such a work, to be able to buy it, and we think it is good value, and a desirable work for all classes to have. The Goldthwaites, Geographical Publishers, 132 Nassau Street, New York.

ELEMENTS OF STRUCTURAL BOTANY, with special reference to the study of Canadian plants, by H. B. Spotton, M. A., F. L. S., head master of Barrie Collegiate Institute. Revised edition. Cloth. Price \$1.00. Published by W. J. Gage & Co., Toronto. This book, which is coming gradually into use in the Atlantic Provinces among teachers and students of elementary botany, is an excellent work in many ways. It introduces the student at once to the practical part of botany—the examination of plants. After a careful and minute study of these, selected as types of the more important families, the elements of Botany are taught, briefly it is true, but systematically, furnishing a good groundwork for further study. In the revised edition, chapters are given on morphology, histology, and the principal features of cryptogamous plants, ferns, mosses, fungi, etc. The manual portion, which is bound with the elements, contains about 200 pages descriptive of plants commonly found in Canada, with a key for their identification. Many of the common plants of the Atlantic Provinces are not described, which is a serious defect, but one which is most capable of being remedied in future editions.