

doing justice to it. Since it is so easy to juggle facts, it is very necessary that the historian should have the true principles as well as sound erudition. These two, so completely had by Lord Acton, are now the possession of many of his followers. They have a noble mission; may they succeed.

J. J. O'G. '04.

*English Exercises*—Imitation and Analysis, by Francis P. Donnelly, S. J., (Allyn and Bacon, Boston), apply in English Composition the basic laws of progress in any art whatever. The awkward efforts of the creeping child straining to walk like its elders are familiar; how, with renewed purpose and the help of a chair or similar support, the inborn faculty is speedily and admirably evolved. The direct simple style and the happy choice of topics in Washington Irving's Sketch Book, so winning for all readers, are depended upon by the author of this little manual to stir in the literary tot the ambition to write well. What is it that generally nips ambition of this kind? A scant phraseology and confusion of ideas. With the "Exercises" in hand the toiling apprentice quickly appropriates the simple devices by which skilled writers impart charm in endless variations of that one element—the sentence, periodic or loose.

A second drawback for young writers is lack of ideas, or better, lack of conception and understanding. It is a tendency too common to launch forth blindly in the confident expectation that "something may turn up." Analysis, however, is the secret of success. If the student neglects to decompose or separate his subject into its component parts, can he possibly do anything but wander around and away from it. But when he studies, root and branch, the matter he selects for treatment, his pen fairly drips with the surcharged secretion of thought. Here, as elsewhere throughout the book, "English Exercises" is a valuable guide. Comparatively short time and study are required to master the methods set forth: the learner will know "how to write and what to write."