

method to be pursued in the æsthetic culture of a child is to remove all that could vitiate the taste, to surround it with the best examples of what is beautiful in objects of taste, and then to leave the growing mind to appropriate to itself the rich enjoyment that is to be derived from the best books, the best pictures, the best music. We mention pictures and music because they have no small part in the juvenile literature of the day. Our illustrated books and our innumerable collection of songs plainly show the large share that the linner and the harmonist have in developing "the young idea," and it is in alliance with poetry, which has been called the highest of arts, that the draughtsman and the musician have found the widest field for the exertion of their talents in behalf of the young.

It is a general opinion that children do not care for poetry, and this opinion is certainly not without foundation. Children do not indeed care for much of the poetry that charms a fully-developed mind and a cultivated taste; they are incapable of appreciating a complicated structure of verse or a lofty subject of thought, because their experience is limited and their ideas are simple; but they love the jingle of rhyme that sets itself to music in the brain, and they delight in poetry that presents to their apprehension a clear picture of familiar beauties. While therefore a child may safely be permitted to choose for himself even books beyond his perfect comprehension, it is a cruelty and an irreparable injury to force the young mind upon a course of uncongenial reading. The absolutism of the school-room, which gives no latitude to a child's preference either of books or subjects, contributes to stability of character, and is therefore to be strenuously upheld; but restraint in the choice of reading, pursued for amusement, can not fail to trammel and fret the mind.

The various and voluminous works on English literature, while they omit no detail that can interest the curious or inform the tedious, either pass over with cursory notice or ignore altogether this most important, and of late years most extensive, branch of the subject, the literature for children. It is true that many works included by general consent and by the unanimous choice of childhood among the books earliest read and most dearly prized are standard works that elicit the admiration of every age; and it is true also that authors distinguished for graver studies have not failed to win distinction in writing for the young; but neither these books of immemorial fame nor these authors of versatile talents receive proper notice in regard to their position in juvenile literature, while books and authors wholly or chiefly devoted to children are ignored.

NEWTON.

LECTURE BY HON. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL.

HON. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL lectured in the Town Hall in West Newton last evening to a good sized audience. Mr. Otis Pettee, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, presided, and seats upon the platform were occupied by several prominent gentlemen of Newton. It had been erroneously stated in Boston newspapers that Senator Boutwell would speak upon the financial situation. His subject was "America before its Discovery by Columbus." He began by showing that in view of the fact that there was a period in which history was broken in the early ages, it could not be urged with a certainty that America was not discovered before first seen by Columbus.

There were many other things which made it very improbable that the existence of this continent was unknown to Europe, Asia and Africa. Geological research demonstrated that America was inhabited soon after the creation. He also traced a resemblance to the aborigines of this country in several races in other countries. From these and other facts which he cited he declared it not at all improbable that this country was peopled from abroad. He then proceeded to produce evidence to support these propositions: Internal evidence which America presents of its early intimate and long continued connection with Asia; evidence which the Asiatic world also presents; the necessary

and probable means by which communication was kept up between the two countries.

He claimed a connection of the aborigines of this country with the mound-builders, whose skill in the manufacture of earthenware demonstrated the existence of a culture which they do not now possess. There was evidence that the copper mines of Lake Superior were worked in the earlier days of this country, and it was also a fact that the art of welding and hardening copper was known only to the ancient Egyptian and to the people who first worked the Lake Superior mines, and modern science has yet been unable to discover the method by which it was done. Although not always safe to fix the origin of a race by its religious customs, yet it was a singular fact that there was a similarity in the religious customs of the aborigines of this country, to those of the ancient Asiatics. There is evidence in existence that gold mines in California and North Carolina were worked in a former age by a people who thoroughly understood the process. From these and other facts he drew the inference that this continent was visited before its discovery by Columbus by Asiatics, who came by the way of Siberia. He also proceeded to demonstrate that the existence of America was also known to the people of the Mediterranean States. One of his reasons for the last assertion was the existence of the knowledge of the sphericity of the earth in very early days, and another the fact that the navigators of those sections long before Columbus were equal to a voyage across the Atlantic or Pacific Ocean by their skill as sailors and the excellence of their nautical instruments, being in the habit of making voyages of greater length than one would have been to this land. He went into an ingenious argument, supported by an extensive array of facts, to show that it was not improbable that America was the Ophir, the mysterious land from which Solomon obtained his large quantities of gold. Some of his facts were the enterprising spirit of the Phœnicians, the knowledge of the compass to the Sidonians, the fact that their ships would sail one hundred and fifty miles a day and were gone two or three years, and that mines in California and Mexico were evidently worked in very early ages. He cited evidences of visits of navigators to the shores of Massachusetts in the years 991 and 1011, an inscription on Dighton Rock having been deciphered to show one of these dates. After alluding to the Northmen he traced references to a mysterious land by writers in all ages, probably meaning America, and said he did not hesitate to avow his belief in a continued but interrupted connection between Asia and America. One strong argument which he urged was the habits of the men living in colder climates to seek for the enjoyment of plunder in more temperate climes, citing the influx of the Northmen into France, Italy and Spain. His deductions from this was that America had been invaded long before Columbus by Asiatics. The lecture was an exceedingly ingenious and interesting one, and was very attentively listened to and warmly applauded at the close.

REFLECTION.

BY WILLIAM PRESTON JOHNSTON.

Reflection is the muse who turns our eyes
From the proud world and things of naught
To Fancy's wide-spread fields and arching skies,
The lucid regions of immortal thought.

She teaches us how wisely to explore
The hidden mysteries of the eternal mind:
To feed on Reason's wholesome, central core,
Stripping the husk, the outward, useless rind.

Sister of Conscience! bring in full review
Each by-gone error, every secret sin,
And teach us our poor efforts to renew
The goal of immortality to win.