

## BOOK NOTICES.

*The Book-Lover. A Guide to the Best Reading.* By JAMES BALDWIN, Ph.D. Pp. 201. Chicago : Jansen McClurg & Co. Toronto : William Briggs.

Dr. Baldwin's comprehensive studies evinced in his volume on "English Literature and Literary Criticism," are a guarantee of his qualifications for the difficult and delicate task undertaken in this book. It is not merely a catalogue of good books. It is a series of admirable essays on the choice of books; the sort of books to avoid and the best way to study even the best books; the value and use of libraries; books for scholars; books for young folk; hints for the formation of libraries; courses of reading in history, science, philosophy, religion, politics, and the practical study of English literature. Parents and young people will find these suggestions of the greatest value in selecting from the bewildering resources of literature the books that will best repay study. It is painful to see the way in which thousands waste, and worse than waste their time over books which are useless or positively pernicious, to the neglect of the priceless treasures within their reach. It reminds one of the "muck-rake" in Pilgrim's Progress, groping in the dirt while an angel holds above his head a crown of life.

Even many of our best furnished houses, where everything speaks of wealth and luxury, are often most meagrely supplied with the best of all furnishing—good books; and our Sunday-school and village libraries, which mould the taste and character of so many young people, are often burdened with the veriest trash—weak, wishy-washy, skim-milk stories, of which one might read a thousand without being one whit the better. Yet purchasers will spurn the advice of "Winnowed Lists" and wise

suggestions in order to gratify the appetite of young readers for the exciting story-books on which it delights to feed.

One of the finest features of this dainty volume is its copious citations from the best authors on the subjects discussed. To the prelude on the praise of books might be added the following tribute by Lord Bacon which the present writer endeavours to translate into a sonnet :

"If the invention of the ship was thought so noble, which carrieth riches and commodities from place to place, and consociateth the most remote regions in the participation of their fruits, how much more are letters to be magnified, which, as ships, pass through vast seas of time, and make ages so distant participate in the wisdom, illumination, and inventions, the one of the other."—BACON,—*Instauratio Scientiarum*.

As richly-freighted ships sail o'er the seas,  
Bearing the products of remotest lands,  
And link by strongest ties most distant strands,  
In spite of stormy waves and blustering breeze;  
So sail wise books across the deeps of Time,  
Freighted with precious pearls of human thought—  
Such priceless treasure riches never bought,—  
The garnered wealth of ancient lore sublime.

Many, alas, have sunk beneath the deep,  
Dark waters of oblivion; but some  
Their treasures on the Present's strand do heap:  
Across the boisterous centuries they come  
Upon the swell and dash of troubled ages,  
And bless the world with wisdom from their pages.