

Book Notices, etc.

The Nine World's; Stories from Norse Mythology.

By Mary E. Litchfield, Boston, U.S.A. Ginn & Company, 1890.

These stories of the Norse gods have been written, the author tells us, after much reading and thinking. They are founded on the researches of Anderson and Rydberg in Norse Mythology, Thorpe's translation of Sæmund's Edda, etc. In some cases the author has used the words of the ancient poems and mythologies, and has combined and added from her own imagination in order to supply connecting links and form a dramatic whole. Many readers might have wished to be enabled to distinguish more clearly between the original and the supplementary, but the book will no doubt prove attractive to children, while to many of riper years it will be interesting and helpful in conveying clearer ideas of the Scandinavian paganism which Carlyle pronounced more interesting than any other.

Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. With Notes and a Sketch of Bunyan's life. Ginn & Company, Boston, U.S.A., 1890.

This edition of the first part of Bunyan's immortal work has been carefully edited and abridged for the use of schools, and includes a sketch of Bunyan's life and brief foot notes. It forms one of Ginn & Company's excellent series of "Classics for Children," and is uniform in type and binding with the rest of the series.

The Statistical Year-Book of Canada for 1889.

Published by the Department of Agriculture
Fifth year of issue.

This volume of 575 pages contains a mass of information on almost every Canadian subject capable of being dealt with statistically which makes it very useful to all classes of citizens who wish to keep themselves informed in regard to the constitution, legislation and general progress of their country. To the journalist it is invaluable, especially as reference to the great variety of matters of which it treats is made easy not only by a copious index, but by running marginal references.

How to Remember History. A Method of Memorizing Dates, with a Summary of the most Important Events of the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries. For the use of schools and private students, by Virginia Conser Shaffer. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1890.

Opinions will vary as to the value of the first part of this work. For our own part we have not much faith in charts and similar devices as aids to memory, though it is quite possible that expedients which are of little use to one person may be very helpful to another. Be that as it may, the summary of important historical events which is given in this work, and makes up, in fact, the principal part of it, cannot fail to be very useful not only to students but to all who have occasion, as who does not, to wish to recall accurately, from time to time, the leading particulars of such events.

An Introduction to the History of the Science of Politics. By Sir Frederick Pollock, Bart., M.A. Corpus Christi Professor of Jurisprudence in the University of Oxford, and late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. London and New York: MacMillan & Company.

This essay was delivered as a course of lectures at the Royal Institution in 1882, and shortly afterwards published as a series of articles in the *Fortnightly Review*. Political Science has become, and is more and more becoming, in its ever widening aspects, one of the most difficult and profound studies of the period. By reason of its vital relation to the well-being of organized communities, it is one of the deepest interest to all intelligent citizens, especially among free, enlightened and self-governing people. The thoughtful reader may not

be able to agree with the author at all points. The author himself intimates, in fact, that were he expressing the same things now he might put them, in some cases, differently, seeing that the lectures were delivered eight years ago. Nevertheless the little volume will be welcomed by students of the subject everywhere as a valuable contribution to a science which is as yet but in its infancy.

Practical Sanitary and Economic Cooking. Adapted to Persons of Moderate and Small Means. By Mrs. Mary Hinman Abel. Published by the American Public Health Association.

The above little volume is the essay to which was unanimously awarded the first prize of \$500 offered by Mr. Henry Lamb, of Rochester, N.Y., for the best essay on the subject which constitutes its title. The above named Association commend the volume to the public as an unequalled work upon the subject. From a cursory inspection we are constrained to echo the wish of the Health Association and the giver of the prize, that it might be placed in the hands of every family in the country. We believe that it would do an immense amount of good in more ways than one.

Elocutionary Department

CULTURE OF THE SPEAKING VOICE.

BY R. LEWIS.

THE speaking voice, which embraces all that we mean by the reading voice, has its music, as full of power and beauty as the singing voice, and, in its application and influence, is beyond measure more potent for good or evil, but is more neglected than any other of our physical faculties. We have physical drill and gymnastics of every kind to develop and strengthen our physical organization; and now musical practice for the development of the singing voice is largely practised, especially when the teacher is capable of singing and parents desire musical culture. But it may be safely said that neither in our homes nor our schools is any attention given to the culture of the speaking voice. We pay heavy penalty of our neglect. The great majority of our public men have harsh and discordant voices; and many of them, especially our clergymen, whose most important duty is to speak to public audiences, are constant sufferers from throat diseases, due entirely to the abuse of their vocal organs. In the best of their time they fail in those oratorical tones of voice which, when wielded by the accomplished speaker or actor, often constitute the highest charm of oratory or dramatic exhibitions. The writer has heard Miss Cushman, Miss Glynn, the elder Vandenhoff and his son, Macready, Chas. Kean, Bellew and others reading, from two to three hours, some grand tragedy of Shakespeare, or passages from poetry, or fiction, or oratory, to audiences that listened with wrapt attention and delight during that time. One person delighting, captivating and commanding the hearing of hundreds for more than two hours. When does the finest singer, alone and without musical accompaniments, ever accomplish such triumphs? It is not supposed that mere culture would attain these triumphs for all. But it is certain that home reading and public amateur and even professional reading are now very dull and tiresome affairs; and in reunions or home gatherings we prefer the singing, because it gives a greater variety than the dull monotonous reading of an uncultured voice and a bad delivery.

The study of elocution embraces the cultivation of the speaking and reading voice, and that cultivation can be and ought to be accomplished in the school training of the young. In this direction the authority of Sir Morell Mackenzie is again invoked. Treating at once of the singing and speaking voice, he says, with reference to the former: "On the whole, I think there can be no doubt that vocal training in childhood, if properly carried out, is not only not hurtful to either voice or health, but, on the contrary, distinctly advantageous to both." But, in another passage of the work from which these quotations are taken, "The Hygiene of the Vocal Organs," he adds: "If there is any doubt as to when it is best to begin the training of the singing voice, there can be none, I

imagine, as to commencing the education of the speaking voice. It can hardly be begun too soon; in this way faults of production and articulation can be prevented, or, as it were, strangled in the cradle, which in after-life can only be got rid of with infinite trouble and vexation of spirit." And, further, for the subject cannot be too strongly urged on the attention of the only class that can use the remedy, the Public school teachers of the country, he adds: "I am persuaded that if there were a thoroughly qualified instructor in elocution (including in that term the whole art of voice production, apart from singing) in every school in the kingdom, our noble English tongue would lose its undeserved evil reputation for harshness of sound; much torture would be spared to the 'general ear,' much weariness to our auditory nerves (unnaturally strained to catch the sense drowned in a stream of half-articulate gabble), and much suffering would be saved to throats ruthlessly stretched, and cramped, 'and every way abused,' in the fierce struggle to deliver the message which the speaker has in him. It is no exaggeration to say that bad elocution is at the root of most of the throat troubles which beset public speakers, and, for that, the want of proper training is almost entirely responsible. This is in an especial degree true of clergymen, to whom a right delivery is of more importance than to any other class of speakers."

What is meant by the term, "Voice Production"? All exercises for voice production, which will be next fully explained, should begin with some of the Breath exercises explained in a previous article.

The names, uses and places of the chief voice organs should be known.

The vocal machinery consists of the *lungs*, which Dr. Hullah names the *bellows*. Their office in the work of voice production is to supply the air which constitutes the great instrument of sound; but the sound is not produced in the lungs or by the lungs. The current of air expelled from the lungs by the pressure of the abdominal muscles and the diaphragm passes through the windpipe until it reaches the larynx, when, acted upon by the tension and relaxation of the vocal cords, the sound is produced. The open cavity where the sounds take their various forms can be seen and governed so that the speaker and singer may watch and control its actions. The large space behind the mouth is called the pharynx, and, with its concave roof, is visible, and the little triangular pendent tongue called the uvula, on the right action of which purity of tone largely depends, can be and must be controlled to secure that purity. The exercises of breathing may be usefully watched and controlled for this purpose. If the learner will sit with his back to the light and hold a small mirror before his mouth he can observe the various actions of the uvula. If he inhales through the nose the uvula will descend and conceal the entrance to the windpipe. The tone will then be impure. If he inhales through the mouth the uvula will rise and leave the entrance to the pharynx open. As purity of tone depends on the position of the uvula, every effort should be made to raise that organ by the mere act of the will, which, after a little practice, can be effected. The oratorical voice owes its purity and richness of tone to this control of the uvula, and the rasping, harsh and nasal tones which so many voices produce, especially under excitement, are due to contact of the uvula with the voice passage from the outlet of the windpipe, the larynx and the cords. The back part of the mouth, the compressed and elevated root of the tongue, all combine to give real beauty and purity of sound, and all, by careful training of the youngest voices, can be directed and led into that action. The control of the tongue is as necessary for purity of tone as of the uvula. The tongue should generally lie on the floor of the mouth, the tip directed to the lower jaw, and, while the mouth should be well opened, wide enough for the thumb and sometimes for two fingers one over the other to lie between the teeth, the action of opening should be caused by the action of the lower jaw.

All the exercises which follow should be given with this attention to the organs of speech. But no exercise for the speaking voice should be sung. Song moves in varying steps, but each sound is a monotone. But speech moves incessantly in rising or descending slides, and the instant syllables and words are sounded in one unchanging tone they pass into the chant. They may vary in pitch,