

recognition, is it treason to cite Mr. Dent by way of explanation? "No people," says our author, "ever developed a national literature so long as they remained in leading strings!"

A comprehensive index completes Mr. Dent's labours on this history—a history which the teaching profession, above all, should be familiar with, and be able to extract from it something more than dates and names—something of the spirit of history and of the life-force behind it.

The mechanism of the book deserves a word of praise, as do the illustrations, particularly the portraits of Messrs. Tilley and Mackenzie.

CICERO'S CATO MAJOR DE SENECTUTE, with notes, by John Henderson, M.A., St. Catharines. Toronto: Copp, Clark & Co., 1883.

ALL who are interested in the advancement of Canadian literature owe a debt of gratitude to those publishers, like Messrs. Copp, Clark & Co., who prefer to encourage native scholarship, in any work they contemplate bringing out, to reproducing adaptations of foreign text-books. Mr. Henderson, whose talent and industry are to be commended,

has now given us a text-book peculiarly well adapted to the needs of Canadian students; and it is but simple justice to say that his edition of the *De Senectute* is calculated to do credit to Canadian scholarship and literary taste. The introduction to the work is a brief but interesting summary of the life of Cicero and of the *dramatis persona* of the dialogue. It is, perhaps, rating the great orator a little too highly to call his "the greatest name in Roman literature;" as the only unimpeachable success he has reached is in his Speeches. The dialogues have always the ring of false metal; they lack the depth of Plato, the wit of Lucian, and the versimilitude of Walter Savage Landor. Mr. Henderson's notes are full, and explain everything that ought to be explained, without descending to the level of a "crib." The vocabulary is specially deserving of praise; the philological part is clear and concise, and gives the student the benefit of the latest results in the science of language. The printing is accurate, and the general mechanism of the book, neat. In this new work of Mr. Henderson's Canadian students have a text-book which is in every respect creditable to the author and to the country.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE NEW READERS.

It is said that Sir John Lubbock once polled a school in London to ascertain the fondness for special subjects on the part of the pupils, with the following results, that 147 liked elementary science best, 38 preferred history, 31 arithmetic, 11 geography, and 2 (!) grammar. We are not told that there was any poll taken for literature, though we may safely assume, if the Readers in use in the schools were attractive, that nineteen-twentieths of the scholars would declare for that fascinating subject. The great preference for science shown in the poll would indicate that the master had a special aptitude for teaching it, and was able to illustrate the subject by no doubt thrilling experiments. It is a truism that any subject can be made attractive to the child-mind if the teacher

knows how to handle it; and the moral is, that no one should teach who is not up in his subject and has the gift of making it intelligible to his pupils. Given, the teacher of requisite training and culture, his success will then depend in no little measure upon the tools he works with. Of a school of over two hundred, that less than one per cent. should declare for grammar as the choice of the heart, augurs ill for the text-book and the machinery of teaching. In the case of English grammar, the defect no doubt lies to a great extent in the text-book; and it is safe to say that of the seven hundred works on this usually repellent subject reported to be lodged in the Educational Museum at South Kensington, not seven of them are worthy of reference in that literary treasure-house. A bad text-book and a bad teacher produce their natural fruit. How