

A New Book on Mushrooms.

The MUSHROOM, Edible and Otherwise; Its Habitat and its Time of Growth; with photographic illustrations of nearly all the common species. A guide to the study of Mushrooms, with special reference to the edible and poisonous varieties, with a view of opening up to the student of nature a wide field of useful and interesting knowledge. By M. E. Hard, M. A., Superintendent of Public Instruction, Kirkwood, Mo. (The Ohio Library Co., Columbus, Ohio).

The student of mushrooms, and indeed other of the fungi of this country, has been handicapped for the want of some authoritative work by a master hand on the subject. So much confusion has arisen in the definition and multiplication of species that some eminent authority would be welcome to put the study of these interesting forms on a more permanent scientific basis. Perhaps it is too soon to expect that. Only within the past year has there been published a systematic revision of our higher and better known plants in the seventh edition of Gray's *Manual*.

But the study of the larger fungi or mushrooms has become so interesting to an increasingly numerous body of amateur students that several more or less useful books have been published to meet the demand of those who would inquire more fully into this attractive field of botanical research. The best of these, it would seem, is the last—the book named above. There is an extraordinary amount of useful information, attractively presented in the six hundred and odd pages which compose this volume. The illustrations, all from half-tone engravings of photographs of fresh plants as they have been seen in the field by Mr. Hard, and by those careful students, Mr. C. G. Lloyd, the late Dr. W. A. Kellerman and others, are accurate productions of the mushrooms described. Illustrations are found on nearly every page of the book, and all species described, with a few exceptions, are pictured. The introduction is by the late Dr. Kellerman (an old college friend of the writer of this review), whose death took place in the forests of Guatemala early last year while following his favourite scientific pursuits. The author inscribes the book to his wife, "whose eyes quick to detect structural differences, and whose kindly and patient help, have been a constant benediction." The book is for the beginner as well as the college student. The text is singularly free from technical terms, in scholarly yet simple language, with the derivation of all scientific names of species, and with the distinctions between edible and poisonous forms very clearly stated. The page arrangements are inviting to the student. The analytical key, explanation of terms, directions for study and preservation, complete index, are direct and helpful, and without any complexity whatever.

It is a book we have much pleasure in recommending to students of one of the most absorbing pursuits of natural science.

Your paper is always of interest to me, and I give it a glad welcome because of its help and guidance in my work.

C. J. D.

Lessons in English Literature.—VI.

ELEANOR ROBINSON.

The Canterbury Tales.—Continued.

The first tale, as you know, was told by the knight. It is the story of the love of two brave knights, called Palamon and Arcite, for a lovely lady, Emelye, the sister of the Queen of Athens. It is full of adventure, and is very beautifully told, but it would need a great deal of explanation of the customs and manners of the time to make it interesting to you. All the other pilgrims, young and old, liked it; and they said it was a noble story and and worth remembering.

The host was well pleased with this good beginning, and considered a little who should tell the next tale. He began to call upon the monk; but the miller, who had drunk too much ale, broke in rudely, and shouted out that he had a story to tell, and if he might not tell it now, he would ride away. Chaucer has a word to say to his readers at this point. He says:

The miller was a churl, and he told his tale as a churl would. I am going to write it down, and you may read it if you like. But please understand that I would not choose to tell such a story as this. If I am to tell you about the Canterbury pilgrims, I must tell you truly what each one said, or else tell you falsehoods. So if you do not like some of the stories, turn over the pages and find one that you do like; for there are enough to choose from, and some of them are stories of gentleness and honour and goodness.

The miller's tale was about a carpenter, and it gave offence to the reve, who was a carpenter by trade; so he told a story about a miller. Then the cook began his tale, but Chaucer never finished writing that, and if it was no better than the two that came before it, it is no loss, for they are not at all to our taste.

No more tales were told on the first day of the pilgrimage, but the next morning, about ten o'clock, the host reminded the pilgrims that they were losing time, and called upon the man of law to go on with the story telling. This learned man complained that there was nothing left for him to tell, because Chaucer had told all the stories that ever were, if not in one of his books, then in another. However, he recalled a tale that had been told him by a merchant who was long since dead. And a beautiful story it is, though very sad. The heroine is a lady named Custance, an emperor's daughter, who suffered great dangers and hardships. Her