

For the REVIEW.]

English Literature in the Lower Grades.**AN APRIL DAY.**

All day the low-hung clouds have dropped
 Their garnered fulness down;
 All day that soft gray mist hath wrapt
 Hill, valley, grove and town.
 There has not been a sound to-day
 To break the calm of nature,
 Nor motion, I might almost say,
 Of life or living creature;
 Of waving bough, or warbling bird,
 Or cattle faintly lowing;
 I could have half believed I heard
 The leaves and blossoms growing.
 I stood to hear—I love it well,
 The rain's continuous sound,
 Small drops, but thick and fast they fell
 Down straight into the ground.
 For leafy thickness is not yet
 Earth's naked breast to screen,
 Though every dripping branch is set
 With shoots of tender green.
 Sure since I looked, at early morn,
 Those honeysuckle buds
 Have swelled to double growth; that thorn
 Hath put forth larger studs:
 That lilac's cleaving cones have burst
 The milk-white flowers revealing,
 Even now upon my senses first
 Methinks their sweets are stealing.
 The very earth, the steaming air,
 Is all with fragrance rife,
 And grace and beauty everywhere
 Are flushing into life.
 Down, down they come—those fruitful stores,
 Those earth-rejoicing drops!
 A momentary deluge pours,
 Then thins, decreases, stops;
 And ere the dimples on the stream
 Have circled out of sight,
 Lo! from the west, a parting gleam
 Breaks forth, of amber light.
 But yet behold—abrupt and loud,
 Comes down the glittering rain:
 The farewell of a passing cloud,
 The fringes of her train.

This poem is called "An April Day," but in what month of our spring would you place the scene it puts before us? What are the "fruitful stores" that the clouds have "garnered"? How does the earth show that she rejoices over them? Where is the writer, in town or country? What time of day is it? What senses does such a day as this please? The eye? the ear? any other? What do farmers call such a day? What are the warbling birds that you hear in the spring? What are the first "shoots of tender green" that you see? and the first flowers?

These verses were written a great many years ago;

and if they were printed as they were written you would find them very hard to read, for our language has changed a good deal in looks in four hundred years; so the words have been put into the spelling that we are familiar with, and some have been changed altogether. No one knows who wrote this poem. For a long time it was thought that it was the work of Geoffrey Chaucer, the first great English poet, but it is almost certain that he did not write it. Whoever the writer was, we can see that he loved nature, and had an eye quick to see the beauty around him, and ready words to tell of it. And so, though we do not know his name, we feel that he was worthy to be in the long line of English poets.

ELEANOR ROBINSON.

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The New Canadian Geography

OFFERED FOR AUTHORIZATION IN N. B. PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

This book is an unhappy combination of two American Geographies, without attempting to follow the plan of either. It is compiled from Fry's Advanced Geography and Fry's Elementary Geography in the order mentioned. That is, the introductory portion of this so-called Canadian Geography for Public Schools is taken from Fry's Advanced Book, and the latter portion from Fry's Elementary Book. The compiling gives evidence, in gradation of lessons and general arrangement throughout the whole book, of haste and indiscretion. It is made from these two books after the pattern of the "crazy quilt." It is an elaborate piece of patch work, a palmary illustration of the old proverb, "Too many cooks spoil the broth." It is a scrap-book, a picture album, a Canadian history, a statistical almanac, and a popular lecture, carefully mixed up by half a dozen writers in different provinces in order to secure local influence.

It is particularly and specially aimed at the average school trustee with a view to immediate introduction. The wants of the average pupil are sublimely overlooked.

The experience of the best practical educationists of this country, of England, of Germany, and of the United States, in the preparation of public school text books, is quietly ignored. Instead of following the plan of either one of Fry's Geographies, any pretence of plan has been ignored in attempting to combine the two in one, and in "putting the cart before the horse" by taking the introductory portion of the so-called Canadian Geography from the advanced book, and the advanced portion from the elementary work.

It is a book in which the letter press occupies less space than the pictures, and the pictures are huddled