varieties of calcite are called *Limestone*. They occur in vast beds or veins. The colors are various running from light yellow and gray to black. Limestone is one of the most important building stones in nearly every country, having been used for this purpose from the earliest times. When burned carbonic acid escapes and the common quick lime is formed which is so much used for making mortar, etc.

Marble is a compact fine grained limestone which will take a high polish. The colors are various, some times being arranged in irregula- veins and blotches. The most highly valued is the pure white, which is used for statuary. Black marble owes its color to carbonaceous matter.

Limestone owes its origin almost entirely to the accumulation and wear of shells, corals and other calcareous remains of sea animals. In many cases the form of the shells etc., can be easily seen in the stone. In fact the limestones of the world are among the best books from which the geologist reads the history of the animal life of past ages. Marble was formed from limestone by a more or less complete metamorphic action.

All the varieties of calcite may be distinguished by their brisk effervescence with acids, and by the ease with which they are scratched with a knife. The crystallized varieties possess very easy and distinct cleavage.

CRITICAL NOTES.

By Montague Chamberlain.

Every Canadian who is at all interested in the study of our birds, must find a source of gratification in the ornithological papers which appear in the columes of this journal, giving the marked evidence, as they most assuredly do, of an increased attention to this branch of Natural History, and an increased intimacy with the literature and technicalities of the subject; for, though we must blush to own it, yet candor compels us to admit that we are very far behind our American cousins in this study, and, indeed the individuals on this side the border, who are not in absolute ignorance of all but a few familiar species of our birds are extremely few. This should not be, and the Canadian Science Monthly deserves much credit for its efforts to remedy the defect.

The head of this Department in the Postal College evince much enthusiasm in his work, an d a wide knowledge of the several divisions of the science, yet it may be questioned if he has not gone the wrong way to work to gain the attention and win the following of the uninitiated, by presenting at the outset, an array of the most repllеant and uninteresting portion of the study and dry technicalities which might better have been left for the concluding lessons, it being obvious that there is little to be gained by attempting to teach the classification of the higher groups to one who knows nothing of the species.