

Principal Caven stated at the opening of Knox College the other day that the present condition of the Endowment Fund, was that out of the \$200,000 aimed at, about \$189,000 was now subscribed, of which about \$129,000 had been paid up. This, together with a special donation of \$20,000, brought the already realized amount into the neighborhood of \$150,000.

The Ninth Annual Session of Carleton County, New Brunswick Teachers' Institute was held at Woodstock, on the 16th and 17th ult. The attendance of teachers and the interest manifested in the proceedings seem to have been beyond the average. Among those who took an active part in the proceedings were Inspector Oakes, Dr. Hall, of the Nova Scotia Normal School, and Dr. M. C. Atkinson, M.P.P.

The *Daily Chronicle*, commenting on Sir Spencer Wells's address as President of the Sanitary Congress, writes:—This, he says, is an age in which we must push popular education in both sexes far beyond conventional limits, otherwise we shall lose our place in the race of life, and no longer rank as "heirs of all the Ages and foremost in the files of Time." Evils may come, especially to women, from over-pressure in education—but then, says Sir Spencer Wells—and no surgeon in Europe has a better right to dogmatise on such a subject—"if overwork sometimes leads to disease, it is more morally wholesome to work into it than lounge into it." Even over-pressure in schools he traces, *pace* Sir J. Crichton Brown, to "some of our sanitary success." The sanitarians have been the means of keeping in life the weaklings—the survivals of the least fit—and under the strain of a system adapted to the average boy and girl, they break down.

A certain number of men are calm, even-lived, sensible, and practical. Men of that class are almost certain to write plain, round hands in which every letter is distinctly legible; neither very much slanted forward, nor tilted backward, no letter very much bigger than its neighbor, nor with heads much above or tails much below the letters not so distinguished; the letters all having about the same general uprightness, and the lines true to the edges of the paper, neither tending upward nor downward. Exact, business-like people will have an exact handwriting. Fantastic minds revel in quinks and streamers, particularly for the capital letters, and this quality is not infrequent in certain business hands, as if the writers found a relief from the prosaic nature of their work in giving flourishes to certain letters. Firm, decided, downright men are apt to bear on the pen while writing, and to make their strokes hard and thick. On the contrary, people who are not sure of themselves, and are lacking in self-control, press unevenly, and with anxious-looking, scratchy hands. Ambitious people are apt to be over-worked; they are always in haste and either forget to cross their t's, or dot their i's. They are also apt to run the last few letters of every word into an illegible scrawl. Flurried, troubled, and conscience-tormented persons have a crabbed and uneven handwriting.—From "Wonders of the Alphabet," by Henry Eckford, in *St. Nicholas* for October.

The standard of education in Spain, according to a consular report just issued, is very low, not 24.50 per cent. of the population being able to read and write. But here again progress is apparent, and according to the latest statistics, published in a report by the Director-General of Public Instruction, there were no less than 23,132 public and 6,696 private primary schools. In addition to the above, each province has its secondary or collegiate school, in which a higher standard of education is prescribed. These colleges are well attended; but the teachers are on the whole wanting in training and zeal, owing probably to their inadequate salaries. There are ten universities in the peninsula, besides special institutions supported by the State for the study of agriculture, engineering, architecture, the fine arts, etc. The subjects taught in the public and primary schools are theology and moral training, reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, agriculture, geography and history, geometry, drawing, music, domestic economy, hygiene, needlework, etc. By the law of June, 1857, education was made compulsory, and an admirable scheme was elaborated for raising the very low standard of primary instruction, but none of these reforms have been properly carried out, nor can education be said to be compulsory in the full meaning of the term. Now, however, under the present Government, no effort will be spared to put into practice the provisions of the law above referred to, which, moreover, it is understood, will undergo modification and improvement during the approaching Parliamentary session. It is felt that until primary education has become more widely diffused, it would be fruitless to look for any great development of home industries, upon which must so greatly depend Spain's material progress.—*London Globe*.

Literary Reviews.

SHELDON'S WORD STUDIES. Containing graded lessons in the Orthography of words and their correct uses in sentences.

The title of this book indicates its general scope and purpose. Considerable space is wisely devoted to dictation exercises. The words seem to have been selected and arranged with care. The letter-press is excellent, and the binding substantial. The book will no doubt take a good place amongst its many competitors for the favor of teachers.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. With notes and a chapter completing the story of his life. Part I.

This little book constitutes No. 19 of the Riverside Literature Series, which is being published by Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston and New York. It is one of their new numbers, comprising over 1000 pages of the best and purest literature, that are to be added to the series during the current school year. These books are excellently adapted for the use of schools. We hope soon to see the day when something of the kind will supersede the Readers for all the higher classes in Canadian schools.

THE FIRST STEPS IN NUMBER. By G. A. Wentworth, A.M., Professor of Mathematics in Phillips Exeter Academy, and E. M. Reed, Principal of Training School, at Plymouth, N. H. (Boston: Ginn & Company).

The professed object of this book is to provide teachers with a record of the work done in Number in the primary schools of to-day. It makes no pretensions to novelty either in the subject matter, or in the manner of presentation. Its processes are based on and intended to illustrate the two simple educational laws, first that the child should be required to show what he is talking about, second, that his progress must be step by step. The book abounds, we might almost say superabounds with fresh examples. It gives suggestions for versatility of drill, and illustrates in detail the teaching of a hundred topics. The work provided is deemed sufficient and arranged for four years' work. An important principle announced by the authors is that of making numbers the chief thing, processes subordinate, and placing what has been found in experience more easily understood before that which is more difficult, without respect to its scientific relation. As fractions really present no greater difficulty than wholes, they accompany the integral numbers from the beginning. Among the many competitors for the favor and patronage of those who are in search of the best methods of leading children by easy and sure paths to the comprehension of numbers, these first steps will take a good place.

ENTERTAINMENTS IN CHEMISTRY: Easy Lessons and Dictations for Safe Experiment, by Harry W. Tyler, S.B., of the Mass. Institute of Technology. (The Interstate Publishing Company, Chicago and Boston).

In this interesting and useful little book, Professor Tyler has aimed to make clear to the minds of pupils exactly what chemistry is, and the best methods of studying it. In the performance of this task he has described a series of experiments which can be performed without the aid of costly apparatus, at home or in the schoolroom, but which demonstrate the main principles of the science just as accurately as those involving greater skill and knowledge. The book is written in a clear and lucid style, without the use of more technical terms than are absolutely required. 16mo, cloth. Price 60 cents.

EASY GERMAN STORIES: A First German Reading Book. By B. Townsend, M.A., Assistant Master at the High School, Nottingham; late scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge. (Livington's, Waterton Place, London, 1886).

In addition to a series of easy stories for translation, carefully chosen and well graded, this Reader contains some very useful introductory hints in the shape of Rules and Observations, and appends nearly forty pages of explanatory notes, and a vocabulary. As a practice book for beginners, it certainly goes far to make German both easy and interesting. It can scarcely fail to become popular both with schools and private students.

TINOTON A MICROSCOPE. By Samuel Wells, Mary Treat and Frederick LeRoy Sargent (The Interstate Publishing Company, Chicago and Boston). 16mo, cloth. Price 60 cents.

This attractive little handbook begins at the beginning, and tells the young student of the microscope exactly how to proceed in his investigations, what to do, and how to do it, and the reasons therefor. Mary Treat has long been known as an interesting writer on natural history, and the valuable series published two or three years ago in *Harper's Monthly* were from her hand. Naturally she has had great experience with the microscope, and so, too, has Mr. Wells, who gives suggestions as to outfits, preparation of objects, and methods of experiment. Mr. Sargent tells how home-made microscopes may be prepared and used. The book is well illustrated.

SCHOOL DEVICES: A Book of "Ways" and Suggestions for Teachers. By Edward R. Shaw and Webb Donnell (E. L. Kellogg & Company, New York). \$1.25. To Teachers, \$1.00, 10 cents for postage.

The object of this book is to afford practical assistance to teachers who wish to keep their work from degenerating into routine, by giving them new "ways" of teaching. The design is to make the teacher's work varied, alternative, and effective. Variety must exist in the school-room, and the authors of this volume desire to share the ideas of the teachers for pointing out methods of obtaining variety without sacrificing the great end sought—scholarship. New "ways" induce greater effort, and renewed activity. Its authors have put together a great variety of suggestions that cannot fail to be of real service.