

## RECENT BOOKS.

Mr. Joseph T. Bergen, the well-known writer of textbooks on plants has associated with him Mr. Otis W. Caldwell, and the result is a new work—*Practical Botany*. This has many admirable features. The illustrations are distinguished for their excellence and clearness. The general plan of the contents is perhaps superior to anything that has yet appeared in the arrangement of textbooks on botany. The first two chapters lead up to the detailed features which follow, and are designed to introduce the student pleasantly to his subject. They present the place of plants in nature and show them as working forces. Then follows a more detailed treatment of the organs of the plant, their structure and functions. The great groups of plants next demand the attention of the student, from the bacteria and algæ up to the flowering plants, a natural arrangement, dealing with those of the simplest structure (but these have many puzzling problems), to those of increasing complexity. All but the more recent botanical textbooks have avoided this arrangement, preferring to deal with the best known groups of plants only, the flowering plants and ferns and their allies. The arrangement adopted by the authors is a convenient one for students, especially as the treatment is concise and experimental. The remaining chapters which take up nearly a third of the book, are devoted to the broader aspects of plant life and the ties which relate them to human life and industries. These chapters are interesting to the general reader as well as to the student of botany. Comparatively few scientific terms are used, and a glossary explains these.

There are many new features of illustration in David Saville Muzzey's *American History*, and the narrative is a vivid and interesting account of chief events and causes. Instead of telling the story in the old way, the author lays stress on the factors which have been of greatest moment in the development of the United States. The early account of exploration and settlement is concise, and skilful in avoiding minor details; the story of the American revolution and the civil war is reasonably fair, and the great phases in the industrial, economic and political development of the country since the war are treated very clearly and intelligently. The book is designed for the upper grades of the high school. (Cloth; 662 pages; price, \$1.50. Ginn & Company, Boston.)

Sharp's *Elements of English Grammar* has been prepared to meet the needs of children beginning the study. Its chief merits are the abundance of exercises and the clear statement of rules and definitions. (Cloth; 249 pages; price, \$1.00. Wm. R. Jenkins Company, 861 and 863 Sixth Avenue, New York.)

Three little books on *Speaking and Writing*, designed respectively for third, fourth and fifth year classes, are well adapted to lay the foundations of a good course in English. They lay stress upon the importance of the correct use of the voice in pronunciation and enunciation. Abundance of practice is insisted on in phonetic exercises, reproduction of stories, games, dramatization, word study, sentence study and paragraphing, memorizing, letter-writing with the elements of simple composition. Thus the use of English is secured by a simple series of exercises, arousing the interest of pupils, and carrying them along

from one step to another in a perfectly natural and delightful process. The books are neatly printed, strongly bound, and are sold at the following prices: Book I, 20 cents; Book II, 23 cents; Book III, 25 cents. (The American Book Company, New York; Morang Educational Company, Toronto.)

Two books on *Elementary English*, by Lillian G. Kimball, may very well be noted here, as they follow naturally those on language work just named, and are designed for the grades of advanced schools. Book one deals in more detail with word study, letter-writing, more elaboration in composition work, and the study of stories. It takes up gradually the study of English grammar, explains the use of the dictionary and diacritical marks, with frequent study of poems and the simplest forms of narration and description. Book two provides a fuller study along both lines of language work, grammar and composition. The principles of grammar are clearly stated and this portion of the work is well fitted to give the pupils an intelligent grasp of the English language as it should be written and spoken. In composition all the forms of prose discourse are presented—narration, description, exposition and persuasion. Poetry is studied as to its form, and a chapter is devoted to word analysis. Both books give excellent choice of material for the study of English. (Book I, price, 60 cents; Book II, price 65 cents. The American Book Company, New York. The Morang Educational Company, Toronto.)

*Peeps at the Heavens* is an attractive title for an attractive book, and one feels that the author and artist have done their parts well in describing and illustrating some of the wonders of the sky. The book is written in simple language, and should help young people especially to a delightful introduction to heavenly bodies. (Board; pages, 96; price, 2s 6d. Adam and Charles Black, London.)

The *Essentials of Greek Syntax* aims to present in a clear and concise way the essential facts of grammar. Part First consists of an outline of Greek syntax as an organized whole. The various constructions are arranged in simple tabular form, and each separate grammatical principle is illustrated by an English example with its equivalent in Greek. Part Second consists of two groups of exercises for translation into Greek, each group containing four separate sets of exercises. The first group is intended for advanced classes in preparatory schools and is based on the Anabasis; the second, consisting of exercises to accompany Lysias and Plato's Apology, is designed for use with college freshman. The book is admirably adapted for use as a review book. (Cloth; pages, 165; price, \$1.25. Ginn & Company, Boston.)

Florence Holbrook's *Dramatic Reader for Lower Grades* contains many excellent little plays—well known stories turned into dialogue—for children who love action, as all children do, and who like to imagine themselves taking the places of their favourite characters. Among the stories dramatized the following may be noted: Little Red Riding Hood, Cornelia and her Jewels, Cinderella, The Pied Piper, Little Two-Eyes, The Days of the Week, King Alfred, William Tell, Time and the Seasons, with seven others. (Pages 192, price 40 cents. The American Book Company, New York; Morang Education Company, Toronto.)