

upon it, a ready clue was thereby furnished for determining their nationality. Since then, in following out the observations thus instituted, I have carefully examined and classified eleven hundred and four head-shapes; including those of two of the principal hatters in Montreal, and of one in Toronto. In testing their various differentiae, I have arranged them by correspondence in form; by common origin, as indicated by French, English, Welsh, Highland, Irish, and foreign names; and by predominant malformations in those markedly unsymmetrical. The first noticeable fact in comparing the head-forms of the Quebec population was that they were divisible into two very dissimilar types: a long ovoid, and a short, nearly cylindrical one. This is so obvious as to strike the eye at a glance. I accordingly arranged the whole into two groups, determined solely by their forms, without reference to the names; and on applying the latter as a test, the result showed that they had been very nearly classified into French and English. In all, out of nearly a hundred head-forms marked with French names, only nine were not of the short, nearly round form; and no single example of this short type occurred in one hundred and forty-seven head-forms bearing English names. A more recent examination of patterns from Montreal led to a very different result. There, where out of the first fifty English head-forms I examined, one example of the short globular type occurred; out of seventy French head-forms (classified by names,) only eleven presented the most prevalent French, head-type of Quebec. But the French head of the Montreal district though long, is not the same as the English type. It is shorter, and wider at the parietal protuberances, and with a greater comparative frontal breadth than what appears to be the Celtic sub-type of the English heads, though also including some long heads of the latter form. So far, therefore, it would seem a legitimate inference from the evidence, that the brachycephalic and nearly globular head of the Quebec district is the Franco-Norman type; while the longer French head of the Montreal district is that of Brittany, where the Celtic element predominates."

ROBERTSON.—The Galt prize Essay—An essay on Common School Education; By Miss Margaret Robertson, Sherbrooke, 1865, 26p.

We begin in this number the reprint of this very interesting essay. It is well written and is alike creditable to the Teachers' Association, the author and the generous donor of the prize.

WEBSTER.—An American Dictionary of the English Language. By Noah Webster, LL. D. Thoroughly revised, and greatly enlarged and improved, by Chauncey A. Goodrich, LL. D., etc., and Noah Porter, D. D., etc., Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam. Royal 4to. pp. lxxii., 1768.

This great standard work has again passed through another edition, revised, enlarged and embellished. Lexicographers, orthoëpists and philologists deeply versed in their respective departments of linguistic science, have been employed in removing the dust of nearly forty years from the well-earned laurels of Noah Webster and in adding fresh lustre to their imperishable glory. Not only have imperfections and blemishes disappeared before the indefatigable exertions of his revisors, but the Herculean task of remodelling the entire work has been successfully accomplished, the celebrated definitions even—wherein consists Webster's acknowledged superiority—having been rendered more terse and unimpeachable. Few persons not practically acquainted with the business of preparing works of reference for the press and with the minutiae of the Editor's duties can form an accurate idea of the immense amount of labor involved in the reconstruction of a modern quarto dictionary. Besides what may be properly designated as the natural changes continually occurring in a living tongue, the uninterrupted march of science necessitates the constant coining of strange expressions that not only

"Would make Quintilian gape and stare,"

but startle Dr. Johnson himself out of all sense of propriety. Innovation too, the bugbear of lexicographers, is also constantly at work undermining the very pillars of the language. It is to no purpose that against its incessant assaults, all the classic volumes in the vernacular are heaped up into a rampart, huge as the Great Wall of China and almost as worthless for defensive purposes. The tide of neologism cannot be stayed. As even the most fastidious dictionary can be no more than a mere reflex of spoken language, it must perforce submit to usage and note down popular eccentricities. Accordingly we have, in the work now before us, the formal though qualified recognition of such verbal *parenus* as *Skedaddle*—an expression by-the-by said to be of Swedish or Danish origin and not of classic birth as learned essays have been written to prove.—It must not however be inferred from this that all neologisms, however whimsical, have found a place in this revised edition; on the contrary, unauthorised or lawless expressions have been as far as possible excluded, yet its vocabulary includes 114,000 words, or 10,000 more than are to be found in Worcester.

Notwithstanding the general excellence of Webster's Dictionary; it is undeniable that in several important respects it was susceptible of improvement. Some of the imperfections here alluded to were inherent in the work itself, others were due to the changes brought about by time. These objectionable features the present owners of the copyright have spared no pains nor expense to remove effectually. In the department of etymology the recent investigations of philologists had left the labors of Dr. Webster—learned as they undoubtedly, were in his day—at the very threshold of the science. To supply this deficiency, the services of Dr. Mahn, a distinguished comparative Philologist of Prussia, were retained and the result of five years of unremitting labor on his part are now before the public. The general revision of the whole work was conducted under the immediate supervision of Prof. Goodrich until the death of that gentleman in 1860, when Prof. Porter succeeded him. The staff of collaborators and assistants whose services have contributed to the success of the present undertaking included men eminent in almost every department of science, art and literature. We regret that we have not space to bestow even a passing remark on their respective labors. It must suffice to say that to Prof. Dana of Yale College, was confided the task of revising the nomenclature appropriated to the divers branches of natural science, to Capt. Craighill, of West Point, that of examining critically the glossary of military terms, to Dr. Mason and Mr. Dwight the duty of scanning those expressions dear to artists and the Muses, while the Hon. J. C. Perkins was specially retained to watch over all the technicalities of law and carefully to exclude therefrom all flaws and informalities.

Thus have the definitions been re-written, the etymology enlarged, technical terms elucidated, synonyms (from the edition of 1839) re-arranged and interspersed throughout the text, the difference of pronunciation indicated in over 1300 words, secondary accents introduced, and numerous tables and pictorial illustrations added. The wood-cuts are both inserted in the body of the dictionary and classified in an appendix so as to exhibit at a glance all the different members of connected series.

An entirely new feature in this edition is the addition of *An Explanatory and Pronouncing Vocabulary of names of noted fictitious persons, places &c.*, by Mr. Wheeler—a complete work of reference in itself occupying over fifty pages and supplying a want often felt by the general reader. All the mythical personages of modern fictitious literature are here assembled and marshalled in alphabetical order.

If anything could have operated as a serious drawback against Webster's Dictionary and prevented so valuable a work obtaining the first place in popular estimation in England and British America, it has undoubtedly been its exceptional orthography, its superior excellence in other respects being almost unquestioned. This impediment has been effectually removed in the present edition by subjoining the old method of spelling in almost every instance in which Dr. Webster had departed from the established usage. No one therefore should now be without a copy of this, undoubtedly the most perfect dictionary of the English language extant; and to teachers especially we recommend it as an indispensable auxiliary.

BACKWOODSMAN.—The Crown and the Confederation. Three letters to the Hon. J. A. McDonald; By a Backwoodsman.—36 p. Lovell, Montreal, 1864.

HAMILTON.—Union of the colonies of British North America; By P. S. Hamilton, of Nova Scotia.—103 p. Lovell, Montreal, 1864.

McGEE.—Notes on Federal Government, past and present; By the Hon. T. D. McGee. Dawson, Montreal, 1864.—pp. 76.

This and the two preceding pamphlets belong to that class of literary productions which attends upon every important change in the political constitution of a free people. In the last, Mr McGee imparts to the public the result of his historical researches into the subject of confederation. From the Achaian League to the Southern Confederacy no precedent has escaped his observation. We have a review of the Italian Republics of the middle ages, the Swiss Confederation, the Dutch Republic, the Germanic Confederation, the American Federal Union and the Confederation of New-Zealand. The author draws his conclusions in a moderate and guarded tone.

BRIÉ & GRIMAUD.—*Les poètes laureats de l'Académie française. Recueil des poemes couronnés depuis 1800 avec une introduction (1671-1800) et des notices biographiques et littéraires*, vol. 2nd., 1830-1864; 18mo. Paris; 1864: 416 p. Bray.

LE ROY.—*Etude historique et critique sur l'enseignement élémentaire de la grammaire latine*, par Alphonse Le Roy, professeur à l'Université de Liège et à l'école normale des humanités; 8vo. Paris; 1864. 262 p. Daveluy.

This learned treatise first appeared in the Brussels *Revue de l'Instruction Publique*. It is eminently worthy of the attention of grammarians, and we heartily recommend it to teachers who may be in a