

NOT THE IMMORTAL Sancho himself knew how to derive from his donkey more occasions for the display of wit, wisdom, pathos and affection than Mary H. Fiske was able to extract from the commonplace circumstances of life. The moral may never be very high, and the humor may seldom be very refined in 'The Giddy Gusher Papers'; but both are there in wholesome, because natural, admixture. When she attends a poor girl's funeral with Parepa Rosa, her sentiment does not prevent her noting the action of the undertaker's screw and the minister's umbrella when their owners are astonished by the diva's tribute of song; and she rights the wrongs of her poultry-yard, in Robin Hood fashion, by stealing her neighbor's chickens to console an unlucky hen, and by decorating a despised and maltreated lame chick with dabs of bronze and gold paint. There is some touch of the grotesque in everything she does or says, but also something of the womanly and natural, notwithstanding that she had hosts of theatrical people for friends, whose mistakes and illusions in the, to them, unreal world off the boards she is never tired of laughing at. By the time her readers are old, her book will have acquired a new value as a treasury of late nineteenth century slang. (\$1.50. New York: *Dramatic Mirror*.)

Minor Notices

FOR MORE than half-a-century Mr. J. Stanley Grimes, it appears, has been crying aloud to deaf scientific ears. In 1838 he published a work on the functions of the brain, which, it seems, was 'received with the greatest disfavor by all parties,' though, we are assured, it simply anticipated some of the ideas of Darwin. Other publications followed, with not much better fate. In his latest work, which appears under the rather diffusively explanatory title of 'Geonomy: Creation of the Continents by Ocean Currents; Kosmo-nomia; the Growth of Worlds, and the Cause of Gravitation,'—Mr. Grimes undertakes to settle, in less than a hundred and fifty pages, problems which have long perplexed the profoundest intellects. Continents, we learn, have been created by 'elliptic currents' in the several oceans; worlds are formed and gravitation is caused by the 'condensation of ether'; and that is all there is in these mysteries. Unfortunately the self-absorbed and unappreciative 'scienticians,' as Mr. Grimes chooses to style them, have in general simply ignored his books and their theories. He has found, however, a staunch adherent in the Rev. W. R. Covert, who, in the introduction to the present work, uncompromisingly ranks the author with Newton and Darwin. Mr. Grimes ingenuously avows his concurrence in Mr. Covert's opinion. Being thus assured of at least two deeply interested and thorough-going admirers, he may cheerfully contemn the apathy of the 'scienticians.' (50 cts. J. B. Lippincott Co.)

THE MANY who are interested in the project of a common language for commercial and scientific intercourse among civilized nations should be grateful to Mr. Henry Phillips for his timely version of the excellent work of Dr. Samenhof, of Warsaw, on this subject. The 'Attempt Towards an International Language, by Dr. Esperanto' (the author's pseudonym), is undoubtedly, as Mr. Phillips remarks in his preface, 'the most simple, most natural, and most easy of acquirement of all the schemes yet presented.' There seems no reason why two intelligent persons, thrown together by the chances of travel, each ignorant of the other's language, but each provided with a translation of Dr. Esperanto's pamphlet in his own tongue, should not in a few minutes be able to carry on a conversation on common topics to the full extent of the vocabulary comprised in the pamphlet. Simple and easy as it is, however, the method is evidently capable of being still further simplified. This, apparently, is the opinion of the experienced translator himself. Some letters of its alphabet are unnecessary, and several of the inflections might be dispensed with. An international language should be nearly, or quite, all vocabulary, with as few grammatical intricacies as possible. (25 cts. Henry Holt & Co.)

THE CHIEF MARKS of 'The World's Best Books, a Key to the Treasures of Literature,' by Frank Parsons, F. E. Crawford, and H. T. Richardson, are its conscientious purpose, honesty of expression, care in construction, and the fulness of its lists and characterizations of books and authors. Many more pretentious treatises will be found less useful, for there is undoubtedly a place, though not the highest, for handbooks on reading which proffer tabulated catalogues of books and authors, with original and selected statements concerning the aims and success of the same. Readers to whom Mr. Lang's enjoyable chapters in his volume on 'The Library' would seem mere dilettante uselessness, may get solid and enduring help from that old standby, Pycroft's 'Course of Reading.' We could comment, unfavorably or amazedly, on some of the inclusions, exclusions, and critical expressions in the present volume, but will content ourselves, after careful examination, with the remark that, on the whole, it is not only the latest but the best of readers' handbooks of the selected-list variety. (\$1.25. Little, Brown & Co.)

MR. LYMAN C. DRAPER of the Wisconsin Historical Society is a collector of autographs who has mastered the mysteries of both the art and the philosophy of hunting sign-manuals. He is a veteran of the chase who knows the tricks of the trade, the forgers and their black arts, the honest men who collect, and the exact graded value of what is collected. Under such literary and learned treatment as our author gives it, the collecting of autographs is lifted up from a mere amusement mania, or even humble avocation, and becomes a most respectable assistant to the historian, and an ally to truth. Mr. Lyman entitles his study 'An Essay on the Autographic Collections of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence and of the Constitution.' In published form, bearing the imprint of Burns & Son, No. 744 Broadway, New York, it is a handsome, wide-margined book with a portrait of the author, and a general index. We have spent a delightful evening in learning who are the collectors and where are the collections of sets of autographs of the makers of our Government, with entertaining information of every sort not only relating to the gentle art, but throwing abundance of side-lights upon American history. In one sense, it is dangerous to read such a book, for it is sure to make one a collector, and to one poor in cash or patience, this is a calamity.