

PROFESSOR SEELEY'S "Expansion of England" (Roberts) deserves a more extended notice than we are able to give it at this crowded season of the year. It is one of those books which even the best informed cannot read without finding themselves elevated, as it were, to a level from which the historical events which are already familiar to them are seen in a new relation and acquire a new meaning. Every student of American history will find new light thrown upon our own colonial history by the lectures on "England in the Eighteenth Century" and "The Old Colonial System;" and the relation of the British empire—"Greater Britain," as he constantly calls it—to European history, is also treated in a most lucid and instructive manner. This is done particularly in the third lecture, "The Empire," in which the leading idea is that Greater Britain was only one of the several expanded nationalities. There was a "Greater France," "Greater Spain," etc., as well, and the seven great wars which successively fill the space from the revolution of 1688 to the Congress of Vienna, were in reality largely resulting from the collisions of these empires rather than the questions of merely national interest which were most prominent upon the surface. Economical conclusions of great value are deduced from the observation, self-evident enough when our attention is called to it, but novel to most of us, that the slowness of the colonization in the sixteenth century resulted from the fact that there was really no superfluous population at that time which needed an outlet. The so-called "Colonial system" was the only policy by which colonization was possible under these circumstances. The book consists of two courses of eight lectures each; the first directly upon the expansion of England; the second upon India—probably the best and most discursive on the India question for general students of history.

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CHARLES C. PERKINS'S "Historical Handbook of Italian Sculpture" (Chas. Scribner's Sons) is a substantial and well printed volume of 432 pages, with thirty illustrations and a good index. The scholarly author gives, by way of introduction, a condensed but impressive view of the condition of sculpture throughout the peninsula anterior to 1240, and then carries on his narrative through the whole period of the Renaissance to 1600. The famous seats of art, Florence, Naples, Venice, Rome, Padua, Modena, Mantua, and other cities, come under review, with the great masters of sculpture and their prominent scholars, and whatever in their works is most worthy of study and admiration. The treatise, which is not in any wise to be confounded with ordinary handbooks of travel, is a serious and careful account of a wonderful era of artistic production,

composed in a fine literary spirit, and embodying a large amount of well arranged and important matter for the student at home or abroad. Of course one will not expect to find here the exhaustive treatment of special topics that makes J. Addington Symonds' works on Italy so attractive, nor the elaborate criticisms of masterpieces that characterize Prof. Lübke's "History of Modern Sculpture," but for its purpose the book is adequately done, and will meet a want that is widely felt for a convenient, reliable and well digested record on this subject. It will greatly assist the traveller in recognizing and appreciating the best art of Italy, and to those who have no such opportunity it will be found useful for reference and study.

THE plan of Mr. C. G. Wheeler's "Course of Empire" (Osgood) is that of a strictly chronological arrangement, with divisions exclusively by centuries. Beginning with the year 500 B.C., the work is divided into as many divisions as there are centuries, each with a map, a table of dates and of leading personages, a brief but clear and accurate sketch of the dynastic history of the century, and an abundant selection of illustrative extracts from a wide range of authors. The work is exceedingly well done, and the book cannot fail to be very useful. We think it a mistake not to give at least an outline of the events prior to B.C. 500. There is, to be sure, a table of dates, etc., occupying one page, but the student needs a guide to the history of the great empires which preceded this epoch. A few genealogical tables would be of assistance at various periods. For displaying the "course of empire," there could be hardly anything better than this book; but the numerous well-chosen selections make it equally well fitted to teach the history of ideas and of civilization.

"HEROES of Literature" (E. & J. B. Young & Co.) is the title of a history of the principal English poets from the age of Elizabeth, by John Dennis. It is addressed to young readers, but its style is not happily adapted to their taste. It is not light and bright enough. The writer is a man of talents, not brilliant but respectable; an adherent of the Church of England, and versed in the poetical literature of his country. His tastes have been formed by study, they are expressed without pedantry, and also without the distinction of marked individuality.