

Specimens of Persian Handwriting. Illustrated with facsimiles from originals in the South Kensington Museum. By E. H. Palmer, M.A., late Lord Almoner's Professor of Arabic, Cambridge, etc. To which are added illustrations of the Nāgarī character. By Frederic Pincott, M.R.A.S. London: W. H. Allen & Co. 1886. Pp. vi, 52.

THE first part of this volume was prepared by the unfortunate Orientalist who perished so miserably in Egypt, and who is now commemorated in St. Paul's Cathedral. The remainder of it has been executed, and the whole prefaced and edited, by a rising scholar whose labors in connection with Hindi and Sanskrit there has more than once been occasion to commend in the columns of this journal. Its directions for writing the Persian and Nāgarī characters are as detailed and explicit as could be desired; and it cannot but prove eminently serviceable to all whose use of it is demanded by their vocation. Previously to the reform of the Indian civil service, introduced just after the abolition of the East India Company, it had, for some two generations, been a rare thing to find Indian magistrates or judges that had not forgotten the knowledge they acquired at Haileybury of reading and writing the languages of the Hindus and Mohammedans, whose interests depended so largely on the possession, by those who administered the law to them, of capacities which they had been too indolent or too unscrupulous to maintain. All this is now, under the improved order of things, essentially altered. It is mainly for the benefit of candidates for the Indian civil and military services, to whom may be added missionaries employed in the northern half of Hindustan, that the work of Prof. Palmer and Mr. Pincott is designed; and better guidance than that which they furnish could not easily be devised.

The Story of Germany. [The Story of the Nations.] By Sabine Baring-Gould, M.A., with the collaboration of Arthur Gilman, M.A. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1886.

It is no easy task to write a consecutive history of a country whose annals are so devoid of unity

as Germany, and we will not say that all the difficulties of the task have been overcome in the volume before us. But certainly it would be hard to find a more entertaining book, and one better calculated to give the young reader an interest in history. The picturesque and personal elements in the narrative are just what young readers want; and—to take illustrations at random—the personality of Prince Eugene (p. 268) and the circumstances of the seizure of Strassburg (p. 261) will, we warrant, never be forgotten by them. We think the author has erred in making his chapters too short; and, as we have already intimated, he has not always made the thread of connection sufficiently plain. The War of the Spanish Succession is introduced (p. 270) by a mention of the death of Charles II., but we are not told who this monarch was and on what ground the several claims were preferred. Neither is it correct to say that Joseph Ferdinand advanced a claim, he being already dead. The Hohenzollern genealogy (p. 265) will, we think, be found rather confusing by young persons. The illustrations deserve all praise, being, almost without exception, the representation of real objects, often the facsimiles of old pictures, all well calculated to convey useful information, and, what is better, to impress the historical imagination. There are a number of excellent portraits—Frederick III., from his tomb; John Frederick of Saxony, by Cranach; Joseph I., enveloped in wig and cloak; a sketch of peasants by Dürer and of patricians by Amman; several views by Beham; the house of Henry III. at Goslar; that of Barbarossa at Kaiserswerth. It would take too long to enumerate all the pictures of genuine historical value.

A Handbook of English History, based on the lectures of the late M. J. Guest, and brought down to the year 1880. With a supplementary chapter upon English literature in the nineteenth century. By Francis H. Underwood. Boston: Lee & Shepard. 1886. 8vo, pp. 614.

A FEW years ago (see *Nation*, September 4, 1879) we commended Mr. Guest's 'Lectures on the History of England' for its interest and sugges-

tiveness. It appeared to us unusually well adapted to the use of young people just becoming acquainted with English history. A reexamination of the book, as edited by Mr. Underwood, confirms us in this judgment. We know of no better sketch of its size. It is, as we said in our former notice, somewhat disproportioned, giving relatively too little space to modern history. Another defect, that it ended with the reign of George III., has been remedied by the editor, who has brought the narrative down to the present time, and has also added a map of the Saxon kingdoms in the tenth century, borrowed from Freeman. The work of the editor appears to have been done with good judgment. The redundancies and repetitions of an oral style have been pruned away, and expressions that were only suited to English readers have been altered to some neutral form. Generally the changes are an improvement, but in a few cases not. The added chapters, embracing the reigns of George IV., William IV., and Victoria, are too brief and compendious—perhaps necessarily brief, but certainly abounding to excess in names and dates. We will only say further that the merits of the book—as is natural in a course of popular lectures—are rather in picturesque narration, and that constitutional history (as in the contest of the seventeenth century) is perhaps necessarily meagre.

BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

Adams, O. F. August. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co.
A Wife's Confession, and Other Stories. Cassell & Co. 15 cents.
Bancroft, H. H. History of the Pacific States of North America. Vol. xvii. California, vol. v. 1848-1848. San Francisco: The History Co.
Bonnieres, Robert de. Le Baiser de Maïna. Paris: Ollendorff; Boston: Schoenhof.
Broglie, Duc de. Souvenirs 1785-1870. T. II and III. Paris: Calmann Lévy; Boston: Schoenhof.
Chanteleuze, R. Portraits historiques. Paris: Perrin; Boston: Schoenhof.
Daudet, Ernest. Les Bourbons et la Russie pendant la Révolution française. Paris: Librairie Illustrée. Boston: Schoenhof.
Dostoevsky, Th. Krotkala. Paris: Plon & Nourrit; Boston: Schoenhof.
Forgues, Eugene. Correspondance inédite entre Lamennais et le Baron de Vitrolles. Paris: Charpentier; Boston: Schoenhof.
Heulhard, A. Bravos et Sifflets. Paris: A. Duprat; Boston: Schoenhof.
Lorenz, Otto. Catalogue général de la librairie française depuis 1840. T. IX, 1re fascicule. A—Crémieux. Boston: Schoenhof.

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