BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

Axonometrical Projections of the most important Geometrical Surfaces.

By FERDINAND ENGEL.

A series of very excellent geometrical drawings, intended, however, we imagine, rather as a descriptive catalogue of the corresponding models than for any great independent usefulness. We feel sure, at least, that if there be any student who cannot form in his own mind, without reference to outward figure, a picture of the wave-surface of a light passing through a doubly refracting medium, he will be much more likely to be led astray than to be assisted by the drawing or model, very beautiful although they are, which are here given. For students of descriptive geometry, however, these figures will furnish valuable examples to copy from, as they are well conceived and executed, and comprise some of the most difficult figures for practice.

Explanations and Sailing Directions to accompany the Wind and Current Charts. By M. F. MAURY, LL. D., Lieut. U. S. Navy. 7th Edition, Philadelphia: E. C. & J. Biddle, 1855.

Lieut. Maury has the merit of originating an entirely new field of usefulness in determining the lines of shortest passage across the oceans, by careful collection of ships' logs, and consequent determination of prevailing winds and currents. The earnestness with which a multitude of navigators, both here and abroad, have entered into his scheme, is sufficient proof of the merit of the plan and the credit due to its suggestor. If, in connexion with this system or in any other way, Lieut. Maury can induce our seafaring men, who are, from education and necessity, acute and accurate observers of phenomena, to study the laws which govern these facts, and endeavor to account for them rationally and generally, he will have accomplished a still more important work. The work before us appears to be a highly meritorious effort in this direction, and we hope it will be found to excite the interest of those more directly concerned with the subject of which it treats, and induce them to pursue the subject still farther. While, however, we speak of this production of Lieut. Maury with all the respect which it deserves, we hope for the credit of his department and the title which he bears, that he will, in the eighth edition, (which, we hope, will soon be called for,) review carefully his *Physical Geography*. A more profound study of what is known on this subject will lead him to considerable changes in his treatise, and to not less considerable improvement in its value.