

ties; Pythagoras going about Egypt begging for crumbs of information withheld from him, but jealously guarded for the benefit of English and American Freemasons; and the North American Indians talking Welsh, an old story.

The following citations selected quite at random on adjoining pages illustrate the author's method. Referring to the epagomenal days of the Egyptian year, the author observes: "The first, third, and fifth of the epagomenal days were considered unlucky. In Freemasonry these numbers have a peculiar significance, which all M.M.'s understand, and with the common herd of people these days are still considered as unlucky days and numbers. How many know why or the origin of it?" (p. 14). How first-rate authorities are "herded" by our author is shown in his estimate of Dr. Eduard Seler's work, "that he has not succeeded in giving the true decipherment of any of his translations of the various codices of the Mayas, Mexican, and Central American nations that he has attempted to, and until he recognises Egypt as the primordial and origin we are of opinion that he will not" (p. 15). JOHN GRIFFITH.

PEDAGOGICS.

(1) *Education*. A First Book. By Prof. Edward L. Thorndike. Pp. ix+292. (New York: The Macmillan Company; London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1912.) Price 6s. net.

(2) *L'Éducation Physique ou l'Entraînement Complet par la Méthode Naturelle*. Exposé et Résultats. By Georges Hébert. Pp. iii+85+8 plates. (Paris: Librairie Vuibert, 1912.)

(1) IT need scarcely be said that any book on education by Prof. Thorndike will be suggestive and helpful; yet it is not quite easy to realise the constituency for which his latest work is specially written. If this first book is meant for students in training for the teaching profession, it seems to contain at once too little and too much. The volume is a simple introduction to the whole theory of education. Rather less than one-seventh of the book concerns the elementary practical situations which usually come into the control of the beginner. Experience shows that practice, unless it is begun before there is some power of reflection, furnishes the best starting point for the future teacher, and a first book for the trainee should therefore concern itself primarily with bringing out the fundamental features of the practical situation. Chapters on the meaning and value of education, the aims and results of education and the like appear so remote from the problem of the moment that students are apt to be impatient of them. A background of class-

room experience would, however, give point and meaning to such discussions.

On the other hand, if the book is written for those who have already had teaching experience and come up for a fuller theoretical course, one would again have expected a different proportion in the various parts of the book. Indeed, the slightness of all the discussions almost puts this type of reader out of consideration. Prof. Thorndike has nevertheless written with his usual clearness and charm, and nobody who reads the book can fail to find some new illustration, some new way of putting an old point, or some suggestive phrase which he will treasure, and as to our general quarrel with it, we ought to add that probably no two authorities are agreed as to what is the best way of introducing the future teacher to the study of his profession.

(2) The English Board of Education has made up its mind about what is the best method of physical training for school children. All this is written down in an official book which every teacher in training must master. Such a proceeding on the part of the Board has its critics, who are not slow to say that there is no one and only system of physical training, and that more depends on the spirit in which the physical exercises are gone through than on the particular movements it embraces. "Teach your boys to walk, to run, to jump, to box, and to swim, and leave those artificial extension movements, which mean nothing, alone!" This is the spirit of M. Hébert's little book. It is not, of course, written in criticism of our Board of Education; it is just a simple account of the methods applied to the physical training of French sailors and of the results achieved. The author calls it the natural method, because his system is based on just those movements which men are called upon to make in the ordinary course of a life of freedom. Teachers and others who are concerned about physical training will find the work interesting and suggestive. It is abundantly illustrated.

J. A. G.

OUR BOOKSHELF.

The Significance of Ancient Religions. In relation to Human Evolution and Brain Development. By Dr. E. Noel Reichardt. Pp. xiv+456. (London: George Allen and Co., Ltd., 1912.) Price 12s. 6d. net.

THE nature of this work by Dr. Reichardt can be best indicated by a citation from the introduction: "And the practical value of the study of these religions lies in this, that not only does it acquaint us with the forces that have determined human history and built up human character; it affords us, moreover, the key to all the bewildering