

EDITORIAL NOTES.

CAMBRIDGE LECTURES ON
TEACHING.

MR. FITCH, whose recent volume of *Lectures on Teaching*, delivered at the University of Cambridge, England, is perhaps the most serviceable contribution to the literature of pedagogy we have hitherto met with, makes the remark that "the best work in the world is not done by criticism, but by enthusiasm." The saying is true, and especially of teaching, though the familiar Biblical reference to "zeal without knowledge" may well be kept in mind in any apotheosis of enthusiasm. Mr. Fitch, himself, however, takes care not to sacrifice the results of his work at the shrine of the mere enthusiast. Criticism, he knows, has its functions; and no really good work is done that will not bear its scrutiny. At the same time there can be little doubt that without earnestness and real love for the work, the instructor of youth will fail of reaping that harvest which is the reward of enthusiasm and fervent labour. In the volume before us this truth finds apt illustration in another remark of our author, in reference to the qualifications of the educator, and the difficulty of imparting methods of teaching which shall be effective as instruments in training the young. Mr. Fitch says, that "the best part of a teacher's equipment is incommunicable in the form of pedagogic lectures." What *can* be communicated, and made interesting as well as instructive, in the science and art of education, beyond, we would almost say, any other manual familiar to us, we have in the present volume. The book covers a wide field and touches upon almost every subject connected with practical elementary education. It is attractively written, and is throughout sensi-

ble, lucid, and free from that bane of modern educational writers, the affectation to present the subject in stiff philosophic phrase, and beset with a haze of psychological mysticism, which wearies and repels nine-tenths of those to whom it is addressed. Mr. Fitch writes, moreover, from an ample experience and with that breadth of vision, the fruit of mature thought, close observation, and long and practical acquaintance with all the varied detail of a teacher's work. As Principal of a training college, as a Government Inspector of Schools, and as a member of the Endowed Schools Commission, our author has gathered an amount of experience of educational methods which entitles him to speak "as one having authority," and which gives a value to his opinions which those interested in the subjects he discusses will be sure to profit by making acquaintance with. In these times, when so many intelligent men in the profession are looking the problems of education anew in the face, and when the demand is on the increase for teachers who are not only capable of grasping, but are imbued with the desire of minutely and critically dissecting them, the aid of a master-expositor like Mr. Fitch is invaluable in conducting one through the maze of theory and method brought before the teacher in such volumes as the present, and which the lecturer so unmistakably has the key of. In here directing attention to the work, our object is, if possible, to incite, in the young teacher particularly, a desire for a more extended acquaintance with both the science and art of teaching than he has usually the means of acquiring, and to turn his attention away from the charlatan and the sciolist to an instructor in professional matters of whom he may learn much and in the main trust implicitly.