

The Profili now sell for three lira each in Italy,—about fifteen American cents, at the present rate of exchange. They are artistically printed and each is the work of a scholar. It seems strange that we have never, in this country, been able to support a series of this kind. The chief criticism of the work of this Italian press lies in the number of typographical errors that appear. On a single page (68), for example, we have the "Leiters of Sis Isaac Newton," "R. Benthey" (for Bentley), "and other authentic documents," "Eeral of Macclesfield, "Côtes" (for Cotes), and "Comptes-Rendus," while on page 66 there are no less than nine errors of a similar nature.

DAVID EUGENE SMITH.

Mathematiker Anekdoten. Zweite, stark veränderte Auflage.
Von W. AHRENS. Teubner, Leipzig and Berlin, 1920.
42 pp.

WHETHER the telling of an anecdote shall provoke the interest of a pleased smile or the different amusement which leads to a shrug of the shoulders depends intimately and delicately upon the mental associations which arise involuntarily when a story is related; and the latter in turn depend upon the varied elements, and even the most minute, which make up the daily life and experience and environment. Hence it has always been, and perhaps always will be, difficult for one people to appreciate the humor of another. It is therefore natural that a book of anecdotes, containing humorous ones among others, shall be addressed by an author principally to his own countrymen.

These stories related by Ahrens of mathematicians and things mathematical are evidently intended primarily for his own countrymen; hence it is fitting that far the greater space should be given to men and things that are German. One of the pleasing features of the booklet is the inclusion of fifteen or more excellent likenesses of mathematicians. The stories range in excellence from some of high quality to some which are not pleasing. We do not find much of value in the story of the boys who convinced a simple old man that in their use of logarithm tables they were mastering the house numbers of Europe. We are only mildly interested when we are told of L. Fuchs' surprise when a long computation in his lecture led to the result $0=0$, that he first painfully suspected