

the coast, and one of them, Findon, has given its name to the "finnan haddock." The population is lowland and included the ancestors of Burns. The sections on the geology and meteorology of the country are well up-to-date; the author, for example, attributes the mild climate of Scotland to the south-west winds and not to the discredited Gulf Stream.

*Zeitschrift für angewandte Geophysik. Unter ständiger Mitarbeit zahlreicher Fachgenossen.* Herausgegeben von Dr. Richard Ambronn. Vol. i., Part I. Pp. 32. (Berlin: Gebrüder Borntraeger, 1922.) 20s.

WHILE the attention of geologists is justly turned to physical considerations, in view of our immense ignorance of the inner constitution of the earth, it may be questioned if it is wise at the present time to inaugurate a special journal for geophysics. The first part of the *Zeitschrift für angewandte Geophysik* is issued under the editorship of Dr. R. Ambronn, of Göttingen, by one of the most enterprising firms in Germany. Its thirty-two pages are priced at twenty English shillings, which puts it beyond the reach of scientific men who are also taxpayers in our islands. We cannot help feeling that the money would be better spent in supporting and, if necessary, enlarging the scope of one of the German geological journals that have already won a world-wide reputation.

Dr. Ambronn shows how the measurement of radioactivity, of variations in gravity from point to point, of the increment of temperature with depth, and of the propagation of earthquake waves, subjects that truly belong to the domain of geophysics, find their applications in the search for ore-bodies, basins of light minerals, such as rock-salt, and of petroleum. Abstracts are given of papers which deal with these or similar subjects; but they will surely fall under the watchful eye of the editor of the *Geologisches Zentralblatt*, to mention only one well-known journal. We compliment Dr. Ambronn on his energy, but not on his adding yet another care to our librarians, however casually his new periodical may appear.

G. A. J. C.

*Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia.* Edited by Dr. W. H. R. Rivers. Pp. xx + 116. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1922.) 6s. net.

It is difficult to lay too much stress on the practical value of this small collection of essays written by members of the Melanesian Mission and others. The fact that the volume is edited by the late Dr. W. H. R. Rivers is a guarantee both of accuracy and impartiality. Sir Wm. Macgregor and Mr. C. M. Woodford, who write from the point of view of the official, and Dr. Speiser of Basle, who writes as an anthropologist, fully bear out the contentions of the members of the Mission. The authors, without exception, agree that depopulation in Melanesia is to be attributed largely to the breaking up of custom which has followed contact with the white man. When the spiritual power of the chief has been discredited in the eye of the native by the white man, the temporal authority, which is based upon it, fails to preserve traditional law, order, and morality. Dr. Rivers, in a concluding essay, however, suggests that the most important factor is

psychological. The native, he maintains, has lost all interest in life through the suppression of customs such as head-hunting, with which have disappeared a large number of closely related social activities. His suggestion that total suppression of such customs could be avoided by substitution of harmless elements is deserving of careful consideration.

*Quaker Aspects of Truth.* By Dr. E. V. Brown. Pp. 156. (London: The Swarthmore Press, Ltd., n.d.) 5s. net.

THE little book under notice consists of a series of lectures illustrating simply the Quaker attitude to various problems. In the chapter on biological foundations, the author attempts to show that the fundamental doctrines of Quakerism, *i.e.* the acknowledgment of no final authority, whether Church or Bible, except the Word of God in the heart, are more in accord with the teachings of biological science than the dogmas of any other religion. The point of view is interesting, although it is doubtful whether the teachings of science, as such, are usefully fitted on as justification for a body of religious beliefs.

The author develops his contention that the Quaker ideal is Christianity from which all accretions in the form of Hebrew, Greek, and Roman sources have been eliminated. He also discusses the Quaker attitude towards war.

The essays all set forth high moral ideals, for the value of which the moral life of the believer in them is the sole criterion.

*Chemistry of To-day: The Mysteries of Chemistry lucidly explained in a Popular and Interesting Manner free from all Technicalities and Formulæ.* By P. G. Bull. Pp. 311. (London: Seeley, Service and Co., Ltd., 1923.) 8s. 6d. net.

ACCORDING to the preface, this is not intended as a text-book, but as an attempt to give some account of modern chemistry to the general reader. It should fulfil this object: the style is bright and interesting, the matter appears to be accurate, and an extensive field is covered—very superficially for a text-book, but probably adequately for the intended reader. There is perhaps too great a tendency to "sensational" topics—the frontispiece representing a well-known man of science "bombarding" atoms half the size of himself with "nuclei of helium" as big as cricket balls, and producing a pyrotechnic display, is an example of what we mean by this criticism. There are good half-tone plates, but the line-drawings are poor.

*The Psychology of Society.* By Morris Ginsberg. Pp. xvi + 174. (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1921.) 5s. net.

IN short compass Mr. Morris Ginsberg discusses critically with admirable lucidity the psychological basis on which much recent treatment of social problems is founded. He has a keen eye for essentials, and a sense of perspective. He presents tersely and fairly the salient arguments of writers who count and pronounces clearly and courteously well-considered judgment. A little book but a good one.