MISCELLANY

Borneo Jungle

An Account of the Oxford Expedition to Sarawak. By John Ford, C. M. Hartley, Tom Harrisson, Patrick M. Synge, Edward Shackleton. Edited by Tom Harrisson. Pp. x+254+32 plates. (London: Lindsay Drummond, Ltd. 1938.) 15*s*. net.

"BORNEO JUNGLE", which describes an expedition of the Oxford University Exploration Club to Sarawak in 1932–33, stands out in the class of travel books in virtue of its method of composition. Instead of one or two authors, it has five, each contributing a chapter. The result is both entertaining and instructive.

The organizer of the expedition, Mr. Harrisson, who notwithstanding his not very advanced years—the average age of the members of the expedition was then twenty years—has already won a reputation as a writer of original views, describes the organization and outlines the work of the expedition as a whole. The chapters by his colleagues all contribute some interesting observations of the daily life and character of the jungle folk of Sarawak; but without being invidious, special mention may be made of Mr. Patrick M. Synge's account of collecting epiphytes in the forest at different altitudes and his discussion of the relation, if any, of the æsthetic qualities of the flora to the art motifs of the people.

Members of the expedition and others working on the material collected have already produced twenty-nine scientific papers, while further studies are in course of preparation. The standing of the expedition, in a scientific sense, is therefore assured. It is necessary to say this, as Mr. Harrisson vigorously attacks scientific exploring expeditions in general, especially if their aim is the collection of specimens, and expeditions of the type of those organized by the Oxford Exploring Club more particularly as failing in their educational aim. This raises too large a question for discussion in a brief notice; but in part the author supplies an answer in recognizing the constraining influence of finance.

The Climate of Madeira

With a Comparative Study. By Vice-Admiral Hugo C. de Lacerda Castelo Branco. Translated from the French by Dr. Alberto Figueira Jardim. Pp. 118+9 plates. (Madeira: Delegação do Turismo da Madeira, 1938.)

THE little book by Vice-Admiral H. C. de Lacerda Castelo Branco on the climate of Madeira, or more precisely Funchal, an English translation of which is under notice, was written with the definite object of comparing the merits of the island with those of other favoured resorts, and it certainly contains a considerable amount of propaganda. Nevertheless the author, who was many years ago director of the meteorological observatory at Lourenço Marques, has been at pains to embody in it much scientific data and to direct attention to the need for further investigations. Some thirty earlier publications, dating from 1811 onwards, are commented on briefly as a preface to his own 'sketch' based upon observations at Funchal since 1923 and official averages for 1916–35. Both sets of figures show the well-known characteristics of mild winters and moderately warm summers. From a table on p. 47, relating to the years 1923–32, the absolute maximum temperature in July (82·6° F.) appears lower than that in any of the other months from April to October. It may be noted in passing that this is doubtless due to the shortness of the period, as considerably higher values have been recorded in July.

In the comparisons with other climates the author seems over-lavish in his praise of the relative value of that of Funchal, but he is careful to state that conditions in other parts of the island may be less good. Further research is advocated not only as regards the climate but also into certain medical and other matters affecting the general conditions of life there which are discussed in the concluding chapters.

L. D. S.

Mineral Tables

For the Determination of Minerals by their Physical Properties. By Arthur S. Eakle. Third edition, revised by Prof. Adolf Pabst. Pp. v+73. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.; London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1938.) 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

PROF. A. S. EAKLE, of the University of California, published tables in 1904 by which the common minerals could be 'run down' by using in a systematic manner the properties of streak and colour, and by the observation of other characters such as hardness, crystal symmetry, cleavage and fracture, the habit or structure of the mineral, the specific gravity, and the chemical composition. Dr. A. Pabst has revised Eakle's tables, making such additions and changes as were necessary to bring them up to date. About 200 minerals are included. For the application of the tables the only apparatus required is a streak-testing plate of unglazed porcelain, a pocket knife and set of minerals for the scale of hardness, a magnet and a pocket lens. Admittedly tests with this simple equipment do not suffice to identify definitely every mineral, and recourse must frequently be had to determination of specific gravities and to optical and chemical tests, but the application of the physical tests in a systematic way is good training for the student who will need to identify minerals in the field.

The League of Nations and the Rule of Law, 1918–1935

By Sir Alfred Zimmern. Second edition, revised. Pp. xiii+542. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1939.) 12*s*. 6*d*. net.

THE second edition of this book differs but little from the first edition of 1935. It has not been extended beyond the limits then planned and although it has been thoroughly revised and the references to the literature brought up to date, new matter has been incorporated chiefly in the chapters on the drafting of the Covenant, and the history of the League of Nations, the latter merely bringing the account of the Abyssinian dispute up to 1936. None the less the book remains an invaluable guide to the problems involved in the re-establishment of the rule of law between nations.