

of the Mediterranean vegetation and the various plant communities represented in the Riviera. However, brief as it is, this introduction gives a remarkably clear picture of the vegetation, such points as the relations of soils and the striking effects of exposure and shelter being well brought out. Those who hope to visit or revisit this beautiful region, when happier times arrive, should have Mr. Thompson's book on Riviera flowering plants.

TWO HANDBOOKS OF EXPLORATION.

- (1) *Stories of Exploration and Discovery*. By A. B. Archer. Pp. x+198. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1915.) Price 2s. 6d. net.
- (2) *The North-West and North-East Passages, 1576-1611*. Edited by P. F. Alexander. Pp. xx+211. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1915.) Price 2s. 6d. net.

(1) **M**R. ARCHER'S book supplies a short history of exploration in simple language. It opens perhaps a little uncertainly on the importance of the Eastern Mediterranean as the earliest known centre from which knowledge of the world was extended outwards. "The Egyptians used boats on the Nile, and perhaps along the coasts of their country, but probably the first serious navigators were the people of Phœnicia"—this, in the light of recent research concerning early Mediterranean peoples, is not a wholly satisfactory summary. The subsequent chapters are handled more firmly, and the rather difficult task of balancing between topographical correlation and historical sequence is judiciously carried out. The final chapters on modern polar exploration, however, are less successful. They maintain the interest to the student, but sometimes a point is missed: thus, it is an unfortunate version of the dramatic encounter between Nansen and Jackson which states that Nansen and Johansen "reached the south of Franz Joseph Land, where to their delight a relief ship was waiting." There is a short bibliography of easily-accessible books of reference, and a good index is provided. There are also some rough but sufficiently clear maps, and some clever adaptations of old maps.

(2) Mr. Alexander's book contains a series of extracts from original narratives of voyages in search of the north-west and north-east passages, together with an explanatory introduction, a chronology of important dates in geographical discovery generally, and notes. The extracts are from George Best's account of Frobisher's first and second voyages, from the narratives of Davis's three voyages and of Hudson's last voyage, and from de Veer's account of Barents's third voyage; which is supplemented by an account of the discovery, in modern times, of relics of that voyage.

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Hakluyt, Purchas, and the Hakluyt Society's second edition of Phillip's translation of de Veer have been drawn upon. The modernising of these texts, so far as necessary, has been carried out without any of the charm of the original being lost. It is this peculiar charm which makes these narratives most attractive to the student for whom these volumes are designed—for it should be added that this book belongs to a series to be known as "Cambridge Travel Books," of which another, "The Earliest Voyages Round the World," is stated to be in the press. The book is excellently produced, and the original illustrations reproduced are as instructive as they are amusing; there are also a few explanatory maps. It can only be a question whether in a book of this compass, designed for the purposes indicated, there should not be shorter extracts from more narratives, but no doubt it would be difficult, if not impossible, to carry out such a plan and maintain the interest of the originals.

OUR BOOKSHELF.

Aids to the Analysis and Assay of Ores, Metals, Fuels, etc. By J. J. Morgan. 2nd edition. Pp. viii+138. (London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox, 1915.) Price, cloth, 3s. net; paper, 2s. 6d. net.

THE first edition of this capital little book has been useful to students of evening classes for a number of years, and the appearance of the second edition will be welcome to their instructors in metallurgical analysis. The general arrangement is good, and has been maintained unchanged, but the book has been considerably enlarged. In addition to descriptions of the assay of the ores of the common metals and of the complete analysis of commercially impure metals, sections are devoted to special steels and other alloys, fuels, furnace materials, and slags. There is also some account of the analysis of the by-products of coke-ovens. The characteristic of the book is that as a rule only one method of determination is given in each case, but the methods are well chosen as having stood the test of time, and the descriptions are concise and accurate. Little is said about apparatus and reagents; there are few illustrations, and in general the book seems to be intended rather to remind students of what they have been taught than to take the place of laboratory demonstration. In cases where the more expensive standard works on analysis and assaying are inaccessible, this handy volume will be found to take their place with scarcely any disadvantage. It is small enough to slip into the pocket.

Alignment Charts: their Principle and Application to Engineering Formulae. By E. S. Andrews. Pp. 32. (London: Published for James Selwyn and Co. by Chapman and Hall, Ltd.) 1s. 3d. net.

ALIGNMENT charts have been used to some extent by engineers in recent years, and are capable of being employed to a much greater extent. The