

planetary week." There is also an instructive chapter on the week in northern Europe, and the names of the days in various European languages are collected together into five groups in the appendix.

The book is extremely well written and contains much information not readily accessible to the ordinary reader. Its usefulness would have been still further enhanced by the addition of an index or a synopsis of the chapters.

Our Bookshelf.

Treatise on Sedimentation. Prepared under the Auspices of the Committee on Sedimentation, Division of Geology and Geography, National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences. By William H. Twenhofel and Collaborators. Pp. xxv + 661 + 38 plates. (Baltimore, Md.: Williams and Wilkins Co.; London: Baillière, Tindall, and Cox, 1926.) 34s. net.

THE treatise is a bold and ambitious attempt to present a comprehensive statement of our present knowledge of sediments and the processes which control their formation and development. From the point of view of work accomplished in America, it may be satisfactory as a preliminary basis for the discussion of future researches, but it is unfortunate that many British and European contributions to the subject matter should have been overlooked. The committee on sedimentation has apparently realised this source of weakness in their earlier work, for Prof. L. W. Collet has now been added as a European representative. In the treatise itself the lack of international proportion is shown by the fact that there is only one nominal reference to the far-reaching work of Prof. P. G. H. Boswell, and that to the statement that "sand is predominantly composed of quartz grains." On p. 629 one of Boswell's memoirs is wrongly attributed to Crook, but in compensation Crook's name does not appear in the index.

While it is in many parts admirable, the treatise is clearly far from being the authoritative work we might reasonably have expected. The necessity for further studies of environment of deposition and of diagenesis is revealed by the striking absence of precise knowledge in these fields of geological endeavour.

Melanesians of the South-east Solomon Islands. By Dr. W. G. Raven. Pp. xix + 529 + 15 plates. (London: Kegan Paul and Co., Ltd., 1927.) 30s. net.

THIS book is very well written, in simple vivid language, and the author is at his best in the descriptions of particular customs, ceremonies, and beliefs. The chapters on sexual life, betrothal, and marriage; the accounts of fishing and gardening, of feasts and dancing, of warfare and magic, are

one and all excellent. The description of bonito fishing, so characteristic of the Southern Solomons, is of outstanding literary merit and scientific interest.

The abstract subjects, such as kinship and legal or economic organisation, suffer from a weak grasp of sociological principles. The table of kinship nomenclature is well-nigh worthless, in that it gives the native words for English appellations instead of giving a sociological analysis of the native terms. The author is right in correcting the late Dr. Rivers (on p. 59) on the use of personal names between relatives in some parts of Melanesia, a custom which is by no means confined to Dr. Ivens's area. But when he adds that "relationship terms in these places (Sa'a and Ulawa) do not connote social duties," he contradicts his own evidence, and his mistake is due to an obvious misunderstanding of Dr. Rivers's words and ideas. Equally misleading are certain generalisations about native 'shell money.'

On the whole, however, the book is a valuable contribution to Melanesian anthropology; it provides very attractive reading, and is magnificently filled with illustrations in colour and black and white, with diagrams and maps.

Practical Psychology: Human Nature in Everyday Life. By Prof. Edward Stevens Robinson. Pp. xii + 479. (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1926.) 7s. 6d.

THIS is a simple presentation of the main features of psychological science aimed at bringing out the relations of its principles to the personal life of the student. As the study of human nature, psychology deals with human behaviour as well as with mental life in the abstract; and, for practical purposes, a knowledge of behaviour and its sources is the more important aspect of the two. Though most people know some psychology (since they carry human nature about with them and can scarcely fail to observe it), science is necessary to approve, correct, or reject popular notions as to the working of human nature, especially when such notions are employed in any attempt to alter or perfect its working. Chapters on the connexion between human nature and body are followed by a fairly complete discussion of all the topics dealt with in elementary psychological textbooks.

The matter is clearly presented, with simple problems suggested at the end of each chapter and references for further study appended. The book substantiates its claim to be practical throughout, and needs no educational background "greater than is likely to be possessed by a student in the latter part of the high school course." As an indication of the general method followed by the author, one of the problems set at the end of the chapter on personality may be quoted. "No personality is perfect. What steps might you take to make yourself a more effective individual?" Materials for its solution, as for that of the other problems set, are given in the text.