

and finally a chapter on quarrying, bring the book to a close. The final chapters should also be regarded as introductions to new branches of mining.

The author has attempted a difficult task, for he deals with many countries, and it is probable that a book could be written on mining stratified deposits in each of the countries mentioned without exhausting the subject, as might be shown by reference to the transactions of the mining societies of these countries. It would be possible to be critical on the score of faulty organisation of the matter, though in the chapters on British methods of mining there is systematic treatment. The treatment of this section would have been much improved by the introduction of a preliminary classification of the methods. It is a pioneer work, and should bring a large amount of information within the reach of many who are unable to obtain access to the sources of information available to the author.

C. HABBERJAM.

Our Bookshelf.

The Student's Guide to the Libraries of London: with an Account of the most Important Archives and other Aids to Study. By Reginald Arthur Rye. Third edition, revised and enlarged. Pp. xxv + 581 + 61 plates. (London: University of London Press, Ltd., 1927.) 10s. net.

THE material for the first edition of this handbook was collected in 1907 at the time when the Senate of the University of London was occupied with the task of organising, co-ordinating, and developing the libraries under its control. Accurate information was needed of the great resources offered by the libraries of the metropolis, and the small book of 76 pages published in 1908 was the first attempt to collect this information into a single volume. The present, much enlarged edition may be taken as some indication of the usefulness of the work.

Although probably no instruments are more essential than libraries to the advancement of knowledge, it is doubtful whether London was well provided with these necessary adjuncts to learning even in the eighteenth century. Thomas Carte, the historian, writing in 1747, said: "I am sorry to observe on this occasion that there is scarce a great city where learning is at all regarded, which is so destitute of a good publick library as London." Boswell's dictum in 1780 that "in London I suppose we may find every book that can be found anywhere" has certainly never been true; and although London is now probably better provided with libraries than any other great centre, their resources are sadly wasted for want of organisation, by restriction of access, or through ignorance of their existence. Most of those responsible for the six hundred and sixty libraries that have been

considered sufficiently interesting to be included in this volume are working independently by multifarious systems to fulfil their individual aims, and there is no doubt that a great deal of money is spent on unnecessary duplication that might be laid out in procuring books that are not available in Great Britain. There are, moreover, too many indifferent or inferior libraries.

The volume before us offers a summary of the situation. The very interesting historical introduction begins with an account of the remains of the ancient libraries of Assyria, Babylonia, and Egypt; it traces the vicissitudes of libraries through the ages, and includes an account of many former London libraries which have now disappeared. Then follows a detailed account of existing libraries and an extensive index, which contains, besides the names of libraries and collections, the sources of information under the titles of their respective subjects. S. C. B.

Buddhism in Pre-Christian Britain. By Donald A. Mackenzie. Pp. xx + 178 + 12 plates. (London and Glasgow: Blackie and Son, Ltd., 1928.) 10s. 6d. net.

WHATEVER may be the readers' verdict on Mr. Mackenzie's views, and we fear it will not be favourable, they will not be able to deny that he has written what is in many ways a fascinating and stimulating book. Starting from the records of Asoka's *Western Buddhist Mission*, of which the extent is questioned by authorities on Indian history, and Origen's attribution of a knowledge of Buddhism to Britain, which is equally held in doubt, Mr. Mackenzie analyses our knowledge of the pre-Christian Celtic beliefs and culture to show that they contain a large element which he attributes to Buddhism.

A great deal of the material on which Mr. Mackenzie relies for the details of his thesis is colourless in itself. It is drawn to a great extent from Irish sources. Perhaps nowhere in the world has native legend and belief been refashioned by extraneous ideas as it has in Ireland. This is shown, for example, by the frequent allusions in popular legend to distant lands by names which would come as a surprise when found among an uneducated people unacquainted with classical learning and tradition. Ireland was the land of learning as well as the land of saints, and further, the British Church was an Eastern Church, as was demonstrated in the opposition to the missionary efforts of St. Augustine. In Ireland, without question, some of the monkish learning filtered through to the people.

On the other hand, this much must be said in favour of Mr. Mackenzie's views—if once the major premise of the existence of Buddhism in Britain could be proved, his interpretation of extraneous matter of uncertain origin might be justified. His argument really depends upon two things, one that the Druidic theory of transmigration came from the east and was not really derivative from Pythagoras, and secondly from the representation of a horned god, whom he identifies as, and equates with,