

and in the conclusion the author looks to the future in which he envisages a remunerative development of the resources of the Arctic lands.

One of the things which strike one about the book is that the author can say in one sentence what many require a whole text-book to set forth. It is hardly a criticism to say that the book gives so much information that it is a pity it does not give more. Thus a word on the use of the plane table and the photo-theodolite for the survey of small areas on a large scale would have been welcome. A fuller account of the work of the Danish Administration in East Greenland would have been enlightening. Finally, some mention might have been made of the Arctic from a purely aesthetic point of view. The work of the artist and photographer is not unimportant.

The only general criticism that one can level against the book is that there is a tendency to make scientific work in the Arctic appear easier than it is. But this in no way detracts from the value of the book. Its *motif* is clear and admirable, the information which it gives sound and accurate, the exposition brief and lucid. It is well illustrated and written in a style which does credit to the translator. It should appeal to the scientist and the geographer as well as to those who are not directly interested in these subjects.

The book fills a wide gap in Arctic literature both in describing the present work in the Arctic regions and in pointing to the end to which this work tends. Throughout the whole the author conveys to the reader his own enthusiasm for and excitement in this work, and we are made to realise that the modern scientific worker in the Arctic is animated as much by that high spirit of adventure as were the early explorers and pioneers in these regions.

L. H. M.

*Polar Exploration*, by ANDREW CROFT. London: A. and C. Black, 1939, pp. x + 268. 7s. 6d.

This book is one of the "Epics of the XX Century" series, and as such it "aims at showing that the Elizabethan spirit lives to-day, and that the present century has produced endeavours, which in daring, excitement and interest are unsurpassed in the history of the human race". In addition the author has aimed at describing all the more prominent expeditions of this country, and in doing so has striven to give a "true and impartial" account, with due consideration to the results of chance and modesty.

The author deserves sympathy in such a task. It is obviously too great a field to deal with satisfactorily in 250 pages, 40 of which are historical. What he has done is done well and the book is a clever précis of twentieth-century polar exploration, in which the new and outstanding features of each expedition are stressed and unnecessary repetition eliminated. As a record, therefore, apart from some minor errors, it is complete and the only book of its kind, embracing both Arctic and Antarctic exploration from 1900 to 1937. There is little popular appeal, however, in such a compilation if treated purely as a record.

As a book of adventure, the Arctic suffers in comparison with the Antarctic. A list of exciting incidents does not provide adventurous reading. For this there must be a descriptive atmosphere as well, and the author could not afford the space for this in the Arctic section. The Antarctic portion of the book is not so crowded with small important expeditions, and more space has been given to the descriptive side, making the latter half of the book the more appealing.

As a record the book is valuable in that the author, who is an experienced modern explorer, has described critically the main achievements and advances of explorations. It is refreshing to see Amundsen and Peary taking their due proportion of praise, although a little more might have been said about the Peary controversy.

The book is sparsely, but well illustrated, chiefly with some of the author's very fine selection of photographs, and the maps are neat and clear. It is unfortunate, however, that Alexander I Land is not only referred to in the text, but also mapped, as being part of the Antarctic Continent.

The reader must decide for himself as to the value of such a book, but the author is to be congratulated on accomplishing a difficult task.

A. S.