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surpassed in its thoroughness and completeness by any previous Arctic expedition, is due to the almost unrivalled experience and admirable qualifications of the leader, and also, in Sverdrup's own words, to those two indispensable adjuncts to the carrying out of polar research, "ski and dogs." H. W. F.

MATHEMATICAL AND PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY.

VOLCANOES.

'Der Vulkan: die Natur und das Wesen der Feuerberge.' By Prof. Hippolyte Hass. Pp. 340. With Plates. Berlin: Alfred Schall. 1904.

In this little book Prof. Hass has given us a succinct and readable account of much theoretical and controversial matter regarding the nature, origin, and mechanism of volcanic action. It is evidently written *à propos* of the eruptions in Martinique, and is meant for the general reader, but is on the whole more suited to the requirements of the student, who will find in it a summary of recent speculations, most of which have not yet found their way into the text-books. It is illustrated by a few well-chosen plates, and would have certainly been improved by fuller references to the literature of the subject and a more adequate bibliography.

J. S. F.

PLANT GEOGRAPHY.

'A Manual and Dictionary of the Flowering Plants and Ferns.' By J. C. Willis, M.A. Second Edition. Cambridge: University Press. 1904.

This is, perhaps, the most useful botanical manual in existence for the purposes of travellers and others, who, without being professed botanists, are desirous of acquiring some knowledge of the general principles of the morphology, classification, and distribution of plants. Without being overloaded with detail, Part I. brings out with great clearness these broad principles, giving, besides, some useful information on economic plants; while Part II. consists of an alphabetical dictionary of the principal orders, genera, etc., in which the salient facts regarding each are concisely summarized. The chapter on distribution is particularly instructive, from the care taken to explain the life-conditions of plants and their relation to external environment. There are useful hints on collecting plants, though some will be surprised to find so much countenance given to the popular notion that *pressure* is a principal requisite in the preservation of specimens.

GENERAL.

FRENCH MISSIONS.

'La France au dehors. Les Missions Catholiques Françaises au XIX^e siècle. Publiées sous la direction du Père J. B. Piolet, S.J. 6 vols. Paris: A. Colin. 1902-1903.

In so many quarters of the globe have French missionaries (even more, perhaps, than those of any other nation) been the earliest pioneers in remote and uncivilized districts, that a general history of the missions carried out by them, such as is presented by the sumptuous work now before us, cannot fail to include much that is of interest, both to the geographer and ethnologist. Although the nineteenth century had not so much to show as some of its predecessors in the way of actual exploring work on the part of the French fathers, their work in many out-of-the-way regions, as, *e.g.*, the frontiers of China and Tibet, and a large number of localities in tropical Africa, have added much to the general stock of knowledge about them, though the information collected has not always been readily accessible. The present work possesses an authoritative character, as it is the outcome of the co-operation of all the French Catholic societies, and it is profusely illustrated by photographs of places, scenery, and native types, some of much interest from the excellent idea they convey of the nature of the countries depicted.