

text-books, most of which are good but some of which are sadly out of date. The laboratory exercises partially cover the conventional elementary ground, but are inferior to those of Miss Brown and of other authors. Unfortunately the book is marred by slovenly English, colloquial expressions and typographical errors.

FREDERIC S. LEE.

*Physiology, illustrated by Experiment.* By BUEL P. COLTON. Boston, D. C. Heath & Co. 1900. Pp. xiii + 386.

This book is intended as a 'Briefer Course' of Mr. Colton's 'Physiology, Experimental and Descriptive.' As an elementary text-book for secondary schools it can be recommended. It contains an unusually large amount of matter, concisely, briefly, and upon the whole attractively presented. It is preeminently physiological and hygienic as distinguished from anatomical. Its language is not overburdened with technicalities. Its directions for practical work are limited, but this is excusable in view of the many satisfactory laboratory books now in existence. Most of its figures and diagrams are excellent.

The treatment of the subject of alcohol, while fairly moderate as compared with that of some writers of text-books, is somewhat intemperate in its use of adjectives. At the beginning of the chapter devoted to this subject the bald statement is made that 'alcohol is not a food.' At the close of the chapter it is allowed, on the authority of well-known quoted writers, that 'technically it may be called a food.'

FREDERIC S. LEE.

#### FOLK-LORE IN BORNEO.

DR. WILLIAM HENRY FURNESS 3d, had privately printed an attractive little volume called 'Folk-lore in Borneo: A Sketch,' in which is given a brief report of an ethnological field that has acquired a new interest because of the recent discoveries made in the group of islands to which Borneo belongs. The influence of a tropical environment is noted by the author in the Kayan myth of creation, which he narrates as a 'purely Bornean' product, and contrasts it with the Dyak account of the genesis of the race, wherein he discerns Malay influence.

Among the interesting pages of the book are those which tell of head-hunting, 'the one ruling passion of the people.' The tradition of its origin is given, and the author thoughtfully remarks: "It is not unfair to infer from this tradition that they have a crude, germinal sense of the barbarity of their actions, in so far as they think it necessary to invent an excuse to palliate that savage love of trophy-hunting which seems inborn in mankind." And he points out how the native beliefs concerning the five peculiar regions in 'the land of departed spirits' tends to conserve the practice of the head-hunting 'rite.' Among the many interesting subjects touched upon are the connection between the Pleiades and agriculture; the omen birds and the devices the people practice to avert bad luck; the function of fire as a 'go-between of man and the birds'; and the glimpses of a river cult among these natives. The illustrations really illustrate the text; they are admirably selected, and the pictures of old and young, men and women, inspire confidence as types, as they are without exaggerated peculiarities. The book is a welcome addition to the literature of folk-lore.

A. C. F.

#### DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

##### NEWSPAPER SCIENCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: I have had so much satisfaction in the review and criticism recently published in SCIENCE, of Mr. Tesla's magazine article on 'Human Energy' that I cannot avoid making public acknowledgment of my appreciation of its justice and timeliness, especially the latter. Is it not the imperative duty of men of science to do what the author of this review has done, more frequently than they have during the past ten years?

Within this decade there has been an enormous decrease in the cost of publication and especially in the expense of illustration, and this has brought about a deluge of reading matter of such infinite variety and general worthlessness that the formation of a society for its systematic suppression is worthy of serious consideration. With the daily newspapers it has been distinctly an era of sensationalism.

A reporter for a daily paper recently de-