

BOOK REVIEWS

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE GEOLOGY OF SRI LANKA (CEYLON) By P. G. Cooray, National Museums Department, P. O. Box 854, Colombo-7, Second Edition, 1984, 340 pp., 123 fig., 38 plates, 25 tables; £ 10 or \$ 15. Copies available from National Museums Dept., P. O. Box 854, Colombo-7.

Under the deceptively simple title, Prof. Cooray presents a fascinating panorama of earth science activities in Sri Lanka. The book is intended for a wide readership of professional geoscientists, students and other earth science practitioners like engineers, soil scientists, geographers, industrialists and planners. Eminent Prof. John Sutton in his Foreword to the book recalls the charm of geology in the countryside so refreshingly narrated by Prof. Cooray.

The book is divided into three exclusive parts: Geological Processes and Principles (Part One), Geology of Sri Lanka (Part Two), and Geology and the Community (Part Three). Part I (46 p.) is a primer on geology with an update on plate tectonics. Part II (204 p.), which represents the core theme of the book, comprehensively describes all aspects of the geology of Sri Lanka, on the pattern of classics on Indian geology by Pascoe and Krishnan. The topics covered in this part include physical features, geological outline, Precambrian geology, Jurassic, Tertiary and Quaternary Systems, intrusive and extrusive rocks, geological history and mineral resources. Without sacrificing modernity, Prof. Cooray presents the geology in simple, readable style, while leaving out the sophisticated jargon of a specialist keeping in view the diverse target audience. Part III (51 p.) deals with the most useful aspects of geology for the community. Geology's vital contribution to the societal needs like water supply, engineering construction, soil conservation and utilisation is highlighted with the thoroughness it deserves. The last chapter deals with our contemporary concern of man and the environment.

The excellent coloured geological map of Sri Lanka on half a million scale accompanying the present edition will be an invaluable source of reference for years to come. Besides, the book is profusely illustrated with line drawings and photographs and backed-up by the valuable data in the Tables. The book also contains useful Appendices, Glossary and General Index.

Though delayed in publication, this Second Edition will be eagerly looked forward to by all earth science enthusiasts, particularly those who are concerned with Sri Lankan geology and the geology of high-grade terrains. It contains a wealth of information painstakingly compiled by the dedicated Professor and is strongly recommended for acquisition by all libraries.

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