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CHRONICLE

THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS.

OF the books that come up for consideration in this Chronicle the first place must certainly be given to the fine volume on the comparative study of religions by M. Pinard de la Boullaye wherein he discusses different types of research, and sets forth the entire methodology of the subject. It will, however, be more convenient to place it last in the list when our survey of various works differing in scope and method will have enabled us the better to estimate its most distinctive features.

The *Bilderatlas zur Religionsgeschichte* (Scholl, Leipzig) proposes to furnish a selection of typical illustrations of the great religions. Edited by Dr. Hans Haas, Professor of the History of Religion in Leipzig, two parts lie before us: German religion, by Eugen Mogk, and Egyptian religion, by Hans Bonnet. Though intended to form a companion volume to the same publisher's *Textbuch zur Religionsgeschichte*, they have their own descriptive matter, the Egyptian part, for example (three parts in one, 6·80 m.), with 166 illustrations and several introductory pages, forming an independent work of itself. This part deals with the gods, the cult of the dead, and is an attractive and useful compilation. The illustrations are well selected, and the paper, too, is better than that used in the part dealing with German religion. Here are fifty-four miscellaneous illustrations ranging over bronze age rock pictures, runic monuments, remains of the Viking period, 'Jupiter pillars', and other monuments of the Roman age, and old MSS of the Edda, &c. The series as planned should meet with success: the illustrations frequently bring interesting problems of their own, and they make the old religions live in a way that a text-book alone can never succeed in doing.

Primarily archaeological is also a monograph by Dr G. Contenau, *La Glyptique Syro-Hittite* (Paris 1922), an admirable treatment of what is rapidly becoming a new field of enquiry. The author is an authority on Oriental Archaeology, in particular on the Cappadocian and Hittite problems, and the area lying between W. Asia Minor and the Aegean, Mesopotamia, and Syria, which is opening out many interesting questions. Dr Contenau finds that Cappadocia, roughly, was the centre of a specific cultural area with points of contact with both the Aegean (in dress, weapons, &c.) and with the East. It is probable

that a Sumerian-Elamite influence was exercised upon the Aegean at a remote date, to be followed by a repercussion; we have to conceive of an extensive fairly homogeneous area over which flowed and ebbed specific waves of influence. The conflict between West and East, the two most conspicuous phases of which are seen in 'Hellenism' and the subsequent flow of Orientalism westwards, was an age-long one, and such a monograph as this is only one of others which warn us that the ultimate problems of influence are far more complex than are dreamt of by the modern exponents of facile theories of some prehistoric Egyptian origin of civilization or of chess-board movements of culture-bearing tribes over the ancient world.

Dr Contenau divides the seals into three main periods: (1) Archaic, 2400–1550 B.C., (2) Egypto-Aegean, 1550–1100, and (3) the Age of Decadence, eleventh–sixth centuries. The dates are, to be sure, somewhat provisional: experts differ seriously in many cases; for isolated objects are as difficult to date as isolated beliefs and practices. The analysis of styles and *motifs* supplies the best criteria, and it is possible to observe certain lines of developement—'evolution' we may bravely say—as religion becomes less theriomorphic and more anthropomorphic. In any event, proceeding on broad lines we can recognize an Egypto-Aegean phase (roughly that of the 'Amarna' age), which is preceded by one less easy to dissect, and followed by what is virtually a 'dark period', though it is the period (after the collapse of Hittite, Egyptian, and other powers) which saw the rise of the Assyrian empire, and the stages which led up (in the Persian age) to the new interconnexion between the different peoples of the ancient Near East. Thus does the study of seals and cylinders make its contribution to the vaster history which more nearly concerns biblical research.

In *Tutankhamen and Egyptology* (Mowbray, London) Prof. Samuel Mercer of Toronto furnishes a lucid and concise account of the historical and religious environment of the Pharaoh whose tomb still continues to attract popular attention. He outlines the elements of Egyptian culture and religion, he gives a list of Egyptian technical terms, with chronological, bibliographical, and other material which the layman will appreciate. To ordinary readers this booklet will prove a serviceable introduction to more comprehensive treatises, and they will observe, *inter alia*, that, with the best will in the world, even the most 'moderate' of scholars find it increasingly difficult to co-ordinate the biblical account of the Exodus with archaeology and the monuments. In a few pages devoted to this problem Prof. Mercer suggests that the event did not take place all at once: tribes left Egypt whenever occasion offered, there was, perhaps, '*an* exodus' in the reign of Tutankhamen (*c.* 1350 B.C.), though the great Pharaohs of the Op-

pression and of the Exodus lived more than a century later. Readers who are attracted by such solutions should carefully consider the amount of reshaping or rewriting of tradition which even so reasonable a compromise would imply.

M. Charles-F. Jean, who is already known in these pages (*J. T. S.* xxv p. 102), devotes a monograph to *Le Péché chez les Babyloniens et les Assyriens* (Geuthner, Paris, 1925). With the works of Hehn and Morgenstern on this subject behind him he enters upon a fresh inductive enquiry, not the least value of which lies in his very copious quotations from the original sources. Without going very deeply into the ancient ideas of sin he gives an account of the main features of the old religion and of Babylonian mentality, and the book serves rather as a prelude to a more historical treatment of the religion, an introduction to the type of mind wherein ideas of sin had not necessarily the same connotation as among ourselves. He well shews how the religion was monarchical, with its priestly or sacred king (pp. 79, 93), but *historically* we have to take into account certain more priestly phases. Again, however 'religious' the old codes were (p. 83 sq.), there is a certain 'secular' phase in the Code of Hammurabi which deserves more consideration. Things, it is true, must be 'set apart' for the gods (p. 171), and this is important for some early sexual ideas (chastity, licentiousness), but one feels that the treatment (e. g. p. 118 sq.) is too incidental, and does not go deeply enough. M. Jean has many good observations upon early attitudes to sin, on the undifferentiated stage where 'sin' and 'evil' are one, on the avenging demons as causes of all hurt, &c., and a fuller study from his pen would be welcome.

Mr. A. Le Marchant, in *Greek Religion to the Time of Hesiod* (Sherratt & Hughes, Manchester), gives so thoughtful and interesting an account that one deplores his failure to provide his innumerable and important quotations with a translation. Why in these days no care was taken to minister to the infirmities of those who read Homer or Hesiod in the original with difficulty—or not at all—passes comprehension. The most attractive feature is the frequent comparison between Greece and Israel, and the attention to the profounder questions which arise from a more philosophical study of the facts.

Alike the progress and the failure of Greek religion stir us; and whether or no it be true to say that 'England is as Athens, the North Sea as the Mediterranean', at all events 'the same things recur from the same causes', and Mr Marchant sets us asking whether 'the history of religion in England is in part the history of lost opportunities' (Preface, p. ii). The history of religion in Greece and Israel has a meaning for ourselves, and in spite of the serious drawback to which

reference has been made, the book well illustrates the fact that such is the relation between the most inductive of studies of early religions and modern living problems that the methodology of the subject is of supreme importance. Both Greece and Israel had prophets: as Mr Marchant says, 'we have taken the word from one language but its meaning from the other' (p. 181). For moral equipment and purity of life the advantage lies with the Greek—how little of Homer might a child not safely read (p. 182). The Semite was elemental, therein lay his strength and weakness, and there is that in Semitic psychology which warns us against making too simple a contrast between Greek and Semite. But the fact remains that the fall of Greece led to no new organism, as did the fall of the old monarchical Yahwism; and while the Greek's past did not save him from degradation (p. 183), the Jew gave the world its conviction of the high ideals from which it had lapsed and of a broken covenant which should be restored. The splendour, beauty, and promise of Greek religion, as sketched by Mr Marchant, can only strengthen the conviction that clear ideas of their actual history are fundamental for the theoretical study of religions in order to check the conclusions based upon mere comparison.

Both Greek and Egyptian religion are illustrated in the *Journal* of the Manchester Egyptian and Oriental Society, No. xi (1924). Among his 'Notes on Anatolian Religion', Mr W. M. Calder shews how the Greek Perseus replaced Mēn, who in turn supplanted Attis, the youthful beardless companion of the still earlier Mother-goddess.

The area held by Perseus in coin-types roughly coincides with that of Plato in legend, and the legendary Plato, with a reputation as a magician, has a role in the plain of Konia similar to that of Herakles elsewhere. Mr Calder also notes that villages belonging to estates of the gods in Asia Minor were often called after the deity in question (e.g. Attionkome, after Attio); later, when the Roman divine emperor succeeded to the rights of the god on the temple estates, villages would be called *θεία κώμη*, Sebastokhorion, &c. In each case the continuity is interesting. More speculatively, Mr John Lewis writes on the Mother-worship in Egypt, mainly to the effect that the preservation and reproduction of life are the two main fundamental instincts. The 'comparative' method is, however, forced *ad nauseam* when the undoubted reference to the 'hand' in sexual ideas and usages in Egypt is applied far and wide in an absurd manner: and one is tempted to say that such methods are as helpful as the fabulous pins which saved the boy's life—by his not swallowing them.

Of outstanding interest is the invaluable study by Prof. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, of the Paris School of Modern Oriental Languages,

Le Pèlerinage à la Mekke (Musée Guimet, Geuthner, Paris). It is a detailed description (340 pp.) of the sacred area (the *ḥarām*), the mosque and its doors, the surrounding buildings, the black stone of the kaaba, the pilgrimage itself, the *maḥmal*, the various rites whereby the pilgrims become 'sacred' and are afterwards 'desacralized', the visits to the sacred place, the circumambulation, and so forth. The writer is in touch both with all that has been written on the subject and with the study of religion (e. g. the true nature of 'sacred' sites). It is the best account of the *ḥajj*, and so full of material that the absence of an index of any sort is much to be regretted. There is curious information on the semi-ritual cohabitation before and after the ceremony, on the traces of rain-charms and sympathetic magic, on the obsolete communal drinking, and on much else which goes back to pre-Islamic times and takes us to much earlier and pre-Christian days. Illustrating as it does the many different feelings that can go to form a complex rite, and uniting within itself the new religion of Islam together with so much that came from outside, the *ḥajj* affords an example of characteristic processes which can be usefully compared and contrasted with other religions. Moreover, the pilgrimage to Mecca is so truly one of the phenomena of the religious world, and Islam so powerful a factor in religion and politics, that this authoritative volume deserves to be widely known. So remarkable a fusion of zeal and fanaticism, where much that seems crude comes under the single category of religion, may naturally arouse mingled feelings in western minds; but students of religion are accustomed to recognize that 'not everything offering itself as religious ought to be admirable'[1]; and while tolerant men of the world do well to respect the religious freedom of others, it is permissible to bear in mind the words of Robertson Smith apropos of the slave-traffic at Mecca: 'it is well to respect the religious freedom of Moslems; but it is too much to suffer this freedom to be used as a cloak for crime'.[2]

To Prof. Gaudefroy-Demombynes we also owe *La Syrie à l'époque des Mamelouks* (Geuthner, Paris): it is the third volume of the Bibliothèque Archéologique et Historique, of the French Administration of Syria and Lebanon. What has already been done by Mr Guy Le Strange in *Palestine under the Moslems* and the *Lands of the Eastern Caliphate* is extended by the translation of other native sources, in particular of Ḳalḳashandi (died 1418) and Omarī. A full geographical description is followed by a full and extremely useful account of the administration furnishing a fine picture of Mameluke

[1] It is appropriate to cite Dr Oman's words in *Science, Religion, and Reality* (ed. Needham) p. 268.

[2] *Lectures and Essays* p. 597.

rule. A third section deals with the different officials and their areas of jurisdiction, and appended notes give us interesting information on the horse and pigeon posts, and on fire-signalling. An account of the way in which the North Syrian pasture grounds would be burnt in order to prevent Mongol invaders from feeding on the districts refers to the practice of tying torches to the tails of foxes (p. 262 sq.). We hear also of the conveyance of snow by camel or ship to the luxury-loving Egyptians (p. 255); an alleged case of ritual human sacrifice comes up for discussion (p. 127 sq.); and, in one way and another, a good deal of light is thrown upon Syria of about A.D. 1400, and the administration of an old land by new masters.

Dr W. O. E. Oesterley's *The Sacred Dance: A Study in Comparative Folk-lore* (Cambridge) is a typical example of the 'comparative' method. It deals with the origin and purpose of dancing, the biblical evidence, processional, circumambulatory, and ecstatic dances, festival and ceremonial dances, and dancing in marriage and funeral rites. Much curious and interesting material is collected and classified—Israelite and Semitic, Greek and Roman, uncultured races—and the points of resemblance and difference between Israel and her neighbours far and wide are carefully noted. The comparative method thus throws a flood of light upon the people, area, or religion under discussion, and everywhere it raises questions which demand an answer. Those who are impatient with the method usually have in mind extreme or aberrational tendencies, or, it may be, particular conclusions; but everywhere a difference must invariably be drawn between the fact that some resemblance is traced between two data and the particular conclusion we draw from it. Dr Oesterley is concerned mainly with marshalling the data, for the subject naturally lends itself to a fuller treatment than he could give it, and involves questions too profound and too fundamental for so compact and eminently readable a book as this is. A more psychological treatment might have been desired, but this would have meant a much more extensive survey; and we may prefer an array of data to a psychological treatise whose strength might, as is sometimes the case, lie in its technical ability rather than in a wide knowledge of the data themselves. Of course the difficulty here is to distinguish between dancing as an instinctive self-expression, a *joie de vivre*, sportive, an undifferentiated emotional non-rationalized manifestation, and, on the other hand, more conscious dancing for some fairly definite purpose. One hesitates to find the 'origin' of the dance in man's *desire* to imitate trees, &c. (p. 15): 'origins' had far better be eschewed; and when one talks of the 'sacred' as the origin, it is perhaps better to recognize that definite 'religious' impulses (whatever the 'religion' connoted) have directed, regularized, or shaped types of

activity which were retained with or without necessary modification when they were taken over and adapted to 'secular' purposes—like the 'sacred' origin of the bull-roarer or of a mimic display. Nor is it very helpful, when continence in warfare is discussed, to say with Sir James Frazer that it was 'based on a superstitious, not a rational motive' (p. 175). Is this an 'either—or'? 'Rational' in the popular sense it may not be, but 'superstitious' is a term that explains nothing. What seems really to be needed is, first, the recognition that not unworthy feelings where the sex-life is concerned can be noticed even among savages, and second, that much more care must be taken as to what is meant by 'rational' and 'religious', and how far the one may cover the other.

The age is determining its vocabulary and rewriting its dictionaries. Religion is inextricably bound up with what the western mind would sever from religion, and sooner or later the question arises whether one must not start with the recognition that the varying relations between the religious and the non-religious forms of all comparable data—from a dance to a philosophy—is the fundamental problem of any methodology that claims to be truly philosophical.

The study of religion is a study of the growth of human behaviour, human mentality—of how men come to act and think as they do. Thus, many of our ideas of heaven and earth and of a supramundane existence take us back to very fundamentary beginnings and it is not without profit, therefore, to read a survey of some of them in the monograph by P. Ildefonse de Vuippens *Le Paradis Terrestre au Troisième Ciel* (Paris and Fribourg). It is a painstaking collection of the conceptions that prevailed among the early Christians and their Jewish and Babylonian forerunners. Out of a vast medley of beliefs he proceeds to weave a few strands, simplifying them by bringing out their essential features, and distinguishing between borrowing or inheritance, modification and originality. It is difficult to avoid reading earlier references in the light of the later, and the work of comparison is uncommonly delicate though exceedingly important. Thus it becomes possible that Plato's 'archetypes of things' is the rationalizing restatement by a Greek genius of a motion which had long been familiar in ideas of pre-existence, and of the heavenly origin of the earthly (cf. G. Buchanan Gray *Sacrifice* p. 151 sq.). What is said of the widespread belief in a Paradise past and future (pp. 38 sqq., cf. 87 sqq.) brings us at once into the midst of problems which divide scholars; and if we take the author's theory that the stories go back to the predispersion stage of mankind and have remained untouched, in spite of the creative power of popular imagination, we thereby imply that they are, psychologically, of surpassing interest and value for the normal

individual, they answer a deep need; and indeed they evidently hold so significant a place in normal human nature that the theory of common origin is really unnecessary. It would be quite as reasonable to argue that the ideas gradually spread after a dispersion stage during the hundreds or thousands of years that we may propose to ascribe to their antiquity; and in fact it would be quite as, if not more, reasonable to allow with M. de la Boullaye and others that ideas of this sort spring up naturally, independently, and stand in no need of any theory of external influence. However that may be, the 'third heaven' of St Paul proves to be neither Palestinian nor Babylonian. Jewish writers knew of seven heavens, and if we follow the old theory of seven concentric spheres with the earth in the centre, then, according as we proceed *from* the earth or *to* the earth, the third sphere would be Venus or Mars, though the writer thinks (p. 144) that the latter reckoning has the preference. Here it may be added that it is left for Dr Albert Gruhn, *Der Schlüssel zur Mythologie* (Schöneiche, Berlin), to urge that the biblical Paradise should be sought at the North Pole. After all, do not the coal seams of Spitzbergen point to an earlier equable climate? America is the Homoroka of Berossus (p. 38), and Labrador is composed of the article *la*+*brad* (= Phrath, Euphrates, firth, forth, fjord, &c.)+*or* (cf. Arabic *bahr* sea); Brussels is boreas-polis, though, we are told, 'whether Paris also belongs here is questionable' (p. 28).

A new edition of the Mishna with text, critical apparatus, translation, extensive notes and introduction, has already made some progress; and *Baba Mezia* by W. Windfuhr and *Schabbat* by Nowack lie before us (Töpelmann, Giessen). Carefully prepared and well printed, they are distinguished by their valuable notes and comments, which are fuller than was possible in Strack's smaller editions. The former of the two tractates deals with loans, contracts, and of course is of extreme interest for the economic life of the Jews. There is much of more popular interest, e. g. the cases where a landlord may not give his tenant notice (p. 94), or where the greedy labourer who eats too much of the farm produce 'shuts the door in his own face', viz. the door of a possible employer (p. 83). Points of contact with Roman law are noted. A more extended comparison with Semitic law would be useful, since the relative fullness (*a*) of Talmudic law, and of Babylonian, Assyrian, and Hittite codes, and (*b*) as implied by the Elephantine papyri, makes the relative scantiness of the 'Mosaic Legislation' stand in extraordinary contrast to what the busy life of the traders of Palestine must have required. Some pages have been torn out, and what we have in the O.T. is the beginning of a new chapter. Prof. Nowack's edition of *Sabbath* is distinguished by its important introduction which is intended

to shew how the tractate is the last stage in a long developement, the earlier stages of which it is difficult to recover from the O.T. Was the Sabbath, as he thinks, the Full Moon? At all events the aim was *later* to set Israel apart from other peoples, and it became one of the chief characteristic features of Judaism. If this explains the remarkable meticulous discussions as to what was and what was not legitimate on the Sabbath, it is as unreasonable for us to comment adversely upon what may strike us as casuistry as it would be to criticize the time, mental energy, and money spent upon important legal disputes of to-day which may strike us as hair-splitting, though great principles—from a legal point of view—may be at stake. Of course there were concessions, legal fictions, and the like, but such an utterance as 'the Sabbath is given over to you but you are not given over to it' (p. 24, second century A. D.) did not leave its mark. Prof. Nowack naturally contrasts Jewish meticulousness with Mk. ii 27 and the 'prophetic' or Deuteronomic spirit (Deut. v 14). Yet it is not unfair to say that in the history of religion there is always a difference between the broad, generous principles of the founder, reformer, or seer and the 'Fence' which every organized and systematized religion erects about its own Law to preserve it. The essays of a Schechter and an Abrahams have been necessary reminders of what the Sabbath, with all its restrictions, could be to the Jews; and many of us doubtless treasure memories of a meticulousness as regards the Christian Sabbath which forbid us to throw stones.

Les Religions païennes et la Religion juive comparées (pp. lii + 438, Plon, Paris), by Prof. Albert Dufourcq of Bordeaux, now in the sixth edition, has already been noticed in these pages (for the third edition, see *J. T. S.* 1909, p. 626). It covers the Egyptian, Semitic, Indo-European (Persian, Greek, Roman), and Israelite religions, and is a fine achievement for a single writer. The volume now contains about a hundred additional pages of invaluable bibliographical information, wherein little of importance is overlooked. Even on this account alone the new edition will always be worth consulting, and we willingly ignore the extraordinary and deliberate anti-English effusion in the Preface (p. iv sq.) which comes strangely in a work part of a great series dealing with the past and future of Christianity.

The fourth edition of the well-known *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte* (2 vols., Mohr, Tübingen) has several characteristic features. The founder, Chantepie de la Saussaye, who died in 1920, had already entrusted Prof. Edvard Lehmann of Lund with the task; and Prof. Alfred Bertholet who was associated with him afterwards became the chief editor. Prof. Lehmann leads off with a brief sketch of the study of the history of religions (22 pp.); the prominent part played by this

country (Max Müller, &c.) is naturally recognized. But while notice is taken of the effect upon the study of researches in the lengthy and continuous history of Indian religion, too little is said of the influence of biblical or Semitic interests, and the resultant work of such scholars as Robertson Smith, Lagrange, or G. F. Moore. To the same writer is due an excellent account of the data of religion and the chief religious ideas (108 pp.). It is a valuable condensed survey, though whether the reader can gain a synoptic view of the whole field through it, is more doubtful. Among the good remarks upon the function of Sacred Writings something could have been said on the part played by the Bible in the philosophy of history, and in fact we expect more in this section on religious philosophy, or the religious *weltanschauung*, than we find. Prof. Ankermann (Berlin) deals concisely with the religions of the lower culture (62 pp.): it is entirely symptomatic of present-day writers that totemism is under a cloud and the religious-historical importance of totemism is said to be quite small. The present reviewer is distinctly in a minority! Dr Franke (Berlin) handles, also shortly, the Chinese (69 pp.), paying due attention to some of the important concepts, like *Li*, *Tao* (with which the Logos can in some respects be compared, i 203), &c. Chinese Buddhism is here included, though the rise of Buddhism in India is reserved for the chapter on India. Japanese religions (Shinto and Buddhism) are handled by Dr Florenz (Hamburg) at much greater length (161 pp.); one cannot but wish that China had been treated with corresponding generosity. Dr Lange (Copenhagen) writes on Egypt (73 pp.); he includes a novel and useful section on the various modern views of Egyptian religion; but we miss here and elsewhere notice of Alan Gardiner's important work. The 'Semites of the Near East' are from the pen of Dr Fr. Jeremias (151 pp.), who in his account of Babylonia and Assyria (110 pp.) introduces the reader to the 'astral' theory and method of interpretation. His treatment of Canaan, Syria, and Phoenicia is relatively scanty (Biblical religion, the religion of Israel, and Christianity are excluded from the scope of the volumes). Islam is by the well-known Arabic scholar Prof. Snouck-Hurgonje of Leiden (108 pp.). Prof. Sten Konow (Christiania) gives an admirable survey of the religions of India (198 pp.), and Persia (Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, 81 pp.) is handled by Prof. Lehmann who, by the way, is of those who date Zoroaster about 1000 B.C. (ii p. 207). Of no little individuality is the account by Prof. Martin P. Nilsson (also of Lund) of Greek religion (138 pp.). Prof. Deubner (Freiburg i. Br.) deals adequately with the Roman religion, including the late Oriental cults (88 pp.). It may be observed that here and elsewhere cross-references are, we believe, wanting, and readers must discover for themselves the light already thrown upon these cults by Prof. Jeremias. Prof. Brückner

(Berlin) handles the Slavs and Letts (34 pp.), Prof. Grönbech (Copenhagen) the Germans (61 pp.), and Canon MacCulloch—the only writer from the farther west—the Celts (35 pp.). The whole makes an imposing result, and much though we miss cross-references and other editorial helps, Prof. Bertholet's remarkably good index (97 3-column pp.) considerably enhances the value of the work. The work is what it claims to be—the history of religion—there is a certain amount of overlapping and repetition (e.g. the fresh explanation of magic and tabu, ii 294), but those who will take the trouble carefully to compare the different chapters and correlate the leading ideas (e. g. the Egyptian *ka* and the Roman *genius*) will gain an admirable conception of the progress of the Science of Religion.

It is not too late to draw attention to the closely packed volume, of nearly 500 pages, of the *Semaine d'Ethnologie Religieuse*, at Tilbourg, September 6–14, 1922 (Enghien, Belgium, 1923). With such prominent Roman Catholic scholars as Pater Wilhelm Schmidt, Albert Carnoy, Capart, Junker, Pinard de la Boullaye, not to mention others, a fruitful session was to be expected, and the many and diverse papers here collected repay careful study. The conference was devoted partly to general introductory questions, and partly to special papers on (1) sacrifice, (2) rites of initiation. As a whole the papers are characterized by their repudiation of 'evolutionism' and their enthusiastic support of the current ethnological method of pursuing anthropology and comparative religion. While very rightly rejecting Morgan's theory of a primitive promiscuity and while opposing rigid mechanical ideas of a continuous upward developement, there was a tendency to rather over-elaborate theories of cultural cycles (e. g. the table, p. 477), which strike the unprejudiced reader as no less rigid and mechanical. And one's mistrust grows when this cultural key to human progress is stained with notions of solar and lunar stages of mythological thought (p. 353). There was also a tendency to over-emphasize the importance of the widespread belief, even among very primitive peoples, in a 'Supreme Being'. If Andrew Lang had right on his side and if his opponents were wrong, one now perceives that the data deserve a more measured treatment than is given them here. The belief is found among tribes who are on an excessively low stage of material culture, e. g. the Yagans, whom Darwin knew (pp. 316 sqq.), and among the Marinds of New Guinea, where the predominance of beliefs and usages of a crude sexual character is not less than remarkable (p. 389). The ethical and social *function* of the belief in a Supreme Being is vital for our study, and from the recent small though thoughtful brochure by Dr Paul Radin on *Monotheism among Primitive People* we can see that the consciousness of some elemental ultimate reality is neither more nor less significant

than the conviction that death is not the end of all things, a conviction which may be associated with gross human sacrifice. More attention should certainly be paid to these 'Supreme Beings', but the facts do not warrant the particular emphasis often laid upon them. There was also a tendency at the Conference to decry the Comparative Method, and no doubt it often deserves it; but when we are asked to regard only 'real' points of resemblance or relation (e. g. p. 461), what is to be our criterion? For the present the exponents of the ethnological method are to the fore, and we must gladly admit that every new method that leads to the collecting and testing of facts is to be welcomed. But the method is ethnological and cultural; that it has anything directly to contribute to the study of religion is not always so evident. An analysis of material objects or of usages, for example, will lead to theories of different migrations, invasions, or waves of influence. Cultures are found to be of complex origin—are there any *pure* cultures anywhere?—and the theories which are formed to explain the points of contact are in their way not more reasonable than the old-time myths which satisfied the curious Greeks. It is significant that it is conspicuously the non-Egyptologists who find in Egypt the key to the history of human culture; and perhaps biblical students would be prepared to agree that, knowing what we do of actual migrations, invasions, and waves of influence, the great problems of religion still remain, and facts or theories of an ethnological character do not solve our problems. It is not unjust, therefore, to be more than a little sceptical when writers, in dealing with conditions less well known, on the strength of differences in culture, put forward easy and often sweeping theories of an ethnological type that can hardly be either proved or disproved.

All the tendencies just referred to reappear in M. Pinard de la Boullaye's second volume of his *L'Étude Comparée des Religions* (522 pp., Beauchesne, Paris), the first volume of which covered the history of the discipline (see *J.T.S.* xxv 108 sq.). In breadth and learning the new volume is as impressive as the first, and the detailed exposition of methods and principles is as opportune as it is unrivalled. The author considers the various introductory questions such as the distinction between Method and Doctrine; he surveys at length the different methods (comparative, historical, philological, the older and the newer anthropological—the difference is vital for him—and the psychological), he discusses their possibilities, limitations, and failures, and summarizes the results. Extended appendices deal with proof by convergence, and the difference between empirical and philosophical history. The work as a whole is characterized by its lucidity, fullness of reference, and abundance of quotation; it has a thoroughness and completeness sometimes bordering on the prolix, and, as a mine of erudition, its easy use

is facilitated by admirably complete indexes (pp. 445–520). It goes carefully into questions which come naturally to a Roman Catholic writer, but they are questions which those who differ from him cannot overlook; and his criticisms of those who study religion as something pathological and abnormal are trenchant and not unfair. It is a conspicuous contribution, though like every other work on the subject it is to be read with discrimination. Taken in connexion with the *Semaine d'Ethnologie Religieuse* (above) it represents a general attitude which cannot be ignored. To say that serious students of religion cannot afford to neglect this work is one thing, but it is difficult to believe that it points the direction in which the study should move. Though it may readily be granted that there is an absence of order in the study as at present conducted, the aim should be towards a *scientific* or *critical* study of religions, even though the possibility of a science be sometimes denied (as on p. 12); for after all we have to deal with what have been or are accepted as ultimate facts, and the data of the world's religions, and also of the world's theologies and philosophies, surely admit of being handled with adequate sympathy and impartiality. On the other hand, M. de la Boullaye would argue that the last word rests with philosophy: though we start empirically, objectively, sooner or later the philosophers and not the historians, or the rest, must pronounce upon our evidence (pp. 19, 207, 275, 281, 407). This is to forget that the comparative study of philosophies is already a going concern, and is not confined to the school of Dilthey. It is of course true that the study of religions leads one to views of grave significance for one's religion, and these views may be valid or otherwise; but one's religious or other presuppositions may also consciously or unconsciously influence one's research, and these, too, may be of a sort helpful or detrimental. The distinction between Method and Doctrine then is of extreme importance, and here the learned author does not take us to the root of the problem.[1] Of course it is easy enough to enlarge upon the 'vicious circle' (e. g. pp. 88 sq., 430), and this always provokes a *tu quoque*; but we meet with the vicious circle everywhere, even in science—witness Prof. Eddington in *Science, Religion, and Reality* p. 205. To say that the study of religion leads us, *inter alia*, to the study of the 'vicious circle' is as true as the fact that it has repeatedly led to the recognition of much which, strictly speaking, lies outside religion proper and concerns logic and psychology. After all, the study of gods and demons is not rarely that of primitive theories of causation, the study of multiple 'souls' proves to be that of primitive psychology, the deeper knowledge of Divine Personality and that of Human Personality grows, as it were, side by side, and the greatest problems of religion are bound up with

[1] I may refer to Hastings *ERE*, Art. 'Religion' §§ 16 (iii), 17 (n. 1).

the non-religious. M. de la Boullaye has some fine pages on originality and wherein originality lies (pp. 70 sqq.); but when it comes to the comparison of Christianity with other religions, there is a resort to the different 'nuances', which is convincing only to those who share his presuppositions. By appropriate emphasis upon the 'nuances' (p. 60) the most harmless comparison could be repudiated, but the author does not reject the method (cf. p. 275). On the contrary he has excellent remarks on the way in which comparative philology helps us to check the principles of comparison; and if the reader will correlate the different principles in the different methods he will greatly strengthen his weapons. For example, the cultural resemblances upon which the new anthropological school lay such stress *might* well be due to parallel, or converging developements (cf. pp. 122, 161), and the peculiarly individualistic traits which, one imagines, could hardly have been invented twice over, and are therefore ascribed to ethnical movements, *might*, like identical readings in a couple of otherwise unrelated manuscripts, be entirely without further significance. At all events, the 'comparative' study of the comparative and other methods is an invaluable training, and we are glad to see that the author admits that Bastian has some right on his side (pp. 61, 65, 270). Similarly, it is essentially the *évolutionnisme rigide*—and there is merit in the adjective—to which he objects; and with this all scholars would undoubtedly agree. After all, Neo-Thomism can scarcely repudiate a mode of thought which was so tellingly employed by St Thomas Aquinas—after his own manner, and in a way which was often not a little rigid.[1] And here, too, M. de la Boullaye shews himself wiser than many of the anti-evolutionists. His fine volumes, in particular his detailed study of method, are throughout stimulating, thought provoking, and challenging, but *the* book that is needed, though not less searching, must be wider in its scope, and we venture to think that a more powerful grasp of the nature, or, one may say, of the whole theory of religion, can be gained only by a more appreciative recognition of the interrelation between totemic and other rudimentary cults, at one end of the scale, and, at the other end, a readiness—the 'originality' of Christianity being freely and clearly apprehended—to apply the different methods of enquiry to its doctrines and history.

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[1] e.g. Étienne Gilson *Le Thomisme* (tr. Bullough), on the principle of continuity, the principle of perfection, angelic hierarchies arranged according to degree of illumination, and so forth (pp. 156 sq., 273, and Index, *s.v.* Hierarchy).