Reviews

**Charles J. Billson , Mabel Peacock , E. Sidney Hartland , William Crooke ,
Alfred Nutt & Florence Peacock**

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REVIEWS.

THE PRE- AND PROTO-HISTORIC FINNS, BOTH EASTERN AND WESTERN, WITH THE MAGIC SONGS OF THE WEST FINNS.
By the Hon. JOHN ABERCROMBY. Grimm Library, Nos. ix. and x. 2 vols. D. Nutt, London, 1898.

By the publication of this important and interesting work Mr. Abercromby has done much to remove one of the reproaches of English scholarship. It is the first serious attempt that has been made in this country to investigate the early history and culture of the Finnish people. Such a task demands indeed no light equipment, as a glance at Mr. Abercromby's list of authorities will at once convince anybody; and it requires also a more than usually cautious habit of mind, for not only is the subject obscure in itself, but it is made still darker by the existence of vague hypotheses and unscientific conjectures. A proof of Mr. Abercromby's sound judgment is shown by his refraining from any excursions into the fascinating but at present unanswerable questions which centre round the Asiatic origin of the Finns. There are only two passages, I think, which refer to this point at all. In the first (vol. i. p. 86) the author says "that both stocks" (long-headed and short-headed) "originally issued from Asia seems almost certain;" and in the second passage (vol. i. p. 146) he remarks, "Though we have to believe that once the remotest ancestors of the Finnish peoples lived in Asia, it is, I think, impossible to trace them there." This reserve is the only scientific attitude. Might it not have been as well, however, to put the general reader on his guard against the errors and exaggerations with which this question has been treated in such books, for instance, as Lenormant's *Chaldean Magic*?

In the first five chapters of Mr. Abercromby's first volume he tries, with the combined aid of craniology, archæology, ethnography, and philology, to sketch the history of the Eastern and

Western Finns in pre- and proto-historic times. How closely his evidences have been brought up to date may be instanced from the archæological chapter, which contains a full account of the important excavations conducted by Mr. Novokreščennikh at Gliadénova, near Perm, in 1896 and 1897, and the book contains twelve excellent reproductions of photographs of interesting finds taken by Mr. Novokreščennikh and given by him to the author.

Mr. Abercromby discriminates seven epochs of civilisation in the early history of the Finns. Two of these periods are prehistoric, the first covering the time during which the Finns and Ugrians lived in close contact before the settlement of the Finnish peoples in Europe. It was towards the end of this period, perhaps about 1800-1500 B.C., and during the Neolithic Age in Russia, that the undivided Finns entered Europe. From evidences collected in the craniological and archæological chapters it appears probable that these Asiatic wanderers settled in the valley of the River Oká, in the Volga region of Central Russia, and their subsequent movements were westward towards Lake Ladoga and the Upper Volkhov, where important prehistoric remains have been found. These movements took place during the second period, which embraces the time between the first settlement of Finns in Europe and their first contact with an Iranian civilisation. During the earlier part of this second period the Finns and Ugrians remained undivided; during the latter part they began to split into different linguistic groups. The reasons given for supposing that the undivided Finns passed this first part of the second period in Europe are based upon the facts that they had learnt the use of spelt and had a name for the oak—neither of which, the author thinks, they could have known beyond the Urals. During this epoch the Finns were at a stage of pure Neolithic culture, without the knowledge of any domestic animals except the dog. In the third period the Finns and Ugrians, "emerging from their sombre, impenetrable forests and trackless swamps," came in contact with Scythian nomads, an event which Mr. Abercromby places about 600 B.C. He concludes, however, that the separation of the Magyars from the rest of the Ugrians had taken place at a still earlier date. The third, or Iranian period, may have lasted for the Western Finns about 200 years, but for the Eastern Finns it continued, through intercourse with Persia, down to the overthrow of the Sassanide dynasty in the seventh

century. Before 300 B.C. the Western Finns broke away from the Mordvins, and, migrating towards the west or south-west, came in contact with Baltic peoples speaking a Lithuanian dialect. This fourth, or Lithuanian, period partly overlaps the fifth (proto-Scandinavian) period, and lasted till about 500-800 A.D. During these first years of the present era the early culture of the Western Finns seems to have received its most powerful impulse. Mr. Abercromby has formed the conclusion—a conclusion opposed to that of most writers on the subject, but supported by the most recent results of archæology—that the Finns entered Finland perhaps as early as the second or third century A.D., and then found the south-western part of that country occupied by a pre-historic Scandinavian people, who remained there down to about the sixth century, and profoundly influenced the Finns, giving them, amongst other things, the important word *Runo*. The sixth, or early Slav period, marks the contact between the more southerly of the Western Finns and various Slav (Russian) tribes, who came pushing up from the south towards Lake Ilmen not earlier than 500 A.D. The seventh or Tartar period marks the influence on the Eastern Finns, first of the Bolgars (about 700 A.D. to 1238), and later of the Mišār Tartars.

From the new words borrowed by the Finns during each of these periods Mr. Abercromby derives a measure of their growth and changes in culture. The chapters containing these results are exceptionally interesting, and every reader will recognise in them a very delicate and beautiful piece of work. The general sketch of early Finnish history, derived mainly from these evidences of philology, must be substantially accurate, although, as Mr. Abercromby is careful to point out, there is room for error in any particular detail; because all new additions to a language do not exactly coincide with the new ideas conveyed by those words, which are borrowed in some cases for special reasons (e.g. the names of spirits, sacred animals, &c.), and apart from this there is a large margin of uncertainty. For example, during the Fourth Period, Mr. Abercromby says, "for transport purposes they had now a sledge," but we cannot be quite sure that the sledge was new to them at this period, however probable that may be; for, though the Finns borrowed a word for it (*reki*), they also borrowed a word for "tooth," and it is certain that teeth at any rate were employed at an earlier period.

The mythological chapters are perhaps the most interesting to students of folklore. They do not, however, contain an exhaustive statement of Finnish myth, but are confined expressly to the mythology of the Magic Songs. May we hope that these sketches are but the prelude to an extensive treatment of the subject in another work?

The account of the Finnish "*haltia*" recalls the Melanesian *mana*, especially in its application to the ecstasy of the wizard.

In remarking that although *haltia* is a loan-word (= ruler) the idea evidently goes back to the earliest times, the author might have referred to the Vogul *aatir* ("prince") the name given to the spirits dwelling in the Vogul images. This word was borrowed in the Third Period, and therefore much earlier than *haltia* (which is Scandinavian) to express the same idea.

In his account of Ukko, the anonymous sky-god, Mr. Abercromby says that "the Finns assigned him many honorific epithets, but no wife or children." This statement, although it is probably accurate, is perhaps put too roundly, and might perplex a reader who had just learnt from Professor Compagnot's work on the Kalevala that "there is a supreme god of the sky, Ukko (the old man), who has a wife, Akka (the old woman)." The fact is that Bishop Agricola, writing in the sixteenth century, included in his list of Finnish deities a wife of Ukko, whom he called Rauni, and the earlier Finnish mythologists, as Porthan and Ganander, followed the bishop's lead, although Porthan remarked that Ukko's wife was never mentioned in the old songs. It appears probable, however, from the arguments of Castrén and others, that Agricola was mistaken on this point. The expression "Ukko's son," which occurs not unfrequently in Finnish poetry, and in the Magic Songs is applied particularly to a wizard, is certainly figurative. I agree with Mr. Abercromby that the club or hammer of Ukko does not symbolise the thunder-bolt, but is a much more humble instrument. There is a song in the Kanteletar (ii. 339), in which Ukko is besought by a hunter to swing round his golden club or copper hammer and beat the woods, so as to drive out the game; and in this case the singer is evidently thinking merely of something like a beater's stick.

I cannot follow the author in his view that Ilmarinen was the old air- and sky-god of the Finns before they ever came in contact with Europeans; that he subsequently acquired an anthropomor-

phic character as the magic smith, after which the old conception of him was continued under the new appellation of "Ukko." Mr. Abercromby mentions in support of this view: (1) the correspondence of the name with the Votjak "Inmar"; (2) the evidence of Bishop Agricola; (3) the fact of Ilmarinen's appearance on the Lapp gobdás in the place of a native wind-god. But in the Magic Songs and in the Kalevala Ilmarinen appears almost invariably in the character of a magic smith, and it is difficult, in the face of Comparetti's arguments (Kalevala, p. 217-8, German edition), to believe in his being personified from an old divinity. As to Bishop Agricola's evidence, it must be remembered that he lived with the Tavastian branch of the Western Finns, and evidently did not know the magic smith as he then existed in Karelian runes.

Mr. Abercromby also looks upon Väinämöinen as the sky-god under another name, and thinks that the transference to a song-and culture-hero may have come about in this way. "The sky-god was also the thunderer; thunder is the voice of the god speaking; but speaking can easily be turned, if the god is thought of as in a joyous mood, into singing." But if Väinämöinen is more than an idealised wizard, his various functions seem to me more appropriate to a wind-god; and although Mr. Abercromby's suggestion in the sentence quoted is quite possible (especially having regard to the peculiar character of wizards' "singing"), yet thunder does not after all seem so naturally and universally suggestive of song as the wind is. It would have been interesting to have had Mr. Abercromby's opinion as to the derivation of the word Väinämöinen or Äinimäinen. Clearly he does not accept any of those derivations which refer to earth or water, nor that of Ahlqvist, who traces it to the River Dvina (Viana—Väinä).

I cannot dwell upon the many points of interest that arise in connection with the author's account of Tapio (in whose name Schiefner recognised the Christian saint Eustace), and his numerous family of woodland deities. Hiisi Mr. Abercromby rightly regards, with Castrén, as originally a tree-god, afterwards transformed, through the ban of Christian missionaries, into a devil. The Finns are unusually rich in names for the Devil, most of them descended from a good old pagan stock: for example, Perkele (from Perkunas, the Lithuanian Thunder-god), Piru

(from Perun, the Slavonic Thunder-god) Lempo (regarded by Mr. Abercromby as a forest sprite, but the word seems to be of Germanic origin = limp; in the Magic Songs the Devil is addressed as "Lempo, Piru, the limping fellow").

Other names for the Devil are Äijö, the old one, who, with his sons and daughters, is frequently mentioned in the Magic Songs; Juutus (Judas), Paha (the evil one), Pakana (the pagan), Keito, &c.

In his account of the underworld, Tuonela, Mr. Abercromby rejects without mentioning it Comparetti's perhaps rather fanciful derivation of the word from *tuonne*, and says it is the same as the Lapp *duodna* ("miserable"). It is a pity that the author should have been so cramped by the comprehensiveness of his scheme, that he could not afford space to enter more into detail on this and other points which are new to many of his readers. A few mythological names which one might have expected seem to have been omitted from this chapter. In the account of elves and brownies there is no mention of Tonttu, the house-sprite (*huoneen haltia*), mentioned by Agricola, and, though there is a full account of Pohjola, the land of gloom and sorrow, nothing is said about the complementary idea of Päivölä, Saari, the land of sunshine and plenty. The reason may be that neither Tonttu nor Päivölä occurs in the Magic Songs, but among the mythological names which do occur there, and are also omitted in this chapter, are the following: Antero Vipunen, Untamo, Lemminkäinen, Äijö, and Keito. The opinion of Mr. Abercromby about the first three of these personages would have been welcome, and the last two names occur so often in the Magic Songs that they should surely have been included in this chapter. Keito's spears = "sorcerers' elf-shots," occur in several of the charms, and the name Keito is generally paralleled with Piru or Hiisi. In Renvall's Lexicon he is described as a patron of metals. I also note in the section on instruments (p. 353) that there is no account of the Para, the apparatus for magically conveying the milk of a neighbour's cow to one's own dairy. This is explained, however, in the Index (vol. ii. p. 396).

The second volume of Mr. Abercomby's work is devoted to the Magic Songs of the Western Finns. These are translated from the *Loitsurunoja* of Dr. Lönnrot. Readers of *Folk-Lore* will recognise all the "Origins" (except one) as having appeared in these

pages; but the translation has been revised, and the "Origins" form only a small part of the collection now given.

The Magic Songs are not ancient as regards the time of their production, although they contain many old-fashioned ideas. Most of them are evidently later than the twelfth century and the conversion of the Finns to Christianity; and it is almost certain that none are older than the Fifth Period, when the word "runo" was introduced into their language. Probably, as Mr. Abercromby thinks, "they received their greatest development in the" (very long) "interval between pure heathenism and pure Christianity."

The Magic Songs are of great interest to the student of literature, for, as Professor Comparetti has conclusively shown in his work on the Kalevala, they are the original root of Finnish poetry, and there is no other instance of a poetic literature developed from Shamanism. They are not stiff pieces of priestly ritual, like the Magic Songs of the Babylonians, for instance, but essentially popular. Two elements in their vitality are obvious. They are all *beneficent*, and they contain far higher *poetic worth* than the charms of any other people. In fact, many of them are pure lyrics which rival in beauty the products of literatures far more catholic than that of the Finns.

To the student of folklore they are interesting for many reasons, and not least because they offer a notable example of the way in which a people of foreign origin can assimilate and work up into original forms of their own the materials supplied by the folklore of their neighbours. For instance, there is nothing elsewhere quite like the Finnish "Origins," as Mr. Abercromby remarks (vol. ii. p. 41), but the materials of which they are composed are not derived (except in some cases) from old Finnish myths, but are drawn generally from the current folklore of Europe. Mr. Abercromby gives a few specimens of East Finnish, Russian, and other charms for comparison with those of the *Loitsurunvoja*, but in order to complete the subject it would be necessary to traverse a far wider field. For instance, on p. 122, the reader will recognise, under a Finnish exterior, the famous Merseburger Gebet, or Dislocation Spell, a charm which ranges from India to Ireland; and the Finnish charm for pleurisy is exactly similar in idea (as Professor Comparetti has pointed out) to an Anglo-Saxon *gealdor*, prior to the tenth century, which is given in

Cockayne's "Leechdoms." Now that these Magic Songs have been made accessible to English students of folklore (the larger part of them have not before been translated from the Finnish) they will be studied, I hope, with the attention which they certainly deserve.

As to the merits of Mr. Abercromby's translation, I hardly venture to express an opinion; but so far as I am capable of judging, I have found it very accurate, and at the same time the English is chosen with care and taste. Sometimes the language is perhaps rather too conversational, *e.g.* "turn a hair" (p. 80), "bothering" (p. 161), &c. On page 68 I do not know why *tulinen* and *panuinen* are both represented by "fiery": would not "fiery" and "flaming" be better, as on pp. 180, 335, &c.? On page 84, in the passage "Hills flowed like butter," &c., are not *voina*, *lihana*, &c., essive cases used as predicates; and would not a more accurate rendering be "Hills flowed into butter, rocks into swinesflesh, lakes into ale," &c.? and again on p. 88, "The Creator's clouds got watery-wet, the sky crackled with fire." The use of the word "like" in both of these passages seems to detract from the reality of the wizard's conjuring.

On page 91, "puskuja puserran" is rendered "the elfshots squeeze." Is not the disease, in this case, conceived as a horned animal, and should not the translation be "press back, or resist the blow of the horns"? (Cf. *panen puskut puskimahan*, which Mr. Abercromby translates on page 92, "I'll order it" (the ox) "to butt at thee." In other places, however, *puskut* is properly rendered "elfshots.") I doubt whether "light of heart," on page 194, quite represents the epithet of Lemminkäinen, "*lieto*," which properly seems to refer to a light sandy soil, "*terra arenosa*" (Juslenius). Lemminkäinen, I take it, is like the sand blown about by every wind of passion, and probably "wayward," or even "unstable as sand," would be nearer the mark. "Unstable or weak-shoulders," would also perhaps render "*lapalieto*," on page 369, better than "defective-shoulders." On page 108, line 3, would not "pliant," rather than "complaisant," express the double idea, there being apparently an allusion to the flexible body of the wasp?

I may be allowed to add that it would have been much more convenient for reference if the numbering of the songs had been made to correspond with that of the Finnish text.

I have noticed only a few trifling misprints. The date of Ganander's *Mythologica Fennica* on p. xv. should of course be 1789. On page 151 (vol. i.), "slow" appears to be a misprint for "low." On page 363 (vol. i.), the reference to the Para should be 132d not 153d.

In conclusion, let me heartily congratulate Mr. Abercromby upon the completion of these admirable volumes, which must remain for many a day the standard English work on the subjects with which they deal.

CHARLES J. BILLSON.

LITTÉRATURE ORALE DE L'Auvergne. Par PAUL SÉBILLOT.
Paris: J. Maisonneuve. 1898.

THIS collection of traditions, songs, riddles, and sayings, which forms the thirty-fifth volume of the *Littératures Populaires de toutes les Nations*, shows once again how rarely any legend stands isolated in folklore. Nearly every story in the book is a variant of some well-known *conte* adapted to local circumstances. The Wicked Stepmother, the Lad who did not know how to Tremble, the Lost Children, the Serpents guarding a Treasure, the Bird of Paradise and the Monk, all have a place in its pages, with other equally familiar characters. In England, St. Mark's-eye is often the time for "watching the church-porch," but M. Sébillot's story, entitled *La mort prédite*, affords evidence that, according to the natives of Aurillac, it is at All-Souls the spectres of those who are to die within the year pass through the abbatial porch of St. Géraud.

The folklore of many English counties represents the white rabbit as a phantom of ill-omen, it is therefore interesting to find that in Puy-de-Dôme a goblin appears in the same form. The belief that a pigeon often comes to a house as a death-warning seems general throughout the British Isles, and an instance of a parting soul assuming the form of a white dove is mentioned by M. Sébillot in connection with the *château* of Baffie. The story of The Devil, The Wind, and Lincoln Minster, lately published in *Folk-Lore*, finds an analogue in a legend of Cantal.

St. Laurence, however, fills the part occupied by "the leader of the opposition" in England. The saint, it seems, met Boreas covered with rags, for, defeated and dispossessed of his altars, the wind was returning to the north. The holy man put on no airs of superiority, but entered into conversation with the vanquished power, and the two went on their way together amicably enough until they reached Puy-Saint-Laurent, when the saint said: "Wait here for me. I am going to pray in this oratory." Since then Boreas has been waiting outside for his reappearance, and, having long been tired, he betrays his impatience by his *rugissements*. "Cette légende est extrêmement répandue," says M. Sébillot, and he gives authority for its existence at Chartres, Langres, Paris (the church of St. Sulpice), Autun, Coutances, Strasburg, Florence, Rome, and Copenhagen.

The riddles given towards the end of the volume are but few in number, although in a mountainous country like Auvergne, "où les soirées d'hiver sont longues, on doit dire bon nombre de devinettes." As in other parts of Europe, probably, the people who have the best opportunity of collecting folklore have little comprehension of its value, and fail to record practices which seem too puerile to be worthy of attention.

MABEL PEACOCK.

TOM TIT TOT: AN ESSAY ON SAVAGE PHILOSOPHY IN FOLK-TALE. By EDWARD CLODD. London: Duckworth and Co., 1868.

It would not be easy for Mr. Clodd to write a book that would not bear witness to his wide knowledge, his grasp of general principles, and his keen perception of their logical issues. The book before us is marked by all of these; and its genial style, so characteristic of him, will commend it to that popular perusal for which it is intended. He is a born *vulgarisateur*, to use an expressive French word for which we have no exact equivalent. Within a small compass he has expounded the underlying philosophy of the story we remember so well from his first introduction of it to

the Folk-Lore Society. How great must have been the temptation to enlarge on his text, and to let the varied reading, which has formed the basis of his exposition, carry him away, those who have attempted similar work will best appreciate. He has not in every direction succeeded in compression to the extent desirable when writing for a public that soon tires; but, on the whole, he has had strength to resist the temptation so easily besetting a writer familiar with the ramifications of his subject.

Having reprinted the story at length, he gives abstracts of several important variants. He then briefly discusses the question of the diffusion of stories, coming to the safe conclusion, that "where coincidences in stories extend to minute detail, a common origin may be assumed, but that where only a like idea is present as the chief *motif*, without correspondences in incidental details, independent origin is probable." The meaning of some of the incidental features of the variants is next dealt with; after which the author proceeds to the main thesis—that of barbaric ideas about names, and the taboos connected therewith. This occupies the bulk of the volume, and involves, of course, a consideration of magic, first through tangible, and then through intangible, things.

The sections on taboo might perhaps have been better arranged; and I wish that at the end of every chapter the author had summed up the results arrived at so far. Moreover, it would have added somewhat to the value of the exposition if he had stated his reasons for discarding Mr. Andrew Lang's suggestion that we have in the story simply an instance of a bet on an unusual name. As it is, while those to whom the subject is familiar will have no difficulty in following him, I fear that the readers for whom the book is mainly intended will sometimes be puzzled for want of an explicit statement. For such, it is needful to label one's conclusions in distinct and unmistakable form.

But these may be hypercriticisms; and they leave after all an interesting book in which initiated as well as outside readers will find not a little both of entertainment and instruction.

E. SIDNEY HARTLAND.

THE TRADITIONAL GAMES OF ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND, with Tunes, Singing Rhymes, and Methods of Playing according to the variants extant and recorded in different parts of the Kingdom. Collected and annotated by ALICE BERTHA GOMME. Vol. I., 1894; Vol. II., 1898. London: D. Nutt.

How comes it that the first volume of Mrs. Gomme's collection, published so long ago as 1894, has never been reviewed in *Folk-Lore*? This is a question that members of the Society may ask, though I am personally not called upon to answer. With the appearance of the second volume, completing the work, at all events it is time to give some account of it.

Imprimis, then, it is the first part of a Dictionary of British Folklore projected by Mr. Gomme: a project which every one who is interested in the subject must hope he will some time find leisure to carry into complete execution. The games collected here are arranged in dictionary-fashion. Not merely are the tunes and rhymes given, with all important variants, but the record is completed by diagrams showing how the players are placed at different stages of the games, or diagrams of the board or ground upon which the playing takes place. And the second volume is brought to an end with a Memoir on the study of children's games, discussing their anthropological significance.

The perusal of the book will bring back to most readers many a childish memory. Perhaps I may note one or two of my own as variants of the games described. The game called "Lamploo" I remember being played at Bristol in my boyhood under the name of "Lamp-out." There was a den, on one side of the ground only, and a goal on the other. The boy whose business it was to catch the others stood in the space outside the den. His hands were *not* clasped. The other boys had to cross the space where the catcher stood, touch the goal, and return without having been caught. Every boy caught was added to the capturing party. This always seemed to me, as Mrs. Gomme in fact suggests, a variant of another game here described under the names of "King Cæsar" and "King of Cantland." Mrs. Gomme notes that in Dorsetshire it is called "King-sealing." We called it "King Sillio." There was, I believe, on catching

some ceremony of crowning, or spitting over the head, but it was dying out; and as we played the game the pursuer touched his man three times, with the words, "One, two, three, the man for me." Another game described here under the names of "Hunt the Staigie," "Chickidy Hand," "Stag," and "Whiddy," of which "Johnny Rover" seems a variant, was well known in Bristol. We called it "Cock Warning;" and the formula uttered by the "Cock" was "Cock warning once, Cock warning twice, Cock warning three times over." Before saying this he had to clasp his hands, and he had to effect his first capture with his hands clasped. Touching was enough for a capture. The boy caught joined hands with him, as described by Mrs. Gomme in "Lamploo," to catch the others, first repeating the warning. There was a goal or post from whence the capturing party always started. If they loosened their hands, any of the others could ride them pick-a-back to the post, and they had to begin again with the warning. In all these games it was the rule that when three had been caught, the first "Cock" or "King" (but only the first) was entitled to leave the capturing party, and join the other.

The differences in these three games, as known in my boyhood at Bristol and as described by Mrs. Gomme, are perhaps trivial. But trivial differences are sometimes of importance in reasoning back to origins; and these, I think, tend to the conclusion that all three games are developed from a common original, to which "Lamploo," as described by Mrs. Gomme from the *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, is probably the nearest approximation. If so, Jamieson's guess at the derivation of the game of King of Cantland cannot be correct, though the common original may have been, and probably was, a mimicry of tribal or inter-communal raids. Numerous as have been Mrs. Gomme's contributors, and many as are the variants of many of the games, the book might easily have been increased in size by the addition of other variant details. In a collection of traditions, of whatever kind, there is always the difficulty of knowing where to stop. For scientific purposes it is of course better to err on the inclusive side; but scientific purposes are not the only considerations in the publication of a book. We have every reason to be grateful to Mrs. Gomme for the information she has got together and the form in which she has presented it. If it be not all we could wish for as anthropological students, it is much more than we could ever

have expected. It is enough, too, to enable the authoress tentatively to expound the significance of much that has hitherto been unexplained. Her Memoir is of great interest and no little importance, for the conclusions she has come to from a consideration solely of British games must form a starting-point for inquiries of a similar character into the games of continental children. These conclusions are modestly stated, and, startling as they may seem to persons who are strangers to anthropological investigations, they are not mere hasty guesses, but are fairly reasoned out. We may not all be prepared to ascribe to the game of Touch so lofty an ancestry as that of a primitive taboo. There is, however, something to be said for the conjecture. It is certainly not weakened by the variant game, apparently unknown to Mrs. Gomme, of Cross-touch. The rule of this game is that when "he" is pursuing one player and another passes between them, the chase must be transferred to the latter and to no other, so long as no other player comes between the pursuer and his quarry. Unless this be a modern innovation, to prevent the marking out and running down of one player, the compulsory transfer of the aim by the crossing of another player seems to hark back to the savage conditions of a taboo or a choice of victim.

The confusion between games founded on funeral or mourning customs and marriage or courtship customs is well pointed out. There has evidently been a transfer from the former to the latter. This has, I think, been aided by the savage difficulty in believing in death, a difficulty shared always by the young, with their superabundance of animal spirits and their consequent buoyance of hope. "Green Grass" clearly owes its origin to funeral rites. The transfer of words from one game to another has been constantly going on, and the adoption of new words is well illustrated by the instance of "Hunting" (where we get a street-song current some six or seven and twenty years ago after the Shah's visit to England), and another where "Up and down the City Road" (a street-song half a century old or more) is sung. The game of "Hood," it may be noted, has been studied more at length since the publication of Mrs. Gomme's first volume by Miss Mabel Peacock in these pages (*Folk-Lore*, vol. vii. p. 330). The local distribution and periodical celebration of games is one of great archæological and ethnological interest, on which Mrs. Gomme

has hardly been able to touch. It will have to be dealt with, however, in order to draw any satisfactory conclusions on the anthropological value of games.

Meanwhile, I congratulate Mrs. Gomme on the completion of her task, and commend these volumes to every student of folklore. Together with Mr. Newell's book on the *Games and Songs of American Children* they present a tolerably complete and very valuable account of British traditional games.

E. SIDNEY HARTLAND.

SEMITIC INFLUENCES IN HELLENIC MYTHOLOGY, with special reference to the recent mythological works of the Right Hon. Professor Max Müller and Mr. Andrew Lang. By ROBERT BROWN, Junior, F.S.A., M.R.A.S. London: Williams and Norgate. 1898.

RESEARCHES INTO THE ORIGIN OF THE PRIMITIVE CONSTELLATIONS OF THE GREEKS, PHOENICIANS, AND BABYLONIANS. Same Author and Publishers. Vol. I. 1899.

THESE two volumes, the work of Mr. R. Brown, Junior, are a further exposition of his well-known views on the relation of the mythology of Greece to that of Babylonia. The former is in the main controversial, being an unmeasured attack on the methods of the anthropological school of folklore and on the writings of Mr. A. Lang in particular. We think that Mr. Brown has shown little discretion by intervening in the duello between Professor Max Müller and Mr. Lang. It is true that he writes not without provocation; but his criticism displays a lack of temper and a bitterness of tone which we had fondly supposed obsolete at the present day. In fact, he takes his versatile opponent much too seriously, and his style is ill adapted to an encounter of this kind. It decidedly lacks delicacy of touch, and much of his banter is rather dreary reading.

But it is with the serious exposition of his views on celestial mythology that we are now more immediately concerned. As readers of his previous works are aware, his object is to show that

Hellenic mythology is in the main derived from Babylonia. He now lays down sundry canons which define the extent to which Semitic influence may be assumed in the myths of Greece—first, when neither the name of any particular personage nor the chief mythic incidents connected with his legend appear in the other branches of religious mythology; secondly, when Aryan nature-myths do not supply an easy and appropriate explanation of his concept and history; thirdly, when his cult is found in regions either absolutely non-Aryan or else permeated with non-Aryan influence; fourthly, when his form is more or less unanthropomorphic; fifthly, when his character and story generally are in harmony with those of mythic personages admittedly non-Aryan; and, sixthly, when the resources of Aryan philology are powerless or inadequate to explain his name and some or many of his principal epithets.

We have no space for an adequate review of these canons of the science of mythology. The final result is that they exclude all investigation beyond the Aryan and Semitic area. With our widened knowledge of Babylonian culture, no one will be disposed to deny that it may have exercised considerable influence on the religious thought of the West. Aphrodite of Paphos, for instance, or Artemis of Ephesus is almost certainly an oriental deity imported into Hellenic lands. But the fact that the later cult of Aphrodite was framed more or less closely on an eastern model does not exclude the possibility of the existence of a purely Greek goddess of love to whom the kindred oriental cultus may have been affiliated. This is, in the main, the view of Mr. Farnell, the most sober authority on Grecian myths. With our experience of the results of explaining the titles of Hellenic gods from epithets in the *Rig Veda*, students will be well advised in hesitating to accept the same method when extended to the Semitic area.

There is, again, much to be said in favour of the view that many of the folk-explanations of the constellations may have been independently discovered. Few scholars now accept the views of Professor Max Müller and Sir G. Cox that the conception of the Great Bear is based on a parallel between the seven shiners, the seven sages, and the seven bears, all of which depends on the assumption that this constellation has not the shadow of a likeness to a bear. But the Karens, who see in this group of stars an elephant, can hardly have been influenced either by Aryan or

Semitic myths, and, as Dr. Tylor has pointed out, the same idea prevailed in Greenland and in other parts of the North American continent.

But whether we accept or reject Mr. Brown's speculations, all must agree that he has done good service by his translation of and commentary on the works of Aratus, and he has brought a vast amount of learning and ingenious suggestion to bear on this exposition of his views. Like every pioneer in a new branch of exploration, he must be prepared for much adverse criticism, and we trust that the diatribe against his opponents will not be repeated. The more calmly and judicially his views are presented for the judgment of students, the greater is the chance of their acceptance by any one whose opinion is of value in this branch of inquiry.

WILLIAM CROOKE.

CREATION MYTHS OF PRIMITIVE AMERICA IN RELATION TO
THE RELIGIOUS HISTORY AND MENTAL DEVELOPMENT OF
MANKIND. By JEREMIAH CURTIN. 1899. Williams &
Norgate.

THIS volume is the first fruits of a myth-discovery expedition made by the author in 1895 and 1896 throughout Western North and Central America, from California to Yucatan. It contains mythic tales derived from two Californian tribes inhabiting the Sacramento Valley—the Wintus, now numbering some 500 souls, and the few surviving members of the Yana people, of whom close upon 5,000 were massacred by the white settlers in 1864, under circumstances, narrated with admirable impartiality and discretion by Mr. Curtin, which make this chapter in the history of the relations between higher and lower races one of the most abominable even in that hideous record of cruelty, oppression, and denial of all that constitutes the only true reason we have for asserting our superiority. Mr. Curtin deserves the utmost measure of gratitude from all who care for humanity, as well as from all who care for science, for his efforts on behalf of the scanty remnants of these interesting peoples. Nothing is said

explicitly as to the degree of culture reached by these Indians, but it seems to have been very low, much lower, for instance, than that of the Pueblo Indians in the south, of the Haidahs away to the north-west, or of the great Algonkin and Iroquois stocks in the east of the continent. Incidentally it is stated "that no Wintu has been converted to Christianity; hence the faith of the nation is undimmed, and its adherence to primitive religion unweakened." This is a point upon which further information would have been welcome, though as a matter of fact there is nothing in any of these tales to excite that suspicion of Christian influence which has been manifested in the case of many Polynesian and Melanesian myths.

The Wintus and Yanas are, the reader is informed, "not related, and their languages are radically different." A marked difference does make itself felt in passing from the tales of the one to those of the other people, though many are substantially identical, and all exhibit a kindred body of incidents and conceptions. Information concerning the racial and linguistic affinities of these tribes would have been welcome, and Mr. Curtin has been far too chary of illustrative comment from the rich storehouse of Indian myth and legend. Moreover, the few parallels and references he does vouchsafe are from the great Central and Eastern stocks. We should have expected and been grateful for comparisons with the mythic legends of other Western tribes, notably the North-western stocks, concerning whom Dr. Boas has accumulated such a mass of information. In general it may be said that Mr. Curtin has diminished the usefulness of his collection for scientific purposes by the absence of those aids to right intelligence which the student desiderates, and, lacking which, feels unable to form a correct judgment. This is the more to be regretted because the stories are of exceeding interest, and because Mr. Curtin puts forth on their behalf claims of a very far-reaching character marked by great speculative insight and daring. As will be seen, I feel myself unable to accept these claims upon the evidence submitted by him, but I am conscious of the unsatisfactory nature of my criticism. Mr. Curtin must possess a mass of information respecting the dogmatic beliefs and rites of these peoples which would throw a flood of light upon the tales, but, save for an interesting account of magician-making among the Wintus, he withholds it, though it may possibly

amply substantiate his theory. The critic can, however, only judge what is set before him.

Mr. Curtin distinguishes two strata of mythic tales, the first dealing with the adventures and fortunes of beings inhabiting this world before its present occupiers, whether divine, animal, or human, the "first people," as he styles them. These beings partly survived as the present gods, but for the most part were changed into the present animals or into inanimate objects. The myths concerning them in their original form may be truly described as creation myths, as they set forth how, according to the Indian belief, nature, animate and inanimate, assumed its present form. The second stratum, "action myths," describes the existing processes of nature, and has for its actors the god-class representing the "first people" and the heroised ancestors of present man. The myths of the Old World belong in the main to this stratum, whereas those of America are chiefly drawn from the earlier stage. They are closely connected with the institutions under which the Indians still live, as "the lives of the first people are presented as models upon which faithful Indians are to fashion their lives at all times and places. Every act of an Indian, in peace or in war, as an individual or a member of a tribe, had its only sanction in the world of the first people, the American divinities."

The mode by which the world of the first people was changed into that at present existing "was mainly struggles between hostile personages" who metamorphosed each other into "some beast, bird, plant, or insect; but always the resultant beast or other creature corresponds in some power of mind or in some leading quality of character with the god from whose position it has fallen."

Later, Mr. Curtin describes the Indian meditating upon the world as he saw it, speculating upon its origin and mode of development, and producing these creation myths as a result of his speculation.

Now whilst I am quite disposed to accept Mr. Curtin's explanation of the origin of these myths, I cannot see that they do bear out his view of their primitive character as compared with those of the Old World, or, generally speaking, his theory of the stratification of myth. His secondary myths, "action myths," in which the existing forces of nature are personified and its

existing processes set forth as actions of those personifications, are to my mind likely to have preceded creation myths properly so called. Primitive man, so I should think, would tell stories about the brother and sister who perpetually chase each other across the sky, or about the being who pops into a hole in the earth at night and comes up out of another hole in the morning, before he told stories to explain why a wolf *is* a wolf or Mount Shasta *is* Mount Shasta. In other words, he must surely have accepted the facts of nature as facts, using them as the material of those dramatic imaginings we term myth, before he speculated concerning their origin and essence.

Accept Mr. Curtin's view and then turn to the stories themselves. The actors, the first people, apparently figure as human in form and circumstance, and although the tale itself sometimes says that so and so was changed into a particular animal or object, yet in many cases this is neither stated nor implied and we have simply Mr. Curtin's warrant for the fact. It rests of course upon native information, but surely further knowledge could then have been gained respecting the psychology of the mythic person postulated. How did the narrator conceive of the being who afterwards became a lamprey eel or a block of flint? He can hardly, to account for the existing universe, have postulated one which changed into it, and which yet was seemingly identical with it. But if we accept tale and theory together this is the conclusion we must come to. I may note in passing that the tales hardly bear out Mr. Curtin's assertion "that the resultant beast always corresponds in some power of mind or in some leading quality of character with the god, from whose position it has fallen." On the contrary one cannot but be struck by the frequent want of connection between the incidents of the tale and the final metamorphosis. In this respect these stories are far less self-explanatory than, for instance, Mrs. Parker's Australian Tales, and, although they often avow an ætiological intent, leave the impression that their original purport was not ætiological at all.

Perhaps the most pregnant and remarkable tale in the book is that entitled "Sedit and the two brothers Hus." The brothers are commissioned by Ollelbis, a kind of supreme god, to make a stairway from earth to the upper sky. The result will be that the new race of men will always have access to the upper world, can obtain rejuvenescence and perpetual life, need not propagate, and will

be able to lead a sinless, sexless, strifeless existence. The two brothers start upon their task, but are interrupted by Sedit. Learning the object of their labours, he points out what a mistaken ideal is that of Olelbis, and how much better it would be for men to love and die, to toil and strive, to warm themselves with human passions rather than to vegetate in bloodless, eventless passivity. The brothers are persuaded, abandon their task, and that is why the world of men is full of strife and toil and love, is the world we know. The stones of the unfinished stairway are there to this day; the brothers flew back to Olelbis; Sedit, essaying to follow them, fell back to the ground and was crushed to pieces.

Now I found it difficult to believe that this marvellous tale was imagined to account for a great mass of natural rock stairway, or to explain the metamorphosis of the Iius brothers into turkey buzzards, or of Sedit into the coyote. On the contrary, it seems self-evident to me that it is the last term of a long philosophic and literary evolution, that the choice of the coyote as the Wintu Mephistopheles is due to his presence in countless tales of a far simpler character, as an embodiment of shifty cunning. The attributes which fitted the beast for his Satanic rôle must have been noted and utilised for dramatic purposes long before it occurred to the Indians to wonder why the coyote was different from himself and to invent a tale accounting for the difference.

The tales lend themselves to endless comment, but I must be content to have emphasised their salient interest according to their collector, and indicated my dissent from his theory. I can only say that, alike from the complexity of the problems which are involved, and for the originality and significance of the tales themselves, this is perhaps the most remarkable collection of stories yet made in the New World. Students of Myth will look forward with keen eagerness to the future volumes promised by Mr. Curtin; they will also expect him to equip them with that apparatus of elucidation and comment which he alone is qualified to supply.

ALFRED NUTT.

MYTH, RITUAL, AND RELIGION. By ANDREW LANG. New Edition. 2 vols. London: Longmans. 1899.

MR. LANG has followed up his *Making of Religion* by a revision of his brilliant refutation of Professor Max Müller and the philological method of expounding mythology, with the object of bringing it into harmony with his later opinions. Readers of the original edition will be glad of the opportunity of reading the book again, and of noting the changes made in it. Here, I think, they will be disappointed. The old arguments are for the most part still valid, but some of them have been weakened by the concessions Mr. Lang has thought it necessary to make, and the limitations already there have been marked and extended in a way that sometimes embarrasses the main position, if it does not deliver the author into his opponents' hands. Moreover, little account has been taken of the progress of inquiry during the last twelve years, fruitful as they have been in many directions. Mr. Lang would, I think, have done better to re-write the book, taking into account the results of discussion on the various points first attacked so trenchantly and successfully by him. Science is ever moving forward, and it is always inconvenient and sometimes dangerous to reprint a work which even, like this, at the time of its appearance constituted a great and significant advance on all that had been previously done. The ideas and the arguments of *Myth, Ritual, and Religion*, many of them novel when it was published, have now become by virtue of their very strength commonplaces of science. Our indebtedness to them is so great that we do not recognise it; and when we come to read them over again, something of their old force is apt to evaporate if they have not been brought up to date. But these drawbacks notwithstanding, the book is and will remain a standard authority on the origins of mythology and a sample of the solvent power of criticism.

As the preface to the new edition consists to some extent of a further reply to my strictures on *The Making of Religion*, I need not apologise for taking the opportunity to make a short rejoinder.

Religion is one of the most difficult words in the scientific vocabulary to define; but for Mr. Lang's argument as now developed its definition is essential. He defines it for the purpose

of his argument as "the belief in a primal being, a Maker, undying, usually moral" (p. 3). I have not been able to find any corresponding definition of *myth*. Sometimes it is used (as on pp. xvii, 3, and 5) in opposition to *religion*, or (as on p. 29) to *religion* and *morality*; at other times it is said to consist of two elements, the *rational* and the *irrational* (p. 9). Again, the term *rational* seems to be the equivalent of *religious*, and *irrational* the converse (pp. 4, 10, &c.). It is pretty obvious that these terms are all purely subjective, purely arbitrary; and moreover they are not used consistently. Arguments built on terms thus loosely employed must suffer the fate of the house built on the sand.

Mr. Lang has quite missed the point of my remarks in the note (*ante*, vol. ix., p. 303) on the legends of the Noongahburrahs. Mrs. Langloh Parker has not yet informed us which of the stories in her second volume the black piccaninnies would not be allowed to hear. At all events they would be allowed to hear the legend of the Borah of Byamee in the first volume. Though that legend speaks of Byamee as a man, it treats him with greater reverence than some of the tales solemnly inculcated in the Wiradthuri mysteries do. If it cannot be said to "touch on sacred subjects," it is inseparably connected with the Legend of the Flowers in the second volume, which presumably does, and which Mr. Lang includes in his description of "a very charming and poetical aspect of the Baiame belief." Charming and poetical aspects are, it would seem, "rational": at least Mr. Lang so characterises the description of Artemis in the *Odyssey* (p. 10). Is the Legend of the Flowers within his definition of religion? It cannot be; for it recognises Byamee not as "a primal being," but as a glorified wizard of the tribe; nor as "a Maker," save of manna and flowers, which a wizard might very well be. Undying he is, but only "up to date," and moral, if it be moral to set his brand arbitrarily on three trees and thus taboo them to the starving people. In short, the legend is a myth, and "the blacks" do not "draw the line" as and where Mr. Lang seeks to draw it. His "essential distinction" does not correspond with the facts; his theory lays undue emphasis on facts otherwise to be explained; and his definition, framed to fit his theory, does not define religion as "the blacks" understand it.

Other points in the Preface to which I may refer are the names

of Daramulun and Baiame, and the low myths concerning Daramulun.

As to the former, the meaning of the name of Daramulun as "leg-on-one-side-(only)," or "one-legged," seems to be agreed on; whereas that of Baiame is not by any means of general acceptance. The last derivation of Baiame that I have seen is quite a different one. It is not, therefore, because the sense "happens to be inconvenient to" me that I decline to hold at present that it comes from "*Baia*, to make." I simply suspend judgment until experts in Australian philology have made up their minds. Mr. Lang takes me to task (p. xvi) for not exposing his error in calling the Wiraijuri "worshippers of Daramulun." Well, if there was an error, it was neither his nor mine, but Mr. Howitt's; for the latter explicitly includes them among the tribes whose initiation ceremonies he describes. Whether it is exactly worship that is given by these tribes to Daramulun is a question of definition: Mr. Lang contends it is. It is true that Mr. Howitt says of the Wiraijuri in a note: "Daramulun is in this tribe not the supreme 'master,' but the son of Baiamai, who rules everything."¹ Does Mr. Lang contend that therefore he is not worshipped? There are analogies which may give him pause. In any case, it is not the Wiraijuri but the Kamilaroi who are said to hold that Daramulun is "the evil spirit who rules the night." My own belief, however, is that the various versions of the tale and status of Daramulun are illustrations of the shifting nature of tradition rather than of any strictly speaking, dogmatic and deeply-seated tribal differences in the manner of regarding him; and it was in this capacity that I referred to them. Let me add, too, that if Mr. Lang tried to erect Zeus into the object of a primitive monotheistic belief of the Greeks, I know of no reason why we should not be "humorous" about him (p. xx), or, in other words, expose the inconsistencies and the impossibility of the contention.

Ahono affords a tempting subject. But here it is Professor Tylor who is challenged, and I shall not presume to intrude into the controversy. I will merely note a rather important misprint of "race" for "age" on page xxxiii.

E. SIDNEY HARTLAND.

¹ *Journ. Anthr. Inst.*, vol. xiii., pp. 433, 452.

WIT, CHARACTER, FOLKLORE, AND CUSTOMS OF THE NORTH
RIDING OF YORKSHIRE. By RICHARD BLAKEBOROUGH.
London: Henry Frowde. 1898.

THIS volume, though not written solely from a scientific point of view, is an important contribution to the printed folklore of the North Riding.

It is of course unavoidable that such a book should contain notes on words, ideas, and social practices which are already well known, but it also includes much that is fresh and curious. Mr. Blakeborough knew a person who could remember hearing "The Lyke Wake Dirge" sung over the body of a distant relation, a native of Kildale, somewhere about 1820. This old man said that it was very rarely heard even then. The version of the old chant given is different in some particulars from the one commonly printed. A verse of it runs thus (p. 123):

"If ivver thoo gav' o' thi siller an' gawd,
Ivvery neet an' awl.
At t' Brigg o' Dreed thoo'll fuind foottho'd,
An' Christ tak' up thi sawl."

This belief in the soul having to cross a bridge is very widely distributed. In *Mélusine* (ix. 149-60) there is an article on Popular Prayers and Magic Formulas, collected in certain parts of the Pyrenees; and in one of these formulas we read "there is a footbridge—narrow—narrow as the hairs of my little head. He who shall do good will cross it; he who shall do evil will not be able."

The same idea occurs again amongst the Esquimaux, amongst the mountaineers of the Neilgheries, and elsewhere.

Mr. Blakeborough gives a variant I have not hitherto met with of the birth-rhyme relating to the days of the week; the end of it especially interesting:

"Dud a Sunday's bairn thruff lyfe is blist,
An' seear i' t' end wi' t' Saints t' rist,"

which clearly shows that its origin dates back to the time when veneration of the saints was still a part of the popular faith.

In the dales of Cleveland and Wensleydale we are told that

until the baby was christened the mother used to put the Bible under its pillow to guard against all evil spirits and bad influences. At the present day this is yet done amongst the Protestants in some parts of Switzerland.

The chapters relating to Birth, Marriage, Death, and Witchcraft are full of interesting facts, many of the details given appearing for the first time, to my knowledge. The volume is enriched by a carefully compiled glossary and a very good grammar of the folk-speech. Many old dialect poems, songs, and rhymes are also given.

FLORENCE PEACOCK.

BYE-GONES RELATING TO WALES AND THE BORDER COUNTIES.
1897-98. Second Series. Vol. V. Oswestry and Wrexham:
Woodall, Minshull, & Co.

Bye-gones is a reprint from an Oswestry newspaper. All who are interested in Wales and Welsh matters know how valuable it is as a local *Notes and Queries*. Many a fact that would otherwise have been forgotten is here garnered. Among such facts a prominent place is given to folklore. A large number of superstitions are noted in the volume. Many of them doubtless have been already noted, but it is to be hoped that will not be a reason for discontinuing the notes. It is important to know with certainty the distribution of traditional observances of all kinds.

A curious practice is stated (p. 406) to prevail at Neston parish church of locking all doors during the celebration of a marriage. The origin of this custom may be sought in more than one direction; but it would be all guesswork in the absence of more detailed local information. For instance, does the converse custom of unlocking all doors, drawers, boxes, &c., at a birth obtain in the parish? Speaking of marriage customs, an order of the Commissioners of the Marches on the 26th August, 1534, addressed to the Mayor and Aldermen of Hereford, is quoted on the following page at length, forbidding the "gadering of Commertheas" and assembling at "love ales or bydden ales."

No one can pretend to have exhausted any branch of inquiry in British folklore who has not searched *Bye-gones*.

E. SIDNEY HARTLAND.