BOOK REVIEWS

METHODS AND PRINCIPLES

Zusammenhänge und Konvergenz. FELIX VON LUSCHAN. (Reprint from *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, vol. 48.) Vienna: 1918, 117 pp.

The contrasting principles of diffusion and convergence have rarely been so critically balanced and concretely illustrated as in this essay. Von Luschan makes propaganda for neither. He adduces parallels in order to dissect and estimate them. Time and again he comes to the conclusion that in such a feature diffusion is suggested, but remains to be proved, in another convergence is possible. His interest is almost limitless, his knowledge that of the many-sided scholar, his point of view thoroughly historical, his touch sure, swift, and spontaneous. He does not philosophize, but discusses facts. Civilized and primitive cultures are handled on a par. The first twenty pages introduce the problem. The remainder of the paper consists of a consideration of a list of culture elements, alphabetically ordered. Among these are cat's cradles, alphabets, bronze, thunderstones, double eagles, iron work, fans, flood myths, swastika, suspension bridges, initiation ceremonies, pottery, Kwan-yin, solder, mankala, masks, tooth brushes, nephrite, pile dwellings, plow, bark cloth, skull cults, navigation, coiled basketry, proverbs, stilts, constellations, zodiac, totemism, trephining, loom, dice, spear-throwers, queues, composite bows.

"Geniality," in the senses which it has both in English and in the author's mother tongue, best describes the quality of this essay.

A. L. KROEBER

A History of the Art of Writing. WILLIAM A. MASON. New York: Macmillan, 1920, 502 pp.

This book is useful and very pleasant reading. Aim and treatment are much like those of Clodd's *Story of the Alphabet*, but the present work is two or three times as long, has a hundred more illustrations, and the quality of these is of the highest. They are chosen aptly, also with aesthetic feeling. The treatment is generally untechnical, but never to

the point of unscholarliness. The specialist in the history of any system of writing will derive little from the book, yet as a work of general reference it forms a valuable addition to any library. Doubtful points are never forced into a theory; there is no dogmatizing; clearness, balance, and interest pervade the treatment. The work seems thoroughly accurate.

One third of the volume is devoted to picture writing, a third to ideographic and mixed systems, a third to the alphabets, much as in Clodd's booklet. The post-Phoenician alphabets of Asia receive bare mention. A modern book of the scope and quality of Isaac Taylor's still remains a need.

A. L. KROEBER

NORTH AMERICA

Zuñi Breadstuff. FRANK HAMILTON CUSHING. (Indian Notes and Monographs, vol. 8.) New York: Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, 1920, 673 pp.

This republication of the greatest of Cushing's works makes available the series issued in *The Millstone* in 1884-85, and heretofore accessible only in three or four complete copies. Genius and phantast, child and amazing observer, Cushing was at his best when he could subdue his imagination to his eyes and ears; and that he has done here. The book fairly reeks of Zuñi. Take the little conversation on the first page, rendered thus:

Meal, soft corn-flour, and good water equally I mix; then stirring, red-pepper, salt, and suet I put in, into husks I roll this, into an oven all-place shutting the hole; time passed, I take them out. Now then, for eating they are ready.

This is absolutely literal; and the Zuñi text is beyond cavil.

Formal organization of treatment is as wanting as one expects from Cushing; but there is full compensation in the vividness of the narrations, the pregnant anecdotes, the interspersed myths, rituals, and pictures of social life. Possibly there holds of this volume, too, what vitiates so much of Cushing's work as science: that one must himself know the people to distinguish what is Zuñi and what is Cushing. But to the reviewer at least there seems to be no piece of writing that renders so complete and true and powerful an impression of Zuñi as *Breadstuff*.

A. L. KROEBER