and the potential profits, of all future revolutionary discoveries comparable with that which, in 1856, led to the displacement of natural colouring matters by the products of coal-tar chemistry.

Sexual Life and Marriage among Primitive Mankind.

The History of Human Marriage. By Prof. E. Westermarck. Fifth edition, rewritten. Vol. 1, pp. xxiv + 571. Vol. 2, pp. xii + 595. Vol. 3, pp. viii + 587. (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1921.) Three Volumes. 84s. net.

COMPARATIVE sociology, in many of its branches, started with very simple and homely concepts, and now, after a career of imaginative and somewhat sensational spinning of hypotheses, we find it returning in its latest developments to the position of common sense. The subject of family and marriage, of their origins and evolution, epitomises such a typical course of sociological speculation. In the views about the human family, there was first the uncritical assumption that the family was the nucleus of human society; that monogamous marriage has been the prototype of all varieties of sex union; that law, authority and government are all derived from patriarchal power; that the State, the Tribe, economic co-operation and all other forms of social association have gradually grown out of the small group of blood relatives, issued from one married couple, and governed by the father. This theory satisfied common sense, supplied an easily imaginable course of natural development, and was in agreement with all the unquestioned authorities, from the Bible to Aristotle.

But some sixty years ago, among the many revolutions in scientific thinking and method, the family theory of society seemed to have received its death-blow. The independent researches of Bachofen, Morgan and MacLennan seemed to prove beyond doubt, by the study of survivals and ethnographic phenomena, by methods of linguistics, comparative study and antiquarian reconstruction, that the whole conception of primeval monogamous marriage and early human family was nothing but a myth. Primitive humanity, they said, lived in loosely organised hordes, in which an almost complete lack of sexual regulation, a state of promiscuity, was the usage and law. This, the authors of this school concluded, can be seen from many survivals, from the analysis of classificatory systems of relationship, and from the prevalence of matrilineal kinship and matriarchate. Thus, instead of the primitive family we have a horde; instead of marriage, promiscuity; instead of paternal right, the sole in-

fluence of the mother and of her relatives over the children. Some of the leaders of this school constructed a number of successive stages of sexual evolution through which humanity was supposed to have passed. Starting from promiscuity, mankind went through group marriage, then the so-called consanguineous family or Punalua, then polygamy, till, in the highest civilisations, monogamous marriage was reached as the final product of development. Under this scheme of speculations, the history of human marriage reads like a sensational and somewhat scandalous novel, starting from a confused but interesting initial tangle, redeeming its unseemly course by a moral *dénouement*, and leading, as all proper novels should, to marriage, in which "they lived happily ever after."

After the first triumphs of this theory were over, there came, however, a reaction. The earliest and most important criticism of these theories arose out of the very effort to maintain them.

In the middle eighties of last century, a young and then inexperienced Finnish student of anthropology started to add his contribution to the views of Bachofen and Morgan. In the course of his work, however, the arguments for the new and then fashionable theories began to crumple in his hands, and indeed to turn into the very opposite of their initial shape. These studies, in short, led to the first publication by Prof. Westermarck in 1891 of his "History of Human Marriage," in which the author maintained that monogamous marriage is a primeval human institution, and that it is rooted in the individual family; that matriarchate has not been a universal stage of human development; that group marriage never existed, still less promiscuity, and that the whole problem must be approached from the biological and psychological point of view, and though with an exhaustive, yet with a critical application of ethnological evidence. The book with its theories arrested at once the attention both of all the specialists and of a wider public, and it has survived these thirty years, to be reborn in 1922 in an amplified fifth edition of threefold the original size and manifold its original value. For since then Prof. Westermarck has developed not only his methods of inductive inference by writing another book of wider scope and at least equal importance, "Origin and Development of Moral Ideas," but he has also acquired a first-hand knowledge of savage races by years of intensive ethnographic field work in Morocco, work which has produced already numerous and most valuable records.

Where does the problem stand now? First of all, the contest is not ended yet, and divergencies of opinion obtain on some fundamental points, while controversy

has not lost much of its uncompromising tone. But the issues have narrowed down somewhat. There is no longer a question of accepting the naïve theory which regarded family as a kind of universal germ of all social evolution; nor, on the other hand, does any competent sociologist take very seriously the fifteen successive stages of promiscuity, group marriage, Punalua marriage, etc. Prof. Westermarck and his school do not maintain the rigidly patriarchal theory, and they are fully aware of the importance of matrilineal descent, of the maternal uncle's authority, and of the various kinship anomalies connected with matriliney. The classificatory terms of relationship are, moreover, not considered by Prof. Westermarck as mere terms of address, but as important indications of status.

The representatives of the opposite school had also to make some concessions, though rather reluctantly and grudgingly. Scarcely any one nowadays would be so irreverent towards our ape-like ancestors and ancestresses as to suspect them of living in a general state of promiscuity. But there is still a formidable list of names, among them some of the most eminent representatives of modern anthropology, quoted by Prof. Westermarck (vol. 1, p. 103 *u.*), who consider primitive promiscuity as "not improbable," "plausible," "by no means untenable," and use this hypothesis constantly as a skeleton-key to open all questions of sex. Group marriage is still, though somewhat faint-heartedly, affirmed to have existed, and even some savages are forced to live up to their evil reputation—in the speculations and bare assertions of some writers. The Punalua family leads an even more shadowy existence, merging into a combined polyandry and polygamy. The most tenacious survival of the Bachofen-Morgan-MacLennan theories seems to be the kinship terms, themselves a most fecund breeding-place for all kinds of survival theories.

Thus Prof. Westermarck in this new edition is not altogether relieved of the necessity of dealing with the hypothesis of promiscuity, and in chapters iii.-ix. he examines the various classes of evidence adduced in its favour. There is a number of statements affirming directly the existence of promiscuous conditions among this or that tribe or people. Some of them come from garrulous and credulous writers of antiquity and have to be discarded as pure fables; others, from modern travellers, equal them in untrustworthiness and futility. On this point no one will certainly controvert the author when he says "that it would be difficult to find a more untrustworthy collection of statements." The investigation then turns to that remarkable group of ethnological facts—*Jus Primæ Noctis*, licence of festive and religious character, prenuptial and orgiastic sexual intercourse—in which the powerful instinct of sex,

curbed and fettered by social regulations, takes, in its own time, revenge on man by dragging him down to the level of a beast. Prof. Westermarck fully admits the importance and extent of these phenomena; his survey indeed shows the extreme range and the often astounding perversity of these deviations. But he declines resolutely to see in any of these facts a survival of pristine promiscuity, for in all cases the facts reveal most powerful motive forces, and can be attributed to definite psychological and social causes. The theory of survival is moreover irreconcilable with the fact that we find side by side with licentious tribes, savages who maintain strict chastity; that some of the most primitive ones are virtuous, whilst the most luxuriant growth of licence is found in more advanced communities; that, finally, civilisation instead of abolishing these phenomena only modifies them.

The chapters on customary and regulated sexual licence are full of penetrating suggestions, and the facts, skilfully marshalled, are made to speak for themselves, and will supply a lasting compendium for students of sexual psychology. But what appears most valuable in this, not less than in other parts of the work, are the methods and implications of the argument. Prof. Westermarck has an abhorrence of the now fashionable tendency of explaining the whole by its part, the essential by the irrelevant, the known by the unknown. He refuses to construct out of meagre and insufficient evidence a vast, hypothetical building, through the narrow windows of which we would have to gaze upon reality, and see only as much of it as they allow. The obvious, common-sense and essentially scientific way of proceeding is to get firm hold of the fundamental aspects of human nature—in this case the psychology of sex, the laws of primitive human grouping, the typical beliefs and sentiments of savage people—and, in the light of this, to analyse each fact as we meet it. But to construct the unverifiable hypotheses of primitive promiscuity and interpret facts in terms of figments is, as Prof. Westermarck shows, a method which leads nowhere and lures us from the true scientific path.

Some of the other chapters of Prof. Westermarck's book give us another approach to the psychology of sex and to the theory of human marriage. Sex is a most powerful instinct—one of the modern schools of psychology tries to derive from it almost all mental process and sociological crystallisation. However this may be, there is no doubt that masculine jealousy (chap. ix.), sexual modesty (chap. xii.), female coyness (chap. xiv.), the mechanism of sexual attraction (chap. xv. and xvi.) and of courtship (chap. xiii.)—all these forces and conditions made it necessary that even in the most primitive human aggregates there should

exist powerful means of regulating, suppressing and directing this instinct. There is no doubt that all the psychological forces of human sexual passion, as well as the conditions of primitive life, must have tended to produce a primeval habit of individual pairing. We have to imagine a man and a woman forming more or less permanent unions which lasted until well after the birth of the offspring. This, Prof. Westermarck develops in the first chapter of his work. A union between man and wife, based on personal affection springing out of sexual attachment, based on economic conditions, on mutual services, but above all on a common relation to the children, such a union is the origin of the human family. This primeval habit, according to the "tendency of habits to become rules of conduct," develops with time into the institution of family and marriage, and "marriage is rooted in the family, rather than the family in marriage."

Marriage, indeed, right through the book, is conceived in the correct sociological manner, that is, as an institution based on complex social conditions. The greatest mistake of the writers of the opposing school—a mistake which, I think, they have not corrected even in the most recent publications—is their identification of marriage with sexual appropriation. Nor is this pitfall easy to avoid. For us, in our own society, the exclusiveness of sexual rights is the very essence of marriage. Hence we think of marriage in terms of individual sexual appropriation, and project this concept into native societies. When we find, therefore, groups of people living in sexual communism, as undoubtedly happens among a few tribes within a limited compass, we have a tendency at once to jump to conclusions about "group marriage."

To the majority of savages, however, sexual appropriation is by no means the main aspect of marriage. To take one example, there are the Trobriand Islanders, studied by the present writer, who live in the greatest sexual laxity, are matrilineal, and possess an institution which is probably the nearest approach to "group marriage" that exists or could ever have existed. Indeed, it resembles it much more, I think, than does the celebrated Pirrauru of the Dieri in Central Australia. These natives satisfy their sexual inclinations through all forms of licence, regulated and irregular, and then settle down to marry, decidedly not only or even mainly to possess a partner in sex, but chiefly out of personal attachment, in order to set up a household with its economic advantages, and last, not least, to rear children. The institution of individual marriage and family among them is based on several other foundations besides sex, though sex—naturally—enters into it.

Space does not allow me to follow Prof. Westermarck

into his dialectic contests with the most eminent of his contemporaries—with Sir James Frazer and Dr. Rivers about the kinship terms (chap. vi.); with Sir James Frazer and Mr. Hartland on matriliney (chap. viii.); and with all of them, as well as Spencer and Gillen, on group marriage (chap. xxvi.). In all these arguments we find the same extensive use of ethnological material, the same breadth of view and moderation of doctrine, above all, the same sound method of explaining the detail by its *whole*, the superstructure by its foundation. In the treatment of kinship and matriliney, too little concession is perhaps made to the important theories of Sir James Frazer and Mr. Hartland, whose views, unquestionably correct, that ignorance of paternity is universal and primitive among savages, Prof. Westermarck cannot accept. Nor can he see perhaps sufficiently clearly the enormous influence of this savage ignorance on primitive ideas of kinship. As Sir James Frazer says

"Fatherhood to a Central Australian savage is a very different thing from fatherhood to a civilized European. To the European father it means that he has begotten a child on a woman; to the Central Australian father it means that the child is the offspring of a woman with whom he has a right to cohabit. . . . To the European mind the tie between a father and his child is physical; to the Central Australian it is social" ("Totemism and Exogamy," i. p. 236). The distinction between a physiological and a social conception of kinship is indeed essential. But, on the whole, Prof. Westermarck's views do not diverge so much from those of Frazer's, who, on the other hand, occupies a moderate position among the supporters of the opposite theories.

Prof. Westermarck's explanation of exogamy, and of the prohibition of incest—which I think will come to be considered as a model of sociological construction, and which remarkably enough seems to find favour with no one—can only be mentioned here. The excellent chapters on marriage rites (chaps. xxiv.-xxvi.); the analysis of what could be called the numeric varieties of marriage, monogamy and polygamy (chaps. xxvii.-xxviii.); polyandry (xxix.-xxx.); duration of marriage (xxxii.-xxxiii.), stand somewhat apart from the main argument of the book. Each division is a monograph, a *Corpus Inscriptionum Matrimonialium*, a treatise in itself.

The book is and will remain an inexhaustible fount of information, a lasting contribution towards the clearing up of some of the most obscure aspects of human evolution, and it marks an epoch in the development of sociological method and reasoning.

B. MALINOWSKI.