The Classical Review

<http://journals.cambridge.org/CAR>

Additional services for *The Classical Review*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)

The Thunder-weapon in Religion and Folklore *The Thunder-weapon in Religion and Folklore. A Study in Comparative Archaeology.* By Chr Blinkenberg, Ph.D. Cambridge Archaeological and Ethnological Series. I vol. 8vo. Pp. 122. 36 phototype and outline illustrations. Cambridge University Press, 1911. 5s.

Jane E. Harrison

The Classical Review / Volume 26 / Issue 06 / September 2012, pp 196 - 197

DOI: 10.1017/S0009840X0020036X, Published online: 27 October 2009

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0009840X0020036X

How to cite this article:

Jane E. Harrison (1912). Review of Donna Lee, Ian Taylor, and Paul D. Williams 'The New Multilateralism in South African Diplomacy' *The Classical Review*, 26, pp 196-197
doi:10.1017/S0009840X0020036X

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

the campaign of Aemilius Paulus with a record of 150,000 slaves ravished from 70 cities.

With neither of these points does the author attempt to deal. He leaves Epirus a land of villages and gives no hint of further development. A 50-line note on ethnology gives us little more information than Kärst's article in Pauly-Wissowa, and any further attention to the social and economic, quite apart from the ethnological, position of Epirus is strictly banned. The mention of the *προστάται* with their analogies in the Spartan ephors, the exceptional position of women, the traces of dual kingship, and even the striking oath given in Plutarch, which exactly reproduces the monthly oath of the Spartan Kings, fail to stir the author to a discussion of this problem. The question of Dodona and its bronze age receives

no serious consideration. Even the constitutional system is not fully treated, and we are left very vague in our ideas of the relations of King, *prostates*, and League.

Minor points of criticism are the want of a bibliography or a list of abbreviations, some haste in the compiling of the Index, and an irritating want of system in transliteration, which admits of Lysimacheia and Lysimachia, Chae-rona and Koroneia, Euboea and Beroia, Epirus and Ephesos, Pyrrhus and Demetrios, Aeacus and Aeakides.

Still, Herr Klotzsch's success in re-constructing Epirot political history is such that we lay down the book with regret at its abrupt closure in 280 B.C., just when it was beginning to be really interesting.

GUY DICKINS.

THE THUNDER-WEAPON IN RELIGION AND FOLKLORE.

The Thunder-weapon in Religion and Folklore. A Study in Comparative Archaeology. By CHR. BLINKENBERG, Ph.D. Cambridge Archaeological and Ethnological Series. 1 vol. 8vo. Pp. 122. 36 phototype and outline illustrations. Cambridge University Press, 1911. 5s.

DR. BLINKENBERG has given us a model monograph, learned, cautious, yet illuminating. What emerges from the great wealth of regional facts surveyed is, briefly, as follows:

Over three continents—Europe, Asia, and Africa—in those regions where thunderstorms are fairly frequent and violent, the belief in thunderstones has existed and still exists. That is, it is believed (in contradiction, of course, to actual fact) that the destructive stroke of the lightning is caused by the descent of a stone. Flash and thunderclap are mere accessories. In regions where thunderstorms are absent or unimportant, *e.g.* Iceland and Egypt, the belief may exist, but it is imported, not indigenous. But on the two remaining continents—America and Australia—though thunderstorms abound, such a

belief is practically unknown, or, when known, clearly imported. In America, *e.g.* thunder is produced by a large thunderbird; in Australia it is associated with the bull-roarer. Dr. Blinkenberg concludes that the Old-world belief in thunderstones and their manifold virtues originated in one, not several, centres.

In Europe, Asia, and Africa it is most frequently pre-historic stone antiquities, flint weapons, celts, etc., that pass for thunderstones; but besides these—the point is important—other stones of notable shape, colour, appearance, *e.g.*, belemnites, echinites, rock crystals, globular stones, are accounted as having the same origin and the like magical powers. Now it is in regard to this question of stone-implements as thunder-weapons that the originality of Dr. Blinkenberg's view comes in. Somewhat unconsciously it would seem, but all the more convincingly, he stands for the new psychology as contrasted with the elder rationalism. He marks an epoch in the interpretation of religious phenomena. The older school still finds the origin of man's religion in his primitive scientific curiosity. He found

stone weapons, the use of which was lost to him. He asked, 'What are these?' He answered, 'They are the weapons of the sky-god,' his thunderbolts. It follows on this view that the sanctity of celts and the like is post-stone age. The new school says religion arises mainly not from man's rationalism, but from his reactions: he feels emotions first, and asks questions later. It is when he uses the stone weapon, when he feels it as a wondrous extension of his personality, *not when he has forgotten its use*, that it is to him sacred, *i.e.* a vehicle of *mana*, an instrument of *tabu*. The source of his *religio* is his reaction towards the thunder, not his curiosity about the relic. This is complicit, though scarcely explicit in Dr. Blinkenberg's new theory (pp. 35-37), and we are entirely with him.

We have space only to note one special point which should instruct and delight the classical scholar. Preller, Gruppe, Bull and, following them, Prof. Ridgeway, have misinterpreted the trident, as in origin a fish-spear. A fishing-spear it became to fit Posidon as a sea-god—that is undoubted. On coins of Troezen the trident has the necessary barbs. But in Homer the trident is no fishing implement. It spears neither fishes nor foes: it raises a hurricane, it shakes the earth, it shivers the rocks, it makes the rivers to swell. It is the weapon of *Enosichthon*, who later takes shape as *Erechtheus*. The trident-mark in the *Erechtheion*,

open always to the sky, is no mark of a fishing spear, it is the sign of a thunder-smitten place, an *ἄβατον*, an *εὐηλύσιον*, a bidental; and a bidental, Dr. Blinkenberg might have added, is a sanctity more potent than that of a two-toothed lamb; it is the place of the coming of the twybladed thunderbolt. Thus, much has long been conjectured by Usener, Meyer, and others; it was reserved for Dr. Blinkenberg to clinch the argument by showing that the history of the Greek *triaina* is precisely duplicated by the Indian *trisula*, both derive from the zigzag of the lightning, not from the thunderbolt. The Hittite thunder-god's equipment alone is complete; he holds both bolt and zigzag, lightning, trident.

The book is admirably illustrated, and contains much new and elsewhere inaccessible material, *e.g.* in Fig. 2 an earth-temple from a remote mountain village in India showing the trident (*trisula*) erect among seven thunderstones. We note two omissions in the bibliography: P. Saint-Yoe's *Talismans et reliques tombés du ciel* in *Revue des Études Ethnographiques et Sociologiques*, 1909, p. 1, and an old but still valuable book, H. Martin's *La Foudre dans l'Antiquité*, 1866. All scholars, as well as ethnologists, will be grateful to Dr. Blinkenberg and to the Editors of the Cambridge Archaeological and Ethnological Series in which his delightful book appears.

JANE E. HARRISON.

Newnham College.

HORAZENS VERSMASSE, FÜR ANFÄNGER ERKLÄRT.

Horazens Versmasse, für Anfänger erklärt
von OTTO SCHRÖDER. Teubner, 1911.

A SMALL pamphlet of twenty-four pages might seem to call for very brief notice. But the writer is attempting to do a thing which would be very useful and important for all Classical teachers, if it were done successfully—to give a clear account of Horatian metres 'for beginners.' Dr. Schröder is an eminent writer on *Metrik*, and has published extensive investigations in the sphere of Greek lyrics. He is one of the metricians, *νεώτεροι* or *recentiores*, who

have revolutionised the study of *Metrik* in recent years. So this little book is a kind of challenge or pronouncement; it implies 'The results we have arrived at are so simple and certain that it is time to formulate them for the school-boy.' There is still a good deal of 'Zerfahrenheit' on the subject, he truly says in his Preface; people are 'at sixes and sevens'; and he proposes to furnish a 'Leitfaden' for the learner. It is doubtful whether the youthful Theseus for whom it is intended will be grateful for this thread. Instead of taking him safely through one labyrinth, it leads