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## Review

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opinion that the Albanian people is fitted for civilization, and that among them we find the elements of an alert intelligence, of translucent honesty, and of extraordinary goodness of heart."

The book is accompanied by a good map prepared by the Istituto Geografico de Agostini, and by numerous sketch-maps illustrating the different expeditions undertaken by the author. There is in addition an extremely useful chapter on the trade routes of the country, with a summary description of the chief places and points of interest touched by them.

J. S. B.

## GENERAL

**Shells as Evidence of the Migration of Early Culture.**— J. W. Jackson.

Pp. xxviii, 208. Manchester University Press. 1917. *Maps*. 7s. 6d. *net*.

This book is avowedly intended to support the views on the migration of early culture recently propounded by Prof. Elliot Smith,\* who writes an introduction in commendation and appreciation of Mr. Jackson's work. Dr. Elliot Smith spent several years in Egypt as a professor of anatomy, and incidentally became more than usually impressed with the importance of that country as the prime source of the world's culture. We know how many origins have been sought for in Egypt. But Elliot Smith puts all his predecessors in the shade in this respect. According to his theory of migration a whole nexus of culture centring round mummification, and including megalith building, sun and serpent cult, migration, terrace culture, the couvade, swastika, and other things, had its origin in Egypt about 800 B.C., was thence spread by the Phoenicians to India, the Far East, and ultimately reached America. As far as our actual knowledge of migrations goes, they do not appear to take place in this wholesale complex fashion. Migration and consequent settlement on a large and complex scale is preceded by that of pioneers and adventurers in small numbers. And that India, for example, was reached by expeditions from the west before 800 B.C. is, to say the least, highly probable. But Elliot Smith has the courage of his convictions, and states his views with a force and vigour which seems to overwhelm all except those who have long realized the difficulties attending such far-reaching and radical innovations. Mr. Jackson is learned in that little-appreciated branch of knowledge—Conchology—and he has collected in this volume a great number of very interesting facts regarding shells and their uses for the purpose of showing how they support Elliot Smith's theory of migration. An important adjunct to this theory is the contention that any invention or discovery is made once and once only, and is spread over the world from the one centre where it arose. This highly disputable doctrine Elliot Smith advocates with the utmost vigour, and with a dogmatism from which the scientific mind recoils. Some competent observers regard it with scepticism as being the reverse of what might be expected, and contradicted by experience past and present. Minds in different parts of the world concentrating their attention on similar objects and on similar problems might well be expected to hit upon similar improvements. Every one knows the classical case of oxygen, independently discovered by three different chemists in three different countries. And at the present day it occasionally happens that similar mechanical inventions and improvements are made independently by different persons.

These remarks have application to the work before us. Because shells have

\* See review of his book in the *Journal*, vol. 47, p. 461.

been used as trumpets in many different parts of the world—Europe, Asia, the Pacific Islands, America—does it follow that the discovery that the shell can be used as a trumpet was made only once at some particular place, and thence spread over the world? If so the wide distribution of shell-trumpets is evidence of transmission of culture and proof of communication between peoples as far apart as Japan, Polynesia, and America. But is it not more probable, considering the simplicity of the invention—blowing into a shell with a hole in it—that different peoples made it on their own account? In the absence of absolute proof this is assuredly the more probable and less far-fetched view. But Mr. Jackson has much more to say about trumpet shells. He shows with a wealth of detail how trumpet-shells are used by many different peoples for many different purposes. It is in the particular use of these trumpets and their association with certain customs that he contends they show migration of culture. As transmission of culture to America in pre-Columbian days is the most difficult to explain, this aspect of the subject is dealt with at some length, and it is this phase of the theory that we shall alone consider here. The association with shell-trumpets of moon cult, ideas of fertility, the giving of life, etc., in both Asia and America is pointed out. "It is altogether inconceivable," says Mr. Jackson, "that people as far apart as India and Mexico could have independently associated the conch shell with the moon and adopted it as a symbol of the moon-god in addition to using it as a trumpet, and we may justly conclude that we have here definite proof of the transmission of an element of culture from the Old to the New World." This extract well exhibits the general argument the force of which, it will be noticed, depends on the word "inconceivable," a word constantly used by Mr. Jackson as it is by Prof. Elliot Smith. The power of conception varies in different people, hence differences of opinion. The "Shell Purple Industry" is appealed to in like manner. The spread of the Tyrian purple by the Phœnicians affords a starting-point. By them it was carried throughout the Mediterranean, and possibly even to Britain. Mr. Jackson believes it was carried from the Mediterranean to the Far East (it is found in China and Japan), and ultimately to America, where it was also known. But curiously enough no evidence of it has been found in the Pacific Islands. *Purpura* shells are common on American shores, so they may well have been found by Indians in pre-Columbian days. If so it is difficult to believe they may not have discovered that the easily obtained secretion of the shellfish could be used as a dye. This view seems to be quite as worthy of acceptance as that put forward by the author, on the evidence he advances in support of it.

Another very interesting subject dealt with at length by Mr. Jackson is the "Distribution of Pearls and Pearl Shells." He thinks there is sufficient evidence that the fashion for pearls and pearl-shell originated in Egypt, and spread thence to the nations of antiquity, and later to the Far East, Oceania, and America. Many curious and interesting customs are associated with pearls. In India and China a pearl was placed in the mouth of the dead, and the same custom existed in the New World. The shell-art of California shows some resemblance to that of the Pacific Islands, and the naive belief that pearls resulted from a dewdrop caught in the gaping shell of the oyster appears to be common to the Old and New Worlds. Are such resemblances as these mere coincidences? Could they have occurred independently to these distant parts? No, says Mr. Jackson; they can only be explained on the assumption that they were carried from one place to another by intercommunication. In other words, they must have been carried by the great wave of megalithic culture composed of so many curious and remarkable elements.

Lastly, an argument is based on the study of Cowry shells used for currency, charms, and armlets. These shells are two species of *Cypræa*, viz. *moneta* and *annulus*, which are very much alike. They are found in many places bordering the Indian Ocean and in the Pacific Islands. The distribution of their use is much wider, extending to Central and Western Africa, parts of Europe, and North America. It is in the customs associated with the cowry that evidence is sought to prove early migration to the New World. The money cowry has been found near a skull in a burial mound, Alabama. But competent American authorities do not believe these shells to be pre-Columbian, but that they were brought by the early discoveries to America. It is said that the money cowry, although alien to America, has been for centuries a sacred object among the Ojibways and Menomini Indians of North America. But it seems to be admitted that the shell used by the Ojibways is not the money cowry, but any small white shell. Among the tribes there is a custom of putting a cowry shell in the mouth of the dead, as is done in India and China. Further, just as in the last-named country rice is put in the mouth with the cowry, so these tribes use wild rice in a similar way. We find mystic powers attributed to the cowry both in the Old and New World. In Togoland, West Africa, the cowry plays a part in certain priestly ceremonies which culminate in the priest spitting out a shell. A similar ejection of the cowry is part of ceremonies practised by medicine men of three North American tribes, and other parallel usages are instanced.

Sufficient has been said to illustrate the argument of the author regarding the importance of shells as evidence of transmission of early culture from the Old to the New World. As before pointed out, much depends on the word "inconceivable;" much therefore must depend on the individual mind brought to bear on the subject. That the author has made out a *prima facie* case may be admitted, but that he has given a thoroughly scientific proof may well be doubted. The reader will be better able to judge for himself after a careful perusal of Mr. Jackson's interesting book.

E. A. PARKYN.

**The Life of Sir Colin C. Scott Moncrieff, K.C.S.I., K.C.M.G., R.E.** Edited by his niece, **Mary A. Hollings.** London: John Murray. 1917. 12s. net.

Miss Hollings states in her preface that this work may be described as a mosaic, containing contributions from many hands, she being responsible for cementing the whole together. No doubt this is so, though the mosaic is not altogether symmetrical. This, however, is of small consequence, and ample material is supplied for the reader to form an adequate conception of the character and work of a man of rare mark, who brought sunshine into many lives, and did much to leave the world better than he found it. So little is generally known of what Sir Colin Moncrieff accomplished that his 'Life' will come as a revelation to many; while those who used to meet him during the many years he was on the Council of the Society (part of the time as Vice-President), with his "singularly gentle smile on a singularly strong face," will be glad to make his more intimate acquaintance. His native modesty was such that no one could have learned from himself the extent and value of the work he accomplished, and it is doubtful if he himself realized it fully, giving most of the credit to those who carried out his plans. The record of what he did is hidden in official reports, read only by experts. He, like other men of his calling, might be classed with the forces of Nature which mould the Earth and change its face. The story of what he accomplished would form an interesting chapter in Marsh's 'The Earth as modified by Human Action.'