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Traces of the Norse Mythology in the Isle of Man. by P. M. C. Kermode

Review by: N. W. T.

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does, how we others come to be as cultured as we are) the mongrel *qui parle* is duly grateful to Dr. Driesmans.

To return to the Germans, however; it was the *ethnologische Eiszeit* of the Reformation-period apparently which roused them from psychological pithecanthropism, and superseded, for example, wood-engraving by copperplate, Dürer by Goethe, and comparative mental monotony by a fine jumble of Slavo-Germans like Lessing, Kelto-Germans like Goethe, and Kern-Germans—the real genuine article, neither east nor west of the Elbe—like Schiller; with a *Weltmachtstellung* and all complete, and very surprising cross-divisions in the field of natural science. Goethe's theory of colour, for instance, proves him *echt deutsch*; Newton's stamps him as a mere Kelt; and the latter-day neglect of Goethe's theory in Germany augurs sad things for the *Lebensanschauung* of the Fatherland. Virchow, conversely, owed to his Slav ancestry his inability to subscribe to Germanic *Darwinismus*: though it would be news to us if Darwin were either blonde or liable to suicidal mania (which things are *Merkmale* of Germanic Man); but, perhaps, Darwin had an *illegitime Kopf*.

From these illustrations of Dr. Driesmans' conclusions and arguments, taken somewhat at random from his analysis of the *Deutsche Blutmischung*, it will be seen that his essay covers wide ground, advances novel and suggestive theories, and contains much instructive and entertaining matter. And as it will be clear from these instances how weighty a matter is true self-knowledge, in ordering a nation's future, let us conclude by commending to all whom it may concern, his speculation on the jesuitical tendency of trousers; and to English readers in particular those sections of *Das Weibwesen* which contain his observations on the *Engländerin*. Experiment towards more systematic *Blutmischung* he desiderates, but does not see his way to recommend. J. L. M.

Norse Mythology.

Kermode.

Traces of the Norse Mythology in the Isle of Man. By P. M. C. Kermode. 119
London: Bemrose, 1904. 8vo. Pp. 30, with ten plates. 22 × 14 cm. Price 2s. 6d.

The local essayist is usually a very harmless person; at the worst he deals out incomplete or inaccurate information to his fellows on subjects which would otherwise not come under their ken. But if he publishes his remarks, he will, if he is well advised, assign to the printing press no higher office than the delectation of his, let us hope numerous, friends. For the sake of his own feelings he should not ask a wider circle to express an opinion on his work.

In the booklet before us Mr. Kermode does useful work in publishing the illustrations, though some of them were figured some fifteen years ago, if we are not mistaken, on sheets distributed by the Disney Professor for his Cambridge lectures. The author's knowledge is, however, hardly equal to the task of elucidation; indeed, it may be doubted if elucidation is possible in many cases.

The work opens with an epitome of Norse mythology, the materials for which might with advantage have been drawn from a modern German handbook. We read, for example, that the five last days of the week are named after Scandinavian gods; it makes one curious to know what Saturday is called in the Isle of Man.

On the folklore side the book is decidedly weak. An attempt is made to explain the world-wide superstition as to nail cuttings by a reference to Ragnarök and Loki's ship. The remarks on midsummer fires are quite inadequate, and the author, as he mentions Grimm as one of his authorities, need hardly have attributed to the editors of the *C. P. Boreale* Grimm's remark (*D. M.*⁴, III., 78) about Balder's funeral pyre.

In interpreting the plates the author regards many of the human faces seen in profile as intended for bird heads. As a matter of fact they are simply a primitive type of portrait; an analogous modern example may be seen in a Welsh collier's sketch of

Pwca, figured in Wirt Sikes' *British Goblins*, p. 21. There is a lack of firmness in the treatment sometimes; on Plate III., for example, the fish is said to be pagan, on Plate X. it is said to be undoubtedly Christian. The author hardly appreciates the extent to which corruption in mythology and confusion in the sculptor's mind may go.

N. W. T.

Africa, East.

Hinde.

Vocabularies of the Kamba and Kikuyu Languages of East Africa. By Hildegard Hinde. Cambridge: University Press, 1904. Pp. 75. 19 × 12 cm. **120**
Price 3s. net.

Officials and settlers in the East Africa Protectorate will be grateful to Mrs. Hinde for the admirable vocabularies she has collected with such care and published in such an attractive manner.

Travellers in Africa know the number of dialects met with and the trouble they cause to the new comer. Here we have Swahili, the key to the trade language, and three Kamba dialects (Kamba, Ulu dialect, Nganvawa dialect). The Kikuyu dialect given is that spoken in the Jogowini district.

Although Mrs. Hinde gives the conjugation of one verb as an example, she wisely omits the grammar, for the construction of the Bantu group of languages is similar to that of Swahili and everyone must learn it.

This book should be in the hands of all travelling or settling in the regions where these dialects are spoken.

R. W. F.

Africa, West.

"Actinus."

Camera Pictures on the Gold Coast. By "Actinus." London: Kleinmann **121**
(1904). 39 × 30 cm. Price 21s.

To anyone, who has actually been to the West Coast of Africa, these photographs of the Gold Coast people bring back pleasing memories and are of considerable interest. The photograph of the surf-beaten shore is an excellent representation of a West African beach anywhere between Liberia and Lagos, while the picture showing a beach covered with cargo, just landed, and crowded with people—both labourers and owners looking after their stuff and capping all the little all-important native custom's officer shouting his orders as he stands on a box—is most vivid and true. The girl fishing by a beautiful tropical river is a picture that also deserves special mention, and the portrait of ex-King Prempeh has an interest all its own.

The gentleman who took these photographs is certainly to be congratulated on his undoubtedly successful results, which are admirably reproduced in collotype.

E. F. M.

Madagascar.

Matthews.

Thirty Years in Madagascar. By the Rev. T. T. Matthews, of the London Missionary Society. With sixty-two illustrations from photographs and sketches. **122**
London: The Religious Tract Society, 1904. Pp. xi + 384. 22 × 14 cm. Price 6s.

In this book the author, naturally enough, confines himself almost entirely to an account of the work of the London Missionary Society in Madagascar. Consequently the reader must not expect very much anthropological matter, although he will find some interesting details about manners and customs scattered about among the pages of the book. The author, moreover, is certainly not an anthropologist, and anything that he has to say about the natives, before they came under the influence of his mission, must be read with some caution, as it is obviously biased by his point of view. Still, the few anthropological facts he gives are of considerable interest, as, apart from papers in various scientific journals, very little seems to have been written about the Madagascan people.