

instruments have been injured or delayed, or are generally inaccessible, such methods are not to be despised. It would be an admirable exercise for anyone, whether he travels or not, to accustom himself to the use of such tools, and learn to what degree of accuracy he can rely on such devices.

THE EVOLUTION OF HUMAN SOCIETY.

La Sociologie génétique. By François Cosentini. Introduction by Maxime Kovalevsky. Pp. xviii + 205. (Paris: F. Alcan, 1905.) Price 3.75 francs.

IN a short compass this book gives an excellent bird's-eye view of a very wide territory. It begins with a discussion of the data available for the study of the evolution of human society. Even animal associations are not neglected, but, naturally, more space is devoted to the beliefs and customs of savage tribes. Our author decides wisely with regard to primitive man that much is to be learnt thus. But he deprecates rash inferences. The ancestors of civilised man, there is reason to believe, never ceased to make progress. The savages of the present day have stagnated, and may, in some cases, have retrograded. Still, when the theories that suggest themselves to the investigator of savages and their ways are modified and corrected by the study of the institutions, the beliefs, the folk-lore of civilised peoples, it is probable that the risk of serious error is reduced to very small proportions.

M. Cosentini decides in favour of a polyphyletic origin of the human race, arguing partly from the reduced fertility observable when two widely different types interbreed. After a brief but interesting account of the Palæolithic and Neolithic ages, he deals with the origin of the family. Here, as elsewhere, he shows sound judgment in his treatment of the various rival theories. He refuses to regard the patriarchal family as primitive. The more primitive the community the less sign is there of patriarchal authority. On the other hand, it would be foolish to maintain that there was ever a time in which woman was absolutely predominant. This view is precluded by the fact that primitive man had to wage incessant war against wild beasts and almost incessant war against hostile tribes. But there is abundant evidence that there was a time when a man was known as his mother's son and not as his father's, when pedigrees were traced through the female line, and when women had much more power and influence than at a later period when the patriarchal system had been developed. When the tendency changed and the paterfamilias became an autocrat within his own household, civilisation made great progress.

The family has been the nucleus which has made the higher civilisation possible, a point which, perhaps, M. Cosentini does not sufficiently recognise. Our author is, no doubt, right in holding that the idea of the family grew out of the idea of private property. The wife was the property of her husband. In very many cases he had captured her as he had captured his cattle. But with regard to monogamy, M. Cosentini does not bring out the interesting fact

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that in northern climes, where it is most firmly rooted, it derives its strength mainly from the fact that one man's labour suffices for the feeding and clothing of only a small number of children. Even among animals we find the same thing. Where the work of both parents is required for the bringing up of the young, there the system of pairing is the rule. Where the young are precocious and are soon able to fend for themselves, polygamy arises.

On the remainder of the book want of space forbids us to comment at length. It deals with animism, myths, language, religion, morality, law, the origin of social classes, art, industry, and commerce. The style is clear; and throughout the book M. Cosentini proves himself a fair critic and a clear-headed thinker.

F. W. H.

OUR BOOK SHELF.

Trees. By H. Marshall Ward. Vol. iii. Flowers and Inflorescences. Pp. xii+402. (Cambridge: The University Press, 1905.) Price 4s. 6d. net.

THE first two volumes of the above work have been previously noticed in these columns. The present volume, which deals with flowers, is, like the others, divided into two parts. Part i. deals with the flower in general. The author has been very successful in his treatment of this vast subject; he has brought together and arranged his facts in such a clear and simple manner that the beginner should have no difficulty in gaining a very comprehensive knowledge concerning the different kinds of inflorescences, the structure and development of flowers, as well as the meaning of their various forms and modifications. So far as possible technical terms have been carefully avoided, but at the same time it is quite impossible to treat a subject like this without using one or two terms which have a special meaning of their own which cannot be readily put into every-day language. Wherever such expressions are used their meaning is always carefully explained, and at the end of the book a useful glossary is given which will remove all mystery concerning these terms should any such exist.

The author has naturally confined himself to a critical examination of the flowers of trees and shrubs, and the student will find here an epitome of the natural system of classification, and when this epitome has been mastered he will be in a position to understand the structure and form of the flowers of cultivated and wild herbaceous plants as well.

Part ii. is more of the nature of a flora, *i.e.* the author has given in tabular form a general conspectus of woody plants and their flowers, by which means any given species may be easily diagnosed at flowering time.

It is a well known fact that the willows are almost, if not, the most difficult family to deal with as regards their identification. Apart from their tendency to hybridise with each other, the willows are dioecious, which renders their identification very difficult when only one kind of flower is available. The author has very ingeniously overcome this difficulty by giving a special table as an appendix wherein the separate characters of the male and female flowers are used for the purposes of diagnosis.

This volume, like the other two, is profusely illustrated. There is also a very useful and exhaustive index at the end of the book. While vol. i., "Buds and Twigs," is a book for the winter study of trees and shrubs, we have in vol. iii. a book which is specially adapted for use in summer.