

Board to advise and regulate, but yet gives it no means of obtaining knowledge. By some obscure departmental tradition research is supposed to be outside the scope of the Board of Agriculture—it spends something between 400*l.* and 500*l.* a year in assisting various investigations! But if the Board of Agriculture is to forward the industry of agriculture, its very first business is investigation and research; it must condescend to go to work in the way other countries and our own colonies aid their farmers, and it must have money to do the work with. Now to build up a proper intelligence department, the present grant of 11,000*l.* a year to the Board of Agriculture for educational purposes is none too much; let it be allowed to keep this money and retain its connection with the colleges by using it to promote investigation in them, building up in one a mycological department which would act as consultant for the board, in another an entomological department, and so forth. Meantime let the educational work of the colleges be put under the control of its proper authority, the Board of Education.

THE CHILDHOOD OF MAN.¹

DR. L. FROBENIUS is a prolific writer on ethnological subjects, and we welcome a translation of a book which gives in popular language the results of his wide reading. The book deals with an extensive range of subjects, upon many of which very diverse views are held, and the English reader will be pleased to be able readily to grasp the point of view of a German ethnologist; but a book, in some cases, has to be judged by what is omitted as well as by what it actually contains.

In dealing with articles of personal adornment the author admits that the objects worn have usually another value than that of pure ornament; he refers to trophies and currency, but entirely omits the very widely spread wearing of "ornaments" for magical purposes. He makes some interesting observations on scarifications of various central African tribes, and alludes to the significance of these and other forms of skin decoration; but, unfortunately, he terms all such tattooing.

The making of shell money he regards as the most peculiar of the reasons for the origin of labour. He quotes R. Parkinson concerning the use and exchange value of the *dewarra*. Under the term of dress-language he refers to strings and belts of wampum, and to the notched and painted eagle feathers of some North American Indians. Also culled from American sources are his accounts of sign and gesture language, but no allusion is made to the gesture language of such peoples as the Australians, Papuans, Neapolitans, and many others. One of the best sections is that dealing with drums and drum language, which he believes has a very wide extension in Africa, and is "convinced that this peculiar drum-language is current throughout Central Africa east of the chain of lakes." He says (p. 86):—"It would appear to be most highly developed in the western parts of equatorial Africa, although scarcely less widespread in Oceania, that is, in the insular lands lying north-west and north-east of New Guinea. In New Pomerania [New Britain] itself the different villages communicate over wide areas by means of the drum-telegraph, which has also a very wide range in the Amazons valley and in Mexico. The North-west

¹ "The Childhood of Man: a Popular Account of the Lives, Customs and Thoughts of the Primitive Races." By Leo Frobenius, translated by A. H. Keane. Pp. 504; with 415 illustrations. (London: Seeley and Co., Ltd., 1909.) Price 16s. net.

Americans, too, possess similar instruments." An interesting modification of the drum, according to him, is the apparatus that is fastened to a bow in Mangbattuland. He makes the interesting suggestion (p. 99) that "the drum is a hybrid sort of instrument, one part of which, the sounding-case, owes its origin to the pounding of corn; the other, the skin, to the measured beat in leather-dressing." The most valuable portion of his account of picture-writing is taken from Hoffman's (not "Hoffmann") contribution to Garrick Mallery's great monograph, to which he does not allude by name.

In the chapter on "skull-worship and head-hunting" he refers to the well-known fact that the preservation of skulls by some people is to ensure the assistance or protection of the spirit of the dead man, which in the next world becomes the servant of whoever captured his skull. Although he does not say so, scalp-collecting had probably a similar significance, as probably had the bunches of human hair which are inserted in some shields from Borneo and Celebes.

In dealing with fetishism he says (p. 184):—

"So long, for instance, as the owners of the ancestral images remember the names and the personalities of the dead represented by them, so long will the object retain

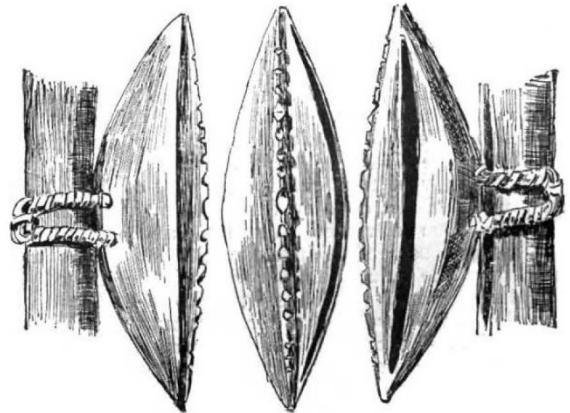


FIG. 1.—The little Signal-drum of the Madi bow. About half natural size. Three views. From "The Childhood of Man."

the type identical in character, essentially the same. But when the memory dies out while the image remains, it will soon happen that the wooden figures will acquire the general significance of a sacred object without any personal value." "When . . . the negro sees any unusual object, he is at once taken with a certain feeling of anxiety, a certain perplexity, and he is ready to believe in a display of power in this object, which exceeds the usual, the commonplace, to the extent that the thing itself looks strange or weird. To put it clearly, the negro attributes a supernatural power to every fresh appearance, to any new object which in any way departs from the ordinary, the known, the intelligible. For him it is uncanny" (pp. 185-6).

But the author does not pay sufficient attention to the fact that a fetish is credited with mysterious powers owing to its being the habitation, temporary or permanent, of a spiritual being, or as being the vehicle or means by which the spirit communicates with his worshippers. The chapter on secret societies and masks is of great interest; it deals mainly with West African conditions, but in the next chapter the author describes the *mide* of the Ojibways. The chapter on sacred animals is scarcely adequate, and totemism he regards, like Mr. Andrew Lang—of

whom no mention is made—as due to a system of naming.

A third of the book is taken up with the exposition of the solar god in mythology, and the author certainly gives examples of solar and other myths from different peoples, but he presses into this argument various folk-tales which do not seem to have any solar significance. It is true that certain incidents in some of these tales may be paralleled by incidents in folk-tales in other parts of the world which are recognisable as solar myths, for, to take one example, a fishing population is very likely to have in one of its tales the incident of a man being swallowed by a fish; and wherever this occurs the solar mythologists pick out this incident and regard it as a part of the "Jonah-solar myth," although the rest of the tale may have no bearing at all on solar mythology. This incident

too, weaves its web. Thus the slender threads of the spider become solar rays and the sun becomes the spider which in artful ways ensnares the souls of mortals. The solar myth, however, became a nursery tale." There are two chapters on the origin of the world, the fall of the sky, the flood, and the theft of fire.

It will be seen that the book covers a broad field and contains much interesting matter, some of which is not easily accessible to the English-reading public; and, indeed, there seem to be some accounts not previously published, but the absence of references renders it difficult to be quite certain on these points, and is, indeed, a very serious blemish in the book. There is a large number of excellent figures and plates, but a great many of these are not explained, and appear to have no bearing on the text. Finally, the



FIG. 2.—The Juju Nkali Feast. From "The Childhood of Man."

occurs in folk-tales from various places, and in the Torres Straits tale of Mutuk it is recorded that the hair of that individual fell off when he was in the shark's stomach. The same incident occurs in the North American tale, when Kaig, the Mink, was swallowed by a whale, the loss of hair in this case being due to the heat; in the tale as here given it is not evident that "the cause of the hair falling off is the heat of the sun" (p. 287). The same explanation is offered for the Mutuk incident; by such methods correspondences are readily arrived at, but this is not the place to discuss the modern recrudescence of astral-mythology in Germany.

The bird in symbolic art, according to Dr. Frobenius, bears the soul aloft through the air up to the sun. "But here is the solution of the whole problem; the soul of the dead man follows the sun." He considers that the tales of the cunning spider are survivals of mythological tales in which the spider is regarded as representing the sun. "In the form of rays the sun emits its sea of light; in the form of rays the spider,

book is rather an exposition of the author's views than of those generally held by ethnologists.

A. C. HADDON.

ALBERT GAUDRY.

BIOLOGICAL and geological science mourns the loss of Prof. Albert Gaudry, who, full of years and honours, passed away at Paris on November 29. He was one of the most distinguished pioneers in the modern methods of studying extinct animals, and during the past half-century his brilliant expositions and suggestive writings have been among the most potent influences for the direction of palæontological research to profitable ends. In the case of his pupils and those who had the privilege of his personal acquaintance, the charm of his courtly manner and quiet enthusiasm strengthened these influences, and made him a revered master.

Jean Albert Gaudry was born at Saint-Germain-en-Laye on September 15, 1827, the son of a well-known