

gaps which were left in the evidence where matters were considered too intimate for publication. After a lapse of more than fifty years, most of these could surely have been filled in without offence, and thus have counteracted the attenuating effect which the mere lapse of time has on the scientific value of any historical narrative. Nor is the recording itself as full and expert as Crookes's account of his experiments with the same medium.

Nevertheless, Lord Dunraven has put under a deep obligation all students of the secular struggle between the champions of "law," convention, prejudice, scepticism, conservatism, on one hand, and of "fact," eccentricity, open-mindedness, credulity, revolution, on the other. The continuance of this struggle is due to the fact that the progress of knowledge demands a co-operation of both these tendencies, so that neither can lay exclusive claim to the term "scientific"; while the question as to which party is right cannot be settled by any appeal to general principles, but only (if at all) by patient and prolonged examination of each case.

All this applies with peculiar force to "spiritualism," which excites strong emotions on both sides, and displays a dramatic clash between established principles and subversive testimony. But it would be utterly unscientific to burke investigation on this account, after the fashion of Hume, by declaring that "miracles" are alleged, and that miracles are impossible. This is mere *a priori* dogmatism, which is discreditable alike to philosophy and to science.

It may be that the times are not yet ripe for a truly scientific inquiry into the facts alleged; certainly neither party as yet welcomes examination. The man of science professes to be more interested in, say, the nephridia of worms than in the immortality of his soul, while the spiritualist, though he rests his case on observable facts, fights singularly shy of test conditions. Even when a "medium" can be got to submit to examination, it is usually hard to find a man of science who will conduct it; as was recently shown when, in spite of a handsome salary, such a post went a-begging, until a physicist already compromised by interest in the supernormal accepted it, and speedily exploded a famous medium.

Perhaps the truth of the matter is that both sides are not quite sure of their ground and afraid to test their convictions. Still, one cannot read Lord Dunraven's book without feeling that progress is being made, though slowly; perhaps it is not too much to hope that, in another fifty years, science will have given an explanation satisfactory to both the scientific worker and the spiritualist of the mysteries that are still in dispute.

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### Our Bookshelf.

*The Morphology and Evolution of the Apes and Man.*  
By Dr. Charles F. Sonntag. Pp. xi + 364. (London: J. Bale, Sons and Danielsson, Ltd., 1924.) 12s. 6d. net.

FULLY sixty years ago, Huxley systematised our knowledge of the anatomy and nature of anthropoid apes in a famous treatise to which he gave the title "Evidence as to Man's Place in Nature." Anatomists have been busy since then; there has been an enormous output of papers relating to the anatomy of apes, and there has grown up a great need for an ordered presentation and interpretation of the new material.

Dr. Charles F. Sonntag, Prosector to the Zoological Society of London, has stepped into the breach and sought to supply this need in "The Morphology and Evolution of the Apes and Man." This book, Dr. Sonntag informs us in his preface, "is intended to serve as an introduction to Anthropology, for it deals with the first steps in that science, namely the relations of Man to lower animals."

The scope of Dr. Sonntag's treatise is best indicated by citing the contents of its chapters. Chapter i. is devoted to a systematic account of lemurs and Tarsius, Chapter ii. to the New World monkeys, Chapter iii. to the Old World monkeys. Then follow nine chapters on the anthropoid apes. One is devoted to a description of their external characters, habits, and classification; then follow others in which plain accounts are given of their skeletons and teeth, of their muscles, of their organs of digestion, of their organs of circulation, of their respiratory systems, of their urino-genital systems, and of their nervous systems. In all of these chapters, Dr. Sonntag keeps his personal opinions in the background, being content to play the part of descriptive anatomist, leaving the interpretation of his facts to others.

In a final chapter a brief account is given of the evolution of the primates, the text of this chapter being greatly assisted by a clearly drawn phylogenetic tree. In this chapter, as in others, Dr. Sonntag is an eminently safe guide for both student and expert, for he has preferred to give a detailed account of the anatomy of apes, rather than to discuss the problems relating to their origin. Anatomists are indebted to Dr. Sonntag for this work, particularly for the full bibliography which is appended.

*Institution of Petroleum Technologists. Standard Methods of Testing Petroleum and its Products.* Pp. x + 102. (London: Institution of Petroleum Technologists, 1924.) 6s. net.

THE Committee appointed by the Institution of Petroleum Technologists to standardise methods of oil-testing has, under the above title, published its first report in the form of a concise manual. It was no easy task to criticise existing methods, to comment on relative advantages and disadvantages inherent thereto, to keep pace with current developments, and at the same time to issue an authoritative work formulating agreed methods of oil-analysis consistent with home and foreign procedures; but the Committee has