

theory is, however, dealt with adequately but quite briefly. The work may be recommended to chemists wishing to employ magnetism as a tool in the investigation of molecular structure and to physics students requiring a book intermediate in scope between Stoner's small monograph, "Magnetism", and his comprehensive work "Magnetism and Matter".

It is, however, unfortunate that so great a delay has occurred between the writing and publication

of the book. The preface bears the date July 1933 and no work later than the early part of 1934 is discussed. It is thus inevitable that certain sections of such a rapidly growing subject are treated differently from what they would be in a more recent account. In particular, less space might be given to the early naïve attempts to explain the magnetic properties of complex salts, and more to the work of Pauling and its extension by Van Vleck.

L. C. J.

Woman's Position in Society

(1) Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies

By Margaret Mead. Pp. xxii+335. (London: George Routledge and Sons, Ltd., 1935.) 10s. 6d. net.

(2) Woman's Mysteries: Ancient and Modern

By Dr. M. Esther Harding. Pp. xvi+342. (London, New York and Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., 1935.) 10s. 6d. net.

IN these two books the factors which contribute to the determination of woman's position in modern society are considered from very different points of view, though both authors approach the question in the light of an analysis of more primitive custom and belief—in the one instance as found among modern peoples of the simpler cultures, in the other mainly relying on the evidence of the cults of antiquity.

(1) Dr. Margaret Mead's evidence is drawn from her observations of three communities living in adjacent areas on the Sepik River in Papua, the mountain-dwelling Arapesh, the cannibalistic Mundugumor, and the head-hunters of Tchambuli. These communities were visited by herself and Dr. R. Fortune in an expedition in 1931–33. Among them, Dr. Mead found some very striking differences in temperament and outlook as between the three communities. These are brought out very clearly in her interpretation of custom and institution, as well as in her observations of mentality, which are described with the lucidity and literary skill that readers of her earlier works on Samoa and New Guinea will have been led to expect. She makes out a convincing case, in these communities, at least, that qualities of temperament which it is customary to regard as sex-linked are to be regarded rather as socially determined, *but that even in these primitive societies there are 'misfits'*.

Applying conclusions drawn from these simpler societies to modern civilisation, Dr. Mead infers that the social dichotomy of sex, to which much of modern social unrest is here attributed, especially in so far as it affects the activities and position of women, is avoidable by a reshuffling which would allow scope for individual development without regard to the limitations of an assumed temperament imposed by convention.

Dr. Mead's volume is stimulating and provocative. While ethnographic evidence and modern experience lend some support to her views, nothing short of a much extended investigation on similar lines would warrant acceptance of her somewhat sweeping generalisations.

(2) While Dr. Mead by no means ignores emotion, and especially sexual emotion, Dr. Harding gives it what may seem an exaggerated importance. In the light of Dr. Jung's doctrine of the unconscious, she demonstrates the symbolism of cults and rituals which in the history of religion are shown to have had special reference to woman and her part in human life. She holds, for example, that the myths of the moon goddess reveal the inner subjective reality of feminine psychology, the moon being the characteristic feminine symbol. Dr. Harding finds support for her views in what is known of the mystic religions and the cults of Astarte and her counterparts in the early religions of the East, as well as in the cults of the Great Mother.

As Dr. Harding admits, such views as these are matters of interpretation, which are incapable of proof. They are to be accepted or rejected according as the psychological hypothesis, upon which they depend, is regarded as valid or not. Like other theories of the psychoanalytic school, the supporting evidence is drawn from a restricted field. When such views are tested in the light of *ethnographic evidence at large*, very considerable modification and adaptation are necessary.