

in the former manual to an entire volume which, although vol. 2 of the "Code", is the first to be published.

It is undoubtedly a convenience for sylviculturists to have their own all-embracing text, although as a matter of fact the only feature of the work under review that is peculiar to sylviculture lies in the numerical data and the actual experiments chosen for purposes of illustration. Generally, the volume is an expository presentation of those parts of the theory and application of statistical methods that are needed in the domain of field experimentation. Full acknowledgment is made of the sources of the compilation, and, although the authors are evidently not mathematical statisticians, the selection of the material and the general presentation are on the whole sound, while a welcome feature is the considerable detail given to all the calculations; so much so, indeed, that the impression may have been left that computation is more complex than it really is, and the so-called 'short methods' not very short after all.

Part 1—general principles—covers the standard methods needed for estimation and tests of significance up to analysis of covariance, with an added chapter (the longest in the book) on the fitting of simple curves, which is mathematical rather than statistical, and which could with advantage have been integrated with the general study of regression. Part 2 deals with the design of field experiments, describing the ordinary arrangements up to simple factorial designs, including split plots, and giving consideration to experiments repeated in space and time. With some unnecessary repetition from Part 2, Part 3 rounds off the work with nine full-scale examples. It would have been a convenience to readers to point out that variance-ratio tables are available, with all the other tables required, in a single book, "Statistical Tables", by Fisher and Yates.

The main points of criticism are a need in some places for integration of alternative methods, a faulty comparison of a total and partial correlation coefficient on p. 57, and some confusion regarding the use of interactions in space-time experiments (for example, p. 177). But, in any event, sylviculturists will be safer with this book than with some of those given in the list of references, and the authors are to be commended for a useful compilation which will have a general value outside the forestry service.

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SURVEY OF THE GREAT WORLD RELIGIONS

Ethics of the Great Religions

With some Account of their Origin, Scriptures and Practices. By E. Royston Pike. Pp. viii+247+20 plates. (London: Methuen and Co., 1948.) 15s. net.

THIS is an attractively illustrated and very readable book, but one which nevertheless cannot be altogether recommended as a reliable introduction to the subject. Any attempt to study the great world religions, which treats them as, in essence, no more than a number of ethical systems, converging towards something like agreement, inevitably fails to do justice to the specific *differentia* of each particular religion.

A religion is more fundamentally a metaphysical than a moral system. Its ethical commandments and prohibitions are understood and justified by its votaries in terms of its metaphysic, and not the other way round. Religious morality is always a relative morality of adaptation to presumed circumstances, and never an absolute morality justifying itself in terms of belief in a conscience or capacity for moral intuition which functions independently of all metaphysical beliefs and presuppositions. Thus even when the ethical prescriptions of two different religions appear, when abstracted from their respective metaphysical contexts, to be in fundamental agreement, the appearance is, in fact, a misleading one. For example, one religion may cultivate asceticism because it distrusts personal life and selfhood, and wishes men to lull themselves into self-forgetfulness and resignation by the elimination of desire; whereas another may resort to ascetic disciplines for precisely the opposite reason, because it believes in personal existence and seeks to intensify its powers by discipline and concentration. The resemblance, in such a case, will be accidental and superficial; the differences are essential and profound.

The truth is that comparative religion is a subject most appropriately studied, because most sympathetically and with most insight, by a man of personal religious experience and conviction. To write about the observed phenomena of religion without knowing the inward discipline of 'being religious' is rather like trying to contribute to the progress of physical science without acquainting oneself with the laboratory techniques of controlled observation and experiment which it employs. It may be replied that the teacher who is a disciple of no one of the great world religions is more likely to display impartiality as between them all than, shall we say, a Christian teacher. But this is one of the great errors of so much liberal educational thought. The real virtue of the teacher is not impartiality—a quality which the mere dilettante can simulate easily enough—but justice, the stern intellectual self-discipline which enables a man who has committed himself utterly to the guidance and promptings of his own convictions to look with charity and understanding upon those of others. Thus a book like this fails to satisfy the Christian reader; but it fails equally, and for the same reasons, to satisfy the Moslem or the Buddhist. A Christian writer on the same subject would do justice to the specific *differentia* of Christianity; but at the same time, and as part of the same process, he would also render a similar service to Islam and Buddhism, and leave the Moslem and the Buddhist at all events less dissatisfied.

To the Christian the author's treatment of Christianity seems particularly defective—he shows, for example, no knowledge or even suspicion of the tendency and implications of recent discoveries in the realm of biblical criticism (he is "almost certain" that St. John's Gospel was not written "earlier than 100 A.D.")—but no doubt a Buddhist would feel that his account of Buddhism is his greatest failure, while a Moslem would complain in particular of a pathetic inability to penetrate the secret of the power of Islam. To be equally unjust to everybody is indeed a travesty of real impartiality; but it is often the fate of the secularly minded doctrinaire liberalism which, in the modern world, has brought the genuine liberal values of our culture into their present parlous condition.

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