actually, much of it is scarcely distinguishable from what would be expected in any university course of lectures on general philosophy. Finally, more particular problems are introduced, until the last chapter is a not very abstruse exposition of statistical 'quality control' in manufacture, which attracted so much attention during the War.

Of course, Mr. C. W. Churchman will consider this a caricature of his book, and say that I have ignored all the ideas to which he attributes most importance. If so, the error is due to genuine misunderstanding and not to malice; he should consider whether his own heed and respect for the views of others entitle him to complain. Surely he can scarcely be really ignorant that there are alternatives to the frequency theory of probability; that facts and laws have been held to be mutually defining, so that neither can be prior to the other; and that to some people his 'ideal' of errorless measurement is as sensible as the ideal of a round square. But if he allowed any trace of such discrepant doctrines to intrude, most of what he has written would have to be completely transformed.

The chief interest of Mr. Churchman's book is that it represents the extreme of a tendency that has been growing ever since the present sceptical generation (apart from the Marxists) abandoned all hope of a universal philosophy; philosophers tend to segregate into groups, distinguished, not by the answers that they give to questions of universally recognized urgency, but by the questions they ask, which have usually developed from a single focus in a narrow direction. The practice has the advantage that any question that once engages the attention of a group of experts may hope to receive a definite solution; doubtless the pupils and associates of E. A. Singer, jun., regard this work as a very serious contribution to knowledge; and it might have a wider audience if it had a less wide title. But the practice has the disadvantage that questions which, from their very nature, are unlikely to attract experts—for example, the treatment of certain topics in the text-books on which we have all been reared—receive no attention at all; it becomes increasingly difficult to convince those who approach science from the outside that it has any general principles which could form the basis of a cultural education. NORMAN R. CAMPBELL

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EUROPE AND HER PREHISTORY

The Dawn of European Civilization

By Prof. V. Gordon Childe. New (fourth) edition, enlarged and completely rewritten. Pp. xix + 362. (London: Kegan Paul and Co., Ltd., 1948.) 28*s*. net.

PROF. V. G. CHILDE has done very well to bring out, so soon after the seven-year interruption by war of contact with archæology in the Continent of Europe, this revised fourth edition of the book with which he first made his name in 1925. Little of importance has escaped him of the material published since the 1939 edition, and the book stands up as well as ever it did to the responsibility of being the standard English summary of the first half of the 3,000 years of prehistory which lie, in Europe, between the early Neolithic and the Roman Empire. The whole 1939 text has been reconsidered, and much of it rewritten; there are many new (and better) illustrations, and at the end a set of new chronological tables as well as of compendious maps. The first chapter, on the Mesolithic hunters and fishers over whom the 'dawn of civilization' from the East gradually broke, is perhaps rather constricted, and the geological and palæobotanical elucidation of its chronology rather curtly sketched; but that, of course, is 'background' only. With the 'Neolithic revolution' to food-producing economy in the Near and Middle East the unfolding of the 'dawn' begins; Childe pursues it, as in his previous editions, by the method of taking each of the chief geographical regions of Europe in turn, and running through the sequence of its cultures from the first Neolithic to the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age, or the fifteenth century B.C., and then starting again upon the next one.

He begins with Crete—though without dwelling on the details of Minoan civilization once fully developed. It could be argued that Evans's belief in its "essentially European" character (pp. 20, 27) is now somewhat undermined by discovery in south-west Asia; the Minoan achievement was, indeed, uniquely blended, but the spread of Neolithic culture from the Ægean and the Straits into Continental Europe, on the other hand, shows its Asiatic heritage undergoing a progressive 'Europeanization' of a more objectively determinable kind, through a blending with the traditions of the Mesolithic Europeans. For, though until then not civilized at all, they showed themselves capable of combining together new 'civilized' and old 'savage' elements of culture, to produce a wide and self-assured range of 'barbaric' variations. Thus the 'dawn of European civilization' really means the morning of European barbarism; and beyond question, the most valuable contribution of Childe's book to the materials for a philosophy of history is his demonstration, built up by patient steps and culminating in the final "Retrospect", that its effect was to produce a *zoning* of cultures, in a descending scale of attainment from south-east outwards to north-west and north.

Thus, literate urban culture was already two thousand years old in Babylonia when it got its first foothold, in Mycenean Greece, on the European mainland; yet much of Europe was still then not yet in the Bronze Age. It was, of course, the same zoning that left the British Isles and Scandinavia still in the Bronze Age when Athens had already the Æschylean drama; and to it, in no small degree, is due the variety and vitality of the European genius, which has never been dulled by the spectacle of any universal uniformity of culture. That these things should now be attaining recognition among writers of general history (who are usually, and perhaps pardonably, about twenty years behind the specialists) is largely to be put to Childe's own credit; and if his fellow-specialists can still whisper that he is too apt to seem timid or perverse on points of detail, they know very well that without what they have learnt from him themselves they would scarcely be able to criticize him intelligently at all.

Since prehistory is not a natural science, but rather a social-historical study, scientific in some but not all aspects, there will always be a distinctive place in it for private judgments. Childe is sometimes chary of letting his be known. Virtuously resolved to be 'scientifically' free from bias, he will shrug away from puzzles with a gloomy exclamation-mark; he even ends the last sentence in the book with one. But there are still few other prehistorians whose private judgments, virtuous or otherwise, anyone really wants to hear. C. F. C. HAWKES