Tylor / by R.R. Marett.

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MODERN SOCIOLOGISTS

TYLOR

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E. B. TYLOR

(*From a photo by Maull and Fox*)

MODERN SOCIOLOGISTS

TYLOR

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NOTE

The references are chiefly to the following works:

Anahuac, 1861.

Researches in the Early History of Mankind, 1865, refs. to 3rd edit., 1878 (*R.*).

Primitive Culture, 1871, refs. to 4th edit., 1903 (*P.C.*).

Anthropology, 1881 (*A.*).

Anthropological Essays presented to E. B. Tylor, Oxford, 1907 (*Anthrop. Essays*). (See esp. A. Lang's Introduction, and full Bibliography at end.)

Journal of the (*Royal*) *Anthropological Institute* (*J.A.I.*).

Quarterly, Contemporary, Fortnightly Reviews (*Q.R., C.R., F.R.*).

PREFACE

IN venturing to write about Tylor I feel inclined to begin by exclaiming, with Socrates: Who am I that I should lay hands on my father Parmenides? Tylor became Reader in Anthropology at Oxford in 1884, only a year before I came up to Balliol College, which had taken him to its bosom; and it was Balliol, too, that had produced Andrew Lang, Tylor's ardent disciple, whose *Custom and Myth*, not long out, was prescribed for me by Strachan Davidson, then Tutor and afterwards Master, almost as soon as I arrived. Later on, just after my election as Fellow of Exeter in 1891, the University set as the subject of the Green Moral Philosophy Prize, "The Ethics of Savage Races." My essay proving the lucky one, Tylor, who had been a judge, went through it with me afterwards almost literally word by word, though it was a screed of interminable length; and I came to realize, as never before, how truly wise he was. Such, however, I am bound to confess was the force of his kindly criticisms —directed not so much against my methods, perhaps, as against my apparatus of facts—that I put this early effort of mine into a drawer with an eye to future amplification and revision; and there alas! it has remained ever since. Thenceforwards my relations with Tylor and his charming wife were close and constant, right up to the time of his seventy-fifth year, when it was my privilege, as one of the co-editors of *Anthropological Essays presented to Edward Burnett Tylor*

(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), to make the presentation on October 2nd, his actual birthday. Though he lived on for another decade, his powers were beginning to fail, and he was soon to retire from Oxford; though not before he had laid down the main lines on which our Diploma Course in Anthropology —one that has served other Universities as a model— has ever since been conducted. Like Alexander the Great, Tylor had no successor; but we, the Epigoni who divided his empire, Arthur Thomson, Henry Balfour and myself, ruled each over his own portion, though in brotherly alliance. Thus I became, and still am, responsible for the Social Anthropology at Oxford; so that it will be natural for me in what follows to consider Tylor's work chiefly from the sociological point of view. These personal explanations will, I hope, be pardoned in one who possibly stands too near to his subject to picture him as an anthropologist in just perspective. Great as was his science, the man himself was greater. To look as handsome as a Greek god, to be as gentle at heart as a good Christian should, and, withal, to have the hard, keen, penetrating intelligence of the naturalist of genius—this is to be gifted indeed; or, as they would say in the Pacific, such a man has *mana*. I feel it, therefore, almost a sacrilege to measure him by those commonplace standards which for lack of better I am forced to employ. For the rest, I would explain that circumstances have made it necessary for this sketch to be composed rather hurriedly, and on holiday when books of reference were scarce; so that perforce I have sometimes had to fall back on precious memories of walks and talks, whence, I dare say, I have gathered

more about the workings of Tylor's mind than even from those volumes of his which I nearly know by heart. All I hope, then, is that what I have written, though manifestly inadequate, may yet be found trustworthy so far as it tries to go.

R. R. MARETT.

EXETER COLLEGE.
December 1, 1935.

CHAPTER I

PERSONALITY AND OUTLOOK

THIS little book is in no sense a biography of Tylor, but is meant simply to give some account of his work in Anthropology, and more especially in that part of it which touches Sociology. Yet something must be said about his origin and career. Edward Burnett Tylor was born on October 2nd, 1832, and came of Quaker stock—a fact not immaterial, since it helps to explain how he came to turn towards science. This is not the place in which to go into the history of this peculiar people; but one might perhaps summarize it not unfairly by saying that in the seventeenth century they were fanatics, in the eighteenth century nonconformists, and in the nineteenth century liberals. In other words, whereas they were regarded by the rest of the world at first as schismatics and later on as eccentrics, they had finally achieved complete respectability, so far as that doubtful compliment applies to free-thinking persons of any description. Their outlook, however, remained limited in certain directions. Thus it was not easy for them to participate in a classical education so long as the Universities imposed tests of orthodoxy to which they could not subscribe, as happened right up to the eighteen-seventies. Tylor in conversation at Oxford would laughingly boast that he had never sat for an examination in his life, and had arrived at a professorship notwithstanding. Again, it

was always part of the Quaker tradition to look with a certain suspicion on music and the other fine arts. On the other hand, when they engaged in trade, as so many of them did, their noted integrity stood the Quakers in good stead; so that they would be predisposed towards science if only through their interest in technology. Moreover, it was inevitable that, as they advanced in prosperity and made wider contacts, most of the old angularities should be rubbed away, so that they could more unreservedly take part in such movements of emancipation as might commend themselves to middle-class opinion. A typical movement of the kind was the struggle to place the natural sciences on an equal footing with the humanities; those sciences in particular that seemed to trench on the question of Man's place in the Universe having to make their way in the very teeth of the conservative opposition. At least, then, it was not inconsistent with those inward promptings which form the bed-rock of the Quaker persuasion that Tylor's generation should be for facing the facts of experience even when it might be inconvenient to do so. Whereas Disraeli was "on the side of the angels," Tylor was ready to throw in his lot with Darwin and the new biology. Tylor's brother became a distinguished geologist, who dealt chiefly with that Quaternary period that is so closely associated with human history.[1] Tylor's friend Henry Christy, another Quaker, did as much as any man of his day

[1] Alfred Tylor (1824–84) was actively engaged in the family business, but wrote important papers on Glacial and Post-Glacial Conditions (being the first to distinguish a "Pluvial" Period); also studied Coloration in Animals and Plants. His son, Joseph John (1851–1901), also of the same firm, became well known as an Egyptologist. He was one of the founders of the National Liberal Club. See *Dict. Nat. Biogr.*, 2nd Supplement.

to confirm by the use of the spade that immense antiquity now at length ascribed to Man to the utter confusion of the conventional chronology. As out of the strong came forth sweetness in Samson's riddle, so by a paradox of development out of the narrowness of the former age came forth the broadmindedness of the later.

The parents, Joseph Tylor and Harriet Skipper, both of the Society of Friends, were Londoners and lived at Camberwell; the business quarters of J. Tylor and Sons, Brassfounders, being in Newgate Street. The young Edward was sent to a school belonging to the denomination at Tottenham, but, like his elder brother Alfred, was taken away at the age of sixteen that he might go into the firm. Thus he had little chance of becoming a scholar in the narrow sense, but, by way of compensation, was able to develop his incomparable gift of writing plain English, good homespun stuff needing no academic tailoring to set it off. For the next seven years he sat at a desk, and then, fortunately, his health showed signs of breaking down. For the sake of his lungs he must travel; and, secure of a modest competency, travel he could at his leisure and as far as to the New World; where in Mexico, as will hereafter be related, he received his "call." Thus many others, from Plato's friend Theages onwards, have had to thank the ills of the flesh for moving them to seek the fruits of the spirit. From this turning-point his life proceeds uneventfully enough; for the external history of a student in easy circumstances and very happily married does not lend itself to drama. Here are a few leading dates. In 1855 he sets forth on his travels, and next year is in Mexico with Christy. As early as 1858

he marries. His wife Anna, daughter of Sylvanus Fox, of Wellington, Somerset, a stronghold of the Quaker faith, was destined to outlive him, though they were together for nearly sixty years; and never were a wedded pair more devoted to each other,[1] their only sorrow being that there were no children. Tylor's publications came out early and fast, *Anahuac* in 1861, *Researches* in 1865, *Primitive Culture* in 1871, and the more popular *Anthropology* in 1881. That was the end of his books, as apart from contributions to periodical literature; for his *Gifford Lectures*, the first of the series to be delivered at Aberdeen University in 1888, were held back for revision and somehow never saw the light.[2] As his best work was produced at a comparatively early age, so public opinion was not long in recognizing its superlative quality. Thus he became Fellow of the Royal Society in 1871, being not yet thirty—a rare achievement; and in 1875 the University of Oxford conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Civil Laws—once more a distinction usually reserved for veterans. Then he was the first to preside, in 1884, over the newly formed Anthropological Section of the British Association, the creation of which was so largely due to his efforts. Appropriately enough this occurred in America, at Montreal, whither the British Association had come on one of its overseas visits; and Tylor took the opportunity of afterwards running south to New Mexico, with Professor

[1] Lady Tylor, it was said at Oxford, never missed a lecture of her husband's terminal courses; and there was a tale to the effect that on one such occasion in the middle of an absorbing demonstration the Professor absent-mindedly exclaimed: "And so, my dear Anna, we observe . . ."

[2] The synopsis of these can be read in *Anthrop. Essays*, 396–9. They seem to go over much the same ground as *Primitive Culture*.

Moseley as a companion, for a turn in the Pueblo country. Of the Anthropological Institute he was, of course, always a main support, presiding in the late 'seventies and again in the early 'nineties; his various addresses revealing how closely he followed the contemporary movements of thought embraced in his vast subject.

As for his Oxford connexion, this, apart from the passing incident of the D.C.L., began in 1883 when he delivered a couple of lectures, and was appointed Keeper of the University Museum. A Readership in Anthropology, which only became a Professorship by way of personal compliment in 1896, was added in the next year, 1884; from which time forth he lectured regularly, right up to his retirement with the title of Emeritus Professor in 1909, when he left Oxford for Wellington in Somerset, the home of his wife. It is to be noticed that in his very first address to the University he declared roundly: "To trace the development of civilization and the laws by which it is governed, nothing is so valuable as the possession of material objects."[1] Here he is evidently playing up to the scheme presently realized in the foundation of the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Oxford, whereby his friend General Lane-Fox Pitt-Rivers, who from 1851 onwards had been collecting, first military weapons, and then specimens of arts and crafts in general, on the comparative and genetic principle, was persuaded to offer, and the University likewise persuaded to accept, this magnificent 'heap of witness' to the technological achievements of mankind. Nay, it was Tylor himself,

[1] *Oxford Magazine*, I (1883), 88, which gives a report of Tylor's first Oxford lecture, delivered on February 15 at the Museum.

aided by Moseley and younger helpers such as Baldwin Spencer,[1] who actually superintended the removal of all this treasure to its present domicile and reduced it to orderly shape. There is no need to dwell on all that he continued to do, alike for the University and for the world, during his long sojourn at Oxford.[2] Curiously enough it was not until he was about to depart that the teaching of Anthropology was organized on more than a nominal basis; and, though Tylor's lack of an academic training may have made it a little hard for him to attain this result unassisted, the truth would seem to be rather that the subject must be created before it became a question of imparting it systematically. Honours continued to fall to him up to the evening of his days, as, for instance, an Honorary Fellowship at Balliol in 1903, and a somewhat belated Knighthood in 1912. To the end he was physically vigorous, even if his memory had been failing for some time; the slight suspense of intellectual activity serving, however, but to disclose the ingenuous, kindly, large-hearted disposition that had ever lain behind it. He died at Wellington on January 2nd, 1917, in his eighty-fifth year. There is a portrait of him by George Bonavia in the National Portrait Gallery, and another by W. E. Miller at Balliol College.

So much for the man. It remains to speak of his outlook in general terms, leaving it to the subsequent treatment to show in fuller detail whither he was led

[1] See my Memoir in *Spencer's Last Journey*, p. 20.

[2] The admirable Bibliography by Miss Barbara Freire Marreco (Mrs. Aitken) appended to *Anthropological Essays presented to E. B. Tylor* (Oxford, 1907) not only gives a full list of his writings, but also the complete titles of his Oxford courses, incidentally throwing much light on the comprehensiveness of his scientific interests.

by the vision of a Science of Man aiming at as high a degree of objectivity as is attainable in the study of any concrete part of Nature. Let us consider, then, first the scope and afterwards the method of such a science as he had in mind. As for scope, his main point was that it must be a universal Science of Man, a synthesis of all that there is to be known about him from experience, that is, in the light of his history. Hitherto the specialists like peasant proprietors tilled each their plot of ground, no doubt very intensively; but, just because it was everybody's business, there was nobody to attend to matters touching the landed interest as a whole. On the physical side, indeed, the medical profession for the last two centuries and a half had recognized the close relationship of all mankind, and were gradually collecting for purposes of exact comparison the craniological and other proofs. Largely in conjunction with them, the great zoologists of the previous century had then gone on to insert Man in their classification of the living world, and could place him with some accuracy in his relative position in regard to analogous stocks, which they nevertheless hesitated to treat as his congeners. To turn next to the study of environment, geology had made great strides during the first half of the nineteenth century, and, though Palæolithic Man was not yet in authentic being, the scene had been set all ready for his appearance. Geography, too, had become in the hands of Buckle a rather venturesome guide to human ecology. While, however, the body and its external conditions were thus making headway as suitable material for scientific treatment on a world-wide scale, mind and its manifestations were held back by the prejudices of

their partisans; who, preoccupied with the justification of those higher values which our civilization more or less imperfectly embodies—slave-owning only now just ceasing to be one of them—could see in the vital habits of the savage little else than an objectionable form of backsliding, as if the old and offending Adam were somehow cropping out afresh in neglected corners. Only in the department of linguistics was it becoming plain that Aryan or Semite acquired his roots and even his syntax when otherwise of a rude manner of life; though as for the Turanian—a sort of portmanteau word for the residue of humanity—he too, remarkably enough, proved to be quite articulate after his fashion, or rather his myriad fashions. But it needed, first, Boucher de Perthes' demonstration of the incalculable antiquity of Man,[1] and, coming right upon it, Darwin's development theory obviously implicating the human species with the rest, to make it clear, at least to the party of natural science, that, body and mind, Man could and must be viewed and studied, as General Smuts would say, holistically—all together and in one piece. Thus the occasion called forth the man. The times were ripe for Tylor and he for them.

In scope, then, the Tylorian anthropology concerns itself with the unity of mankind more directly envisaged as a continuity. As science it is history and something more, namely, an attempt not only to describe, but likewise in some measure to explain, the historical process. Tylor is an orthodox Darwinian—though orthodoxy is perhaps hardly the

[1] These discoveries went back to 1841, but were not tested and finally recognized by the scientific world until 1858.

word that would have been applied in the 'sixties to such a profession of faith—and writes as such whenever he has to pronounce on the physical problems relating to human descent. But his original investigations take him in the other direction, namely, that of inquiring into what Germans like Klemm called *Kulturgeschichte*, and Tylor, needing a more comprehensive term than "civilization," named, after their example, the comparative study of "culture." Though he occasionally used in this connexion the rather high-sounding phrase "evolution" which Darwin had taken over from Herbert Spencer, perhaps without paying much heed to its philosophical implications, Tylor decidedly prefers to speak simply of the "development" of culture.[1] Probably he realizes, though subconsciously, that the growth of culture is a distinct, if analogous, process as compared with that involved in biological evolution in the sense of such race-propagation as makes for an increasing complexity. No doubt psychology, and more especially an ethnic psychology, must in the long run face the problem whether the birth-process in question ultimately conditions the mental no less than the physical changes. Tylor, however, refrains from philosophizing too deeply, and, so far as his actual treatment goes, may be said to leave the cultural process as such a little in the air—in fact, to give it an airy existence of its own as if it were an emanation of mind, even if more than mind pure and simple. To the modern sociologist, however, the unique and quasi-independent character of the

[1] In *Researches* he speaks of "development," having Buckle, perhaps, mainly in view (p. 4); but *Primitive Culture* both opens and concludes on the word "evolution" (cf. I. 6 and 14 with II. 451).

social, or traditional, element in human life is clearer in explicit theory than it could be to a thinker of Tylor's day, who must look in vain to the prevailing psychology, with its individualistic and mechanical bias, for any clue to the nature of culture as a mental product of another order to that of the output of each and any contributory mind when taken singly. Yet Tylor has the supreme art of avoiding dialectics and allowing the facts to tell their own story. Of themselves, then, the parts of his majestic construction cohere, and, in the absence of logical scaffolding, the grand lines come out all the more clearly to the eye and proclaim that the whole is sound. It may be added that British anthropology has not been deterred by the encyclopædic range thus given to the subject, and has to this day continued to build according to the same model; while it is at least no objection to the largeness of the design that it keeps many in harness together.

To pass on to Tylor's method, this, in accordance with his conception of a universal science, must be comparative on a corresponding scale. His is emphatically not an anthropology confined to the savage, modern or prehistoric, with the civilized man exempted from having to toe the line with his social inferiors. On one plea or another—that he has written records by which to check his account, that his chronology is more exact, and so on—the historian who begins somewhere at the point where what he would distinguish as archæology and ethnology may be supposed to end would hardly claim nowadays that he deals with a separate kind of Man; but nevertheless defends his attitude of detachment on methodological

grounds. In other words, because he uses different tools, he would excuse himself from working on the same building with the rest. How can a paper-hanger and a bricklayer have anything in common? The answer is of course, that, while their exclusive right to the tricks of their special trade is unquestioned, they must likewise acquire enough of the co-operative spirit and the sympathetic intelligence that goes with it to grasp the architectonic; for this alone determines the functions of each and all, so that the differences, without being abolished, yet are transcended in a higher unity. Even Tylor himself, though something of a Jack-of-all-trades, as every pioneer must be, did not dream of interfering with the methods of the experts in Physical Anthropology; though, taking over their results, he made it his duty to harmonize them as far as might be possible with whatever evidence was forthcoming from those other quarters where he was more at home. In a word, then, his general method is a comparison carried right through. Chosen people or lost tribe—for history two aspects of the same fact—such distinctions are to be ignored; since Man is Man "for a' that."

In the next place, then, what are the specific methods by which Tylor proposes to reconstitute and explain the development of human culture? Taking first the *Researches into the Early History of Mankind*, which confines its remarks on method to the introductory and concluding chapters, together with another chapter on "Growth and Decline of Culture" sandwiched between discussions of particular topics in the very middle of the book,[1] let us note that he is here setting

[1] *R.*, chs. I, VII, XIII.

out to explore one part of history—that which rests on what he terms "indirect" as contrasted with "direct" evidence. It is the part comprising what in *Primitive Culture* he distinguishes as the "prehistoric" and "extra-historic" regions of the subject;[1] these together constituting on the theory of development our only available grounds of proof, inferential yet cumulatively convincing enough, concerning that "earlier," or "lower," civilization from which the later and higher civilization has manifestly emerged. "Lower" in such a context is, plainly, to be understood in a purely stratigraphical sense, since he accounts it outside his task "to reckon on an ideal scale the advance or decline from stage to stage of culture."[2] Meanwhile, his main object is to study this phase of history, not statically and by itself, but dynamically as it changes and on the whole is transformed into that civilized phase which must therefore be kept in mind for purposes of comparison. Due allowance must be made for the fact that there is both growth and decline of culture at all stages of this process of change. In other words, it has its ups and downs, though all the evidence goes to show that the ups prevail. Tylor has no sympathy whatever with "degenerationists" of the school of de Maistre,[3] but he is fully alive to the interest attaching to those sporadic traces of "lost arts" among primitive peoples to which Dr. W. H. R. Rivers has more recently called, or rather recalled, attention.[4] Meanwhile, Tylor is mainly concerned to

[1] *P.C.* I. 39.
[2] *P.C.* I. 28.
[3] Cf. *P.C.* I. 35.
[4] See Rivers's paper in *Westermarck Festschrift*. For Tylor cf. esp. *Researches*, 181–91.

distinguish the specific kinds of change, necessitating correspondingly different methods of interpretation, that constitute as it were so many threads in the ravelled process of the cultural movement. Degeneration is one of these, but in his opinion the least important; since Civilization, as he puts it in a fine figure, is progressive according to her very nature. "Her feet were not made to plant uncertain steps behind her; for both in her forward view and in her onward gait she is of truly human type."[1] Decline in culture apart, we are left with two possibilities: independent invention and borrowing from outside. Obviously both these processes are ever at work together, since no people could have developed in complete isolation from their fellow-men, nor on the other hand does anyone borrow so passively as not to modify the others in the very act of receiving from them. Nevertheless, methodologically speaking, it makes all the difference whether for the time being explanation adopts the one or the other line of inquiry. It will be seen in the sequel how Tylor does his best to be fair to each method in turn. For the moment it will be enough to notice that, confessedly, he finds independent invention the easier principle to work on. Proofs of intercourse in the absence of historic records are hard to come by; whereas it needs no profound knowledge of psychology to arrive at the mental condition which causes men all over the world of their own accord to eat, sleep, marry and so on in ways that are fundamentally similar. Indeed, the transmission of culture from one people to another cannot but imply

[1] *P.C.* I. 69. Less picturesquely he writes in *R.* 374, "The history of mankind has been on the whole a history of progress."

a mental uniformity uniting them as human beings, and distinguishing them from the rest of the animal kingdom; which is cut off by a natural divide that utterly dwarfs the shallow differences between man and man. Thus it is the psychological approach that Tylor finds most tempting in striking out explorer-fashion into the uncharted wilds. But he realizes from the start that there is a choice of ways—a high road and a low—and he means to try them by turns; having in the meantime no fixed destination in mind, but yet as a man of science, a votary of experience which is experiment, being resolved somehow to go ahead.

In *Primitive Culture* Tylor's express views concerning specific methods of research have changed very little.[1] Chiefly noticeable is a certain access of confidence, carrying with it a claim to extend the field of observation so that the survey of mankind "from China to Peru" goes both ways round the globe, covering the longitude of Greenwich no less than that of Fiji. Perhaps, too, the scientific tone has hardened; for those were days in which naturalism and theology, being loud in controversy, were both inclined to be correspondingly blatant. Anthropology seeks the "laws" of human thought and action. It will prove that "the history of mankind is part and parcel of the history of nature, that our thoughts, wills and actions accord with laws as definite as those which govern the motion of waves, the combination of acids and bases, and the growth of plants and animals." As for free-will, described as "an anomalous action of the will, which it need hardly be said is incompatible with scientific argument," that obviously must go by the

[1] The chapters on Method are *P.C.* I–IV, and XIX

board. All this seems a little unnecessary, more especially as, after this gesture of defiance in the face of the obscurantists, he makes all haste "to escape from the regions of transcendental philosophy and theology" in order "to start on a more hopeful journey, over more practicable ground."[1] Following him into this cooler region, we observe that the word "Culture" has been definitely adopted, to remain ever since the term used in Anthropology to designate the subject-matter of that major department of the subject known as Cultural Anthropology which comprises Social Anthropology together with Technology and Linguistics. In *Researches*[2] he had equated the study of Civilization with "Culture-History as it is conveniently called in Germany"; but now he is emboldened to give the Teutonism the full benefit of naturalization. Culture, then, in its technical sense, is to be taken to mean not history in general, but a branch of it. It is "the history, not of tribes or nations, but of the condition of knowledge, religion, art, custom, and the like among them."[3] It is worthy of notice that, rather awkwardly, he here identifies the study of the thing with the thing itself; though elsewhere he mostly means by culture the actual body of customs forming the content of the cultivated, that is, educated life.

This provision of a fresh term, however, hardly bears on method except in so far as it supplies historical research with a peculiar orientation. Another contribution to terminology, however, which is now made for the first time, might almost be said to embody in itself the suggestion of a new method. This is the word "survival"—one that bids the student of cul-

[1] *P.C.* I. 1–3. [2] *R.* 4–5. [3] *P.C.* I. 5.

tural change to be duly observant of a tendency to procrastination on the part of some elements that are as it were unable or unwilling to maintain the pace of the rest. Now, thanks to this drag at the tail-end of any progressive movement in history, it becomes possible to trail it backwards to its starting-point, since one behind the other the laggards of the advancing host will mark every previous stage of the route. Thus we are furnished with a sort of inverse method of assessing an evolutionary process. The test is one of survival in a new sense—not a survival of the fittest, but rather a survival of the unfittest or at any rate of the slowest. For Tylor is perfectly aware that the survival, though seemingly dead beat, may be merely hanging back in the race until its opportunity comes; when the so-called "survival" speeds up into a "revival." Meanwhile, he is more immediately concerned with the more or less obsolescent and outmoded customs that civilization retains as marks of its humble origin, just as a man who has risen in the world may be betrayed by his accent. Thus the Folk-lore Society, which in the early 'seventies was already flourishing, setting an example which the world at large was soon to follow, gladly acquiesced in the definition proposed by the devoted Tylorian, Andrew Lang, that folk-lore was "the study of survivals." Hence Tylor, almost by the simple act of pronouncing a master-word, an "Open Sesame," showed the way to the exploitation of a treasure-house, hitherto unsuspected and inviolate, that lay, not in distant and doubtful parts of the world, but right under one's feet.[1]

[1] Mannhardt's researches were later to have great influence, as notably on Sir J. G. Frazer.

One more fruitful notion in regard to method calls for brief mention. Already in *Primitive Culture* the possibility is mooted of the use of statistics in Anthropology;[1] though eighteen years had to pass before he was ready with a detailed proof that such a procedure could be made to answer.[2] It is de Quetelet, in particular, whose example encourages him thus to apply quantitative standards to the study of social phenomena. After all, science becomes exact in proportion to its power of measuring and weighing; and Tylor, as we have seen, would not have his anthropology any less capable in theory—whatever it may be able to do in practice—of finding strict uniformity in nature than biology or even physics. Now de Quetelet's arithmetical proofs of the regularity of the average rates of seemingly accidental happenings, the murders, the suicides, the very letters posted annually without address, have had, he thinks, a deeper effect than any other kind of evidence bearing on the argument that human action is an expression of natural law. Whether the material provided by ethnography is too unpromising to allow this method to be adapted to it remained to be seen; but, since he saw to it in the end, we can acquit him of the charge that as an architect of a new science he planned without reference to the exigencies of the builder's side of the business. For he was a Moses and a Joshua in one. Not only did he descry the promised land with sublime vision as from a high rock, but likewise, heading the advance, both

[1] *P.C.* I. 11. Cf. Tylor in *Nature*, 5 (1872), 358 f.

[2] See *Journ. Anthrop. Inst.*, XVIII (1889), 245 f. "On a Method of Investigating the Development of Institutions; applied to Laws of Marriage and Descent."

devised and actually tried out the means of effective conquest.[1]

[1] A question into which one cannot go here concerns Tylor's debt to Continental scholars. Some have put Bastian, the German traveller and writer, on a par with Tylor as a creator of the science of Anthropology, and even profess to find signs of his influence in Tylor's writing. I doubt, however, if Tylor owes much to Bastian, or at any rate so much as to Klemm and Waitz. Indeed, from conversation, and in the course of helping Tylor a little with his literary work towards the end of his days at Oxford, I gathered that, although he could find his way through a book in French or Spanish, German or Dutch, and could even extract the tit-bits from a Greek or Latin classic, he was not really happy with foreign tongues. After all, to be on speaking terms with all mankind the ethnologist would need a thousand tongues. The ethnographer, on the other hand, has no such excuse.

CHAPTER II

MEXICO

TYLOR'S anthropological apprenticeship was served in Mexico. Not that in 1856, when he visited that country, a science of Man, an all-embracing study involving principles of the highest generality, was yet in sight; even if various systematists had already done their best to provide our highly diversified race with a natural history. Nor, again, was Tylor at the time conscious of any predestined mission to found such a science. To pure chance must be attributed his meeting with Henry Christy in an omnibus at Havana; yet on that chance hung his own fate together with the fate of British anthropology. For Christy, who was just off to Mexico, invited his brother-Quaker, his junior by more than twenty years, to accompany him. Tylor gratefully closed with his offer, being for the moment at a loose end after having wandered about the United States for the best part of the previous year, with a sight of the live-oak forests and sugar-plantations of Louisiana as the most recent of his experiences.

Now Christy's passion was for prehistoric archæology; and by way of a start the anthropological education of his companion might fitly concentrate on the old, as less ambiguous than the merely old-fashioned, in their respective bearing on human origins. A shrewd man of business and of considerable wealth, Christy had collected *antica* in the Near East to such

good effect that the Great Exhibition of 1851 was glad to make a show of them. Next he visited Scandinavia, where the study of the so-called kitchen-middens had furnished the justest notion prevailing up to that date of the succession of European cultures from the late Stone Age onwards; so that his cabinet was further enriched from this new and almost unexploited source. And now it was the turn of pre-Columbian America to be ransacked, as the sequel will show. Meanwhile, as regards his subsequent career, it must suffice to note that in 1858, the *annus mirabilis* when not only did the Royal Society hear first of Darwin's and Wallace's mutually supporting explanations of the origin of species, but also certain of its leading members, having verified on the spot Boucher de Perthes's discoveries in the Somme valley, authoritatively confirmed his proofs of the high antiquity of Man, Christy was quick to realize what the latter event portended from the treasure-hunter's point of view. So, in fortunate alliance with Edouard Lartet, he pitched on that veritable metropolis of the Palæolithic world, the valley of the Vezère in the Dordogne; and for the next seven years, in fact up to his death in the spring of 1865 from a chill contracted in the course of his work, lavished time and money on those classical excavations of which the posthumous *Reliquiæ Aquitanicæ* (1865–70) contains the impressive record. Bequeathed to the nation and now adorning the British Museum, his vast hoard of authentic specimens of early human handiwork bears perpetual witness to his energy, his taste, and, rarest gift of all, his eager desire for wide horizons.[1]

[1] See the excellent article on him, *Dict. Nat. Biogr.*

In Tylor's lightly written narrative we catch glimpses of his Mentor that sufficiently reveal the man. The kit that served Christy in the Levant must be no less appropriate here; so behold him arrayed in a felt hat covered by a white handkerchief, while a veil and a great umbrella afford further protection from the sun. Tylor, on the other hand, with the improvidence of youth, had brought but a scanty wardrobe with him. Soon his travelling coat had gone at the elbows, and the seat of his trousers had gone too; whereupon, mindful of George Fox and his suit of leather, he must fall back on a jacket and loose pants made out of chamois hide after the fashion of the country. As for his ruling passion, Christy's first act on reaching the Aztec country is to verify the fact by dismounting from the *diligence* in order to gather a broken arrow-head which his eye had marked by the wayside. Though he had acquired many Mexican objects before this visit, he was bent on increasing his store, and not only buys up other men's collections, but institutes a dig of his own at Tezcuco (Texcoco), with gratifying results. Alas! his Quaker morals are not proof against smuggling when a Mexican Government, for which, it was true, it was impossible to feel respect, prohibits the exportation of the local antiquities. For the rest, he is indiscriminately interested in all that he comes across, sketching and note-taking even while jogging along on horse-back, and gathering by the way not only human artefacts, but orchids destined to thrive in an English hothouse, and even a live armadillo that, less amenable to transplantation, got no further than Havana. Thence on their return Christy immediately sets off for Hudson's Bay, and

the last we hear of him is that here he has persuaded the tribal medicine-man to sell him his drum.

Turning to Tylor's personal share in these adventures, we at once perceive him to be endowed with all the qualities of the good observer. True, since the book did not appear until 1861, he has had time to work up details that might have escaped him at the moment; though the spontaneous air of the whole suggests rather that we are mostly treated to impressions committed straight to a diary. Clearly he has the geographical sense, a firm grasp on the essential facts pertaining to geology, climate, flora and fauna, such as together constitute the passive condition that must ever limit the free play of human life. The full significance of adaptation to environment might not yet be understood as a biological principle; but at all events Humboldt had not practised, nor Buckle preached, in vain, so that the naturalist could any longer afford to ignore the moulding force of locality. Whether of native instinct, or through association with Christy, Tylor travels with a mind ever alert to detect the scientific issue behind the surface-view of every novelty that strikes his senses. He may indeed be inclined to drop the part of disinterested observer for that of adverse critic when the Spanish-American and his particular version of New World civilization come under review; but the Indian at all events is accepted as someone who has a right to be there—*Homo sapiens var. Americanus.*

Indigenous though he might be, however, and appearing almost an adjunct of the soil to which his present servitude has tied him, the native could look back to more than one phase of culture as brilliant as any to which his own continent had attained before

the intrusion of the Conquistadores. In this direction pointed Christy's main interest in the country; and for Tylor too the reconstruction of so important a chapter of world-history, the more intriguing because it lacks a context, yielded a foretaste of anthropological method with its delicate task of maintaining the balance fairly as between what a society invents and what it borrows. So, using Mexico City as their centre, they journeyed north to Teotihuacan, south to Xochicalco and east to Cholula, where in each case they might gaze on structures comparable in the sheer impressiveness of their size with those Egyptian pyramids which in certain features they so closely resemble. To-day each of these sites may be reached in a few hours by rail or car; but in the middle of the last century to cover the same ground meant so many expeditions on horseback, extending over several days, but offering the compensating advantage of unhurried scouting among by-ways. Again, the modern visitor is greeted with the results of scientific excavation. At Teotihuacan the huge Pyramid of the Sun has been restored as nearly as possible to its original appearance, and, though much else has been hardly touched, certain buildings such as notably the Temple of Quetzalcoatl have been successfully rejuvenated. On the hill of Xochicalco the principal adornment of the ancient city, a pyramidal base supporting a shrine of which the lower walls are still standing has been uncovered. Lastly, if the hump-backed mound of Cholula, with a pretty colonial church perched upon its summit, is all that is left of an immense brick-faced pyramid too far gone in decay to be rebuilt accurately, tunnels driven in all directions and electrically lighted disclose

the inner mysteries of its construction.[1] But for the pair of explorers who some eighty years ago had to deal with what might have passed as natural hills, so thickly overgrown as they were with prickly pears, aloes, and mesquite bushes, it required the eye of faith to discern the terracing and other marks of human design, half obliterated by the joint attacks of a tropical vegetation and a tropical rain.

In the circumstances, then, all credit is due to Tylor, who doubtless speaks for his companion as well, when he not only furnishes descriptions that in most essentials are right so far as they go—even if his account of the dimensions of the Pyramid of the Sun at Teotihuacan errs considerably on the side of under-statement—but likewise, speculating on the history of the three sets of monuments, ascribes one and all to Toltec influences, a judgment which modern research would certainly endorse. It is true that it was then the fashion to exalt the Toltec element in the culture of Central America at the expense of Aztec and Maya alike. For this very reason, however, Tylor deserves praise for his boldness when he also contends, on what he claims to be new evidence, that at Xochicalco there are approximations to Maya art; for this means that he is not afraid to impute to the Maya an independent development entitling them to share the honours with the rest. Nowadays, no doubt, the pendulum has swung the other way, and it is rather the Toltec who must bow to the Maya with his claim to a civilization that is both older and far greater.

Abandoning himself to even more daring flights

[1] For these details I am indebted to my son's little book, *Archæological Tours from Mexico City*, by R. H. K. Marett, 1934.

of conjectural reasoning Tylor proceeds to attack that standing puzzle of the Americanist, the question how in so isolated a region there comes to be a civilization, nay, any form of human culture at all. Geographically speaking, the New World, whether it was originally a broken-off slice of the Old or not, has become an island, vulnerable to invasion on foot only by way of its Achilles' heel, the ice-bridge of Bering Strait. Though a cradle of life in a secondary sense, it cannot show proof of having brought any major branch of the *Hominidæ* into being; nay, would seem to have offered Man hospitality only when he had elsewhere already solved, or come very near to solving, the problem how to grow one's dinner instead of having to catch it. Never within recent times, however, to reckon them liberally as anything up to some ten thousand years ago, have the amenities of North-Eastern Asia been such as to attract the more progressive stocks; and still less would Alaska be hailed as the Promised Land by any people not narrowly adapted to Arctic conditions. Conceding to climate all benefit of the doubt, we cannot imagine, and, needless to say, cannot trace by any signs of its passage, the transmission of more than the hunter's outfit of simple arts and habits by a route fit only for a hunger-march. On the other hand, seeing that European discovery, apart from what a few adventurous Norsemen might have seen and kept to themselves, was immediately confronted with the spectacle of a flourishing agricultural society ripe for city life, it was natural that from the first some connexion should be suspected with the world's centre as identified more or less vaguely with Eurasia. If this new land was not some annexe of far Cathay, then it

must be that the Lost Tribes of Israel had somehow wandered hither. Next to nothing being as yet known about the more backward parts of the Americas, these early theorists were bound to approach the problem from the wrong end, inasmuch as, trusting to the loosest analogies, they professed to recognize foreign importation without having previously taken stock of the local resources. By Tylor's time, of course, the unscientific character of these early applications of the diffusionist argument was tolerably manifest. Yet, as he magnanimously observes, "Crude as most of these ideas are, one feels a good deal of interest in the first inquiry that set men thinking seriously about the origin of races, and laid the foundation of the science of ethnology."[1]

If we in our turn find a certain crudeness in Tylor's own treatment of the subject, it must be remembered in fairness to him that this youth who casually introduces such larger topics into his notes of travel is at most but feeling his way towards his true vocation. We are but a third of the way through the book when he enters on a minute and very masterly description of the stone-industry of Mexico. Thereupon he is incidentally led to examine its significance as an index of the general level of culture attributable to the most advanced people from Europe or Asia that could possibly be held responsible for the higher education of the three Americas. To begin with he lays down the very doubtful law: "in supposing civilization to be transmitted from one country to another, we must measure it by the height of its lowest point, as we measure the strength of a chain by the strength of the

[1] *Anahuac*, 18.

weakest link."[1] His inference is that the use of stone or at best bronze implements implies a derivation from "some very barbarous and ignorant tribe." Now, quite apart from the consideration that such a description hardly does justice to the facts, had he then been as familiar with them as he was afterwards to become —for to sum up Ancient Egyptians of the earlier dynasties or even Polynesians as ignorant barbarians would be an insult to history—the principle itself, will not bear a moment's scrutiny. As well argue that a man's worst vice affords a measure of his virtues. At any rate no causal explanation is forthcoming why stone or bronze tools cannot coexist with Christian morals, whereas iron ones can. Some kind of differential development as between the various powers of Man must be allowed as at least a theoretical possibility. The truth is, however, that Tylor here is not deliberately making towards some doctrine of economic materialism that would assess culture in terms of the industrial factor; but in the usual manner of the tiro has simply resorted to rash generalization in the interests of special pleading. For the time being he contents himself with the following conclusion: "On the whole, the most probable view of the origin of the Mexican tribes seems to be the one ordinarily held, that they really came from the Old World, bringing with them several legends, evidently the same as the histories recorded in the book of Genesis. This must have been, however, at a time when they were quite a barbarous, nomadic tribe; and we must regard their civilization as of independent and far later growth."[2] Nay, not only does he pin his faith on Biblical parallels,

[1] Ibid. 102–3. [2] Ibid. 104.

but discovers Christian analogies suggestive of more recent contacts with the Old World. So, roundly declaring his belief that Quetzalcoatl, the supreme god and culture-hero of Cholula, was a real man, he goes on to hint that he may have been likewise an Irishman —truly, if that were so, the forerunner of a great host!

Nevertheless, as his observations multiply, he sets down *pros* and *cons* with the strictest impartiality. He finds proofs of importation in myth and legend; or, again, is moved by Humboldt's "celebrated argument," which assigns an Asiatic origin to the Mexican calendar. But, if these refinements of culture could cross the seas, how comes it that some of the commonest arts of life failed to travel in their company? If the chaplain and the navigator of this earlier *Mayflower* could survive the passage, why not the carpenter and the cook? The Mexicans "do not seem to have known the proper way of putting the handle on to a stone-hammer; and, though they used bronze, they had not applied it to the making of such things as knives and spear-heads. They had no beasts of burden; and, though there were animals in the country which they probably might have domesticated and milked, they had no idea of anything of the kind."[1] He notes, further, that they failed to realize how oil or wax could be used for burning; and were also without knowledge of the art of weighing anything, but sold entirely by tale and measure. So he has the good sense to return a verdict of "not proven." "Let the difficulties on one side of the question against those on the other, and they will nearly balance. We must wait for further evidence."[2] Here speaks the born man

[1] Ibid. 243. [2] Ibid. 244.

of science. So dispassionate an inquirer will go far.

Little more remains to be said about a trial flight, hardly spectacular, perhaps, in itself, yet invaluable as a training, since a soaring mind that would embark on an aerial survey of the habitable globe must first learn how to take off solid ground, and likewise how to keep afloat until sure of a good landing. Even so there is informative as well as disciplinary value in this vigorous essay. For instance, as it has been said, the stone-industry of Mexico is intensively studied; with the result that a new discovery can be announced, namely, that the many-sided prisms of obsidian which had previously been classed as maces, or the handles of some kind of weapon, were really but cores from which a number of long flakes had been struck or pressed off. With Christy's expert assistance he had thoroughly examined the obsidian mines of the Cerro de Navajas, or Hill of Knives, formerly "the Sheffield of Mexico," where this volcanic glass, capable of being chipped to a razor-like edge, is found in enormous quantities. Thus were laid the foundations of that technological interest which is part of the necessary equipment of any student of human culture who would "see it whole." Linguistics, again, cannot be left out of account if a comprehensive view is to be taken of the development of the arts of life; and the infinite multiplicity of the details furnishes no sufficient excuse for leaving out of sight the supreme importance of language, whether in its unity as a vehicle of meanings common to all mankind, or in its differences as indications of ethnological distribution. Outlandish as the average Briton may reckon American

speech-forms, rendered all the more obscure by the Spanish way of spelling, Tylor has at least acquired enough of a Nahua vocabulary to make use of it at every turn as a guide to former conditions; and we may find here another foretokening of the breadth of his mental outlook. But it is unnecessary to seek for further signs of promise in a book which, after all, professes to be no more than a chronicle of gay adventure. Thoroughly enjoying themselves in their sober Quaker fashion, the well-assorted pair explored at their leisure and in relative comfort the Aztec country, literally from top to bottom—from the breathless heights of Popocatapetl with its dazzling cap of hard snow to the humid depths of more than one of those deep barrancas which intersect the plateau, so that a descent of three or four thousand feet involves a sudden plunge from the temperate into the tropical zone. Yet, however casual in its inception, or in its actual execution as an organized scheme of research, this excursion amid the relics of an exotic civilization was the prelude of a life's devotion to an evolutionary science of Man for which the time was not yet ripe by a few years. Taught by Christy to appreciate the rich diversity of human achievement on its material side, Tylor was soon of his own accord to look beyond the body to the soul of the cultural process—in other words, to seek to determine the nature and growth of the racial intelligence as gathered inductively from the entire range of its concrete manifestations.

CHAPTER III

LANGUAGE[1]

IF it is right to regard Tylor's Mexican journey as the turning-point in his life from which can be definitely dated his devotion to the scientific study of Man, one can go on to infer that the very act of reducing his material to shape, which took him some five years, urged him forward to seek for principles of explanation that should bring the isolated culture of native America into organic touch with the rest of the human world. The very fact that so much of it seemed, on the face of it at least, to be indigenous called for a careful balancing between alternative theories of independent invention and diffusion such as alike involved immense issues, whether psychological or geographical. He appears in the meantime to be familiarizing himself with the Mediterranean region by frequent travel, since one may gather from the pages of *Anahuac* odd references to Italy, Sicily, Spain and North Africa, though not to Greece or Egypt. Indeed, though Mexico must once for all have sharpened his faculty of observation, so that henceforth he would doubtless make the most of such experience in the field as came his way—as when, in 1884, after the meeting of the British Association at Toronto, he

[1] See generally *R.* 3, chs. II–V; *P.C.* 4, chs. V, VI; *A.* IV. 6; also *F.R.* 4 (1866), 544 sq.; *Q.R.* 119 (1866), 394–435; cf. also ibid. 124 (1889), 504–24 on W. von Humboldt.

went off with Professor Moseley to visit the Pueblo Indians—, he must on the whole be classed as an anthropologist of the study, a circumnavigator of the world of books.

A scathing remark used to be current in Germany to this effect: "To be a comparative philologist, one but needs two dictionaries." Now it is true that the difference between ethnography and ethnology consists simply in the fact that, whereas the former is content to describe, the latter institutes comparisons; and possibly does so on some all too narrow basis. Nay, it is a common fault with a professed work of pure ethnography that it should more or less unconsciously use some exotic culture, not as matter for disinterested study, but rather as a foil whereby to show off the superiority of our own civilization. Tylor, however, has evidently determined from the first to be comparative on a world-wide scale—in other words, in terms of mankind in general. We may account him lucky for having begun on the New World—something stranger, because more heterogeneous, than any part of the Old World, with its criss-cross of cultural connexions, could ever be, or at any rate seem to be. To be confronted by Man in his most divided aspect almost amounted in itself to a challenge to reduce him to a unity by tracing out the entire system of missing links. Side by side with the biological question of the ancestry of the human race—and one origin for all the types was a fundamental postulate of Darwinism—there now came clearly into view the parallel and ultimately correlative problem how human culture could likewise be resolved into a single tissue of related growths. In piecemeal fashion scholars had long been

occupied with the Bible and the Classics in their intimate bearing on the development of the beliefs and institutions of Europe; and latterly archæology, having most ingeniously devised the means of interpreting the literary records of Egypt and Babylonia, was opening up fresh vistas of remoter and more alien, yet none the less impressive, forms of complex social life such as fairly belong to the phase classed as civilization. But, apart from the systematists who for purposes of zoological classification took a rather perfunctory interest in the distribution of mankind, no serious student was prepared to pay due heed to the infinite variety of human custom in its entirety as a fact calling for investigation in its own right. Wise as it were after the event, civilized folk took their culture in its grand lines more or less for granted—a boon from the gods; and the poor savage who seemed to lack its essentials must seemingly have lost his birthright through sheer degeneration, unless indeed he were to be rated an earlier and inferior experiment in creation—a pre-Adamite. As for Adam himself, he starts straight off as a gardener, with a spade ready to his hand, if perhaps scarcely a wheelbarrow. It struck no one that half a million years or more might go to the evolution of the art of planting a cabbage.

Meanwhile a single, highly specialized, branch of study had begun to invest the history of culture with a deeper meaning, being, moreover, peculiarly capable of stimulating the spirit of research to flights of wider range. Be it noted, too, how it was from the faculty of the arts rather than from any of the sciences that the impulse came. Philology, the prime interest of the academic student from the Renaissance onwards,

and indeed throughout the Middle Ages as well when there were Latin and Hebrew, if not Greek, to be mastered, was always alive to the value of etymology as a guide to the radical sense of a word as it developed within a given language. Thereupon analogies of sound all too easily led to comparisons between distinct bodies of speech; and, on the strength of such superficial resemblances, attempts at linguistic classification were in vogue long before the general principles of verbal change had come into sight. This discovery that human language as such obeys a law of its own came definitely from the use of Sanskrit as a key to the affiliations of the speech-forms of the Indo-European, or Aryan, family. One may almost date it from February 2nd, 1786, when Sir William Jones, in an address to the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, pointed out that there exists so close a relationship between Sanskrit and other ancient tongues such as Zend, Gothic and Celtic that they must alike have originated from "some common source which perhaps no longer exists." Whether this bold suggestion has proved something of a will-o'-the-wisp is a question on which different opinions will be held. Even, however, if it be thought that the manifold efforts to reconstruct the Aryan mother-tongue—the *Ursprache*, as Schleicher named it—and to deduce therefrom the archetypal civilization of our own branch of the human race have proved but a groping in the dark, it must not be overlooked that, as an incidental result of all this energy, however misdirected, the conception of a veritable science of language, founded on the use of the Comparative Method, became firmly established in men's minds.

So far as touches England, the new science owed its recognition—such as presently amounted to a widespread popularity—almost entirely to the knowledge and eloquence of one man, F. Max Müller. Born in 1823, nine years before Tylor, he had studied Sanskrit at Leipzig with Brockhaus, and afterwards at Berlin under the eminent Bopp. Visiting England in 1846 he was, through the good offices of the German ambassador, Baron Bunsen, commissioned by the East India Company to prepare an edition of the Rig-Veda. The first volume was printed at Oxford in 1849, and the following year saw him enrolled by the University among its teaching staff. Here he resided up to his death in 1900, and, thanks to a brilliant literary gift, doubtless inherited from his father Wilhelm Müller, the poet, soon aroused an intense enthusiasm in the country of his adoption for what had hitherto been untouched subjects, namely, the Comparative Philology of the German school, together with a Comparative Mythology which, after the example set by Adalbert Kuhn, was treated as a sort of appendix to the study of language. In a way, then, even though there was a ready response to this invitation to enlarge the bounds of their research on the part of the old-fashioned scholars, the students of classical literature or of ancient history, we must at the same time recognize in the success of the new movement of thought the personal triumph of one man. His was a genius for the best kind of popularization—much the same genius as was exhibited in a separate, though adjacent field by Sir John Lubbock, the future Lord Avebury. It was perhaps inevitable that, with so zealous a following to egg him on, the leader, however solidly entrenched

within the wide ground covered by his Oriental lore, should likewise indulge in spectacular excursions into unexplored country offering more risk than profit. Yet, be this as it may, it was something to have quickened in the mind of the public, the more disposed to listen because it was addressed from the very head-quarters of an erudite traditionalism, an interest in human origins altogether transcending the accepted limits of history. Already a little before Darwin had spoken, or Boucher de Perthes had been vindicated, the embryological study of language, proceeding from a basis of authentic verbal facts, had launched forth into a speculative seriation of past conditions that by its very infinity dwarfed any short time-reckoning, such as might serve well enough to measure what mankind has actually managed to remember and record in writing. Thus the literary no less than the scientific world had declared for open windows and fresh air, just about the time when Tylor was beginning to work out for himself the larger implications of ethnology, and, in particular, the inauguration on a world-scale of a history of human culture that should do justice to all its diverse aspects at once.

Now, that language must be of prime concern to the anthropologist was obvious for more reasons than one. Indeed, the most laborious and systematic of previous British writers on the classification of mankind, J. C. Prichard, had treated it as his chief clue to race on the ground that it provided the most authentic records of the formation and distribution of physical types no less than of the political groups that we know as peoples. If that were indeed so, one must allow about such evidence that the best is but bad. Thus we have

before our eyes such a contradictory example as that of the spread of the Romance languages derived from Latin which have brought under one linguistic category populations of very different blood—even if not so diverse as the blood of the whites and negroes who share the English tongue in the United States. Baron Bunsen, indeed, who did so much to start Max Müller on his way, was inclined to regard the Aryans, that is, all folk of Aryan speech, as a race apart and superior to the rest; but Max Müller himself was under no such illusion, realizing that nature and nurture by no means always go together. As for Tylor, he in his turn is quite clear on the point. Anthropology on its physical side he leaves to the experts in Comparative Anatomy and other more or less specialized branches of biology. His own concern being rather with Cultural Anthropology, he contents himself with summarizing the findings of his colleagues of the Physical department when in his admirable handbook *Anthropology*, published in 1881, he views the world of Man as an integral whole with which this most comprehensive and, so to say, composite of sciences must endeavour to cope. It may be added that, towards the end of his active career, when about the year 1906 he lent his authority and advice to the organizers of a School of Anthropology at Oxford, he was in complete agreement with the view that the best way to understand human nature in its diversity was through ethnology understood as the study of ethnic groups or peoples in all their concrete actuality. The causes of such characteristic aggregation into separate societies are both physical and cultural, being so interwoven, as we may see by trying to analyse the notion of

family, that no abstract and one-sided treatment of the subject can hope to do full justice to the facts.

Meanwhile, Tylor's interest lay rather in the unity underlying this all too conspicuous difference. The need of his age was to proclaim that mankind is a many in one, with the emphasis on the one. Philosophy and Religion, looking at the matter from the standpoint of value, might have already insisted on the brotherhood of Man; and even Politics, so far as it enshrined the spirit of the French Revolution, was labouring over heavier ground in the same direction. But Natural Science, with no dogma to uphold, no axe to grind, was now prepared to state a case for human unity, not in terms of value—always a matter of choice and hence of opinion—but in terms of fact as verifiable as common sense could make it. Tylor, in throwing in his lot as a student of Man with the new archæology and the new biology, supported their demand for an indefinite allowance of time in which to find room for the human life-process to have run its leisurely course. His scientific purpose is the same, namely, to examine origins. His contribution to the question of unity is not to show wherein it consists or ought to consist, but rather how it has come about. Mankind exhibits a certain family resemblance in its bodily and mental traits, and the anthropological way of explaining this is by working out a pedigree. The relationships are as far as may be possible demonstrated as matter of historical fact; but the moral problem of the mutual obligations thereby entailed is not raised at all.

Being chiefly concerned, then, with the cultural and hence mental aspect of human development, Tylor makes language his point of departure. Partly, no

doubt, he does so because culture as communicable intelligence is almost entirely founded on our unique power of exchanging ideas as embodied in words; but partly too, for the historical reason that Comparative Philology already had the ear of the public, and discoursed on origins—at any rate Aryan origins—with an authority that none but the very learned could dare to question. Tylor himself was not in a position to challenge the Sanskritist or the Classical scholar on his own ground, and must leave them to settle their etymologies among themselves, even if sometimes he could rightly pounce on them for speculative poaching on the preserves of others. But, after all, their origins, humanly regarded and not merely from the European point of view, were proximate rather than remote. At most they professed to furnish history with that immediate background sometimes known as proto-history. Bopp, for instance, whom Max Müller followed in the main, sternly refused to eke out a purely historical treatment of his subject with guesswork; though his distinguished pupil certainly permitted himself more liberty in this respect. But Tylor's origins are not circumscribed by the data to be obtained from literary records—data that, if they carry us back beyond civilization as defined by the use of letters, stop short at reconstructing a previous barbarism as defined in its turn by the practice of agriculture. At this point such a work as Pictet's *Origines Indo-Européennes* breaks off its retrospect of the history of culture, manifestly leaving a ragged edge. Here is Tylor's opportunity, if anything can be done with the help of the facts relating to human language to explore "the dark backward and abysm of

time" that looms beyond. Just as Boucher de Perthes with his palæoliths (as Lubbock baptized them) bestowed on prehistoric archæology as it were a new dimension in the shape of an unlimited chronological latitude, so Tylor maintains that savage culture, pre-literary and even pre-agricultural though it be, offers the necessary proofs for a vast extension of human history, if it trust to its chosen instrument, the Comparative Method.

As regards language, then, he distinguishes between "historical philology" which traces the transmission and change of words and what he names "generative philology" which seeks their ultimate origins.[1] Recognizing that from de Brosses onwards there have been attempts to explain the very beginnings of Man's greatest achievement, articulate speech, he sets out to justify them as sound in intention, even if hitherto they have relied more on fancies than on facts. He for his part is altogether in sympathy with the natural sciences in their insistence on the observation and comparison of facts as the secret of inductive reasoning. Indeed, in his Introduction to the *Researches* he inveighs against "the opinion that the use of facts is to illustrate theories"; and, since their use is certainly to test theories rather than to generate them, may possibly be suspected of following Bacon too closely in his view that somehow of themselves facts will crystallize into laws without the help of constructive imagination. Even were this so, however, he has a right to insist that every scrap of evidence be given its due weight, as also to call attention to the almost complete neglect up to the present of primitive culture as a mine of

[1] *P.C.*, I, 198.

relevant information. For the rest, it is to be noted how faithful Tylor always remains to inference from the known, so that he resists all temptation in thus concluding to the unknown to venture on that one step more which would carry him from science into sheer romance. Readers of his works who are not so conscientious may sometimes feel a certain disappointment that he breaks off his argument so often just at the point when it seems about to arrive at some crowning revelation. Though for his survey work he uses the longest of telescopes, he steadily refrains from professing to describe what may lie below his horizon. No doubt it is for this very reason that Tylor's writings possess that classical quality of never seeming to be out of date. Because he never goes further than his facts warrant, while the facts themselves are sound so far as they go, his constructions are almost time-defying; and, however needful it may be for the science of Man to readapt its dwelling-place to modern uses, it cannot fail to respect the foundations which its first architect has laid down so securely.

In approaching the subject of language, Tylor starts from the reasonable assumption that to communicate by gesture is simpler and more intelligible in origin than to do so by means of articulate speech. Nor is he thereupon content to collect the available evidence concerning the so-called gesture-language of savages. He must likewise visit Berlin where in their Deaf-and-Dumb Institution they had elaborated a system of no less than some five thousand signs, whereby a habit of wordless, yet perfectly effective, talking and thinking was successfully taught and acquired. For his purposes, however, it was enough to make a list of five

hundred, containing the most important of these gestural symbols. For in such institutions there are various signs, introduced by teachers who have the use of speech, that represent grammatical forms belonging in the first instance to articulate language. Or, again, the deaf-and-dumb finger-alphabet is a mere substitute for alphabetic writing.[1] But, though taught to use such artificial signs in school, it is noticed that the deaf-and-dumb are apt to ignore them in their ordinary talk, and in fact, will have nothing to do with them if they can help it. On the other hand, they prove quite capable of developing an effective means of communication with one another out of their own minds and without the intervention of speaking men; and such a system of natural gestures turns out to be remarkably uniform all the world over. Tylor, therefore, entitles his chapter on the subject in *Researches* "The Gesture-language," as being the common property of all mankind. Whereas there is not the slightest hope of recovering the *Ursprache* of the human race—whatever may be the case with the Aryans who go back hardly four thousand years in recorded history—we have in this "mother-tongue" of the deaf-and-dumb a cultural faculty almost as uniform in its workings as any organ of the body, an artifice so akin to nature that our ethnic diversity scarcely affects it. There are, no doubt, what he terms "dialects" that can be distinguished within the world-wide language of signs. Thus the "Indian pantomime" of native North America, which served as a medium of converse between the tribes, despite, or rather because of, the infinite variety of their spoken tongues, and was in

[1] *R.* 16, 17.

use from Hudson's Bay to the Gulf of Mexico, was such that a skilled deaf-and-dumb talker from Europe would understand it without difficulty, even if a few of the signs were so conventionalized that the meaning would not be at once evident. The hand lends itself to no such vagaries as the tongue, and the anthropologist is spared the incoherencies of a gestural polyglot. Not that we must think of hand and tongue as rivals which, because they command independent means of correspondence by signs, are therefore indisposed to co-operate. On the contrary, though an Englishman is perhaps the last person to appreciate the fact, gesticulation joined to speech can render it twice as lively; and, since the intercourse of minds is not limited to the exchange of ideas, but likewise involves the sharing of emotions, the gain in expression due to the accompanying pantomime may in certain vital contexts be of decisive value. Tylor does not fail to observe how religious ritual embodies reverential attitudes in which the action of the whole body supports and enhances that of the voice, while the voice itself trusts as much to tone as to articulation in declaring its meaning.[1] Here, then, we have a fundamental and truly universal instrument of human culture, based as this is on the development of our powers of communication. Meanwhile, Tylor is too cautious, too loyal to the authority of fact, to maintain that the gesture-language was the original language of Man and that speech came afterwards.[2] He announces roundly: "The idea that the gesture-language represents a distinct separate stage of human utterance, through which Man passed before he came to speak, has no support from facts."[3]

[1] Ibid. 46–9. [2] *R.* 64. [3] *R.* 15.

He finds Steinthal's masterly summary of the speculations of previous thinkers concerning the origin of language to be "quite melancholy reading"; and proceeds to add: "it may indeed be brought forward as evidence to prove something that matters far more to us than the early history of language, that it is of as little use to be a good reasoner, when there are no facts to reason upon, as it is to be a good bricklayer when there are no bricks to build with."[1] Whatever the philosopher may have to say to this rather unqualified account of the limitations of human thought, it is at least a robust declaration of Tylor's adherence to the empiricist faith as it bears on Anthropology.

Indeed, this empiricism of his may at this point be subjected to further scrutiny, since it dictates the method which he consistently follows in his later no less than his earlier work. Throughout he behaves as a pioneer. He is not going to attempt a systematic treatise on human origins, as if the information were ready to hand, and it remained but to put it together. On the contrary, most of the anthropological field is unknown country, and he proposes to enter and blaze a trail just wherever it may seem feasible. In his Introduction to the *Researches* he states that the matters discussed are not chosen so much for their absolute importance as because they are among "the easiest and most inviting parts of the subject."[2] There are, he goes on to argue, "particular parts of human culture where the facts have not, so to speak, travelled far from their causes"; the gesture-language providing a case in point. Thereupon, what he calls a "direct method" becomes practicable. Often it may be necessary to hunt back

[1] *R.* 56. [2] *R.* 3.

through all the details of history to whatever great law of human development may lie behind them. Nay, he blames Buckle for trying to explain the complex phases of European history by a few rash generalizations; so that his work must serve as a warning of the danger of too hasty an appeal to first principles.[1] But such a phenomenon as gesture-language may, he thinks, be mostly explained, without the aid of history, as a direct product of the human mind. In other words, he would go straight to psychology, presumably using his ethnographical apparatus as a rather secondary means of confirmation. Perhaps he is not sufficiently aware of the very questionable validity of the "mental laws" which the empirical psychologists of his day with their mechanistic presuppositions were so ready to offer to the world. Tylor himself was no expert in this branch of learning; and, if there is a weak spot in his armour it is just here, namely, in the fact that he has to accept at second hand a good deal of psychological building-material of rather dubious quality. Not any brickbats lying to hand will suit the bricklayer's true needs.

Now Tylor recognizes two main ways in which the similarities of human culture may be explained. Sometimes they may prove intercourse, direct or indirect, between the peoples concerned. Sometimes they may be ascribed to the like working of men's minds under like conditions.[2] A purely historical argument is required in the former case; whereas in the latter case the parallelism "has no historical value whatever," being due to the uniformity of our mental nature causing one and all independently to meet recurrent

[1] *R.* 4. [2] *R.* 5.

situations with one and the same appropriate kind of reaction. True, the history of culture testifies to the great variety of human habits; and Tylor would be the last man to gloss over these very real differences. But for him they are essentially differences to be ascribed to training, not to the mind as such, since its innate powers do not noticeably change whether they be given free play or not. In his search for human origins, then, Tylor frankly looks about him for such facts as "have not, so to speak, travelled far from their causes."[1] Let history by all means do its part; and, so far as prehistoric archæology can recreate our forerunners almost literally out of their own dust, Tylor is only too ready to assist. But he has another string to his bow, and it serves him for his longest and boldest shots. He studies the natural man in his own civilized self, joining minds with the savage by his "direct method," amounting to a sort of introjection. In another such a procedure might lead to sheer apriorism; and one wonders whether Tylor himself was aware how near he comes to what he is inclined to denounce as a "metaphysical" treatment of certain fundamental problems of psychology, as, for instance, how far the mind can think at all without some means of utterance, that is, outward expression of its thought.[2] But Tylor's safeguard is the formidable array of facts, partly of his own observation and partly gathered from a very wide reading, that he brings to bear on every mental process that he would assign to our common human nature, so that it may be invested as far as possible with the extreme generality of an empirical law. Thus he is no philosopher claiming to speak of Man universal,

[1] *R.* 3. [2] *R.* 14.

but a scientific inquirer limiting himself strictly to the given, and hence to all known specimens of humanity, not excluding himself—a bundle of particulars which no theoretical string could ever make wholly fast or tidy.

Picture-writing, which he goes on to consider as a connected theme—and certainly, gesture might almost be described as a picture-writing in the air—affords another crucial instance of that self-evident kind of mental process which may initiate a widespread custom. To convey the notion of three things by drawing a like number of strokes, after the fashion of the Roman numeral, involves little or no more effort of intelligence on the part of those concerned than does the corresponding act of holding up three fingers. It so happens that, although Tylor was not at the time of writing in possession of the pictographic material since yielded by the caves of Quaternary Europe, he could retrace the development of a phonetic script—fundamentally a representation of sounds on the principle of a *rebus*, as he shows[1] from the evidence supplied by China or Ancient Egypt; while from the first his interest in picture-writing and its further possibilities must have been aroused in Mexico, where a syllabic, if hardly alphabetic, system of phonetic characters was just beginning to emerge out of the pure picture-writing known to so many of the American tribes. Indeed, the history of the art of writing is not only of great intrinsic interest as being concerned with the primary condition that brings civilization into existence, but, thanks to the completeness of our documentation, offers at the same time a perfect example

[1] *R.* 94.

of a cultural development lending itself to Tylor's "direct method" as it advances from simple to complex—from the spontaneous impulse of the natural man to an elaborate convention of society. Meanwhile, it affords one more proof of human unity as revealed by the study of origins. "Like the universal language of gestures, the art of picture-writing tends to prove that the mind of the uncultured man works in much the same way at all times and everywhere."[1]

It remains to consider the larger subject of articulate speech, wherein it is no longer possible to recognize the fountain-head offhand, seeing how far the stream has travelled from its source. Tylor's distinction between a "generative" and an "historical" branch of philological science keeps him on the whole pretty clear of Max Müller; though he cannot altogether forgive the latter for laughing at what he nicknamed the "Bow-wow" and the "Pooh-pooh" theories of the origin of language, which severally laid stress on imitative and interjectional sounds. For, in Tylor's opinion, such strictures only apply to the abuse of what, used critically, are entirely just conceptions of formative influences that, though operative mainly in early times, may be discovered alive and active among us to-day. Thus it would be fatal to try to pick out such "self-expressive" words by simple inspection in a given vocabulary without reference to their historical antecedents; which may show them to have undergone transformation past belief in the course of being handed down from mouth to mouth. Clearly the ground must be cleared of these deceptive forms,

[1] *R.* 88. See also chap. XI of the present book.

after thoroughgoing inquiry into their chequered career by philologists of the historical school, before the student of origins can begin to look for genuine examples of natural signs. Even when the stripping of adventitious elements leaves us with so-called "roots" to which the simplest and most straightforward meanings are attached, we do not find in many, perhaps in most, cases that the sound directly suggests the sense. Otherwise the world's thousand languages would not be so completely out of touch with one another as in fact they are, even when full allowance is made for the very considerable selection of significant noises that lies within the compass of our vocal powers. Needless to say, neither Tylor nor anyone else is master of these thousand tongues; and, indeed, were it possible to analyse their entire contents, we should be as far as ever from being able to trace them back to some common original, if any such there once was. Evidences of identity, then, being out of the question, it must suffice to deduce from the existing similarities certain common tendencies on the part of Man in the making of intelligible oral signs. Thus it is plain that, having long been accustomed to recognize things by their audible effects, as any animal can do, he had only to imitate these effects more or less passably to give his friends an inkling of the thing that he had on his mind. Soundless effects would in the first instance be conveyed more easily and directly by gesture; but, if the voice could take over this duty from the hand, leaving it free for its manifold other duties, it would clearly be a gain, more especially as one can often hear when one cannot see. Tylor, indeed, hints that the gulf can be bridged between gesture-language

and at least a rudimentary form of word-language;[1] for lip-reading as successfully practised by the deaf mute shows that significance can pertain to mouth-gesture as such, which is bound in its turn to affect articulation. This is a point which Sir Richard Paget has since worked out in great detail; and his claim to be able literally to see the meaning of various utterances in any unknown tongue such as translate into oral movements the kinds of things expressible in manual gesture needs to be treated with respect. Such investigations must turn on a correct understanding of the physiological mechanism of voice-production, seeing that the relative positions and motions of mouth, tongue and glottis, not to speak of sympathetic actions of the nerves governing the whole facial expression, must be taken into account as causes or accompaniments of articulation, before we can hope to gauge the extent to which their external manifestations will be significant in themselves. Just as Sir Charles Wheatstone a century ago constructed a speaking machine that could utter whole sentences, such as "Je vous aime de tout mon cœur," by shaping sounds like those of our vowels and consonants,[2] so Sir Richard Paget has contrived a no less eloquent material witness to those origins which are likewise the ever-present conditions of human vocalization. It is demonstrable that a common framework supports the loom on which language has wrought its tissues of infinitely variegated pattern. Nay, as Tylor points out, even if tradition—that perpetual re-imitation of imitations, which alters and embroiders as when gossips repeat a tale—has done so much to "stylize"

[1] *R.* 74. [2] *P.C.* 170.

human speech, there is also to be reckoned with an inherent fitness in our verbal forms that within limits keeps them true to themselves.[1] If, then, such birth-marks are retained by us all, it is the business of the anthropologist to take heed of them for whatever light they may throw on the life-history of our race.

It only remains to note that, whereas Tylor's direct method has in the case of speech as contrasted with gesture—not to mention picture-writing—failed to get back to any naked process of language-making, seeing that actually this is veiled by any one of a thousand superimposed changes of raiment, he is none the less ready on that account to obey the laws of evidence. His searchings among the vocabularies of primitive folk may possibly yield him a few more examples of self-expressive words, yet taken altogether these do not afford the makings of the simplest kind of universal language; and Tylor would be the first to allow that any attempt in this direction, such as the Chinook jargon of North America, is an artificial device, unlike the natural language of signs that prevails in the same part of the world. As it is, he is more inclined to question the facts supplied to him by travellers than to make the most of them. Are any of the stories of dumb peoples who have but nods and gestures for their language true or nearly true? He has no hesitation in rejecting these absurdities. But far more credible authorities, modern as well as ancient, state that certain primitive folk cannot understand one another in the dark, so necessary is it for them that words should be eked out with explanatory pantomime. Admitting that a remarkable array of evidence

[1] *P.C.* 183.

to this effect exists, he finds it in every case to be more or less defective; for the observer's own acquaintance with the natives and their mode of speech never amounted to real intimacy.[1] So, admiring and envying the strictness of treatment of which the historical branch of philology is capable, he takes leave of his own researches on the generative side of the subject by recalling Augustine's caustic remark that to explain the origin of words is, like the interpretation of dreams, a matter of individual fancy.[2] Nevertheless, Tylor has at least done his best to subject fancy to the control of fact; and that, after all, is the most that science can ever hope to do. Linguistic origins, as speculatively adumbrated by the genius of a Wilhelm von Humboldt—whom Tylor holds in the highest esteem[3]—must, before a genuine science of language could take them seriously, be made conformable with human experience as built fact upon fact into a solid system of knowledge. Inspired fancy must somehow come to terms with stark common sense.

[1] *R.* 77.
[2] *P.C.* 199.
[3] See his two *Quarterly Review* articles, *Q.R.* 119 (1866), 394 f. and 124 (1868), 504 f.

CHAPTER IV

MAGIC

SO far Tylor might have been composing a treatise on Imitation, seeing that, on his showing, gestures, pictures, and only a degree less obviously words, are alike in origin and essence so many expressions of this racial tendency. Indeed, mimicry is a natural endowment that we share with our poor relations, the apes and monkeys, though these have proved themselves far less ingenious in turning this faculty to practical advantage. Nor have we yet by any means done with the subject; for Tylor now goes on to consider another group of human habits, one as miscellaneous as it is large, which is no less imitative in its general character, namely, that comprising the various uses of material images. When he published the *Researches* in 1865 he was evidently not prepared to embark on the vast subject of religious origins; though in the very next year he contributes an article to the *Fortnightly Review*[1] on "The Religion of Savages" which propounds for the first time his famous theory of animism, destined from that time on to occupy so much of his attention. Thus in his earlier account of images he refrains from any reference to the image-worship or idolatry which in *Primitive Culture* is elaborately explained to involve the belief that the image is actually animated by a human soul or divine spirit which has taken up its

[1] *F.R.*, 6 (1866), 71–86.

abode in it as in a body. On the other hand, he is largely concerned in this first handling of a theme of obviously very wide application with the part played by the image in sorcery or magic; and his preoccupation with the subject of language at this stage of his thought is shown by the fact that he devotes part of the same chapter to the parallel function of the name as a magically effective substitute for the person or thing named. It is perhaps a little unfortunate that what is on the whole a maleficent usage connected with this kind of symbolization should be thus singled out for notice, since in so doing it is hardly possible not to overstress the erroneous and dangerous character of the mental process whereby for one purpose or another the image is made equivalent to its original. By postponing his proof that "the student who occupies himself in tracing the early stages of human civilization can see in the rude image of the savage an important aid to early religious development,"[1] he unwittingly invites the reader to dwell on the superstition and delusion which sorcery, a mere by-product of social evolution, a kind of infantile disease, has always carried in its train. Tylor himself struggles hard and on the whole successfully to maintain throughout an attitude of scientific impartiality towards beliefs once prevalent but no longer held, at least by educated people. His business, as he understands it, is to show that such notions are "intelligible," and hence "to a particular state of mind one might even say reasonable."[2] It may be, however, that the accident of his having dealt in separate contexts with magic and religion as they employ imagery for their

[1] *R.* 110. [2] *R.* 139.

several ends may have led the world to overrate a difference which in view of the underlying psychology is rather one of degree than of kind. Between a crude form of symbolism and a refined one there are infinite grades of transition, and it can be at most but in a relative sense that the mind can be said to outgrow its habit of taking the likeness for the reality.

Tylor starts with the child's doll.[1] It is a good opening, because it enables us to grasp at the outset that there is nothing necessarily wrong in the use of images, whatever be the consequences of their misuse; but, on the contrary, that their function may be recreative, nay, may be supremely educative, and must be so long as the child is father to the man. Just, however, as a grown-up man may fail to appreciate the value of a doll in childish eyes, so the unsympathetic missionary is apt to "see nothing in idol-worship but hideous folly and wickedness."[2] But, as Tylor points out, all depends on the level of education that has been reached. "It is emphatically true of a large part of Christendom that the images and pictures which, to the more instructed serve merely as a help to realize religious ideas, and to suggest devotional thoughts, are looked upon by the uneducated and superstitious crowd as beings endowed not only with a sort of life, but with miraculous influences."[3] Looking back from ourselves to primitive folk, we are invited to regard savages as grown-up children, though a warning is added that the analogy must not be pressed. Both display the same tendency of the uncritical mind "to give an outward material reality to its own inward processes." He goes on to say

[1] *R.* 106. [2] *R.* 110. [3] *R.* 121.

roundly: "This confusion of objective with subjective connexion, which shows itself so uniform in principle, though so various in details, in the practices upon images and names done with a view of acting through them on their originals or their owners may be applied to explain one branch after another of the arts of the sorcerer and diviner, till it almost seems as though we were coming near the end of his list, and might set down practices not based on this mental process as exceptions to a general rule."[1] Yet it must be noted that Tylor can give us no example of the child who expects his toy cannon to knock down real walls, or would not be surprised if his wooden horse proceeded to kick him. His alleged mental law, so uniform in principle, surely leaves out a good half of the required explanation. Whence the projectiveness attributed to the magical act? How comes the notion of an ulterior effect to be attached to what in itself is a bit of harmless mimicry, like a child's fun at pretending to be what he is not? Here, as elsewhere, Tylor may be convicted of tending to identify the mind with the intellect, as if the emotions played but a subordinate part in the actual determination of human conduct. Thus there was no psychology of the unconscious on which he could draw for a theory of repressions and their release, such would have helped him to sound the depth of the relief afforded, say, by sticking pins into the waxen image of an enemy. Nor was the "blessed word" auto-suggestion available, to account for the convincing nature of such an experience, so that there seems to occur that mysterious transference of the curse to the person of the victim which our good King

[1] *R.* 127.

James in his "Dæmonology" more simply explains as the work of the Devil. Nor, again, was a social psychology yet in existence to show in terms of group-consciousness how under stress of a contagious excitement what all hope or fear becomes truth—for them.

Tylor's neat statement, then, that magic originates is the confusion of a subjective with an objective connexion, may serve well enough as a summary description of the facts; but as an explanation of them it will hardly do, since it begs the question how and why simple minds are led astray in just this manner. "Man," he says, "in a low state of culture, very commonly believes that between the object and the image there is a real connexion, which does not arise from a mere subjective process in the mind of the observer, and that it is accordingly possible to communicate an impression to the original through the copy."[1] Unintentionally, perhaps, the impression is here given that the savage reasons the matter out with himself, though, as it happens, fallaciously. Later on he represents the process involved as rather one of passive association. "He feels that the subjective bond is unbroken in his own mind, and he believes that the objective bond, which his mind never gets clearly separate from it, is unbroken too."[2] In *Researches* he is led up from considering the kind of suggestion involved in likeness as such to the more general proposition that any kind of association between ideas is liable to translate itself from thought into action, by extending his argument from magical images to magical names. The witch can work his incantation

[1] *R.* 116–17. [2] *R.* 127.

equally well by using the one or the other; so much so that a wily savage will often keep his real name carefully concealed from the public, and let himself be known by an alias which, naturally, diverts the aim of those who wish him ill. But names, to whatever extent they may have been imitative in origin, have certainly for the most part come to display a quite arbitrary relation between sound and meaning; which relation is nevertheless firmly established by social convention. Such an association, then, is not based on similarity, nor indeed can it be brought under the complementary principle known to the associational school as contiguity except by a very loose rendering of that convenient term. Sir James Frazer's phrase "homœopathic magic" must be strained no less, if it is to cover this branch of the magical art; and to the hazy-minded savage there must be imputed some far more definite conception than is likely to be present to his consciousness of the name as an actual part or attachment, like a limb or a garment. However this may precisely be, the laws of the association of ideas in their universal application are finally invoked by Tylor as affording "the principal key to the understanding of occult science." But, as he duly notes, this is "a faculty which lies at the very foundation of human reason, but in no small degree of human unreason also."[1] Thus we are still left in the dark as to the process whereby the good kind of reasoning becomes gradually differentiated from the bad; and are forced to reflect that logic has a psychological and social history, and is not, like some fabled Goddess of Wisdom, exempt from the derangements of ordinary

[1] *P.C.* 115–16.

human generation. Meanwhile, if on the purely theoretical side one can perhaps detect a certain incompleteness, no critic could accuse Tylor of giving short measure in the compilation of his raw material. His is emphatically not a theorizing that runs ahead of the evidence and attends only to what can be moulded to the required shape. Contrast his contemporary, Herbert Spencer, who indeed claimed to have anticipated some of Tylor's most important findings,[1] but has never been recognized to belong to the true tradition of British anthropology, simply because he uses his vast collections of facts to illustrate rather than to test his preformed opinions. But the Tylorian method, which in this country has had a host of imitators, of whom Sir James Frazer may be selected for mention *honoris causa*, is to gather first and sift afterwards. It is the method of the drag-net. The seeker after human origins is like some marine biologist who feels that almost any part of the sea-bottom may supply him with a haul of interesting specimens, and gloats over his miscellaneous booty for its own sake hardly less than for its value for classificatory purposes. His first duty, he feels, is to land and store his finds, leaving it to Time and the help of his successors to work out the many meanings with which this medley of odds and ends is pregnant. Thus, in dealing with images and names in a single chapter of his *Researches*, it would almost seem as if he had thrown his facts together by the handful trusting to no more than a sort of divination—and, after all, genius is mostly good guessing—

[1] See the curious correspondence between Spencer and Tylor, *Mind*, 2 (1877), 141–56, 415–19, 419–23; *Academy*, 11 (1877), April 23, May 2, 7, 19, 28, June 2, 13, 19.

that some kind of useful generalization will come out of it somehow.

As it is, it provides a theory of magic, but a good deal more as well that bears, or might be made to bear, on other more or less allied questions, as, for instance, why it is that, whereas the grosser minds give way to idolatry, a more refined intelligence can avoid such vagaries and yet continue to cherish the concrete symbol as a source of helpful suggestions. In a set argument some of the matter adduced might almost be judged irrelevant; but the whole point of the treatment is that it is not proceeding according to plan, but is simply feeling its way. For instance, we are regaled in passing with a dissertation on imaginary footsteps, which hitches on rather loosely to the subject of images, and not at all to the subject of magic. For the point is not that occasionally the savage will maltreat the footprint of his enemy so as to transmit the evil to the body that made it. It concerns rather the habit attributed to the Devil, to Saints, and to other distinguished persons, of impressing the marks of their feet—feet, it would seem, of all sizes—on rocks that permanently testify to the fact. So far is Tylor from neglecting, as he has been sometimes accused, the explanation of similarities of culture by a theory of diffusion as contrasted with one of plural invention that he actually says: "For all we know, the whole mass of the Old World footprint-myths may have had but a single origin, and have travelled from one people to another."[1] Even Polynesian analogies might be referred, he suggests, to the same complex on a hypothesis of Asiatic influence. But Mexico and other parts

[1] *R.* 115.

of America also provide parallels, and he leaves it an open question whether this implies one and the same cultural tradition, or simply one and the same mental process. Indeed, Tylor is sorely tempted to infer from the similarities running through the sorcerer's art how certain practices, for example, that of bewitching by locks of hair, may have spread from one geographical source. In fact, it is sheer caution that bids him fall back on a psychological explanation. It is the more "prudent" line to take, "at least while the ethnological argument from beliefs and customs is still in its infancy."[1]

We may go on to note how Tylor's whole handling of the subject of magic tends to connect it with science rather than with religion, if only for the reason that, as will be seen presently, his animistic theory takes charge of the subject of the idol as also of the fetish, and removes them from the immediate range of the explanation that magical symbolism is association of ideas somehow gone wrong. For in *Primitive Culture* what was previously examined under the name of magic now figures as the basic element in something rather indeterminate, and by no means confined to the primitive world, that is described as "occult science." But it is nowhere made very plain what exactly it is that distinguishes such pseudo-science from the real article. It certainly cannot be simply that any reasoning with a flaw in it falls under this head; for in that case, if Einstein is right, then Newton must be classed with the occultists, while Einstein's turn is pretty sure to come some day. Clearly, the occult must have a differentia that marks it off as a more or less self-con-

[1] *R.* 139.

tained province of thought from that of the kind of science that is called "natural." Tylor himself, it would seem, is prepared to recognize this distinction, and to assume that true science is all along concerned with the normal—with that which meets common sense half-way by behaving in accordance with habit, like some respectable person. By contrast, the occult would seem to comprise all disorderly happenings on the part of our world, which after all never repeats itself in its total reaction to our vital efforts, but always has a card up its sleeve in the shape of some unpredictable novelty. What, then, is the attitude of the savage towards this incalculable side of things. Tylor, in his intellectualistic way, regards it as a kind of idle trifling with oddities. "In the love of abnormal curiosities," he writes when dealing with the psychological origins of fetishism, "there shows itself a craving for the marvellous, an endeavour to get free from the tedious sense of law and uniformity in nature."[1] This is, to be sure, a rather sophisticated mood for simple folk to entertain. It would be more appropriate in a man of science who, at the end of a long day spent in grappling with the higher physics, turns gratefully to some work of light fiction. The proposed explanation does not take into account the fact that these queer things matter for the man who experiences them, nay, may matter so seriously that it may seem to him a question of life or death. A portent is something more than a whet to the appetite for the sensational and intriguing. Nor can it be denied that historical religion, rightly or wrongly as may be variously held, is disposed to regard the miraculous as of the greatest importance,

[1] *P.C.* II. 145.

nay, is apt to join issue with natural science on this very point, and to challenge its right to exalt the uniform at the expense of the unknown and yet vitally allied remainder. It would have doubtless caused Tylor a shock if one of his disciples had tried to class religion under the general category of the occult sciences on the ground of its participation in a condition of mind orientated towards the suprasensible. As it is, he avoids any such damaging confession of an ultimate community of interest as between magic and religion in respect to their object; namely, that uncanny side of things which is just as real as any other part of our experience, even if less amenable to our direction. Ignoring those functions of the worker of marvels that might be supposed to disclose him as a priest in the making, he conceives him rather as the professor of a technique differing only from the common arts practised by the plain man in that it enwraps itself in an atmosphere of mystery for which there is no justification in fact.

Yet Tylor strives to be just to what as a man of science he regards, when it crops up in a modern context, as a sheer survival—a *damnosa hereditas* inflicted on us by the past. "The modern educated world," he says, "rejecting occult science as a contemptible superstition, has practically committed itself to the opinion that magic belongs to a lower level of civilization." In confirmation of this view he goes on to cite numerous instances to show how "nations who believe with the sincerest terror in the reality of the magic art, at the same time cannot shut their eyes to the fact that it more essentially belongs to, and is more thoroughly at

home among, races less civilized than themselves."[1] Now no doubt it constantly happens that derelict peoples who cannot defend themselves by physical means against more powerful aggressors have to fall back on what they can manage in the way of scaring them; and, so long as this method works, it might well be argued that there is little to choose between the two parties as regards mental outlook as distinguished from material strength. It will usually be found in such cases, however, that it is simply the rites and ceremonies—or, as we may say roundly, the religion—of the underlings, as carried on obscurely in their holes and corners, that cause the dominants to keep their distance. Strange gods, because of their strangeness, will always tend to rank as devils; and the same principle will be found to extend in the other direction towards the devilish arts of the White man, whose higher status by reason of the superior effectiveness of his civilization is, nevertheless, grudgingly acknowledged. Contempt, then, is no certain token that there is no longer anything to fear; but, on the contrary, may mask an uncomfortable feeling that one's own position is none too sound. Tylor, however, is for sternly relegating obsolete modes of thought to their place in history—to the infant-school of the race as it were—and would agree with some good Nordic who said that Lapp magic was all very well—in Lapland. For "magic," he says, "has not its origin in fraud, and seems seldom practised as an utter imposture. The sorcerer generally learns his time-honoured profession in good faith, and retains his belief in it more or less from first to last; at once dupe and cheat, he

[1] *P.C.* I. 113.

combines the energy of a believer with the cunning of a hypocrite. Had occult science been simply framed for purposes of deception, mere nonsense would have answered the purpose, whereas what we find is an elaborate and systematic pseudo-science. It is, in fact, a sincere but fallacious system of philosophy, evolved by the human intellect by processes still in great measure intelligible to our own minds, and it had thus an original standing-ground in the world."[1]

Such a standing-ground, however, he will no longer concede to divination with its many branches, augury, oneiromancy, haruspication, scapulimancy, chiromancy, cartomancy, rhabdomancy, dactyliomancy, coscinomancy, and so forth. For the evidence of fact is dead against them all; and that though civilized nations have practised them, and have invested them with all the appearance of rational systems, with their corollaries correctly deduced from ill-founded premisses. Or, again, astrology is shown to be in little better case, even if it has always rested on a certain body of true observations in regard to the heavens, and merely went on to mix up imaginary with real connexions. Just so popular meteorology still associates changes of the moon with changes of the weather; if it no longer supports Pliny's rules that eggs should be set under a hen at the new moon, while a waning mood is the time for uprooting trees. It is, however, for a third type of pseudo-science that Tylor reserves his most biting comments. The creator of animism will have nothing good to say for spiritualism, which on pure grounds of etymology ought to mean precisely the same thing. Andrew Lang, in *The*

[1] *P.C.* I. 134.

Making of Religion, might well protest that "the x-region of experience" provides many puzzles such as natural science with all its array of experimental methods has hitherto proved quite unable to solve. Undoubtedly, as Tylor shows at length, the modern spiritualist displays a *modus operandi* that bears a remarkably close resemblance to that of the old-fashioned medicine-man. It is one that on the face of it might have been handed down whole and intact from another age having what Tylor would call a "philosophy" of its own. But must it not be allowed that the subject of a possible life after death, which after all is being explored by the spiritualist after his peculiar fashion, is one on which no philosophy, ancient or modern, has said the last word, nor indeed can say anything that is of what Tylor would recognize as scientific value? It shows the danger of neglecting the emotional conditions that always accompany and in varying degree qualify our intellectual activities that the religious man's interest in the problem of a future life is in Tylor's treatment brought into no relation with that of the spiritualist. Even the fact that the latter is an animist in his way no less than the former, at any rate so long as science does not take on itself to say which spirits are the genuine thing and which are not, does not save him from being packed off in disgrace to join the company of those who pursue shadows. He is classed with the goats, and not among the sheep, and the common ancestry of the two species is conveniently left out of account.

Always clinging to the view that the true affinity of magic is with science, since each is alike a child of reason, even if the elder one is illegitimate, Tylor is yet

moved when approaching the subject of magic from a fresh point of view to render it its due as a factor, and no mere pathological feature, in the development of thought; which, like human experience in general, is an experimental process from first to last. In the *Anthropology* he devotes a whole chapter[1] to the history of science, and notes how "of common knowledge savages and barbarians have a vast deal."[2] Logic, on the other hand, is no heaven-born gift, but a habit of mind that has to be acquired by that same method of trial and error whereby all knowledge, common or uncommon, advances from strength to strength. "Reasoning or logic is itself a science, but, like other sciences, it began as an art which man practised without stopping to ask himself why or how."[3] "Practical reasoning," then, as Tylor terms it, is responsible for science and magic alike as they have been together implicit in a single process of experimentation which, being partly successful and partly not, has all along worn these diverse aspects; though it always took wisdom after the event to distinguish them. Unfortunately he tends to make too much of the reasoning involved, and too little of the saving clause that it is "practical," that is, more or less implicit, subconscious, unreflective. Thus he explains: "in getting on from what is known already to something new, analogy or reasoning by resemblance always was, as it still is, the mind's natural guide in the quest of truth."[4] He might have added that in its most comprehensive sense analogy is equivalent to the reasoning process in general, since it means arguing on the strength of a ratio or intelligible relation—a term under which com-

[1] *A.*, ch. XIII. [2] *A.* 309. [3] *A.* 336–7. [4] *A.* 338.

parison according to a superficial resemblance can no doubt be brought, but not so as to exclude the strictest methods of trying to "put two and two together" in their due proportion. This continuous and never-ending process of getting more and more sameness out of mere likeness has occasioned many an aberration by the way; and such side-slips are by no means confined to primitive stages of thinking, since no Aristotle or Bacon could draw up a full list of the fallacies that must ever beset the path of evolving science. Thus, if magic be regarded in an historical and concrete way, with the credit and the debit sides of the account considered together, as is only fair if we are trying to estimate the net earnings and hence the efficiency of the institution as a going concern, its claim to have assisted the cause of science cannot be overlooked; not to mention here its other claims to have taken part in the development of technology, the perpetual associate of science, together with fine art, government, law and, last but not least, religion. So with Tylor the kindliness of his attitude towards all things rudimentary and primeval prevails in the end; and he concludes that magic is not mere pseudo-science so much as science in the making. "Loose and illogical as man's early reasonings may be, and slow as he may be to improve them under the check of experience, it is a law of human progress that thought tends to work itself clear."[1] In a like spirit of Victorian optimism sang Robert Browning "whatever there is to know, that we shall know some day." The car of progress may be an admirable machine, but only because it is man-made and man-driven will it take us forward, if forward it is to be.

[1] *A.* 341.

CHAPTER V

MYTHOLOGY

ONCE more we are referred to Man's imitative faculty and his power of making the most, though it may be sometimes too much, of the resemblances that strike his fancy, in order to explain another main department of interest as expressed in what is generally described as mythology, or the story-telling habit of mind. This province of scientific investigation obviously falls within the sphere of influence to which the anthropologist lays claim, since he considers nothing human to be alien from his scheme of research. But it happened to be ground already occupied by another party. Max Müller who, in British eyes at least, stood for the autocrat of Comparative Philology, was notoriously anxious to annex Comparative Mythology as an outlying portion of his dominions. His theory that mythology might be largely explained as "a disease of language" threatened to leave any student of the subject not specially trained in the niceties of linguistic science on the wrong side of the pale. But Tylor, though owing not a little of his inspiration to the stirring activities of the philological school at the outset of his career, is from the first suspicious of its right to invest words with any such supremacy over primitive thought or imagination. As early as 1866 he had made his protest. "Comparative Mythology," he writes in his article on the Science of Language in the *Quarterly Review*,

"has seemed to us too important in itself, too intimately mixed up with the hardest problems of thought, of religion, and of early history, to be discussed here as an offshoot of the science of language."[1] If it was eventually Andrew Lang who dealt the fatal blow to Max Müller's philological "key to all mythologies" in his article "Mythology" contributed to the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, his whole attack, as he would have been the first to allow, was based on the teachings of anthropology—of "Mr. Tylor's science," as he calls it after Max Müller's example. Of course other students of mythology had already broken a lance with the philologists. For example, Dr Dasent is singled out by Tylor in *Researches* as one "who, in his admirable Introduction to the Norse Tales has taken the lead in the extension of the argument from Comparative Mythology beyond the limited range within which it is aided by History and Language."[2] Moreover, since it is clear that savage myths are not only narrated but for the most part believed as well, there was the further difficulty in assenting to the doctrine of the philologists that, on their showing, religion itself must be set down as a sort of primitive Malapropism, a "nice derangement of epitaphs," if indeed it turned out to be anything more than a misapplication of meteorological metaphor.

It was by patient study of the facts, however, rather than by any initial revelation that Tylor was led to throw his weight on the side of the opposition. A good illustration of the gradual nature of his ascent in search of broader prospects is afforded by his changes of mind concerning Quetzalcoatl ("Bird-Snake" or

[1] *Q.R.* 119 (1866), 434. [2] *R.* 365.

Feathered Serpent), the Mexican, or more specifically Toltec, deity and culture-hero. According to the myths he is the Wind-god who was sent by the Sun to teach the people wisdom or, one might say, science; for he imparted to them picture-writing and the use of their elaborate calendar; and, generally, turned the Toltec capital Tula—usually identified as Teotihuacan with its stupendous ruins—into a veritable paradise on earth. And so it remained until the wicked spells of Tezcatlipoca (Smoking-Mirror), the champion of those Chichimecs who seem actually to have destroyed Tula about the time of our Norman Conquest, drove Quetzalcoatl, the bearded one of white, shining countenance, back to the East, the land of the Sun, whence he formerly had come.[1] Now at first sight this story-cycle appears to be a good deal more than a tissue of fictions, and one might well be inclined to class if offhand as what Tylor terms "historical tradition"—we would nowadays term it "legend"—namely, an embodiment of genuine folk-memory, no doubt flavoured with a pleasant dash of romance. Rather naively, then, in *Anahuac*, Tylor adopts the Euhemeristic attitude that recognizes in the god the deified man, and, in a style such as must cause the heart of any thorough-going diffusionist to rejoice, suspects a half-obliterated reference to the coming of some earliest missionary from Europe and perhaps Ireland.[2] But only four years later when he publishes *Researches* a recantation is necessary. "As the gods Ceres and Bacchus become the givers of corn and wine to mortals, so across the Atlantic there has grown out

[1] Cf. R. H. K. Marett, *Archæol. Tours from Mexico City*, esp. 44–7.
[2] See above, p. 38.

of a simple mythic conception of nature the story of the great enlightener and civilizer of Mexico. When the key which Professor Müller and Mr. Cox have used with such success in unlocking the Indo-European mythology is put to the mass of traditions of the Mexican Quetzalcoatl, collected by the Abbé Brasseur, the real nature of this personage shows out at once."[1] He goes on in the light of this new creed—and he is not merely bowing in the House of Rimmon, but evidently burns with all the faith of the multitude—to identify the "bright career" of Quetzalcoatl with that of the Sun. "His history is perhaps a more compact and perfect series of solar myths than hangs to the name of any single personage in our own Aryan mythology."[2] Nay, in his enthusiasm he seems ready to jettison the whole cargo of historical memories with which the myth was charged so long as it sailed under its former colours. The Toltecs themselves, whose name is so intimately bound up in Aztec story with the great monuments that to this day adorn the land and cry aloud for explanation, are no more weather-proof than Quetzalcoatl himself, but "catch from him solar qualities." "Will it be even possible," he asks in all sincerity, "to grant to this famous race, in whose story the legend of Quetzalcoatl is the leading incident, anything more than a mythic existence?"[3] Andrew Lang's travesty of the philological method, whereby the solar character of Mr. Gladstone is triumphantly demonstrated, could hardly carry such a line of argument further.[4] But Tylor's mind was soon to

[1] *R.* 151. [2] *R.* 153. [3] *R.* 154.

[4] See A. Lang, "The Great Gladstone Myth" in *In the Wrong Paradise and Other Stories* (1886). Tylor himself later on in *P.C.* 319, showed how Julius Cæsar could be plausibly turned into a solar myth.

recover its balance. To the third edition of *Researches* he appends a note as follows: "The author, after ten years' more experience, would now rather say more cautiously, not that Quetzalcoatl is the Sun personified, but that his story contains episodes seemingly drawn from sun-myth."[1] The egg, he handsomely allows, may be good in parts; but, plainly, it no longer appeals to his appetite. Now this little drama in three acts is concerned with the working out of but a particular problem; though the fact that it is staged in Mexico, where he made his first entry into wonderland, would for him lend it special significance. At the same time, however, it serves to show how the scientific mind must ever advance gropingly, arriving at truth by the elimination of successive errors rather than by any unfailing intuition. As regards anthropology at any rate, Tylor's example proves that genius consists, not in leaping in the dark, but in feeling one's way.

Meanwhile, at the stage of his thought represented by the *Researches*, though he devotes much attention to the subject of mythology, he seems none too sure of his ground; and, though ready enough to follow the philologists up to a point, is for making excursions on its own account in other directions more or less ignored by them. The trouble is that, whereas they have a principle of explanation that rightly or wrongly they deem to be what Bacon would call an *axioma maxime generale*—a generalization to which all the facts can somehow be fitted—, Tylor for the time being has nothing equally comprehensive to offer in its place. So far as anything of the kind is provided in the *Researches*, it would be that Law of Association

[1] *R.* 153 *n.*

whereby fallacious (as well as sound) reasoning may occur, so that, as old Montaigne put it long ago, "a powerful imagination generates the event itself." But this line of thought might well seem to lead up directly to the philological theory. Magic having been disposed of by a consideration not only of images but of names as well, we have virtually conceded to words a like power of pretending to be the things of which they are but the arbitrary signs. Thus it is not pride of theory, but rather fidelity to fact, that urges Tylor to halt at the classificatory stage and be content with trying to break up a very heterogeneous material into workable portions. Thereupon he proposes a triple arrangement of topics which is probably not intended to be exhaustive, but would seem to have for its primary object the liberation of at least two major divisions of the subject from the despotic control of Comparative Philology. Thus on the one hand there are "the pure myths whose origin and development are being brought more and more clearly into view in our own times by the labours of Adalbert Kuhn and Max Müller and their school."[1] The precise meaning of "pure" in this context is not explained, but there can be little doubt that "purely subjective" would be his own way of putting it more explicitly. On the other hand, there are two additional kinds of myths that are not pure, inasmuch as they mix up fiction with fact in varying proportions, and in virtue of this approach to common sense are on their way to escape from the toils of verbal imagery. He names these two kinds severally "Historical Traditions" and "Myths of Observation." The first embody memo-

[1] *R.* 306.

ries of real events; the second are would-be explanations of genuine facts. In each case, though fancy shrouds it in mist, something solid looms in the background; so that here at least a modicum of sympathy can be expected from the man of science. It is unfortunately impossible in these pages to examine in detail Tylor's store of illustrations, which, as always, are not merely helpful to his arguments, but are also of the greatest intrinsic interest. Thus he cites the Polynesian itineraries and other records of the saga of their wanderings across the Pacific from some homeland in the Far West as racial archives of no small documentary value; which in this case was considerably enhanced by their custom of transmitting the sacred story of the exploits of their ancestors inviolate and word-perfect from mouth to mouth. It is indeed worth noting by the way how, if we are looking simply for a test of folk-memory—in other words, are judging oral tradition from the single standpoint of its historicity—, our first step must be to inquire whether there was any organized transmission of what was deemed memorable; whether, for instance, a college of bards was trained to repeat by rote the authorized version of the tribal achievements as they faded away into some divine fore-time, some heroic age. Again, under the head of myths of observation, Tylor collects many curious examples of that special kind of ætiology—for he might have brought it under a wider genus—that tries to account for something lying outside the range of ordinary experience which nevertheless obtrudes itself as a fact present to the senses. For example, what of those wonder-tales, so often met with up and down the primitive world, of 'dragons of

the prime,' giant animals and men whose monstrous forms, however fantastically described, are yet not without resemblance to those actual fossils on which even the hardened archæologist cannot gaze without awe or incredulity according to his temperamental bias? Can it be "that several traditions, found in different parts of the world, were derived from actual memory of the remote time when various great animals, generally thought to have died out before the appearance of man upon the earth, were still alive"?[1] Tylor is too cautious to reject such a possibility altogether; and, as a case in point, alludes to the question, which even to-day excites as much controversy as ever, whether reminiscences of the elephant, somehow transported from Asia into America, not in the flesh, but by word of mouth alone, have or have not found their echo in the sculpture or picture-writing of Mexico and the adjoining regions. As for fossils, plenty of evidence can be cited from native Siberia, or indeed from civilized China where the medicinal virtues of dragon's bones have always been appreciated, that these finds have been objects of curious speculation, such as could not fail to leave its mark on the folk-lore.

It will be noticed that this attempt to classify myths, at least partially, regards them throughout from a peculiar angle. Nothing but their credibility is considered—their correspondence with fact as the modern man of science understands that term. But myth, after all, means story, and a story may be good without being true, or at any rate true in a literal and matter-of-fact way. One might even construct a myth of one's own to the effect that the first story-teller was inter-

[1] *R.* 311.

rupted in the middle of his moving recital by someone who asked "Was that really so?;" that he promptly slew the stupid fellow with his stone-axe; and that ever afterwards there has prevailed a certain tolerance of poetic licence. Primitive mythology provides the savage with his literature no less than with his science —with his Shakespeare no less than with his Euclid. Nay, more, it furnishes him with his Bible as well; and it was no less a votary of science than Bacon himself who warned those who searched the Scriptures for scientific rather than moral edification that they were *inter viva quærentes mortua*—seeking amid living truths for such as were spiritually dead, that is, indifferent. It may be, indeed, that Tylor, and anthropologists in general, are liable to suffer from a "disease of language" so constant and almost constitutional that its dangerous effects are scarcely noticed. A word like "myth" or "magic" is taken over from the popular parlance which uses it in a more or less unfavourable sense, and is then employed as a scientific category applied to the institutions of people living in what is quite a satisfactory way from their own point of view, if not from ours. It is certainly no business of science to blame these folk for having solved the problem of existence as best they could; but their methods must rather be judged by their success in meeting the situation of the moment. If, then, "myth" is to be used to mean oral tradition in general, the word must be purged of any connotation of error or shortcoming of any kind. When Tylor says roundly, as he does in *Anthropology*, "it is sham history, the fictitious narrative of events that never happened,"[1] he is by the very

[1] *A.* 387.

force of his definition cutting off himself and his readers from a just appreciation of the meaning that it is entitled to have as an organic and vital part of primitive culture—its functional meaning, as one may say. As well define child's play as foolishness for the purposes of a treatise on the education of the young. In an evolutionary study, of course, it is not irrelevant to contrast one stage of cultural development with another as on the whole or in certain respects the inferior of the two; but, even so, the preceding condition must be characterized not negatively but positively, not by its deficiencies but by its deserts, since after all it presumably had to be there before it could give birth to something better.

Meanwhile, though Tylor's leanings towards the "direct method" encourage him to cast about within the domain of mythology for fresh proofs that human minds tend to think alike in like circumstances, he is by no means averse to using the diffusionist argument wherever he can do so safely; his main objection to sailing on this other tack being that it seems the more likely to carry him on to the rocks. The chapter in *Researches* entitled "Geographical Distribution of Myths" was ultimately inspired, one can hardly doubt, by his Mexican experiences, which brought him face to face with all manner of remarkable coincidences between what was thought and done in the New World and in the Old, such a parallelism extending to their stories. Accordingly he will see what he can do to contribute something to what he evidently regards as the "far-off divine event" of deducing from these resemblances the actual channels of intercourse whereby the assumed migrations or contacts have been

made. He is not prepared to theorize on these lines; he will simply offer some possible data in the interests of the science of the future. For many ancient shipwrecks bear witness to the perils of this course, which has never ceased to tempt the bolder spirits ever since America was discovered; for a few far-fetched comparisons with Old Testament ways on the part of the natives was enough to convince the newcomers that they were on the trail of the Lost Tribes. Tylor, however, is ready to lean on the authority of Alexander von Humboldt[1] so far as to postulate some connexion, however it may have been brought about, between the higher culture of America and that of Asia. So he contents himself with producing eight sets of myths occurring in America, North or South, which closely resemble tales current in Asia. These are: the World-Tortoise, the Man swallowed by the Fish, the Sun-Catcher, the Ascent of Heaven by the Tree, the Bridge of the Dead, the Fountain of Youth, the Tail-Fisher, and the Diable Boiteux.[2] In working out these analogies for whatever they might be worth, he finds that he is induced to wander "over a larger geographical range than that included in Humboldt's argument"[3]; but how far this evidence bears on the early history of America, or on the general problem of the diffusion of mankind, he would not venture to determine. Be it noted, finally, that, with all his readiness to resort to the diffusionist method when his facts appear to warrant it, he would always have it serve his supreme purpose of testifying to the fundamental similarity of human minds. Thus,

[1] Cf. *R.* 339. Alexander, the traveller, was the brother of Wilhelm von Humboldt, to whose speculations on the subject of language Tylor was so much indebted.

[2] *R.* 340–70. [3] *R.* 371.

if the transmission of culture is to be recognizable at all, the change suffered in transplanting must not be great; and this in turn implies that the old soil and the new have much in common.[1] Like other commerce, the exchange of ideas is a matter of supply and demand.

While there are five years between *Anahuac* and the *Researches*, the same interval of time separates the *Researches* from *Primitive Culture*; and Tylor's thought has been moving apace. Mythology still engrosses his attention; but, since he now has got his ideas about Religion into shape, the former subject can be viewed in a new relation and apart from the question of its value as science. One might even have expected that, as soon as Mythology and Religion were brought into touch, some synthesis would have been achieved whereby myth, or at any rate one kind with as good a right as any other to the name, became part and parcel of religion; for no religion in its concrete and institutional form can wholly dispense with an oral tradition. As it is, however, Tylor treats the two subjects in juxta-position, yet apart; and the animistic hypothesis which appears to span the divide turns out to be a construction built up from the two sides and barely touching in the middle. A full discussion of the theory of animism must be postponed until it can be considered in a religious context; since there its chief importance must be held to lie, in view of its paramount influence on the subsequent study of religion from the comparative standpoint. Here it will suffice to call attention to the fact that *Primitive Culture* contains two definitions of animism, the one introducing

[1] *R.* 373.

the three chapters devoted to Mythology, the other prefacing the account of Religion that occupies the rest of the book.[1] For the purpose of understanding the nature of mythology we are bidden to regard animism as "the belief in the animation of all nature, rising at its highest pitch to personification."[2] In its bearing on religion, however, it stands for "the belief in Spiritual Beings."[3] Tylor himself is more or less aware that the two conceptions are distinct. Thus he promises when dealing with mythology that the subsequent treatment of religion will show how "the doctrine of spiritual beings at once develops with and reacts upon mythic personification." Or, again, in the same paragraph, he distinguishes between "an idea of pervading life and will in nature far outside modern limits" and "a belief in personal souls animating even what we call inanimate bodies"; though he adds that the two thoughts so closely coincide in their effects as to "make it hard indeed to unravel their separate action."[4] At any rate it cannot be quite the same thing to attribute life to an object and to attribute to it a life-principle that, while possessing it, has likewise an independent existence of its own. Doubtless the two notions are allied, but at the very least the second must be treated as a refinement of the first—an ascent to a new, because more abstract, level of thought.[5]

[1] Chaps. VIII–X as against chaps. XI–XVIII.
[2] *P.C.* I. 285.
[3] *P.C.* I. 424.
[4] *P.C.* I. 287.
[5] To keep the two senses apart in thought the author proposed that a separate word "Animatism" be used as equivalent to Tylor's first meaning, while "Animism" was reserved for the second; and this suggestion has been widely adopted. See R. R. Marett, *The Threshold of Religion*, 1st ed. (1909), 15 (reprinted from *Folklore*, 1900, 170). See also *Encycl. Brit.* 14th ed. s.v. "Animatism."

Now, considered on its own merits, and without reference to that doctrine of the soul which for Tylor constitutes the foundation of human religion, this other "doctrine of universal vitality"[1] might be questioned on the ground that, even if the savage succumbs to it when in his story-telling mood, he does not in his practical affairs appear to act on any such wholesale supposition; but expects an animal to behave in one way and a stone in another, and reacts to each accordingly. On the other hand, if the stone behaved oddly, or simply looked odd—was shaped like an animal, for instance—then he might be more inclined to credit it with life, whether active or just latent. Such criticisms, however, may be a little beside the point; for Tylor's immediate interest in his principle is simply that it will enable him to tackle, if not the whole of mythology, at any rate that part of it which the philologists claim as their own, namely, the whole important class of the nature-myths. Now it might seem that the personification-theory cuts both ways at once, and could furnish the philological school with a chance of arguing that vivid language and personification go together. But Tylor will have none of this, contending that language followed imagination ere ever it was capable of leading it. His experiences at Berlin come to his aid, so that he can state: "the myth-maker's mind shows forth even among the deaf-and-dumb, who work out just such analogies of nature in their wordless thought."[2] For "if mythology be surveyed in a more comprehensive view, it is seen that its animistic development falls within a broader generalization still," namely, the "great doctrine of

[1] *P.C.* I. 285. [2] *P.C.* I. 298.

analogy."[1] Without the intermediation of words, men directly compared object with object and action with action, so that for them literally and really hunger gnawed, thunder threatened, and so on. So Tylor modestly concludes: "For myself, I am disposed to think (differing here in some measure from Professor Max Müller's view of the subject) that the mythology of the lower races rests especially on a basis of real and sensible analogy, and that the great expansion of verbal metaphor into myth belongs to more advanced periods of civilization."[2] Let my savages alone, he virtually says, and the Aryans are yours to deal with as you like. So for two chapters out of the three devoted to mythology he analyses the nature-myths of the most primitive folk, and traces the effects of animism in the sense of personification right through the complex. His principle is, surely, sound as far as it goes. Naively we read ourselves into our surroundings; and it is only through a sort of growing estrangement that the object of sympathetic interest finally ceases to rank as an *alter ego*. But the very ease with which his new-found theory carries him along may, perhaps, cause him to disregard other speculative opportunities that occur by the way. For instance, with that slight inconsequence which lends British anthropology so much of its charm—one is reminded of a stroll in an English garden where the paths conform to no geometrical pattern, nor are the lusty bushes tortured according to the rigours of the topiary art—Tylor, *à propos des bottes* or rather of nature-myths, is moved to discourse on werwolves. True, they can be brought somehow into the expansive class of

[1] *P.C.* I. 296. [2] *P.C.* I. 299.

animistic phenomenon; though the animism here involved would seem to be rather of the second than of the first type—that is, the animism consisting in the belief in the independent and separable soul—since we are told: "the doctrine of werwolves is substantially that of a temporary metempsychosis."[1] But, incidentally as it were, we are afforded quite another view of the matter. For "it really occurs that, in various forms of mental disease, patients prowl shyly, long to bite and destroy mankind, and even fancy themselves transformed into wild beasts."[2] Similarly, Bastian, in connexion with the popular notion that the malady known as shingles (from the Latin *cingulum*, "girdle") is due to a coiling snake and proves fatal whenever head and tail meet, cites a medical case where in moments of excessive pain the sufferer could see the snake and touch its rough scales with his hand.[3] Here, then, are suggestive facts inviting the inquirer to strike off into untrodden byways of Morbid Psychology—the subject which in recent times has, thanks chiefly to the brilliant work of Freud and of the psycho-analytical school in general, made such fruitful contacts with anthropology. Let it not be forgotten, however, that the savage is a healthy animal, not only physically, but in a mental way that is quite normal for anyone living in his conditions. Unless, therefore, all of us alike, civilized or uncivilized, are to throng the waiting-room of the modern soul-doctor—as no doubt he would like us to do—one had better refrain from exaggerating the ills that primitive flesh is heir to, seeing that it has to be pretty tough to survive at all; while what applies to body must apply to mind too,

[1] *P.C.* I. 308. [2] Ibid. [3] *P.C.* I. 307.

since it is all of a piece that we merit survival or fail to do so. Tylor himself, though grateful for an occasional hint from the science of medicine, shows no signs of doing homage to the superstition of the sick savage. But perhaps it would not be so easy to exculpate him and his generation from taking the attitude of the old-fashioned schoolmaster towards the young—for the savage is at least young in the sense that he has had a more limited experience—and identifying the immature with the backward; so committing the "psychologist's fallacy" of reading his own mental processes into something else that must be judged by its own standards. No doubt an evolutionary treatment implies that successive stages are graded as relatively lower and higher; but each stage needs to be studied on its own account and from within before science, delivering judgment from without or rather from above, can award to each its rightful place of honour.

It is unnecessary here to deal at any length with the myths considered in the last of the three chapters and, apparently, one not covered by the animistic hypothesis. They are a rather miscellaneous lot, as indeed is suggested by the opening sentence which says: "Although the attempt to reduce to rule and system the whole domain of mythology would as yet be rash and premature, yet the piecemeal invasion of one mythic province after another proves feasible and profitable."[1] Thus one such group to which a quasi-independent status is assigned is that of what are described as "philosophical myths." At first sight this might seem hardly distinguishable from the vast and

[1] *P.C.* I. 368.

rather indeterminate class of the nature-myths to which so much attention has already been given; for these, so far as they embody cosmological speculation are concerned with those ultimate questions in which philosophy is interested—questions, indeed, so ultimate that any thought about them is bound to be of the stop-gap variety, in fact, more or less mythic from the Tylorian point of view. It turns out, however, that Tylor is using "philosophical" in that old-fashioned sense in which it is equivalent to scientific—as when a London shopman styles himself to this day "Maker of Philosophical Instruments"; so that we are back again in the category recognized in the *Researches* under the name of "myths of observation"—would-be explanations of what the modern man of science would admit to be real facts. On the basis of some perfectly admissible impression the savage reasoner builds up his hypothesis exactly like the man of science, only as it happens wrongly. "Such theoretical explanations are unimpeachable in their philosophic spirit, until further observation may prove them to be unsound. Their disastrous effect on the historic conscience of mankind only begins when the inference is turned upside down, to be told as a recorded fact."[1] Thus it was correctly noted that there are no snakes in Ireland; but it is less certain that this is so because such vermin were extirpated by the miraculous intervention of St. Patrick. At any rate, when soil from Ireland was used as a vermicide in England up to the time of Henry VIII, it did not work; or at any rate appears not to have worked since the Reformation.[2] Tylor's bias in regard to myth—this constant and not

[1] *P.C.* I. 371. [2] Cf. *P.C.* I. 372.

always very relevant insistence on their value as simple matter of fact—can perhaps be partly explained by his attitude towards what for him were survivals of similar beliefs in medieval or even modern theology. In his eyes the doctrine of miracles is "a bridge along which mythology travelled from the lower into the higher culture."[1] But "allowing the mere assertion of supernatural influence by angels or devils, saints or sorcerers, to override the rules of evidence and the results of experience" may be all very "disastrous" when the rules and results in question are or ought to be well known to educated persons. Yet is the savage, therefore, to be condemned as an "accessory before the fact"? Would it not be historically and psychologically the sounder plan to try to discover what are his own standards of credibility, seeing that certainly he must have them; and thus to show how far myth satisfies the primitive will to believe now in this way and now in that—sometimes by enlarging the bounds of common sense, and sometimes, and perhaps more typically, by lending wings to emotion and uplifting the heart.

Tylor, indeed, before bringing to an end his list of myth-types which are mostly of the ætiological or explanatory order—since, for example, folk-etymologies and the invention of eponymous heroes to account for the names of tribes come under this general head—finds himself confronted with a case which it becomes absurd to try by the strict canon of conformity with fact. This is the beast-fable, which even among fairly primitive folk, as in West Africa, has become more or less moralized—a sort of proverbial

[1] *P.C.* I. 371.

philosophy couched in picture-language. Whereas the allegorizers of classical times who tried in this fashion to explain away the crudities of their ancestral myths were doubtless for the most part on the wrong tack, yet allegories are a genuine product of the fallow intelligence. Just as Monsieur Jourdain talked prose without knowing it, so the savage may hardly be conscious that he is speaking in parables when he adopts a concrete imagery, such as is implicit in his very vocabulary; yet it does not follow in the least that he cannot impart to his words a meaning which is not literal but figurative. When the point is simply the artfulness of Brer Rabbit, no one dreams of raising the question of Brer Rabbit's actuality. Given enough self-consciousness, however, the story-teller might proclaim, as is actually done in Ashanti, "All I am going to say is not true"; and he could count on holding his audience none the less. In other words, it is possible at all stages of mental development to be intuitively aware that fancies are fancies, and yet to cherish them for their own sake; while no doubt they recommend themselves as pleasant before they can come to be reckoned improving. Thus to use the myths of savages simply to illustrate "the difficulty such men have in comprehending the unreality of any story"[1] is at best a one-sided way of estimating their function in primitive life. It is really to make an allegory of "the man who could not tell fact from fiction" for the moral benefit of those who in these latter days are not so scientifically-minded as they ought to be. Tylor dwells most instructively on the

[1] *P.C.* I. 413.

untrue element in savage mythology; but he says very little about the true element—true at least for those immediately concerned, and in the circumstances vital to their well-being.

CHAPTER VI

RELIGION AS BASED ON ANIMISM

IN granting to primitive religion its right to such a name, Tylor has at last found an anthropological category that, instead of being 'pejorative' or disparaging in its implication, allows the savage to derive what benefit he can from association with a term of the highest authority and repute. True, of religions taken in the plural, it is customary to say that this one is true and that one false; yet none but a few extremists would hold that religion in general is anything but a worthy concern of Man. It is consonant with usage, then, as well as convenient that, at any rate for the purposes of history, the religious sentiment should be recognized as something common to peoples civilized and uncivilized, something, in fact, almost in the nature of a universal human attribute. Hence in dealing with it scientific realism must go cautiously. This is no dead horse to be flogged with impunity, like magic or mythology. It is very much alive and might kick. Whence, then, this persistent vitality? Tylor, looking first around him for a clue, finds that the religious man of his own time and civilization believes in the divine as a supreme manifestation of the spiritual or soul-like; then, turning to the savage, discovers beliefs that seem to be in principle the same. A sympathetic relation is established between one age of faith and the other. Hitherto, in considering notions

nowadays almost completely discarded, it has been necessary for him to lay stress on the difference between mental enlightenment and mental twilight. But now it is the continuity of human development that needs to be underlined. For, whatever the spiritual may exactly mean and be, humanity at large would seem to have an inkling of it as the source and sustainer of experience, nay, of life itself as it struggles with death the destroyer.

Nevertheless, it may not be possible to exempt Tylor altogether from the charge of using a terminology that, as it were, puts the savage in the wrong from the outset. For to impute religion and to impute animism hardly amount to the same thing, even if a free use of the word "spiritual" helps one to glide over the distinction. Somehow it would not do to class the Pope or the Archbishop of Canterbury among the animists. One might almost as well call some leading Darwinian an ape on the strength of a simian ancestry that he would be the last to deny. Animism, then, is the spirit-doctrine—we must not say spiritualism, since that word too has an unfavourable connotation—at a stage of its development when it is as yet very largely, if not wholly, untrue. Says the evolutionist in effect: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." There is tacit evaluation at the back of a descriptive term that for scientific purposes ought to be uncoloured by any such innuendo. Certain it is that, if the anthropologist were to rate evolved religion as the higher animism, he would, wilfully or not, be playing the critic. No doubt *humanum est errare*; but *solvitur errando* should be

inscribed on the other side of our family escutcheon. Let the evolutionist by all means distinguish the different stages of a process which plainly originates in the mind's capacity for self-awareness—that power which is and must always be the very hub of our universe. But the labels that he uses for purposes of discrimination must do equal justice to each phase of a reality somehow subject to growth. The naturalist must try to be as impartial as Nature herself, who has ever mothered her children on the principle "first come first served."

Tylor, when he published the *Researches*, reserved the subject of religion as not yet ripe for treatment; but in the very next year, 1866, came forward in a modest article on "The Religion of Savages" in the *Fortnightly Review*[1] with the idea and the word with which his name will always be associated.[2] Animism, he here suggests, might conveniently be used to designate "the theory which endows the phenomena of nature with personal life."[3] It may stand for "the old and simple theory which explains the world at large as directly animated by a life like our own."[4] He is inventing a new term at least partly in the interest of the savage, seeing that "spiritualism," which means the same thing, has come to signify something of which he thoroughly disapproves—something which later on in *Primitive Culture* he classes with witchcraft as a "survival" that in recent times has, like some intermittent fever, broken out into a "revival."[5] So, too, in the earlier essay he writes: "The modern spiritual-

[1] *F.R.* VI (1866), 71 sqq.

[2] The word "Animism" had already been used by Stahl, but in a cosmological connexion; see *P.C.* I. 425 *n.*

[3] Ibid. 85. [4] Ibid. 72. [5] *P.C.* I. 141.

ism, as every ethnographer may know, is pure and simple savagery both in its theory and the tricks by which it is supported."[1] Thus he is really doing his best to dissociate the savagery of the real savages from that of their disreputable imitators. The former are apt to be traduced by the traveller who is but superficially acquainted with their ways. "The very assertion that their actions are motiveless, and their opinions nonsense, is itself a theory, and I hold, a profoundly false one." He continues: "The tendency of research in this as yet little worked field is indeed to show more and more throughout the life of the lower races reasonable motives of opinion and practical purposes of action, or at least the influence of ancestral tradition which once had itself a like intelligible basis."[2] So far so good; but perhaps too much attention is paid in the sequel to showing how a reasonable savage is apt to go wrong. Be it remembered that Tylor has been pursuing a train of thought that led him forward to religion from mythology, which for him is pre-eminently a creation of fancy posing as science. Indeed, his theory of animism may well have occurred to him in the middle of his battle with the philologists. "It is not language," he exclaims, "that need be called in to explain how Sun or Rain or River were conceived of as animated beings. . . . The simple anthropomorphic view, as it seems to me, is itself the fundamental principle of mythology."[3] Anthropomorphism, then, and animism come with Tylor to much the same thing; but the latter term expresses more clearly that it is the shape of his mind which man impresses on his surroundings. No doubt, too, anthropomorphism is

[1] *F.R.* VI. 85. [2] Ibid. 86. [3] Ibid. 81.

here thought of as a more or less fallacious way of looking at things, an abuse of analogy; while the point that might be more obvious to a modern psychologist is overlooked, that Man is anthropomorphic, and, for the matter of that, animistic too, down to the very roots of his thinking.

Meanwhile, there is another more or less rival term which Tylor is anxious to displace. This is "fetishism"—the word used to characterize savage religion by President de Brosses in the middle of the eighteenth century, and in the first half of the nineteenth century popularized by Auguste Comte. More will be said about it later, but for the moment it will be enough to note that here Tylor, probably taking Comte for his authority, identifies it with "the view by which Man conceives of all external bodies as animated by a life analogous to his own, with differences of mere intensity."[1] In this first draft of the theory of animism, however, Tylor shows himself no less anxious than he does later on in *Primitive Culture* to make it include a good deal more than simply the universal animation of nature—or personification, which he regards as amounting to the same thing. For he holds that the savage has a test of personality which consists, not only in the breath of life but, likewise in the soul or phantom—a sort of animated image which is the double of the living being. In confirmation he points to the phenomena of dreams and waking hallucinations.[2] These reveal the apparitional self as something belonging to a visionary world of its own; and, whether the notion be applied to the souls of the dead, or to other spiritual beings such as fairies or even gods, it repre-

[1] *F.R.* VI. 84. [2] Ibid. 72–3.

sents them one and all as not on the same plane of existence as the concrete bodies with which they may be associated. Here, then, is the Tylorian theory of animism not merely in germ but already full-blown. The illustrative matter, which is mainly concerned with the special topic of sacrifice, may be slight as compared with the array of evidence so impressively marshalled in the eight famous chapters of *Primitive Culture*; but in essentials the working hypothesis has been formulated.[1]

Tylor's prime concern when he comes to deal with the subject at length is to provide what he calls a "minimum definition of religion." He wishes to be able to say, for historical as contrasted with theological purposes, that in all circumstances it means at least this, though in certain circumstances it may mean a great deal more as well. For he has to contend with that deep-rooted prejudice of mankind which equates orthodoxy with my doxy; whence it follows that what the others think does not count, and is as if it were not at all. Thus the ancient Aryans described the aborigines whom they encountered on their arrival in India as *adeva*, "godless"; and so the classical Greeks called the Christians "atheists" before the latter were strong enough to return the compliment with interest.[2] Such manifestations of *odium theologicum*, however, do not immediately affect Tylor until they assume an anthropological guise, and prevent science from holding the scales fairly. Thus he cites J. D. Lang, quite a

[1] Between 1866 and 1871, however, he was giving the matter constant thought; see remarks on animism, *Proc. Royal Inst.* 5 (1867), 83; *Trans. Internat. Congr. Prehist. Archæol.* (1869), 11–25; *Journ. Ethn. Soc.*, N.S., 2 (1870), 369–79.

[2] Cf. *P.C.* I. 420.

good observer in his own way, who, after reporting of the Australian natives that they have no idea of a supreme divinity, creator and judge, no object of worship, no idol, temple, or sacrifice, sums up as follows: "In short, they have nothing whatever of the character of religion, or of religious observance, to distinguish them from the beasts that perish."[1] But Tylor is able to show, from Lang's own testimony coupled with that of a host of other credible witnesses, that "the natives of Australia were at their discovery, and have since remained, a race with minds saturated with the most vivid belief in souls, demons, and deities."[2] Whether such a criterion is wholly adequate to its purpose, which is not merely to furnish the ethnographer with a drag-net of suitable size, but to lead up by way of ethnology, the comparative treatment of the facts so obtained, to a theory of religious origins commensurate therewith, remains to be seen. But at any rate it is a liberal criterion. Those who sit down in the highest room at the feast are tacitly rebuked for assuming that none but themselves are bidden. Let religion, Tylor says in effect, be conceived as something in which all men not only can but actually do share.

As a minimum definition of religion, then, we are offered the shorthand formula: Religion, whatever more it may be, is at least Animism in the sense of "the belief in Spiritual Beings."[3] Spiritual beings include "souls" which animate bodies; "ghosts," which had bodies but have parted from them; and "spirits" which have no connexion, at any rate no organic connexion, with bodies at all. Clearly, he

[1] Cf. *P.C.* I. 418–19. [2] Ibid. 419. [3] *P.C.* I. 424.

thinks, the second and third of these classes depend on the first; so that soul and the soul-like will serve between them to characterize this entire group of conceptions. Given the human soul, we have thereupon to take note of its projections, so to speak—its analogical extensions beyond the range and context of the living man. Now, whereas animism in the sense of the attribution of life and some degree of personality or selfhood hardly calls for explanation, so long as it applies simply to that fundamental awareness of being alive and privately interested in the fact, it is quite another thing for the individual to credit himself with the possession of a soul—the basic notion of animism in the other sense. Even if we consider the trains of conscious or subconscious reasoning whereby each kind of animistic self-projection is effected, we can see at once that the second involves the more elaborate process. Thus the savage who can think, 'I feel angry; let me compose these feelings of mine with a pipe,' can easily pass on to the judgment, 'Grandfather, to go by his manner, is angry; it might be opportune to offer him tobacco.' Thereupon, venturing further on the wings of analogy, he may argue, 'The sea looks angry; let me see whether a gift of tobacco will not placate it too.' Inferences on this level of experience may be good or bad, but in neither case do they need to be mediated by the concept of soul. No contrast is necessarily drawn between the outer and the inner man; whereas the doctrine of a soul always implies a composite being, made in two pieces and of two stuffs. By what inferential process, then, is this new standpoint attained? Tylor undertakes to exhibit it in set terms. For him animism is essentially "an ancient and

world-wide philosophy, of which belief is the theory and worship is the practice."[1] Being theory, then, it has a rationale, and he proposes to work this out.

"It seems," he argues, "as though thinking men, as yet at a low level of culture, were deeply impressed by two groups of biological problems. In the first place, what is it that makes the difference between a living body and a dead one; what causes waking, sleep, trance, disease, death? In the second place, what are those human shapes which appear in dreams and visions? Looking at these two groups of phenomena, the ancient savage philosophers probably made their first step by the obvious inference that every man has two things belonging to him, namely, a life and a phantom. . . . Let them be considered as united, and the result is that well-known conception which may be described as an apparitional-soul, a ghost-soul."[2] Now these references to "thinking men" and "savage philosophers" will read strangely to the modern psychologist. His whole method of approach to such a question as how religion arose, or even how a belief in the soul came to be associated with a more or less definite idea of it, would be less intellectualistic. Thus he would interpret the theory here supposed to initiate the practice as mostly "rationalization"—the attempt to provide preformed habit with an ostensible motive. No mythical proceedings of a Royal Society of the Stone Age can truly represent the part played by thought as such in the making of religion, if the view be accepted that on the whole religious action came first—that men "escaped their own notice," as the Greek has it, in behaving in a special way towards

[1] Ibid. 427. [2] Ibid. 428–9.

certain objects and certain situations that more or less automatically provoked such characteristic reactions. Without going into the matter at all precisely, let us describe them as "sacred" things and occasions which could thus evoke a spontaneous response of the type distinctive of rudimentary religion. For the moment, however, it is enough to insist on the point that neither religion nor law nor government nor marriage nor any other institution belonging to the very groundwork of human culture is to be explained as the happy thought of some primitive debating society. It was by floundering in the water that men learnt to swim. Just so, they discovered that they had minds in the course of using them. Now there are two psychologies, one scientific, the other popular, and where the former says "mind," the other prefers to say "soul"; but both of them are referring to what is at bottom the same thing. Tylor, then, it would seem, is tackling this problem upside down. He ought to have inquired, not how religion grew up out of a psychology, but how a psychology grew up out of religion; if indeed it be true that men were religious in the first instance because they felt like it and acted accordingly, rather than because they knew why.

Turning to Tylor's account of the development of the idea of the soul, one notes that, of the two lines of converging argument which he supposes to meet in it, the first implies a functional context that is very likely to have generated a psychology, and a transcendental psychology into the bargain. He represents his "savage philosopher" as meditating on the difference between life and death. Such thoughts, however appropriate in a chief mourner, might take quite

another turn when, as happens with the savage, the mourner has to act as undertaker as well. Here is the dead man's body; what, then, are we to do with it? Here is the dead man's gear, with the smell of him, as the Australian natives say, still in it—that smell which itself testifies to his change of condition. Will he want this gear any longer; or, in any case, do we dare to use it ourselves? These are practical questions. Someone lies dead, and something has to be done about it. Conventionalized as they may become, and needing *ex post facto* justification to a like extent, funeral rites and mourning ceremonies surely start as spontaneous expressions of feeling and duty towards one who is present yet also gone—who is here in the body, but otherwise to all appearance not here any longer. "Home they brought her warrior dead," and the first woman so widowed wept ere ever her grief became articulate in a dirge. Nay, even if she found the words in which to call him back to her, she could hardly be said to be proceeding on a theory. As Hegel said, philosophy is an owl that comes forth in the evening, and not at daybreak, when another kind of life is astir. At the same time, Tylor has fastened on a genuine source of evidence showing that a doctrine of a life somehow transcending death could have been built up on the steadfast foundation of an ever-recurrent and profoundly moving experience. Even if he did not know in 1871 that Neanderthal man buried his dead with apparent provision for their future comforts, he, no less than his friend Henry Christy, was well aware how the archæological record bears witness to the immemorial antiquity of the mortuary customs of mankind. At whatever point we choose to place in

the time-scale the precise moment of transition from an implicit to an explicit belief in a soul that survives the dissolution of the flesh, we must give our palæanthropic and neanthropic forerunners alike the credit for having committed the anachronism of acting on such a presumption. Some indeed distinguish between a "tendance" and a "cult" of the dead, and would perhaps deem the latter possible only when a conscious animism has supervened. Tylor, however, makes animism coextensive with religion, and rightly prefers to makes religion in its turn coextensive with human culture as known to science.

Let us next consider the complementary train of nascent reflexion that Tylor would make answerable for the idea of the "separable and surviving soul."[1] In his view the phantom originates in one kind of experience, and the life-principle in another; but they amalgamate in a visualized life-principle, one that has a "vaporous materiality"[2] to bear external witness to the comings and goings of this inner force. No doubt it is Tylor's preoccupation with images and, so to speak, image-thinking that causes him to lay such stress on the apparitional side of animism. For, etymologically, the *anima* is the breath, and hence by obvious analogy the breath of life; whereas there is little or no suggestion of a wraith-like appearance naturally attaching thereto. An Eskimo might think of breath in terms of sight, but scarcely an Italian.[3] When an Australian native tries to express the mys-

[1] *P.C.* I. 477.
[2] *P.C.* I. 457. He also describes it as "ethereality."
[3] The Tyrolese think they can see the breath-soul issue forth at the moment of death looking like a little white cloud (*P.C.* I. 433); but they, after all, are hill-folk.

terious "sending" whereby the sorcerer kills his enemy in absence he says that the evil magic flies "like the wind," meaning to say that it does so invisibly. It is true that he can vary his figure—proving thereby that he is more or less aware that he is speaking figuratively—since he will sometimes describe the immaterial dart as travelling "like light"; or, again, he can also talk of it as "whistling" through the air. It is usual to characterize such a mixture of metaphors as "confusion of categories," "pre-logical mentality," and so forth, as if the poor savage were quite incapable of being anything but literal in his alternative modes of expressing what for him no less than for us is a single meaning. Of course, as can be shown by his behaviour, the primitive man is often the victim of his own imagery, as at times any one of us may be; when the irrelevant part of the symbolism prevails and, as it were, the knife slips from the object and cuts the fingers instead. But there is good evidence likewise that up to a point the savage fully understands that a meaning does not necessarily lie on the surface of the word-pictures used to convey it, or on that of the mental visions that these conjure up. Riddles, for instance, with their resolvable ambiguities, greatly amuse him. Thus due allowance must be made for the fact that the phantom is not the only form in which the life-principle is conceived in terms taken over immediately from sense. Tylor, always fair to the facts, shows in detail how this idea has to compete with a number of others, of which the breath and the shadow are outstanding examples. The question, then, arises, Why this insistence on the phantom?

Tylor's explanation of the genesis of religion has

often been designated the "dream-theory"; and, though this is a quite inadequate account of it, one must allow that he treats the dream-image as the leading type of mental construction, or fiction, responsible for the ghost. True, in his earliest essay on the subject he puts sleeping and waking vision on a par in this respect, and thus leaves room for what science in its rather question-begging way is wont to class as "hallucination"—a word that in its original sense implies that the mind "wanders." Perhaps Tylor is inclined to assign to dreaming a relative importance on account of its universality as a human faculty, thereby establishing his animistic theory on a broader basis. Be this as it may, Andrew Lang in *The Making of Religion* would have had him make more of the so-called "hallucination"; Lang's own view being that the mental phenomena loosely classified under this head as more or less pathological may well include contacts with "the x-region of experience" that are not merely apparent but profoundly real. Tylor, however, as we have seen, is no friend to modern spiritualism; though its ancient counterpart is deemed all very well when it appeals to the savage who knows no better than to believe in it. He is consistently pursuing the line of argument that convicts the primitive mind of confusing the subjective with the objective. One might even say that his theory of animism hardly does justice to the fact that the subjective exists in its own right just as much as does the objective; and that, so far as soul is identical with mind, the animist is perfectly right in supposing it to be completely other in its nature than the human body, or any other body as such. For in connecting soul with dream-figure or

ghost Tylor is treating it as something illusory—a mere semblance mistaken for a reality. Whatever scientific enlightenment makes of life and mind as existences of a non-physical order, it consigns the savage and his ghost-soul to the outer darkness of credulity and error.

On the other hand, in thus calling special attention to the apparition, Tylor has hit upon the image or quasi-sensible appearance that is naturally associated with the question, What happens to the life if it leaves the body? Tylor's method, being that of the Individual Psychology dominant in his time, does not consciously relate the development of traditional beliefs to their social context; but so near does he keep all the while to the concrete evidence, that there is never much difficulty in discovering the particular seed-bed from which he holds the mental growth to have sprung. Thus, in relation to funeral custom, we can see at once how the ghost-soul is a highly appropriate adjunct and reinforcement of any belief in an after-life generated almost spontaneously by the custom itself. When, for instance, the Arunta of Central Australia bid the dead man depart by way of bringing the ceremonies to an end, they exclaim, "Come back to us, if you will, in a dream, but do not come back as a ghost." They might almost have read their Tylor, so fully do they bear out his analysis of their mental processes. Be it noted, moreover, that, while both dream-vision and ghost are taken to be what they seem, the former is compatible with peace of mind and the latter is not; so that it would hardly be overstating the case to say that, of the two experiences, one is normal and the other abnormal. For all the evidence goes to show that among savages, as among ourselves, far more per-

sons fear ghosts than actually see them. Often it is only the medicine-man who has, or claims to have, these terrifying visitations; and for one of that profession there are perhaps fifty laymen in the average tribe who would gladly leave ghosts to those who can tackle them. Now, while the laity provide the public opinion that supports the established religion as an institution, it is the expert who will take the lead in formulating in thought and language such articles as the faith may require. Though the medicine-man did not inaugurate religion, he may well have been the first theologian. As a visionary *par excellence*, then, he would be sure to give due prominence to the ghost, and in all sincerity if he was a genuine "seer." So we seem to be back after all at our savage philosopher; but with this difference, that we recognize his thought to be mostly afterthought—an attempt to supply social use and wont with a reason sufficient unto the day.

Tylor, however, does not derive the animism from the sociology, but the sociology from the animism. No doubt as a literary device it would be convenient first of all to set forth the general principle and then to attend to its manifold applications; but deeper than that lies the cause of his thus treating the social facts as if they were but the logical consequences of an ingenious but wrong-headed theorizing. At the back of his mind is the feeling that, as a biologist and psychologist of the new order, he must expose the shortcomings of the biology and psychology of the very oldest school of all—one to which, however, on the principle of survival, certain moderns, vaguely envisaged as transcendentalists, cling more or less blindly. Science, we

gather, can dispense with soul as a working concept. "There has arisen an intellectual product whose very existence is of the deepest significance, a 'psychology' which has no longer anything to do with 'soul.'" At most he would allow it to remain at the service of the speculative theologian. "The soul's place in modern thought is in the metaphysics of religion, and its especial office there is that of furnishing an intellectual side to the religious doctrine of the future life."[1] Again, the primitive notion of the soul is held to have developed out of the contemplation of certain "biological" problems.[2] For the savage was not interested in "the ordinary operations of his own mind," which he took for granted as a matter of course; "it hardly occurred to him to think about the machinery of thinking."[3] But "savage biology"[4] fastened on questions of immediate interest as to the causes of sleep, trance, sickness, death and so on. "The animism of savages stands for and by itself; it explains its own origin"; dealing as it does with "results of point-blank natural evidence and acts of straightforward practical purpose."[5] Such matter-of-fact thinking, then, is made directly responsible for that conception of the soul which Tylor sums up in a passage that has become classical: "It is a thin unsubstantial human image, in its nature a sort of vapour, film or shadow; the cause of life and thought in the individual it animates; independently possessing the personal consciousness and volition of its corporeal owner, past or present; capable of leaving the body far behind, to flash swiftly from place to place; mostly impalpable and invisible, yet

[1] *P.C.* I. 501. [2] Ibid. 428. [3] Ibid. 497.
[4] Ibid. 436. [5] Ibid. 500.

also manifesting physical power, and especially appearing to men waking or asleep as a phantom separate from the body of which it bears the likeness; continuing to exist and appear to men after the death of that body; able to enter into, possess, and act in the bodies of other men, of animals, and even of things."[1]

It will be noted that this is a generalized account of the ghost-soul, giving prominence to the image, but not altogether excluding the shadow and other experiences, not all of them visual, that contribute to the total content of this many-sided notion. The image is, however, the essential feature in Tylor's firmly held opinion. "My own view," he says, "is that nothing but dreams and visions could have ever put into men's minds such an idea as that of souls being ethereal images of bodies."[2] As has been already said, however, he can produce from savage psychologies many other versions of the soul's nature not so much alternative as complementary to what he gives as the standard doctrine, though one and all put forward regardless of consistency. Perhaps shadow and breath stand out as ranking next to the dream-image. But there is also the reflexion in water or a mirror, the little man in the eye, the "thumbling" or soul of tiny form that is probably akin to the last, the butterfly-soul verging on the metaphorical, the soul-substance verging on the metaphysical, and so forth; not to mention more concrete embodiments of the life-principle, such as head, heart, blood, or again, the animal or plant double, passing into any material vehicle of the personality, from something organic like the scalp to possessions more naturally classed

[1] Ibid. 429. [2] Ibid. 450.

under the head of "movables" such as an ornament or weapon. Now how comes it about that so large and miscellaneous a set of concepts can exist more or less comfortably side by side? Tylor, intent on showing these to be specimens of would-be scientific theory, does provide a certain amount of evidence that savages have occasionally professed to believe in a plurality of souls; as when the Dakotas say "that a man has four souls, one remaining with the corpse, one staying in the village, one going in the air, and one to the land of spirits."[1] If such a cataloguing of separate manifestations of post-mortem existence is a spontaneous effort on the part of the native mind, and not a response provoked by the too searching arithmetic of some civilized interrogator, it may be, admittedly, classed as science in the making. But it is more likely that on the whole the several notions are not fitted into any logical frame, their practical contexts being distinct enough to keep them from clashing. Thus, for instance, it may be necessary as a matter of funerary custom to observe different ritual occasions, so that at one time the ghost is welcomed in the village, at another fed at the grave, while again other positive actions or taboos may almost unconsciously credit him with a certain multipresence; one, however, not to be compared as an effort of mental ingenuity with that miraculous faculty of "bilocation" whereby certain saints have been proved able to preach in church while also confessing penitents at home.[2] But enough has been said to suggest how a social psychology might shed a fresh light on the thought-processes accompanying the evolution of early religion. First thoughts are im-

[1] *P.C.* I. 434. [2] Ibid. 447–8.

manent in action and mostly gregarious action; whereas conscious reasoning supplies only those second thoughts which doubtless are often best. As Lucian says, such "afterthinking" is the job, not of Prometheus, but of Epimetheus—he might just have well said, not of the savage but of the civilized man. There never was a "savage philosopher." With all respect to Man's philosophy, it must be regarded as an expression, not of innocence, but of repentance.

CHAPTER VII

FROM FETISHISM TO THEISM

GIVING precedence as he does to creed rather than to worship in the development of religion, Tylor, having defined the nature of the ghost-soul, goes on immediately to examine the doctrine of the after-life rather as a corollary following on that conception than in relation to its ritual aspect; the whole subject of rites and ceremonies being dealt with on its own account in a single chapter at the end of the book. Here, however, it will be more convenient to disregard his order of topics waiting to take together the various matters that have reference to the institutional side of the religious life, and in the meantime to consider the further implications of the definition of animism as a belief not merely in souls and ghosts but in spiritual beings in general. Now on the dream-theory, if that be pressed, it is just as easy to perceive the visionary shapes of animals and plants as those of men; nay, any object of sense, or at any rate visual sense, such as a rock or a pool of water can be pictured as convincingly as any other dream-stuff. Rather surreptitiously, however, we make first acquaintance with the non-human kind of spirits, including what are termed "object-souls,"[1] when the ghost-soul is still being discussed; for therewith arises the question how ghosts are going to make use of their grave-

[1] *P.C.* I. 480; cf. 477.

furniture, unless it is first of all etherealized to suit their unsubstantial condition. But that line of argument might seem to subordinate theory to practice more completely than the Tylorian psychology could well allow. We are, therefore, offered later a rationalistic explanation how animism, expanding from the doctrine of souls to a wider doctrine of spirits, thereby becomes "a complete philosophy of natural religion."[1] Spirits are soul-like, and therefore are derivations of the ghost-soul. Despite their wondrous variety of power and functions, their "essential similarity of origin" is evident in all cases alike.[2] Even medieval and modern opinion about the spirit-world cannot be understood except in the light of a "development-theory of culture"; and the importance of so regarding it is driven home with the remark—one that reveals Tylor's sympathy with evolutionism in its militant mood—that "whatever bears on the origin of philosophic opinion bears also on its validity."

To consider, then, the spiritual in so far as it is not soul but only similar thereto, let us begin with the fetish—a subject likely to cause the consistent animist some trouble. Tylor is careful to build himself a bridge so that he may the more easily slip across from soul as a human being knows it in himself to the analogue which is but more or less clearly conceived after its pattern. In certain abnormal conditions a man feels that his ordinary and familiar soul has been replaced by another indwelling principle that must equally be soul; since in general it performs the same functions, though, maybe, in some extremely odd or uncomfortable way. Any "visitation" or "seizure" in fact,

[1] Ibid. II. 108. [2] Ibid. 109.

from inspiration to demoniacal possession, may plausibly be explained on these lines; namely, by supposing that the hysterical patient, as modern medicine would class him, though being, as we still say, "beside himself," has or rather is another adventitious self in temporary occupation of his body. Thus we have only to suppose this hypothesis extended to other corporeal receptacles of such psychic wanderers in search of lodgings, and we can people the entire physical world with *animæ*; and these not merely alive but, in the fuller sense of the term 'animism,' likewise separable and self-sufficient. In a word the possession-theory is the stepping-stone from soul to spirit.

Now it has been mentioned already that, as propounded and popularized by de Brosses and Comte, fetishism had for more than a century supplied the scientific public with a compendious description of primitive religion—very much as if one had said "idolatry *in partibus*." The word was taken by de Brosses from West Africa, being, let it be noted, no native expression, but simply the *feitiço* of the intrusive Portuguese, from the medieval *factitius*, "magical," whence the meaning of "charm"; and modern usage tends once more to restrict it to that area. Comte generalized fetishism as a vitalism read into external objects. This so nearly coincides with Tylor's animism in the first sense that at first sight we seem to be merely exchanging one word for another in order to mean the same thing. Tylor, however, naturally preferring his own term with all its ambiguity, proposes to retain the other in an inferior capacity. "It seems to me," he says, "more convenient to use the word Animism for the doctrine of spirits in general, and to confine the

word Fetishism to that subordinate department which it properly belongs to, namely, the doctrine of spirits embodied in, or attached to, or conveying influence through, certain material objects."[1] Yet when he wishes it to resume its "proper" meaning which, as we have seen, is that of "charm," certain difficulties stand in his way. For there are "symbolic charms working by imagined conveyance of their special properties, as an iron ring to give firmness, or a kite's foot to give swift flight."[2] These, for Tylor, fall under the head of magic, the underlying belief being regarded as of the pseudo-scientific, even if occult, order. Again, there is that "endless multitude of objects . . . to which ignorant men ascribe mysterious power." He freely admits that fetishes are in great measure selected from among objects of remarkable beauty, form, quality or scarceness; and adds, "the principle of their attraction for savage minds is clearly the same which still guides the superstitious peasant in collecting curious trifles 'for luck.'"[3] It is indeed a habit that can be traced back to Neanderthal man who, as the excavator of one of his caveholds will know, prized not only the utilitarian flint, but likewise crystals and gem-like fragments of stone that may be interpreted as amulets or ornaments as one pleases. Apparently, however, though it is "superstitious" to recognize a luck-bringer in the oddment that strikes the fancy, it is magical rather than religious, or, perhaps, not yet quite the one or the other. What, then, is the *differentia* of the fetish? It is laid down that material objects fall under this category only when they are "considered vessels or vehicles or instruments of

[1] *P.C.* II. 144. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. 145.

spiritual beings."[1] Unfortunately, there are two senses of animism; and one wants to be clear on the point whether the spiritual beings in question are of that separable and independent kind which is held to be required where religion is concerned. Tylor offers us two criteria, of which one only furnishes the necessary guarantee. This principle runs as follows: "To class an object as a fetish demands explicit statement that a spirit is considered as embodied in it or acting through it or communicating by it, or at least that the people it belongs to do habitually think this of such objects";[2] this qualification being doubtless added because it is easier to demand "explicit statement" from the savage than to get it out of him. But there is an alternative test. "Or it must be shown that the object is treated as having personal consciousness and power, is talked with, worshipped, prayed to, sacrificed to, petted or ill-treated, with reference to its past or future behaviour to its votaries."[3] But, surely, we are here getting very near, if not actually crossing, the borderline that, in theory and apart from reference to the corresponding practice, separates the animistic in its earlier and laxer sense from the purely "magical." Had he said "personal consciousness or (instead of 'and') power" he would have overstepped the logical and almost verbal divide; for it is plain that he makes the real proof of the presence of fetishism depend on the worship it evokes. Nay, this worship is so liberally conceived that it may be anything from prayer and sacrifice down to mere "petting"; and who will say that the "superstitious" peasant with his luck-object hidden in his bosom does not go as far as that? In short, if cult be

[1] Ibid. 144. [2] Ibid. 145. [3] Ibid.

allowed to define the nature of the belief that is immanent and subconsciously active in it, we have insensibly passed out into the non-animistic—or what, typologically at any rate, is the preanimistic. The only way to save the situation would be to say that, when cult gives the wrong theoretical result, it ceases to be cult; in short that worship under another name would be worship no longer.

Tylor's examples of what he terms the "worship" of stocks and stones are certainly not designed to favour a narrow interpretation of the separability, or other animistic attributes, of the potency for good or ill with which the material object is charged. When, however, he very naturally turns to the eponymous homeland of fetishism for typical evidence, he happens to be referring to a region where a highly developed religion exists such as embraces every grade of sacred power from fetish to High God. "In our own time," writes Tylor, "West Africa is still a world of fetishes. The traveller finds them on every path, at every ford, on every house-door, they hang as amulets round every man's neck, they guard against sickness or inflict it if neglected, they bring rain, they fill the sea with fishes willing to swim into the fisherman's net, they catch and punish thieves, they give the owner a bold heart and confound his enemies, there is nothing that the fetish cannot do or undo, if it be but the right fetish."[1] On a careful analysis of this very miscellaneous list of functions, Tylor might find it not always easy to say where magic, as he conceives it, ends and religion begins; but on the other hand it is probable that the cross-examination of an intelligent native

[1] *P.C.* II. 158–9.

would extract from him an explanation couched in terms of an elaborate spirit-doctrine covering the whole of this magico-religious complex. On the other hand, when Tylor turns for confirmation to European folk-lore, he is forced, as it were against his better judgment, to treat such survivals as "traces of the ancient doctrine of spirits or (not 'and' this time) mysterious influences inhabiting objects."[1] These fading beliefs, we may suspect, are broadly comparable with those crepuscular beginnings of reflection which the psychologist observes, or rather divines, in savages at the lowest stage of culture, say, the Australian aborigines. Vestiges and rudiments are hardly distinguishable as regards their mental quality. A religion in its second childhood and a nascent religion display a like feebleness of intellectual grasp. That faint but clinging aroma of luckiness or unluckiness attaching to some venerable piece of paganism, last relic of some majestic rite of antiquity, finds a close parallel in that 'adjectival' phase of early religion when a more or less transmissible power of weal or woe, not amenable to ordinary calculation or control, is held to manifest itself in and through common things, but always by way of augmentation to their normal stock of properties. 'Sacredness,' 'mystic evil,' 'occult quality' and so on have to serve as our renderings of vague ideas and vaguer words that nevertheless have far-reaching effects in the profoundest movements that stir and sustain the life of one of these truly primitive peoples. Tylor, indeed, knows his facts too well to misrepresent or ignore whatever does not suit a theoretical interpretation which, like the flexible leaden rule of the

[1] Ibid. 159.

ancient Greek architect, can ever be adjusted to an irregular material, or to that curve which will always serve as the graphical representation of any evolutionary process. Thus he is content in the end to describe the indwelling power of the fetish as "a spirit or an influence," thus virtually placing it half in and half out of the confines of animism. Nay, he frankly adds: "To go yet farther, I will venture to assert that the scientific conceptions, current in my own schoolboy days, of heat and electricity as invisible fluids passing in and out of solid bodies, are ideas which reproduce with extreme closeness the special doctrine of Fetishism."[1] The *mana* of Codrington's Melanesians, viewed in the light of such analogies—which, however, gloss over the difference between a natural and a supernatural force—needs for its theoretical basis, not any kind of spiritism, but rather a dynamism. Such a dynamism, however, is not enough to transfer it from the sphere of religion to that of the pseudo-scientific or proto-scientific group of interests which Tylor labels "magical"; for in it, as Codrington roundly states, all Melanesian religion consists, that is at any rate, all religion as expressed in practices implicitly directed towards its attainment.[2] Possibly this is too roundly stated by him, since on his own showing there is plenty of animism to be reckoned with as well in what after all is but a half-conscious and quite unorganized theology, barely precipitated out of ritual custom. Even so, a root-and-branch animism could but wash *mana* clean out of the picture of the living religion of Melanesia as Codrington painted it; whereas he, as

[1] *P.C.* II. 160.
[2] Cf. R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians* (Oxford, 1891), 119 *n.*

clear-sighted a field-anthropologist as Britain has ever produced, made it the central feature of his study. His evidence, of course, was not available when Tylor framed his theory; yet the actual treatment of fetishism shows that, in reducing it to nominal subjection to animism, he left an unadministered territory along or just across the border, where it might enjoy something of its old ascendancy, and even set up an autonomous if limited rule under some fresh title.

By a natural transition we pass from fetishism to idolatry. The theoretical difference between the two is made tolerably clear. "The old and greatest difficulty," he writes, "in investigating the general subject is this, that an image may be, even to two votaries kneeling side by side before it, two utterly different things; to the one it may be only a symbol, a portrait, a memento; while to the other it is an intelligent and active being, by virtue of a life or spirit dwelling in it or acting through it. In both cases image-worship is connected with the belief in spiritual beings, and is in fact a subordinate development of animism. But it is only so far as the image approximates to the nature of a material body provided for a spirit that Idolatry comes properly into connexion with Fetishism."[1] The logical position could not be more clearly defined. If the "image"—to extend that term to a stock or stone however shapeless—be, as Grote conceives the "baetyl" of ancient Greece to have been, "the primitive memorial erected to a god," then it would be no more fair to class it as idolatry than it would be to use so invidious a term to describe the "image-worship" that "became and still remains widely spread and deeply

[1] *P.C.* II. 169.

rooted in Christendom."[1] Let there be attributed to the image, however, a more or less intrinsic "energy or animation"—Tylor does not notice that this hardly squares with "life or spirit," the equivalent description offered on the same page[2]—and it falls into line with the fetish, being no longer the shrine of a spiritual god but simply an "energetic object."[3] What, then, differentiates fetish from idol? Primarily, it would seem, any touch of artifice that furnishes an outward clue to the inner meaning of the cult object. "A few chips or scratches or daubs of paint suffice to convert the rude post or stone into an idol." This may be a useful basis for classification for museum purposes. It reminds one of Boucher de Perthes' rule for distinguishing the figure-stone: "If there is one eye, it is probable; if there are two eyes, it is certain." But a chip more or less is but a dumb prophet at best. Before we can judge of the religious function of the cult-symbol, not to say image, we must at least study the ritual accompaniments in full. Thus an unwrought stone lying at the foot of a tree in some deliberately untended grove may stand for Zeus or Siva; and its present status at all events may be guaranteed by the backing of an elaborate theology, even if, according to the method of survivals, we assign it some ultimate origin that is humbly animistic or preanimistic as we choose to make it. In defence of the Tylorian criterion, however, one might perhaps argue that the slightest trace of an anthropomorphic or even zoomorphic iconography must bespeak ritual attentions implying human or at least live feelings on the part either of the material thing or of the mystic principle that

[1] Ibid., cf. 165 with 168. [2] II. 169. [3] Ibid.

it embodies. This is true, no doubt; but it is also possible to pour a drink-offering and offer a meat-offering to the "smooth stones of the valley."[1] So, too, the "aniconic" object may be called "Grandfather," or may be wrapped up snugly in a blanket when not in use—practices that fall within the animistic sphere of influence. On the other hand, to carry it about or bury it in house or garden "for luck" is a far more equivocal proceeding. Nay, Tylor's "daub of paint" is no very certain indication of an "iconic" or representative intention, since coming into touch by means of blood, or the red-ochre that may well be its ritual substitute, can hardly be meant to fashion a likeness, even if it the sympathy that the act is held to convey or at least to express is vaguely reminiscent of human relations. But such niceties of interpretation are perhaps a little beside the point, seeing that Tylor's main concern is to get forward with his evolutionary journey from fetishism to theism. For idolatry makes a convenient half-way house, where he can rest awhile and take stock both of difficulties surmounted and of those about to be attacked. Historically, too, as he shows,[2] a very turning-point in the development of religion was reached when the precise significance to be given to the artificial image became a subject of high debate among more or less educated men—Greeks, Romans, Jews, Christians—whether, for instance, it could serve as the shrine of a real presence, or was simply a means of directing thought towards a divine being above all space and time.

Before the god proper emerges into view, however, we have to face a whole spiritual menagerie of lower

[1] Ibid. 165; cf. Isaiah lvii. 6. [2] Ibid. 178 f.

forms classifiable variously as "elves and gnomes, ghosts and manes, demons and deities,"[1] whose separate claims to attention it would be an endless task to review in detail here. Tylor, on the other hand, does not shrink from this task; so that, if his theoretical treatment strike the critic as being over-simplified, the latter should at any rate take into account the meticulous thoroughness with which the *data* are analysed and arranged. Theoretically, all that the inquirer has to do in order to understand the origin and nature of these myriad and multifarious entities is, we are told, to use the following two "keys": "first, that spiritual beings are modelled by man on his primary conception of his own soul; and, second, that their purpose is to explain nature on the primitive childlike theory that it is truly and throughout 'animated nature.'"[2] No doubt, if one begins by rating them indiscriminately as "spiritual" beings, the rest follows; and Tylor is bent on proving by his actual examples that one and all "they conform to the animistic theology in which all have their essential principles."[3] But do these examples display such an obliging conformity? Some come from the human province, others from that of nature; and he takes the former first, because here at any rate, namely, in the typical ghost, we have what he believes to be the quintessence of spiritual being with its twofold attributes of independent vitality and apparitional appearance. It would seem, however, that as regards the latter property, there are degrees of ethereality. Indeed, some ghosts or ghostlike beings are substantial enough to leave footprints; and these may range from faint traces left on the ashes or maize

[1] Ibid. 185. [2] *P.C.* II. 184. [3] Ibid. 222.

flour that has been artfully strewn in order to detect them to deep indentations, often of monstrous size, stamped deeply into some rock-face as a sign that a god or a devil, a saint or a wizard, has passed that way.[1] All we are told is that "at a certain stage of animism" these relatively materialistic notions of spirit-action are possible. Or take the case of vampires. Some of them are uncommonly like corpses that "walk" in all the ghastly reality of their decaying and blood-hungry flesh; and it is certainly on the bodily remains themselves that, by impalement or decapitation of the ghastly thing, the rite of "laying" is performed. Or, once more, is it by way of animistic forethought or mere afterthought that there arises the custom of eating the slain enemy, or it may be the deceased relation, whose body is at any rate in the first instance a more real presence than the ghost, with heart, blood, liver as intermediate representatives of the life-principle? Does it need the logic of a ghost-theory to dictate such ceremonial practices? Or is it not rather these which, arising to cope with practical situations of very various kinds, create by suggestional backstroke, as it were, explanations no less various, which the savage is at no pains to reduce to consistency —at all events at no such pains as the civilized observer who tries to think in his place?

Passing on to the non-human sphere—though even this distinction is more clear to us than to the primitive man with his leanings towards the Ovidian type of metamorphosis whereby any amount of shape-shifting as between man and the rest of nature becomes possible—let us confine our attention to a single case, that

[1] Ibid. 197–8; cf. *Researches*, 114–16.

of the totem, which figures in this list of spirits but half evolved into gods, even though their ethereality is of the most robust order. The subject of totemism will be dealt with later in connexion with Tylor's views about social organization; and it will be noted that in order to explain the very obscure origin of the institution he falls back on the notion of the transmigration of souls—as would fit in with animism very nicely. In the present context, however, he frankly faces the fact that the real animal is sacred in its own right; so much so, indeed, that one of the first duties of the totemite is not to kill it, at any rate in an ordinary way. Tylor, honest to his own undoing, allows: "uncultured man seems capable of simply worshipping a beast as beast";[1] or, again, he speaks of "direct worship of the animal for itself."[2] Let us note the word "worship," which definitely brings the case within the ambit of religion, animism or no animism. For a psychological explanation of "the worship of the animal as divine"[3]—for he is prepared even to attribute to the totem a divinity or inferior kind of godhead —we are referred to "direct and simple awe";[4] and he adds that there is at least a partial truth in the old tag from Petronius, repeated by Statius, *primus* (not *primos*, as he prints it) *in orbe deos fecit timor*, "the first to make gods in the world was fear." Whether by substituting "awe" for "fear" Tylor believes himself to have converted a partial truth into a whole one is not clear; but the passage is at any rate notable in that it seems to carry us past any purely "intellectualistic" version of the origin of religion, and to take into

[1] Ibid. 229. [2] *P.C.* II. 237. [3] Ibid. 231.
[4] Ibid. 230.

account that emotional and motor life which preconditions all conscious reflexion. However much animistic conceptions may adorn the facade of the religious edifice, its stability—and religion has proved the most stable of human constructions—depends on foundations hidden below the surface of the mental life, yet giving ultimate support to the entire fabric. As it is, Tylor fails to see the interpretational possibilities of his primal "awe," and decides that "the general theory of fetish-worship" will cover the case of the totem, so long at any rate as we are speaking of the individual animal which is revered as a representative of its group or kind.[1] For the totem is shown to fall under a class of divine beings which he describes as "species-deities."[2] He points out that plants and animals offered to the primitive mind an early and easy opportunity for noting a family resemblance entitling them severally to be generalized as belonging to a single "archetype"—he might just as well have said 'tribe.' He goes on to argue, not perhaps very plausibly, "the uniformity of each kind not only suggested a common parentage, but also the notion that creatures so wanting in individuality, with qualities so measured out as it were by line and rule, might not be independent arbitrary agents, but mere copies from a common model, or mere instruments used by controlling deities."[3] This very laboured explanation is presumably meant to show how from the individual animal, regarded with awe without any reference to its spiritual nature as such, the savage mind can rise to a universal Brer Rabbit, or what not, who apparently is thereby invested with the status of a spirit-control.

[1] Ibid. 232. [2] Ibid. 243. [3] Ibid.

But is universality something that necessarily carries with it vaporous materiality and the other qualities of an *anima*? All that it needs to connote in the present existence is an omnipresence—rather like that of the Irishman's bird that could be in two places at once. Brer Rabbit, or his West African original Brer Spider, is not, to judge from the stories, at all wraith-like in his looks or his ways, but is simply a super-animal quite concretely envisaged. Thus one early statement from North America is to this effect: "The elder brother of the beavers is perhaps as large as our cabin."[1] It is true that another account from the same part of the world is made out to mean that every animal kind has a *manitu* that lives in the world of souls;[2] but this sounds rather like a gloss on the part of the reporter, since *manitu* belongs to the same group of conceptions as *mana*, and certainly has very little to do with the ghost-soul.

The "species-deity," however, is given by Tylor a wider function than that of explaining the evolution of the worship of the representative beast or plant from that of the single one—the *Augenblickgott*, as Usener would say, namely, the particular snake, or bear, or Loch Ness monster, that excites the awe of the moment. He is inclined to use the notion as his crucial example of "the intellectual passage from fetishism to polytheism, reduced to the inevitable preponderance of specific over individual ideas."[3] This very slippery plank for crossing the chasm is borrowed straight from Comte, who distinguished the pure fetish "governing" but a single object, from which it is inseparable, from the god who governs a number of things with

[1] Ibid. 244. [2] Ibid. [3] *P.C.* II. 243.

different bodies at once. But surely Comte, who as a matter of fact has never ranked among the true anthropologists, was here parading under the disguise of history a mere piece of scholasticism, wherein he differs from the medieval realist only in that he exalts the universal as being *post rem* instead of *ante rem*. No doubt such a generalizing process can be traced in the theology of all ages, whereby, for instance, an abstract Hestia or Vesta epitomizes all those individual hearth-fires to which each household pays respect in what is essentially an act of private worship; so that for ancient Greek or Roman the collective goddess remained a vague figure that hardly attained to iconic form. But precedence in divinity manifestly depends, not simply on the position of "departmental god," as Sir James Frazer would say, but likewise on the importance of that particular department in the scheme of things. A god is not a god because he can put M.P. after his name; but one species-deity like a totem can represent a humble constituency—the flies, for instance, or the witchetty-grubs—and remain comparatively a divine nobody, whereas an altogether loftier personage, the Sun, for example, or the Rain, may, even for totemic purposes, be virtually said to represent himself only. No doubt a logician might contend that even the Sun is in his way a generalization made up out of each sun that appears of a morning; and primitive mythology might be cited in support of the belief that the Sun dies every night, even if there is enough continuity in the succession for him to be reborn next day, after the untiring manner of the phœnix. Such cosmic speculations, however, hardly touch the Sun's worshipfulness as a personality. If he is a universal, then he must be

classed as what Hegel would call a concrete universal, whose concreteness in the form of his visible presence is the very secret of his majesty. In any case, it becomes absurd to push the same line of argument so far as to say that the Man in the Moon is but the generalissimo of numbers of lesser men in the moon, of whom each one is here to-night and gone by break of day; or that smallpox is all the smallpoxes taken together, or water all the drinks. Most fatal objection of all, is monotheism the final outcome of a process of compounding polytheisms? Is the God of the Universe but a crowning abstraction, an absolute eviscerated of all concreteness, and hence of all content whatever? However philosophers may feel about such a consummation of an all-too-pure logic, it will certainly not satisfy religion, which is a way, not of logic, but of life. Tylor's dream-theory with its insistence on ethereality would but refute itself if it were forced to make good the thesis that, the thinner an abstraction, the more honourable its rank in the hierarchy of the animistic confession.

Of course the very notion of such a hierarchy proclaims itself as the work of the theologian, not to say the priest, and carries us a long way past the level of primitive thought, at any rate so far as it is coloured by analogies reflecting the social organization of savagery; for this is typically tribal—not a class-system, but a mere group-system cohering more or less closely in and through what Bagehot calls a "cake of custom." Totemism on its religious side does indeed correspond very nearly with the prevailing arrangement of a loose federation of clans; and the species-deities are not to be compared with the "real kinds" of pre-Darwinian

biology so much as with the homonymous groups of human beings whose law of collective responsibility makes any member a representative of the rest, regardless of any sanction of the ballot. Nevertheless, on the principle that every crowd has its ringleader, there will always be in clan or local group, if not necessarily in the infrequent tribal assembly, some leader or head-man of acknowledged authority, whose influence makes itself felt at all times, though more especially at moments of crisis. As the repository of the sacred tradition of the group, such a man will tend to be regarded as sacred in himself. Hence he can hardly fail to be invested with incipiently priestly functions, whether he be, so to speak, a layman, or has acquired by special training the professional status of a 'medicine-man.' Now Tylor has made a careful study of the arts of the savage wonder-worker, but throughout with reference to his particular qualifications as a spirit-medium—his "shamanism," if one may use such a term to sum up those practices that involve the belief in "possession." Thus he considers together "fasting and certain other means of producing ecstasy and other morbid exaltation for religious ends."[1] Again, he has much to say on the subject of what he labels "demoniacal possession";[2] while it turns out that "disease-possession passes into oracle-possession,"[3] and, though apparently none the less "morbid,"[4] is imputed to spirits that are not evil, but beneficent, in the eyes of those concerned. Such preoccupation, however, with the kind of animism of which he sees a revival in the modern spiritualism that

[1] *P.C.* II. 410 f. [2] Ibid. 124 f. [3] Ibid. 131. [4] Ibid. 132.

he so heartily detests makes it difficult for him to realize the supreme respectability attaching to the exercise of such functions. However science may rate their value, they do actually satisfy a social need so well that all mankind, at a certain stage of its development, may be said to have had recourse to them. It seems a little hard on the doctor to describe his methods as "morbid" when he is doing his best to fight disease in ways that have the complete approbation of his patients.

What, then, is to be said about the sacredness of that very concrete person, the sacred man? Is fetishism once more to be made to cover this case of a god of substance as contrasted with dream-stuff? No doubt the superior person to whom wonder-working power is attributed has a soul, if one happens to think of him in that way. But cannot his power be appreciated without making any such distinction between mental and bodily qualities and their several natures and sources? The impressiveness proceeds from the lot of them together. Take the case of the wizard reputed to have the "evil eye." Does the victim of "suggestion" —as we, not he, would call it—feel that the eye as such has nothing to do with the result? It would surely need a "savage philosopher" of the most advanced type to carry analysis thus far. It is only when, say, the same wizard turns into a werwolf that, in order to account for his faculty of self-projection, the notion of a separable soul is needed to meet the apparent facts. So too, then, a great man whose transcendent powers are exerted for the public weal may well be revered during his lifetime, and not merely when he has become a ghost, because of his concrete and per-

ceptible excellencies—the dignity of his mien, his strength, his courage, his wisdom—a composite whole of which the physical and the psychical elements are in no way presented apart. Here, then, is the head and front of Tylor's offending, according to Andrew Lang in *The Making of Religion*, namely, that in his theory of the genesis of the highest kind of god, in the sense of the most ethical, the most deeply concerned with human folk and their betterment, he overlooks the "magnified non-natural man." Perhaps Lang makes too much of the difference between man-like and and ghost-like as touching what might be called the relative palpability of these two kinds of imagery considered simply as such. Thus, although it is quite true, as he contends, that Apollo, as conceived by a Greek, was no spectre, but of as hearty and sanguine a constitution as any Olympic athlete, yet as a god who had been subjected to much syncretism he likewise enjoyed considerable privileges in the way of changing his shape. For he could shift at will now into some human *alias*, and now into an *avatar* of humbler form, cock, grasshopper, wolf, crow, swan, hawk, olive, laurel, palm and so on—with that sort of soul-transference or rather transubstantiation in which the human wizard also indulges if addicted to lycanthropy. But what is perhaps more to the point is that the concrete and quasi-perceptual image, which is anthropomorphic without being animistic, is probably taken straight from some real man or kind of man as seen in the flesh. Lang himself, however, on the question of origin is anything but convincing, since he deems most of his "high gods" to be in essence creators modelled on some human artificer—not quite the sort

of man to be picked out as the superman and supreme benefactor of his people, even if he be in some repute as a master of strange devices. In any case cosmological interest in such a question as "Who made the world?" will hardly explain how, as for instance happens in South-Eastern Australia, the high god presides over the initiation of youth, and sports all the attributes, external no less than internal, of the actual medicine-men and elders who carry out the ceremony. Howitt who reports the facts has no doubt that the human and the divine hierophants correspond in all respects. Thus it seems impossible to deny that one among the doubtless manifold origins of historical religion is this exaltation of the human into the divine by way of the superhuman, as exhibited in living and palpable shape before the eyes of sincere, if credulous, hero-worshippers.

How, then, does Tylor come to make so little of this aspect of primitive religion? Certainly it is not that he ignores the evidence; for of the ethnographical facts available in his day Tylor misses uncommonly few. Nay, in order to compile his list of "high gods" Lang had hardly any need to look beyond the pages of *Primitive Culture*.[1] They are there in crowds, even "Baiame the creator" (though the etymology has been questioned) being duly cited from South-Eastern Australia, although Howitt had not yet exposed his true character as mystagogue in chief. Yet somehow it is only the "deified souls of men" that are allowed to become "tutelary gods."[2] Sir James Frazer's "sad stories of the death of kings" introduce us to the "dying god"; but the king must have died outright

[1] See especially *P.C.* II. 249. [2] *P.C.* II. 250.

before he can be admitted to the Tylorian pantheon. Is it, then, that Tylor shrinks from recognizing the significance of the fairly patent fact known to the old world as Cæsar-worship, and perhaps not wholly unknown to the new Europe of to-day, because he is out of patience with Euhemerism when posing as a "key to all mythologies," as a little before his day it had tended to do. Thus he writes: "The modern 'euhemerists' (so-called from Euhemeros of Messenia, a great professor of the art in the time of Alexander) in part adopted the old interpretations and sometimes fairly left their Greek and Roman teachers behind in the race after prosaic possibility. They inform us that Jove smiting the giants with his thunderbolts was a king repressing a sedition; Danae's golden shower was the money with which her guards were bribed; Prometheus made clay images, whence it was hyperbolically said that he created men and women out of clay; and, when Daidalus was related to have made figures which walked, this meant that he improved the shapeless old statues, and separated their legs."[1] It grieves him to think "how the mythology of classic Europe, once so true to nature and so quick with her ceaseless life, fell among the commentators to be plastered with allegory or euhemerized into dull sham history."[2] And what applies to the god as he figures in story he would doubtless feel to be no less applicable to the god of religion, the more abounding in life of the two. Thus, as we have seen, he himself had succumbed to euhemerism on first acquaintance with that culture-hero and very god of the Toltecs, Quetzalcoatl; though later, after due recantation of his heresy, he agreed with the

[1] Ibid. I. 279. [2] Ibid. 275.

philologists that he was a sun-myth; while later still he was disposed to temporize. Further, apart from his aversion from the exaggerations and seductions of euhemerism, he probably is suspicious of savage gods that pretend to high moral qualities. For he believes that the relation between primitive religion and morality is slight; and in any case professes to aim at "the almost entire exclusion of ethical questions from this investigation." "My task," he explains, "has been here not to discuss Religion in all its bearings, but to portray in outline the great doctrine of Animism, as found in what I conceive to be its earliest stages among the lower races of mankind, and to show its transmission along the lines of religious thought."[1] Also he frankly states that "the intellectual rather than the emotional side of religion has here been kept in view."[2] In judging his work, then, let us value it for what it sets out to do and does so brilliantly rather than find fault if certain things are left undone. Entering an almost unknown wilderness he has forced a way through it from end to end; and so well marked and feasible has this way proved that for nearly thirty years to come those who followed never wanted to try for another. From this one path his feet never strayed; yet his eyes roved to right and left, and with an infallible sense of country he took just note of many outlying landmarks. Even so, it is our own fault if we mistake the road-map that we are offered in all good faith as what it was never meant to be—a complete survey.

[1] Ibid. II. 359; cf. I. 23. [2] II. 358–9.

CHAPTER VIII

RITUAL

IT is no part of Tylor's scheme, he tells us, to write "a handbook of religions."[1] His object is rather to trace "the relation that the religion of savages bears to the religion of cultured nations." He is making "a contribution to the theory of religion, with especial view to its lower phases as explanatory of the higher."[2] Thus, whether he fully realizes it or not, his is essentially a folk-lore method—one that works backward from the "survival," the more or less anomalous and hence presumably antiquated element discernible in the higher civilization, in the hope of connecting it with some savage prototype, some belief or institution that is no longer out of place among ruder conditions, but on the contrary is conformable with and germane to them. Moreover, since it is the theory, not the practice, of religion in which he is primarily interested, rites are considered only so far as they serve to illustrate the thoughts and reasonings that are supposed to have prompted them. Thus it is essentially the ideological, not the sociological, origins that are in question, even in the one chapter of *Primitive Culture* that is devoted to rites and ceremonies on their own account. Here he contents himself with the examination of five topics, namely, Prayer, Sacrifice, Fasting, Orientation and Lustration, on the express ground that,

[1] *P.C.* II. 73. [2] Ibid. 363.

while all have a "rudimentary meaning" for savages, at the same time "all have their representatives within the limits of modern Christendom."[1] Science is, in fact, confronting our civilization with the following dilemma: that either it must furnish new and better reason for its customary observances inherited from the past; or, if it alleges itself to be satisfied with conformity to tradition, it will be liable to be told that what was reasonable enough for the undeveloped intelligence is good and sufficient reason no longer.

Tylor opens his chapter by drawing a distinction between two uses of ritual. "Religious rites fall theoretically into two divisions, though these blend in practice. In part, they are expressive and symbolic performances, the dramatic utterance of religious thought, the gesture-language of theology. In part, they are means of intercourse with and influence on spiritual beings, and as such their intention is as directly practical as any chemical or mechanical process."[2] He would seem here to be trying to draw a line between what might be called a subjective as contrasted with an objective interpretation of the rite, turning on the question whether it is held to operate upon and through the mind and will of the worshipper, or directly on the course of outward events. In the former case Tylor evidently has nothing to say against its employment in religion. As regards prayer, for instance, he freely recognizes it, so long as we are looking at it in its effect on the man himself, as "even in savage religion a means of strengthening emotion, of sustaining courage and exciting hope."[3] What he calls "matter-of-fact prayers,"[4] however, he evidently

[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid. 362. [3] Ibid. 374. [4] Ibid. 370.

would place in another and less reputable category. "Throughout the rituals of Christendom stand an endless array of supplications unaltered in principle from savage times—that the weather may be adjusted to our local needs, that we may have the victory over all our enemies, that life and health and wealth and happiness may be ours."[1] Now it is no business of the anthropologist, whether he come of Quaker stock or not, to decide whether one kind of ritualism is better than another; for that is a question of value. Nor, if he speak in the name of natural science, has he any more right to dictate to the religious conscience on the matter. Tylor, however, is probably pursuing a legitimate and useful line of thought in thus differentiating the rite that is believed simply to mean something from the rite that is believed actually to do something. There can be little doubt that on the whole the savage rituals tend to conform to the latter type, namely, that in which an automatic efficacy is imputed to the ceremonial act as such. The trouble with Tylor is that the clearest cases of this kind have been brought under the separate head of magic; even if they occur in connexion with public celebrations and solemnities of great moment, initiations, marriages, funerals, ordeals, oaths, the seeking for good weather, good hunting, good crops—in short a host of social activities which, if religion were involved, would be counted as sacramental occasions. But, if such rites are put aside as magical and not even magico-religious, we are left only with those that are more or less animistic. But surely every ghost or spirit has a will of his own; so that it is by his grace that the rite works, however

[1] Ibid.

much the medicine-man or priest may claim to control his familiar. Meanwhile, quite apart from the theoretical nature of the power involved—and on the question whether it is quasi-mechanical or quasi-personal the savage is likely to be far more hazy than the anthropologist who tries to read his mind—there is the sheer force of custom to reckon with. 'Because our ancestors always practised this rite,' men argue, 'then, depend upon it, we had better do likewise, and can be sure of the result.' Ritual from this point of view is simply religious routine, which as such is apt to become mechanical. As Tylor puts it in the language of the laboratory, "Religion deposits itself in sharply defined shape from a supersaturated solution, and crystallizes into formalism."[1] Or, again, contemplating the relation of prayer and spell from this one side only, he writes: "Charm-formulas are in very many cases actual prayers, and as such are intelligible. Where they are mere verbal forms, producing their effect on nature and man by some unexplained process, may not they or the types they were modelled on have been originally prayers, since dwindled into mystic sentences?"[2] The answer must surely be that some charms are undoubtedly prayers that have degenerated through formalism into nonsense; whereas other oral formulæ, call them charms, incantations or whatever one may please, show no signs of having ever been addressed to any *anima*, but simply convey a suggestion of the type, "as I do this, so may that which it symbolizes happen." Now such a spell may well be prayer in the making, since suggestion works in more ways than one with human beings and with anything else that we

[1] *P.C.* II. 371. [2] Ibid. 372-3.

treat as if it were human, namely, partly by dominating them and partly by appealing to their feelings; so that, for instance, it is quite normal, for a savage, to exorcise a disease-demon and to call him 'Grandfather' in the same breath. Without reflecting on the difference between magic and religion, the savage does his best to get rid of the devilish thing somehow.

The truth is that Tylor by starting on the subject of prayer from the civilized end has on the whole failed to find anything different—anything wrong, so to speak, from the standpoint of the higher education—in the primitive form of the custom. On the other hand, he probably has at the back of his mind a prejudice against any sort of materialization imputed to spirit-agency. Unconsciously he is thinking to himself that, putting aside the inconvenient analogy of the soul of the live man that in reply to a request is perfectly competent to move his body and by means of his body other material things, it is no part of a disembodied spirit to manifest its power through a material instrument; whereas to respond to the cry of spirit to spirit—the kind of prayer of which he tacitly approves—by means of edification and "uplift" would be perfectly appropriate on the part of a being that itself is not on the physical plane. For a moment, however, he forgets his own theory of animism, making the savage do likewise, by defining prayer as "a request made to a deity as if he were a man."[1] But one can expect from a man-like being kind actions no less than kind words. Meanwhile, this is to look at the matter all the while as if the concept had first to be formed and the ritual act framed to correspond

[1] *P.C.* II. 375.

with it—a method which might be described as that of putting the logical cart before the functional horse. Had he considered oral rites from the angle of the social and individual needs and situations that provoke them, he might have reflected that it is natural to call for help without having to make up one's mind beforehand as to whence, how, and in what form the desired help is to come. In particular, the collective act of supplication cannot afford to be silent, if it be true that, as the crowd requires a ringleader, so it inevitably thrusts upon him the rôle of a spokesman, in order that intelligible expression may be given to the general will by putting it into words. So long as religion is at the stage at which it is danced out rather than thought out, the chorus is all the more able to perform its part if it can say out loud "Here we go round the mulberry bush"—or whatever else it may the implicit purpose of their drama. The words are not directed outwards but rather inwards to increase the corporate self-awareness and as it were liberate the group-soul. Tylor, in dealing with the ritual dance, is preoccupied with those features of it which he repeatedly describes as "morbid;" as when it generates such an over-excitement as is manifested in the paroxysms of the "devil-dancer" so-called—paralleled, as he does not fail to point out, by the transports sometimes to be witnessed at "revivalist" meetings.[1] But many observers also bear witness to the earnestness and seemliness of a great deal of such "psycho-physical" religion, as one might almost call it, wherein mind and muscle find joint relief in submitting to a rhythm as to some higher control. Thus in Australia, where anything

[1] *P.C.* II. 132 with 420.

resembling prayer in the sense of oral petition is more or less completely absent, the choric ceremony, having for its object the securing of all that the tribe holds most dear, serves nevertheless as the vehicle of deep and wholly creditable aspiration. As regards oral accompaniments, the utterance of the name of power is here of outstanding importance; but to this factor in the evolution of prayer Tylor pays little heed, being rather inclined to let it go as an example of "the early tyranny of speech over the human mind"[1]—quite in the style of the philologists with their "disease of language." By considering it in relation to ritual instead of in a mythological context, he might have made more of the fact that to name the object of desire is in itself a means of self-direction towards it; such as by making it clearer likewise seems to bring it nearer, as in the act of focussing with the eye. Altogether, then, if Tylor had not deliberately subordinated the emotional to the intellectual aspect of the religious life, he might have made it clearer that prayer begins as a "gesture-language," not only "of theology," but of religion itself; and that there are natural, if relatively inarticulate, vocal prefigurations of the content of hope and longing that precede all conscious thought as to the manner of its accomplishment. Prayer, after all, relates to a sacred world where everything is miracle. Hence it embodies, primarily and essentially, no argument from cause to effect, but rather contemplates the effect, so that by a sort of supervening self-causation the hope by sheer intensification is translated into fruition.

Passing to the subject of sacrifice, Tylor proposes a treatment that would put it entirely on a par with that

[1] *P.C.* I. 304.

of prayer; for "as prayer is a request made to a deity as if he were a man, so sacrifice is a gift made to a deity as if he were a man."[1] He has now, however, more scope for an evolutionary account providing contrasted stages of development; for the highest religions can be shown to have refined on the idea of sacrifice until its associations with crude butcher's work, or with the brewing of intoxicants, have almost gone, and we are left with a conception such as that of self-sacrifice, which, in becoming moralized, has been more or less completely purged of its physical taint. It will be noted, however, that Tylor goes back no further than what might be called the middle religions for his examples of the more primitive kind of rite. His famous "gift-theory of sacrifice" will on inspection be found to fit only that relatively advanced level of society when "the suppliant who bows before his chief, laying a gift at his feet and making his humble petition, displays the anthropomorphic model and origin at once of sacrifice and prayer."[2] Chiefs, kings, priests, temples, sacrifices, litanies—these all go historically together. From this point upwards it is all plain sailing. The gift-theory evolves very naturally into the homage-theory followed by the abnegation-theory.[3] Tylor is not disposed to look beneath the surface of the copious evidence that he adduces in favour of such common-sense motives. We make a gift to a great man, he explains, in the hope that he may repay it with interest. If he is a very great man, he can demand such attentions almost as a right, and our service is rendered as to one who is our feudal superior. Finally, the ineffectual nature of our humble

[1] Ibid. II. 375. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. 376; cf. 396.

offering, as made to one who has everything that he wants already, becomes so apparent that the virtue of the oblation comes finally to consist, not in the costliness of what is given, but rather in the cost to the giver. Is it not, then, superfluous to inquire further? "In studying the religion of the lower races, men are found dealing with their gods in as practical and straightforward a way as with their neighbours, and, where plain original purpose is found, it may well be accepted as sufficient explanation."[1] Thus he estimates that "nine-tenths or more" of the sacrifices offered to deities are, from the lowest to the highest levels of culture, gifts of food; and he has much to say about the difficulties that primitive theology has to overcome in explaining how spirits may be supposed to eat. For, on animistic principles, it is obviously in character for them to regale themselves on burnt offerings, tobacco-smoke, sweet savours and suchlike etherealities rather than on the actual solids and liquids provided for them; even if a cruder fancy occasionally portrays them as gnawing, licking or sucking, so as to get just a taste of what human beings can enjoy so much more heartily.[2]

Now it is rather arbitrary to confine sacrifice to meaning a religious act inspired by the giving-motive —though no doubt that is what it tends to signify in Christian usage—because, etymologically, it must have had the far more general sense of rendering something sacred, or, as a Polynesian would say, tabooing, that is, setting apart for any ritual purpose. Curiously enough in the Index of *Primitive Culture* "Sacrifice" stands only for rites of offering; but "Funeral sacrifice" covers a distinct set of references, while "Foundation Sacrifice,"

[1] *P.C.* II. 397. [2] Cf. esp. ibid. 39–40 and 216.

though serving as a caption at the head of the page,[1] is not indexed at all. The trouble with these other cases, which mostly relate to the slaying of human beings, is that for the most part the gift-theory will not apply to them. Perhaps from that Mexico which he knows so well Tylor could have got evidence for cannibal gods who rejoice in devouring the dedicated flesh and blood; though without going any further afield he would have lighted upon discrepant facts such as suttee, or, again, the incarnate god who must die when his time on earth is up. Whenever there is the possibility of gift it is suggested. For instance, what is called "funeral-object sacrifice," namely, the deposition of so-called "offerings"—though consisting largely in what was previously the property of the deceased, so that it is but a giving back to him of what is his own—is correlated with the dispatching of wives, attendants, and slaves for the service of the dead, as if they were simply human chattels.[2] That both the things and persons are transmitted as souls in accordance with the requirements of the animistic doctrine is likewise made part of the explanation, but of course is not inconsistent with their alleged character as valuables paid over to the ghost by way of charity, bribe, or tribute. As for the foundation-sacrifice—a subject dealt with under the head of "survivals in culture," because European folk-lore so steadfastly clings to the belief that a life, human or at least animal, must be destroyed if a new building is to stand fast—Tylor sees in it either a gift to the earth-spirit, or else an endeavour to use the victim's soul as a protecting demon, a spirit watcher;[3] this alternative view, be it

[1] See I. 108–12. [2] Ibid. 481. [3] Ibid. I. 106.

noted, which seems to accord better with most of the reported facts, being quite independent of the gift theory. Thus, from the casual way in which reference is made to these other types labelled sacrificial, yet implying gift only constructively or not at all, it is plain that Tylor has made no attempt to consider systematically and together those very various kinds of rite in which either blood is shed—this by itself constituting a very large and miscellaneous class—or something is destroyed, or at least is removed from a profane use to a sacred one.

Now this is, obviously, no occasion on which to launch forth on a general dissertation concerning the progress of research in regard to the subject of sacrifice during the succeeding half-century. After Tylor had cleared the air with a hypothesis that at any rate had the merit of being simple and very manageable within certain limits, there followed a host of younger students, most of them proud to call themselves Tylor's disciples, whose speculations have immensely widened, and doubtless also complicated, the problem of the origin or origins of an institution on which to this day a master-work remains to be written. Thus, of this country, there have been Robertson Smith, Frazer, Hartland and many more, and from abroad come an equal number of whom Hubert and Mauss might be mentioned *honoris causa*; while the list might be extended indefinitely by including the names of those who have thrown light on sacrifice as it dominates particular rituals such as those of Israel, Greece, Rome, Egypt, Babylonia, India, China, and the Andean civilizations. Tylor's principle, which may be roughly described as that of *do ut des*, will carry us a long way,

more especially in those well-developed religions that have reached the level of what might be called "altarage," the old legal term for ecclesiastical profits as depending on the contributions of the faithful. Moreover, giving is a *vera causa*, and its importance in primitive life, as notably in the giving of food, must not be minimized. There are, however, special practices and beliefs relating to blood, as such, and apart from its connexion with meat and feasting, that need to be carefully considered on their own account. Thus the notion that "the blood is the life" can be traced back a long way; and Tylor might have made more use of it than he has done in direct support of his thesis that *ichor*, the ethereal fluid in the veins of divine beings, is but a refinement on that good red blood which sorrowing relatives shed at the grave-side, not merely in a spirit of emotional self-abandon, but with a definite intention—whether primary or not it is hard to say—of revitalizing the corpse. It is to be noticed, however, that the very backward folk, the Australian natives, for instance, who thus anticipate the "transfusion" of modern medicine both in the case of the dead and the living—though in their view swallowing or mere daubing would have exactly the same effect —often expect from the corpse some kind of return. Even if blood is in the nature of the case not forthcoming, they make a point of themselves taking over something of his by means of unpleasant processes of eating, wearing relics, anointing and so forth that need not be specified in detail. Indeed, in discussing gift in its ritual context, Tylor has by no means made enough of its function as a mutual bond. It is indeed the idea of communion, rather than of gift as a more or

less one-sided mode of propitiation, that more recent research has tended to emphasize. In particular the great stress subsequently laid by some authors on the religious side of totemism has brought the "communial" type of sacrifice, as Robertson Smith named it, into what Tylor might have deemed an undue prominence; for the latter was never very enthusiastic about the totemistic line of approach to religious origins, deeming it, perhaps rightly, to be beset with peculiar pitfalls.[1] Be this as it may, however, a sociological account of the history of sacrifice must reckon more than Tylor was prepared to do with the fact that it, or at least one of its leading types, does not originate in funeral ceremony. Rather it starts as a rite practised by folk at the hunting stage, who for the best of reasons—partly economic but partly also sentimental, since based on feelings of kinship—desire to be on good terms with that animal and plant world which, by Nature's iron law, they must nevertheless destroy, so that they may themselves survive. Tylor, indeed, had his feet at one time planted right in the path that might have led him in this direction, since he mentions the hunter's ceremonial efforts to conciliate the game, for instance, the well-known bear-festival of the Ainu; observing in passing in his shrewd way how the motives are mixed, and the homage is in a sense "ironical"—representing, as one might put it, the bait of a snare. One realizes here how penetrating would have been his analysis, had he made it part of

[1] It is to be noted how the passage on totemism re-written for the 4th edition (1903), viz. pp. II, 234 f. avoids closing with Frazer's theories, though mentioning them with respect, and rather cursorily refers the whole subject back to animism by way of the transmigration of souls.

his primary aim to explore the emotional content of primitive religion; so as, for instance, to show, as he does here, how the same "solemn festival" can begin in "trembling sincerity" and culminate in sheer "merriment."[1] As it is, however, he uses the facts mainly in order to show that savages believe in animal-souls, and consequently that it is quite logical for them to slay the hunter's dog that it may accompany its master to the next world. For it is precisely at the point at which logic and theory come into play that he begins to be seriously interested. Thus, as regards offerings to the dead in general, he writes: "Affectionate fancy or symbolism, a horror of the association of death leading the survivors to get rid of anything that even suggests the dreadful thought, a desire to abandon the dead man's property, an idea that the hovering ghost may take pleasure in or make use of the gifts left for him, all these are or may be efficient motives."[2] What a rich feast for the psychologist does he here spread out, only to put aside most of it untasted. For his purposes, out of the purblind customary act, pregnant with subconscious motives that notwithstanding are "efficient" enough, there must detach itself some explicit meaning such as can be brought into line with the kind of idea proper to advanced theology; whether its likeness or its unlikeness serve to give point to the comparison. To push back the history of an idea to its vanishing-point and then seek for its origin a wee bit further still—such a method, beloved of the modern psychologist, is not Tylor's. He probably suspected mysticism to lurk wherever the mind could not see distinctly; and mysticism was the

[1] See *P.C.* I. 468–9. [2] Ibid. 483.

enemy. The "dry light" of Victorian science was also, perhaps, a little harsh.

Fasting, again, is a subject which nowadays would be handled as but one topic among a vast number of others pertaining to that system of negative rites, known generally as taboos, which is not so much a part of primitive religion as the whole of it as seen in one of its two main aspects; namely, the circumspect side of what is in its very essence a circumspect kind of behaviour. Fasting, in fact, might almost be defined paradoxically as a scrupulous eating, so closely bound up is the practice with that of making ready for those "feasts of charity," as the Epistle of Jude calls them, from which those "feeding themselves without fear" are warned to abstain; though of course it serves no less as a preliminary to many other sacramental occasions that have nothing to do with food. As with sexual continence and other acts of apparent self-denial, its primary purpose, there can be little doubt, is to mark, in a ritual and socially manifest fashion, a withdrawal from the business of the profane world; with a corresponding turning round, or "conversion," towards some sacred duty involving due self-concentration—the mental equipment of a new, because intenser, man. Tylor, leaving out this significance of the ceremonial setting, goes straight to the psychological import of the fasting habit, and is inclined to class it as on the whole morbid. Had he given more attention to it as a form of taboo, and so having some ultimate affinity with practices of a negatively ceremonial character that he could respect—say, Sunday observance or, in fact, public holidays in general—he might have been less ready to insist on the patho-

logical features of these human experiments in repressing part of the natural man in order to afford more scope to another part, one certainly not entirely unnatural, since it often proves vital to his welfare. But Tylor's dream-theory of animism needs such strengthening as it can get from a hallucination-theory, in order to account for the sheer strength that must be postulated for the spirit-doctrine, if that is to be made the sole foundation on which religion rests. Hence his insistence on "the rite of fasting and the utter objective reality ascribed to what we call its morbid symptoms."[1] As always, of course, he can lay his hands on evidence that bears him out; as, for instance, on the strenuous ascetism of the American Indian, when in the course of the puberty ceremony he seeks his personal totem and "receives visionary impressions which stamp his character for life"[2]—hardly, one would think a case of diseased imagination, if the belief in a spirit-helper so acquired helps him to develop that "strong heart" for which he yearns. But, somewhat relentlessly, he exhibits in one long chain as captives to his argument the primitive evoker and exorciser of spirits, the Zulu witch-doctor who says that "a stuffed body cannot see sacred things," the Pythia of Delphi, the Hindu yogi, and even St. Theresa who "was of morbid constitution and subject to trances from her childhood." He concludes: "So long as fasting is continued as a religious rite, so long its consequences in morbid mental exaltation will continue the old and savage doctrine that morbid phantasy is supernatural experience. Bread and meat would have robbed the ascetic of many an angel's visit; the opening of the

[1] *P.C.* II. 411. [2] Ibid.

refectory door must many a time have closed the gates of heaven to his gaze."[1] Feeling perhaps a little ashamed of this outburst, he hastily adds that there are also other sides to the subject—penance, for instance —since his aim is simply to consider it in its bearing on animism. Whereupon he goes on to examine "ecstatic phenomena" as produced by drugs, intoxicants, tobacco and so on, as also by "convulsionary" dancing and "fanatical" preaching; so that we are led up stage by stage to the wild doings of the "revivalists," of which it is uncompromisingly said: "These manifestations in modern Europe indeed form part of a revival of religion, the religion of mental disease."[2] To read alongside this tirade a work of recent psychology, say, William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*, will serve to show that human education in respect to the highest values of life has not come entirely by way of the intellect.

Of Tylor's treatment of Orientation little need be said. He seems to refer it exclusively to Sun-worship, though there are other ritual practices of what might be called the directional order that probably have nothing to do with it. It is to be remarked, too, that animism gives no help here, since it is the real Sun of the sky that determines East and West; and no spirit of the Sun is required, nor indeed could do it as well. Finally, Lustration is dealt with in a broad way covering various dramatic acts of ceremonial purification. Like Fasting, it suffers in treatment from not being brought under the wider category of taboo, so as to show how all ritual avoidances alike imply a break with the profane or ordinary world, and a consequent

[1] Ibid. 413–15. [2] Ibid. 421.

condition of holiness or uncleanness—two sides of the same fact that it is dangerous for sacred and profane to come into contact without lifting the taboo by a ritual act, as typically by one signifying the removal of dirt. Tylor, however, tries to make out that the religious symbolism is secondary in an act that began by being purely practical in its intention. "It is the plainest proof," he says, "of the original practicality of proceedings now passed into formalism, to point out how far the ceremonial lustrations still keep their connexion with times of life when real purification is necessary, how far they still consist in formal cleansing of the new-born child and the mother, of the manslayer who has shed blood, or the mourner who has touched a corpse."[1] It is rather curious that an equally good way of obtaining the same result is to leap over the fire, or pass between two fires. If a Basuto mother finds that a child has walked over a grave, for instance, she will light a small fire at its feet; or, after a Tibetan funeral, the mourners stand before the fire, wash their hands with warm water over the hot coals, and fumigate themselves thrice with proper formulas.[2] It is not easy to find a "matter-of-fact origin"[3] for the use of the fire in most of such contexts. One does not resort to fire-walking in order to feel tidy; or, when Kaffirs fumigate with burning wood the growing crops and the cattle taken from the enemy, such proceedings regarded simply as agricultural operations would be pointless and even unsafe. Nay, as regards the washing, Tylor notes with great frankness that many of the people who resort to it on ritual occasions are "not in the habit of washing themselves or their ves-

[1] *P.C.* II. 429. [2] Ibid. 434, 436. [3] Ibid. 430.

sels for ordinary purposes";[1] so that it is rather as if it were found appropriate in the special circumstances just because it was not part of a routine that would be observed anyhow. Altogether, then, this theory that the holiness of holy water is but the glorification of the idea of a sanitary bath is unsatisfactory in that, apart from a vague reference to formalism, no reason is given why the operation should be transferred from a material to a non-physical kind of dirt. Curiously enough, Tylor does not come forward with an animistic explanation to show that the latter kind of dirt consists of evil spirits; though Sir James Frazer has tried to prove that drowning and burning are effective ways of destroying spirits as such. The truth is that taboo is often represented in savage thought and language as a sort of contagious and invisible evil that spreads by contact, the "pestilence that walketh in darkness." A sort of faith-cure by a symbolic removal or destruction can bring relief, as every psychologist knows, without having to give any reason satisfying to the literal-minded about the precise mechanism of the process.

Tylor's handling, then, of this and the other problems of origin relating to his somewhat random instances of ritual forms shows that he has never troubled to seek a general answer to the question how religion originates and functions as an institution—as a kind of custom. Had he done so indeed, he would have been involved in an endless maze of particular inquiries, seeing that every department of the social life of savages is permeated with practical religion in one shape or another; so that they may be said to share

[1] 434.

their time equally between mundane and supramundane concerns. To find unity here could only be by a long and difficult process of detecting emotional, and mostly subconscious, processes at work in giving expression, at first almost entirely by way of collective drama of the mimetic and hence symbolic order, to the common aspiration of hard-pressed men to expel fears and strengthen hopes, dimly pictured as influences not so much in them as about them. But this was more than a pioneer effort could attempt, if it was to capture public attention by an instant success. On the other hand, animism conquered the world at one blow. Here were facts innumerable, gathered from all parts of the globe, concerning primitive religion, and it seemed a chaos; then hey presto! a generalization "won from the void and formless infinite" irradiates a world previously all darkness. If religion were but theology, animism, or at any rate anthropomorphism in one sense or another, would almost provide it with a sufficient reason. Moreover, it is so ingrained a habit of the human mind that it serves excellently to bring out the continuity between savage and civilized thought. Tylor tells us in so many words that his plan is to try the easiest methods first. He had to make a beginning, and no one can deny that he made it. For the rest, he was almost bound to adopt an intellectualist attitude towards the psychology of religion, since he was in the forefront of an intellectual movement of liberation. One might speak of the second Renaissance of Europe that began about the year 1858. Immense vistas opened out on all sides, with philology, biology, archæology alike eager to break the dusty windows of the academies and let in

light and air. Tylor has the impartial mind of the true man of science; yet, despite himself, he uses his anthropology as a stick wherewith to assist this process of window-breaking, even if a certain amount of stained glass should be incidentally involved. His thesis throughout is that the savage is no fool to think as he does; but that, on the other hand, for a civilized man to continue to think likewise is supremely foolish. Let us, then, put him together with Darwin and Galton, Spencer and Huxley, Lyell and Prestwich, McLennan and Lubbock—to speak only of some of the men of this country—as one of the protagonists in a struggle for wider horizons. To the later generations it falls to examine their constructions as critically as may be necessary, yet always remembering that the right to think freely has been inherited from those who went before; so that in all gratitude let us say, "There were giants in the earth in those days."

CHAPTER IX

RELIGION AND MORALITY

ONE of the great difficulties in applying the comparative method to human institutions and beliefs is concerned with the use of those seemingly plain words "more" and "less." Whereas in anthropology they ought to bear a purely statistical sense, that is, should stand for a relation between facts, they are apt, unless the student is on guard, to vitiate a historical judgment by colouring it with a surreptitious valuation. A further source of confusion is that, when the civilized man turns his attention to savage life, he straightway transfers the common terms in which he is wont to describe his own activities to the analogous doings of simpler folk, with the inevitable consequence that their descriptiveness becomes correspondingly a diminishing quantity, being less and less appropriate in proportion to the remoteness of the likeness. Religion and Morality are both terms of this kind. It is very hard to ask in what way the savage is more or less religious or moral without secretly measuring the distance between ourselves and him; as if it were a question of attaining an end, desired by both alike, which we have reached and he has not. Since, however, he does not in many cases desire what we not only desire but hold to be desirable in itself, and since experience is a seeking in all directions with a good deal of finding but no holding in prospect, science,

when striving to represent the latter process objectively as a display of biological adaptability, must deal with human motives in a similar spirit; that is, must treat them relatively to the different vital experiments that they help to condition. If a running-match and a walking-match are being held on the same ground, to time the two sets of competitors against each other can afford no clue to the form of the prize-winner in each event. In studying, then, from the standpoint of the anthropologist, how religion and morality manifest themselves in primitive life, it is not only unfair, but quite irrelevant, to make out that savages are less religious or less moral than ourselves; as it would be likewise were one to insist that an African king with several hundred wives or an Eskimo who bloats himself with blubber from a stranded whale is more married than any of us in the one case, or eats more of a dinner in the other.

What connexion, then, is there between the religious and the moral aspects of savage life when regarded strictly in the light of what they severally and jointly do to render that life possible in the circumstances? Tylor makes a general pronouncement on the subject which he himself feels to be "startling." "The relation of morality to religion is one that only belongs in its rudiments, or not at all, to rudimentary civilization. The comparison of savage and civilized religions brings into view, by the side of a deep-lying resemblance in their philosophy, a deep-lying contrast in their practical action on human life. So far as savage religion can stand as representing natural religion, the popular idea that the moral government of the universe is an essential tenet of natural religion

simply falls to the ground. Savage animism is almost devoid of that ethical element which to the educated modern mind is the very mainspring of practical religion. Not . . . that morality is absent from the life of the lower races. Without a code of morals the very existence of the rudest tribe would be impossible; and indeed the moral standards of even savage races are to no small extent well-defined and praiseworthy. But these ethical laws stand on their own ground of tradition and public opinion, comparatively independent of the animistic belief and rites which exist beside them. The lower animism is not immoral, it is unmoral."[1] Now in this passage two points are to be noted; one being that religious evolution is regarded as a process whereby an old "philosophy" has acquired a new meaning by becoming invested with a "practical action" on life that it lacked before. The other is that, even at the savage level of society, there exists a code of morals in which "ethical laws" are prescribed. Thus it would seem to be a question how a religious philosophy and a moral philosophy arose apart, and later under civilized conditions coalesced to their mutual advantage. It may be observed, moreover, that, together with animistic belief, animistic rites, which, surely, have some "practical" bearing on human life, are held to be equally devoid of moral value; and yet he goes on immediately to say, "in the course of history religion has in various ways attached to itself matters small and great outside its central scheme, such as prohibition of special meats, observance of special days, regulation of marriage as to kinship, division of society into castes, ordinance of social

[1] *P.C.* II. 360.

law and civil government."[1] All turns on the tacit presumption that primitive religion has a "central scheme." Substitute Lévy-Bruhl's "prelogical savage" —not that the expression is an entirely happy one— for Tylor's "savage philosopher," and we are left with someone far more free to let religion take charge of manifold departments of his vital activity—fortunately not yet distinguished as falling under the distinct categories of social organization, marriage, government, law and so on—without any disturbing sense of inconsistency. So, too, while being perfectly moral or at least respectable according to the dictates of his custom, he may have refrained almost altogether from providing himself with an ethics, or even with a code of morals, so far as that means a set of rules reduced to rational system. Once more, then, we may suspect Tylor of viewing the whole problem from the intellectualistic angle, so as to be a little blind to the spontaneity of the process whereby Man becomes at once religious and moral, without taking conscious thought to it, until he is fairly involved in an incoherent striving that is neither because it is both together.

The truth is that Tylor goes to civilization for his type of a moralized religion, and looking backwards towards savagery soon ceases to find anything quite like it, and so concludes that nothing exists to which such a description would apply; whereas, whatever we choose to call it, the functional equivalent ought to be recognized, because in fact it is there. "Looking at religion from a political point of view, as a practical influence on human society, it is clear that among its greatest powers have been its divine sanction of

[1] Ibid. 361.

ethical laws, its theological enforcement of morality, its teaching of moral government of the universe, its supplanting the "continuance-doctrine" of a future life by the "retribution-doctrine" supplying moral motive in the present."[1] Such principles he finds to belong "almost or wholly to religions above the savage level, not to the earlier and lower creeds."[2]

Now these criteria, even if they fairly represent the chief sanctions derived by morality from advanced religion, leave out of account moralizing forces of the greatest importance in early society; for instance, the cult of ancestors, for which the Christian missionary finds it so hard to provide an efficient substitute. Taking them as they are offered, however, we perceive them to imply a theology that lays stress at once on the goodness of the Deity and on the need of goodness in Man if he is to be happy in the hereafter. To both these topics Tylor has devoted much attention in order to show how such ideas have but gradually taken shape out of a mass of beliefs so confused, and actually conflicting, that the demarcation of good from evil in the attributes assigned to the spirit-world, or in the fates supposed to wait on the dead, cannot count any longer for thought; and hence, it is assumed, cannot influence practice. It will be enough here to allude briefly to the elaborate argument[3] concerning the evolution of a Supreme Deity out of animism by way of polytheism; his beneficence developing by corresponding degrees out of a rudimentary and unethical "dualism" in regard to the freakish ways of spiritual beings half-divine and half-diabolic. It has already been mentioned how Andrew Lang in *The*

[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid. [3] See the whole of *P.C.*, chap. XVII.

Making of Religion produces a long list of what he calls "high gods of low races," some of them at least having excellent credentials, such as those from South-Eastern Australia; and asks very pertinently how these come to appear at the wrong end, so to speak, of Tylor's evolutionary series. These personages, according to Lang, were never ghosts and therefore of an inherently offensive and odious character, but from the first were personified men with a human kindness proportionate to their exalted rank. So much for the ethical type of deity. As for the moralization of the belief in an after-life, Tylor's version of the process as from continuance through idealized continuance on to retribution has become classical.[1] At first, it is suggested, the simple savage can imagine no state of existence differing in any respect from his own except in its shadowiness. Gradually, however, since it is possible to dwell either on the bright side of a dream-land where all things are made easy, or on the gloomy side of a journey into the outer darkness, these two notions are brought together in the mind to form a contrast. Thence it is but a step to connect the better and the worse fate with relative desert, or at any rate with relative social position; so that heaven is reserved for persons of quality, while hell swallows the rest. Nothing could be prettier, considered simply as a train of reasoning that by its own momentum lifts the mind to a higher level; but at the same time it is as if one travelled aloft amid thronging clouds of fancy, with never a sight of solid earth beneath, in the form of ritual custom, or of any other concrete manifestation of the social life. If one were told exactly how such

[1] See *P.C.*, chap. XIII throughout.

speculations about the future abode of the soul were related to funeral practices, it would be far easier to estimate their effect, if any, on moral conduct. Indeed, at the stage of advanced religion, to do so is hard enough; for, as Tylor remarks, "how far the moral standard of life may have been adjusted throughout the higher races with reference to a life hereafter is a problem difficult of solution, so largely do unbelievers in the second life share ethical principles which have been more or less shaped under its influence."[1]

Meanwhile, when we turn to the savage, we find that a concern and positive care for the dead constitute a major interest of his existence, and one that brings its religious and moral factors into the closest co-operation. As Tylor himself admits, "Manes-worship is one of the great branches of the religion of mankind. Its principles are not difficult to understand, for they plainly keep up the social relations of the living world."[2] But this is, surely, to admit that religion and a kind of social behaviour, which must certainly be accounted moral since it is a fulfilment of pious duty, do have something in common wherever we find tendance of the dead—the earliest known ritual usage of mankind not only in a typological but in a chronological sense. True, in such a context there may be little or no recourse to any conception of an abode of the dead, much less of one to which merit is the necessary price of admission. With that convenient laxity of definition which, we are told, enables the savage to think of a man as having many souls, or at any rate would allow him a considerable choice of residence in the future state, friendly intercourse with

[1] Ibid. II. 107. [2] *P.C.* II. 113.

the ghost need not involve his recall from any isolated Hades, whether on the earth or under it or above it—though such a summons is quite appropriate to certain ritual occasions, as when invitations are sent out to a Feast of All Souls. For it is also possible for the ghost to dwell in the grave, or in the family hut, or in a snake that has to be fed, or, in fact, for it to manifest itself anywhere and anyhow, so long as somewhere and somehow contact is made with the living. Or, once more, a belief in reincarnation, though not incompatible with post-mortem retribution, as Buddhist doctrine shows, introduces fresh possibilities in the way of a resumption of the closest social and moral relations, seeing that the dead man thus becomes the living heir to himself and is among friends who have done likewise; so that the past agreeably repeats itself, as suits the conservative tastes of the static type of society. But enough has been said to show how a sociological approach by way of ritual would bring primitive religion into more intimate sympathy with the practical and moral life. Tylor's treatment makes too much of theory for theory's sake, even to the pitch of representing the savage as, in comparison with the civilized man, the more speculative and less pragmatic of the two. For he writes: "Throughout the present study of animistic religion, it constantly comes into view that doctrines which in the lower culture are philosophical tend in the higher to become ethical; that what among savages is a science of nature passes among civilized nations into a moral engine."[1] One may suspect, on the contrary, that the original inventor of the moral engine can be traced back to the Stone

[1] Ibid. 103.

Age; that he was a highly religious man in his own way; and that otherwise he could never have performed the feat.

It remains to remark in connexion with the subject of ritual that negative rites, or taboos, receive scant attention on their own account, even if the various mortifications of the flesh incidental to purification, fasting, and so on, are noticed in relation to their mental effects of the ecstatic order. There is, however, another side to the psychology of self-denial which enables one better to appreciate its function as a form of moral discipline. Jevons might be going rather far when he recognized in taboo the earliest form of the Categorical Imperative; but of the savage "enmeshed in a net-work of taboos," as *The Golden Bough* has it, it can truly be said that he suffers, in patience, and even with a sort of "masochistic" relish, more "repressions" than the most decorous and law-abiding citizen of the civilized community. "Theirs not to reason why," no doubt; so that, if we insist with Tylor on viewing them as philosophers who as such require a reasoned morality, an ethics, their claim to have learnt the first lesson of communal life, obedience to the common law, must go by the board. But their punctiliousness in cleaving to the tribal rules for better or worse is so striking that the civilized observer is usually quite at a loss to explain how an "unadministered" society can be run, or rather can run itself, so smoothly. When Jowett wrote, perhaps after reading his Tylor, of "the ages before morality," he meant by this somewhat sweeping characterization no more than that a morality with express sanctions was late in coming. But, express or not, there is a real

sanction at work in primitive society—one that escapes notice for the paradoxical reason that it works so well —which consists in the sacredness of custom. The sanction is simply that a "people who knoweth not the law are cursed:" that "one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law" lest there automatically follow pollution—a contagious pollution with general disaster in its train. Such a law may not be conceived as "the word of the Lord," or the word of any identifiable member of the animistic host; for in itself it is almost wordless. Yet the ancestors at all events understand it as well as the living elders of the tribe; nay, it was they who made it. And so with culture-heroes and gods. They may be called in to justify custom; but custom was there beforehand to create them for this very purpose. In short we must, in the study of religious and moral origins, argue from the immanence to the emanations, and not, after the ideological fashion, the other way about.

Now it might be thought that the virtual divorce between religion and morality in *Primitive Culture* was due to the exigencies of a method designed at all costs to light up the dark places of religious history with a consistent theory that would reveal a continuous development from start to finish. It appears, however, that he was prepared to abide by his "separationist" contention as there stated; for two years later he enlarges on it in two articles in the *Contemporary Review* entitled "Primitive Society,"[1] thus admittedly adopting a sociological basis for his treatment of the problem. His point, put briefly, is that we must recognize, as apart from the history of religion, the

[1] *C.R.* 21 (1873), 701–18, 22, 53–72.

previous existence of an "independent morality." This was "purely secular," consisting simply of "recognized habits and rules of conduct between man and man, the systematic result of social forces."[1] He lays the utmost stress on custom, but ignores its sacredness—its inherent power of miraculously avenging its own violation. A primitive society in full exercise of its ancestral custom is for him simply in "a condition of happy equilibrium." Morality amounts to no more, at any rate as regards its origin, than acquiescence in this blissful state of things as governed by Nature, whose ultimate sanction is the law of survival. Thus the only absolute testimony to the moral state of Quaternary man is "that he existed and continued to exist"; the ethnologist borrowing from the archæologist the same proof in favour of the modern savage, who likewise has managed to exist, or at any rate did so until the blessings of civilization have sometimes proved too much for him. Surveying generally, then, what he calls "the ethics and politics of the lower culture," Tylor finds that no primitive tribe stands at, or even near, the zero-point in morality. From our point of view, no doubt, there are repulsive traits, for example, senicide; which, however, will also serve as a reminder of the "hard old barbarism" of our Teutonic forerunners. On the other hand, there are admirable features as well, honesty, freehandedness and so on. In short, we find on the whole "a system of mutual good offices and restraints, often putting us to shame."

How, then, does such a morality come into existence, taking it as a sort of minimum definition that "ethics or morals imply a man's conformity to the

[1] *C.R.* 21, 711.

customs of the society he belongs to"?[1] Tylor maintains as before that it has no "direct origin" in religion. He considers the customary morality of particular peoples, such as Papuans or Caribs, and finds that the contact of their religion with their moral life is but "slight and secondary." Borrowing a distinction from the Catechism, he declares: "If the essence of such a rudimentary religion were put into the form of commandments, we should find duty to the gods enforced, and that stringently. But the introduction of commandments of duty to one's neighbour comes later in religious history, and indeed marks the great transition from the lower to the higher religions."[2] It so happens that he has already noted the strictness of the negative injunctions which restrain the passions of the savage and furnish him with his sense of decorum—one so strict that he would certainly condemn the laxity of our taboos as they bear on marriage.[3] But, surely, the horror of incest is, as our very name for it proclaims, a nascently religious feeling. It is one, no doubt in part based on social convenience, namely, on the need for suppressing quarrels about sex within the family circle. Yet it owes its inexorable rigour as an interdict to the unquestioning awe that shrouds it, rendering it the most terrible of the conditional curses that primitive, one might even say, primal, society must face, with or without any backing from common sense. Tylor, however, would apparently make "natural" sentiment—as if awe were a little unnatural—suffice for the moral solidarity of early family life. After all, he tells us, "kindly" just means "kind-like"; and he goes on to describe the way in which those normally

[1] Ibid. 706. [2] Ibid. 710. [3] Ibid. 707.

behave towards each other who are of one kind, birth, or family.

Such natural kindliness, then, he would have the ethnologist concerned with moral evolution take as his "initial fact," leaving ulterior explanations of the biological order to Darwin, Spencer or Galton. In short, "morality, like charity, begins at home";[1] and there is no trouble until we proceed to account for the extension of what is essentially "group self-interest" beyond the limit of the family or clan. What between instinct, then, and enlightened self-interest, nothing more is wanted to explain another great taboo—the "curse of Cain" that threatens the slayer of his brother. Tylor in this context is always coming on facts that illustrate the sacredness of the blood-tie. First, there is the horror of intestine bloodshed; then the duty of blood-revenge—explained in a purely legal way as a recognition of collective responsibility; and, finally, there is blood-brotherhood as a symbolic means of enlarging the family circle. Now as a methodological device it would always be legitimate to deal with such matters abstractly with sole reference to the social dynamics involved; and, as the next chapter will attempt to show, Tylor, whenever he turns his attention to questions of social organization, handles them with the unerring touch of a master. But in this case Tylor rules out the influence of religion, not merely lest it complicate his argument, but because to his inquiring eye it does not seem to be there. The sacredness of blood as such cannot be fitted to an animistic interpretation without much sophistication of the very crude and obvious symbolism that

[1] *C.R.* 21, 718.

makes it stand for the mystery of birth and all that it entails. How the voice of a brother's blood can "cry aloud from the ground," even if there is no god to hear the cry, is a problem that he would probably dismiss with a vague reference to fetishism. In short, when religion verges on the subrational, his love off scientific clarity and his suspicion of obscurantism together urge him to treat it as unreal—the grin without the cat. On the other hand, a sort of primeval "city of pigs" can be constructed in Platonic style out of good tangible needs and appetites; and it is not for the likes of such low folks just a point or two off "moral zero" to display premature mystical tendencies—thick-heads to whom perhaps even the rudiments of the animistic way of thinking have not yet been vouchsafed. No doubt, the biologists would bear him out in holding that the animal society is incipiently moral—not ethical of course—whereas it shows no signs of a dawning religion. Even so, mankind as we know it has left the animal condition a long way behind; and has universally developed a culture which it takes a very protracted education to acquire and duly transmit. Is it not, then, better method to treat morality and religion, together with marriage, law, government, fine art—in short, all the major interests involved in this complex of our common social inheritance—as intertwined from the first; or, in other words, as fading out together at the not very distant point back in the time-process at which Man himself fades out into the dark?

CHAPTER X

SOCIETY

IN the year that saw the publication of *Researches*, 1865, J. F. McLennan in a work on "Primitive Marriage" furnished the student of institutions with two cardinal principles of explanation in totemism and exogamy; and, just about the time of the appearance of *Primitive Culture* in 1871, a third principle of equal importance was contributed by Lewis Morgan when, in his *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity*,[1] he demonstrated the world-wide distribution of the classificatory system of relationships. Still earlier in 1861, when *Anahuac* came out, two distinguished jurists, Bachofen and Maine, had severally championed mother-right and the patriarchal form of the family as a key to social development. Together, then, these scholars, all men of the Law, "opened a field," as Andrew Lang has said, "as thorny as expansive." Yet, as he goes on to remark, it is "a field into which Tylor, as far as his published works are concerned, has made few incursions."[2] Now why is this so? Not, we may be sure, because Tylor overlooked the importance of what he has called "the comparative jurisprudence of the lower races."[3] On the contrary, he is full of admiration for McLennan's bold, but somewhat too speculative, attempt to reconstruct the history of matrimony,

[1] L. H. Morgan, *Smithsonian Contributions*, Washington, 1871; his *Ancient Society* followed in 1877.

[2] *Anthrop. Essays*, 5.

[3] *R.* 279.

greeting it as "the first systematic and scientific attempt to elicit general principles from the chaotic mass of details of savage law."[1] But Tylor is pre-eminently a cautious strategist—one who will advance only from a well-fortified base, and, even so, prefers to keep to safe ground where he can. There simply did not exist an *apparatus criticus*, a sufficient body of digested evidence, concerning the social organization of savages, until Lewis Morgan made one for himself, and naturally became entitled to priority in the use of it. Bachofen has little more than the classics to rely on; Maine supplemented his Roman Law only with Indian experience and the Old Testament; while even McLennan, who really searched the ethnographers, found in their writings but the loosest descriptions of forms of society labelled "family," "kin," or "tribe" almost at random, since an exact terminology had yet to be invented. The last arrived, indeed, at a great deal that has proved to be as fundamental as it is true, but for the most part by a kind of divination—perhaps the second-sight of which his native country has the secret. But when he and Morgan engaged in a trans-atlantic battle of wits, it was Morgan who had the best of it, not because he was the cleverer man, but simply because he could always overtrump his opponent's facts. Even as it was, every one of these great thinkers must plead guilty to the charge, which hardly holds against Tylor at all, of definitely committing themselves to a treatment involving the fallacious notion of a unilinear evolution. Stage by stage, according to them, the social development pursues a uniform course, starting from promiscuity as a zero-

[1] Ibid. 280 *n*.

point, and then moving on by way of mother-right to father-right; while all the minor links in the implied chain of causation are neatly fitted in here or there. So long as the details remained obscure, such a conception was not without value, since it provided the future surveyor with a direction. But this imaginary straight line was, so to speak, geodetical rather than geographical in its function, a mathematical artifice, not an empirical generalization. The modern student of the morphology of primitive society may well say "Back to Morgan," if he is seeking inspiration rather than a theory that will actually serve to colligate the immense body of relevant facts that has been collected in the course of the last sixty years. But Tylor may be excused if, as a contemporary, he shunned so difficult a line of country, when it was a question of leading a new science along a route where the going was sure. To-day, however, all is changed. Such a loyal follower of Morgan as the late W. H. R. Rivers has shown how the social system of a primitive people needs only to be grasped in the fulness of its workings for the entire scheme of legal, moral, and even religious duties to become intelligible as being directly dependent on the status to which each man and woman is born. Moreover, in his "genealogical method" he has placed in the hands of the ethnographer a ready instrument whereby the necessary information can be obtained in as precise a form as science could desire. No wonder, then, if the tendency of the twentieth century is to make Sociology, with Social Psychology as its lieutenant, the scoutmaster in the search for the inner meaning of primitive culture.

Again, in his attitude towards totemism Tylor "has

ever shown great and laudable caution," as Andrew Lang remarks; adding on his own account—for did he not himself indite a work audaciously entitled *The Secret of the Totem*?—"may others be forgiven who have hazarded hypotheses much at the mercy of new invading facts that undermine our cloud-capped towers of conjecture!"[1] It has been already noted how in *Primitive Culture* Tylor deals briefly with the totem on its religious side, complaining, as well he might at the time, of the "obscurity and complexity" of the whole subject of zoolatry.[2] He brings the totem into connexion with animism in so far as it may be regarded as "representative of a tribe-ancestor,"[3] and hence animated by the transmigrated soul of one who was once a human being.[4] Meanwhile it was not until several years later that Sir James Frazer contributed his famous article on "Totemism" to the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and for the first time gathered the scattered facts on which previous writers had perforce relied into a digest; one destined eventually to become a veritable pandect, in the four bulky volumes of his *Totemism and Exogamy*. To such good hands, then, Tylor might well resign the subject; though of course he never ceased to keep it before his mind and to watch for such new evidence from the field as might bear on it.[5] Indeed, the last paper of importance that he published consists in a survey, going back some thirty years, of the growth of interest in the totemic

[1] *Anthrop. Essays*, 9.
[2] *P.C.* II. 237.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Cf. Ibid. I. 469.
[5] E.g. note references to Wilken in *P.C.*, 3rd edit., and to Spencer and Gillen in the 4th edit.

question, and showing a disposition to be critical towards latter-day enthusiasms that might make too much of what is but one factor among many in the complicated history of religion.[1] He tells how, though he has written very little on the subject, his first lines go back to the year 1867; and how shortly afterward he became well acquainted with McLennan, who, although he had dealt with totemism in 1865 as incidental to exogamy, had not come before 1869, when his articles on "The Worship of Plants and Animals" appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, to regard it as a great principle, nay, the great principle, of early religion no less than of early society. Tylor then proceeds to examine the evidence cited not only by McLennan, but by Robertson Smith, Frazer, and other authorities, with the special object of indicating the danger of confounding totemism in any or all of its forms with the far wider subject of zoolatry; since, if a totem be a sacred animal, it will not do to convert the proposition simply. Thus a good many deities represented as evolved totems exhibit no such derivation on closer inspection of their pedigrees. Again, as regards sacrifice, the famous totemic sacrament of Robertson Smith turns out to have nothing to do with totems in not a few of the instances cited; for neither Californian buzzards nor Zuñi turtles belong to any such category. As for Frazer's theory that the totem is an "external soul," he points out that the idea is borrowed from Wilken, but that the Dutch anthropologist could have furnished him with something better in the shape of the belief in souls that enter animals by way of trans-

[1] "Remarks on Totemism, with special reference to some Modern Theories respecting it," *J.A.I.* (1898), 28, 138 f.

migration. Thus Tylor evidently feels that his own view, half a century old, has so far weathered the storm, and may do so still. In other words, it is animism, not totemism, that in his opinion holds the field in religion; though in sociology he would concede to the latter principle a far greater importance. Here it is to be closely associated with exogamy, though this can exist without it, and for all we know may have had an independent origin. On the other hand, as regards the religious side of totemism, he confidently foresees a time when "the totem has shrunk to the dimensions it is justly entitled to in the theological schemes of the world."[1] So far the master, who, if he is rather relentless as a critic, nevertheless has correctly anticipated the trend of modern thought on this subject. If the leading spirits, McLennan, Robertson Smith, Frazer never lost their heads, the same could, perhaps, scarcely be said of certain of their more zealous abettors, Reinach, Jevons and so on, whose working principle, according to an unkindly wit of the period, was that there must be a totem at the back of every "cock-and-bull" story.[2]

It must not be supposed, however, that, because Tylor hesitated to frame a general theory bringing marriage, kinship and totemism into organic relation with each other in one comprehensive process of social development, he was at all remiss in paying due heed to facts of this order as he happened to come across them. There is a curious chapter in the *Re-*

[1] *J.A.I.* 28, 148.

[2] The humorist in question, however, may have been nearer the mark than he knew; for, if Tylor is right, this contemptuous expression referred to the European beast-fable when it had come down in the world. Cf. *Researches*, 10.

searches, with the indeterminate title of "Some Remarkable Customs," which consists as it were of specimen pages torn from a very stout notebook of sociological gleanings, and offered without comment for whatever they may suggest to the reader. Evidently the one question immediately before his mind is that of independent origination *versus* diffusion; and he selects four groups of customs having a wide geographical distribution, and at the same time exhibiting the closest similarity, which will serve as test-cases, if we choose to use them for this purpose, though he is apparently not yet prepared to do so himself. The first set of examples relating to the sucking-cure as practised by the medicine-man need not detain us. But the others, severally concerned with prohibitions on marriage between kinsfolk, ceremonial avoidances between relatives by marriage, and couvade, introduce considerations bearing directly on social organization, and, had it struck him to regard them all three as taboos, on religion as well. First, then, as for the ban on marriage within certain degrees of relationship, Tylor was perhaps all the more interested in the subject because, as he tells us, "the Society of Friends go farther than the Canon Law, for they really prohibit the marriage of first cousins."[1] This fact does not debar him, however, from comparing the prejudices of his own circle with those of barbarians and even utter savages in a condition of pure totemism. It is to be noticed of what poor quality was the evidence then available from Australia which, as he suspects, "may sometimes have been misunderstood" by those who report it; as well it might concerning a system as

[1] *R.* 279.

"complex" as it is "ingenious." On the other hand, better observations are procurable from America; Morgan's account of the Iroquois rules, composed as early as 1851, being signalized for its instructiveness. Tylor duly notes that the institution rests on a unilateral notion of kinship as either reckoned on the male or on the female side; and for his present purpose is content to regard totemism as an "especial means of tracing kindred by a system of surnames."[1] So far as he ventures on explanation it is on such 'nominalist' lines as the following: "In practice, the races of the world who keep such a record at all have had to elect which of the two lines, male or female, they will keep up by the family name or sign, while the other line, having no such easy means of record, is more or less neglected, and soon falls out of sight. Under these circumstances, it would be quite natural that the sign should come to be considered rather than the reality, the name rather than the relationship it records, and that a series of one-sided restrictions should come into force, now bearing upon the male side rather than the female, and now upon the female side rather than the male, roughly matching the one-sided way in which the record of kindred is kept up."[2] He also hints that the advantage of the marrying "out" (the word exogamy has not yet come into force) which results from the prohibition to marry "in" would be that different groups would be bound together in friendship by such intermarriage; adding, unhandsomely, that the stranger woman, if stolen, would be the more easily turned into a slave—apparently another advantage of the system. But for a "full discussion" he

[1] Ibid. 285. [2] *R.* 285–6.

deems the time not ripe; and merely in later editions indicates his agreement with McLennan[1] as to the early prevalence of "bride-capture in earnest"—the real thing as contrasted with the mock affair that so often occurs in marriage ceremonial.

Passing to what are now known simply as "avoidances," namely, prohibitions on intercourse, in the social rather than sexual sense, between certain near relations, he mostly dwells on the rules that thus separate parents-in-law from children-in-law, and, generally, persons on opposite sides of the marriage union; though he brings under the same head the analogous restraints that keep apart brothers and sisters, and, again, sometimes first-cousins. He confesses that "of this curious series of customs I have met with no interpretation which can be put forward with confidence."[2] But he proceeds forthwith to make the pregnant suggestion: "It is possible that a fuller study of the law of *tabu* may throw some light on the matter."[3] Unfortunately this seed failed to germinate, having fallen on the fence that lay between two richly fertile parts of his mind, where social and religious origins were cultivated side by side, but singly. Somehow he dislikes social matters—law, government, even etiquette—to become mixed up with mystic influences, perhaps because common sense was the golden rule of his political liberalism. He points out that "it is natural enough that there should be found even among savage tribes rules concerning respect, authority, precedence and so forth"; and would leave it at that. When a Zulu meets his mother-in-law in the path, he must hide his face behind his shield, while she

[1] *R.* 287 *n.* [2] *R.* 291. [3] *R.* 291; ibid. 288.

squats behind a convenient bush. If this and the like be "natural enough," then Nature must sometimes allow herself a practical joke.

The last set of customs here examined relates to *couvade*, or "hatching," which he finds existing as a European name for a similar practice, and proposes to use with a world-wide application.[1] In this one case he hopes to provide not only the facts but a key to their meaning. He believes it to rest on an opinion that "belongs, like sorcery and divination, to the mental state in which man does not separate the subjective mental connexion from the objective physical connexion, the connexion which is inside his mind from the connexion which is outside it, in the same way in which most educated men of the higher races make this separation."[2] This he terms "the sympathetic-magical explanation of the couvade,"[3] and in the latest edition of *Researches* (1878) opposes it sharply to Bachofen's view that *couvade* is a symbolic act whereby the father takes on himself the parental character previously held by the mother only. As for sympathetic magic, he classes it with sorcery and divination, presumably as being pseudo-scientific rather than religious in its ultimate intention. Being always honest about the facts, however, he does not fail to note that precisely the same taboos that the father must observe in the interest of the child have likewise a bearing on the affairs of the spirit-world, since their violation would interfere with the journey of a departing soul to its new home.[4] Thus it looks as

[1] For a rather acrimonious discussion with Dr. Murray of the Oxford Dictionary as to his authority for the use of the French word in this sense, see *Academy*, 42 (1892), for Nov. 2 and Dec. 6.

[2] *R.* 296. [3] *R.* 299 *n.* [4] Cf. 296.

if animism were somewhere in the offing; though officially it cannot recognize magic, even when the latter displays a power of invading the very bosom of the family and there contriving a social institution which, if slightly comic in our eyes—for we think of it as if Papa were brought to bed, when he is simply keeping a day of rest, a sabbatical retirement from worldly distractions—is not only a decent proceeding on the part of a family man, but one that marks him as a respecter of sanctities. For staying in his hammock is his way of going to meeting—just a negative instead of a positive form of Sunday observance.

In *Primitive Culture* we look in vain for sociological matters considered as such; though magical practices and religious rites are examined in relation to the underlying notions, as has already been shown. But, long after it was written, namely in 1888, Tylor at length comes forward with what Andrew Lang rightly describes as an "epoch-making" pronouncement on the need for a new and stricter procedure in the study of society.[1] His paper, first delivered as a public lecture at Oxford, appeared in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute* under the title: "On a Method of Investigating the Development of Institutions applied to Laws of Marriage and Descent."[2] In essence his suggestion is that, to get results of scientific value, we must learn to apply statistical principles to our data; and he would show by example no less than by precept how the thing is to be done. Working on a census as complete as possible of the world's peoples—and he confesses that there are at least a hundred about whom he could obtain little or no information—we must tabulate

[1] *Anthrop. Essays*, 5.

[2] *J.A.I.* 18 (1888), 245.

their rules of marriage and descent by way of securing a conspectus of all the similarities and the differences between them. Thereupon we shall find that, of the traits distributed among the members of the series, certain repetitions or concurrences will enable us to distinguish groupings implying more than mere coincidence, namely, causal connexion. Tylor names it a "method of adhesions," since the degree in which each adheres to each determines the relation as one of more than mere chance. Thus, by way of example, he takes the rule about residence after marriage, according to which either the husband or the wife must live among the other's folk. He then proceeds to plot out how far the one or the other condition—matrilocal or patrilocal marriage, as we nowadays say—corresponds with the incidence of various other elements of marriage custom; such as avoidance, tecnonymy, the levirate, the couvade, and marriage by capture. As it turns out, the adhesions are such, in what is admittedly an incomplete set of returns, as to warrant him in concluding that on the whole the matrilocal system is prior to the other; though he is careful to add that it is not therefore proved to have been the primal form of the marriage state. Again, treating in the same way the facts relating to exogamy and to the classificatory mode of using names, such as those of father and mother, with a collective instead of an individual reference, he obtains from the large proportion of adhesions the proof of an organic connexion between the two practices; being thereby encouraged to reaffirm his old view that their joint object is to further political union by forming a criss-cross of matrimonial ties. This very inadequate summary must suffice here of a new depar-

ture in anthropological method which, wholly feasible or not, has persuaded other scholars to try it out on the grandest scale. For instance, Steinmetz in his important work on the Evolution of Punishment[1] has unflinchingly applies the Tylorian method throughout. Again, the late L. T. Hobhouse in the third edition of his *Morals in Evolution* has incorporated many important results obtained by him in this way. Further, with the able assistance of G. C. Wheeler and M. Ginsberg, he has published in *The Material Culture of the Simpler Peoples*[2] a concrete illustration of the use of the method; one that, handled in the most critical fashion, does its best to provide Social Anthropology with a reasonably rigid yet flexible background. This is no place in which to raise difficulties about the practicability of a scheme that requires for its basic condition that the units of comparison be of approximately equivalent value. If France and Spain behave in ways contrary to those of Monaco and Andorra, is it to be reckoned on the long count a case of fifty-fifty? Also, there is diffusion of customs to complicate the issue, since repetitions due to direct imitation cannot be put on a par with independent reactions to similar circumstances. Are all the British colonies to compose one unit or many as against, say, altogether unitary folk such as the Lapps? Indeed, a statistical method not unlike Tylor's might prove more effective in tracing diffused characters to their common centre —surely in any case a preliminary step that must be taken before separate cultures can be compared as more or less parallel, but equally spontaneous, out-

[1] R. Steinmetz, *Ethnologische Studien zur ersten Entwicklung der Strafe*, Leiden, 1894. Tylor examined him for this his Doctor's thesis.

[2] London, 1915.

growths of human nature. Suffice it, however, to point out in conclusion that, whatever successes Tylor's plan of research be destined to realize in the future, he is to be honoured for the framing of so noble a conception. It is true that no science can be more accurate than the nature of its subject-matter allows. But it is also true that only the best is good enough for the man who tries; and Tylor tried all his life long.

It remains to note that the last chapter on "Society" in *Anthropology*, which is of course meant to be popular, gives a very complete picture of the structure and functions of the social organism as Tylor saw it, namely, somewhat in abstraction from that inner life of the mind concerning which he went to Individual Psychology for his clues. From family and clan, with rather more stress laid, perhaps, on the former, he takes us by gradual consolidation and enlargement from the tribe to the modern state. Though as a Quaker he can have had no love for war, he strives to do it justice as a welding force and as the chief architect of a class-system and of monarchical government; even making out a case for slavery, the product of war, as an inevitable accompaniment of economic development at a certain critical point of its history. Altogether, it is a masterly synthesis of a vast material hard to assemble and still harder to infuse with a dynamic; and the apparent obviousness of it all, partly an effect of the simple language in which it is expressed, conceals—perhaps mercifully for those who would attempt the like—an effort of constructive thought only possible for one whose vision sought to embrace all human things together.

CHAPTER XI

MATERIAL CULTURE

THE arts of life as assisted by material objects and mechanical devices, such as can be exhibited in a museum and illustrated by practical demonstration, constitute a distinct province of anthropological interest, which, in its turn, forms part of an all-embracing study of human culture. For working purposes, within this special field concerned with culture in its material aspect, prehistoric archæology and the technology of the modern savage occupy, in these days of specialization, the attention of different experts; who often find themselves too busy to keep in touch with each other's findings, and, still less are prepared to carry their investigations concerning Man's use of implements for work or amusement right through from beginning to end of the evolutionary scale. A synoptic view, however, was more practicable when Tylor took his bearings as a prospector in virgin country. Nay, mankind might never have appealed to him as his "proper study," had not Henry Christy, omnivagant and omnivorous snapper-up of *Realien*, fired him to collect not only such ponderable facts, but any and all facts that bore on the human story. Moreover, it was tangible evidence in the shape of bone and stone that forced upon his age the conviction that, in the oracular words of Prestwich, "we must greatly extend our present chronology."[1] Andrew Lang is

[1] Cf. *R.* 195.

probably right when he says, of the interest suddenly evinced by science in matters anthropological at that time, "probably it took its rise, not so much in Darwin's famous theory of evolution as in the long-ignored or ridiculed discoveries of the relics of palæolithic man by M. Boucher de Perthes."[1] Tylor's brother Alfred, the geologist, wrote with "first-hand knowledge on the latter subject."[2] Tylor himself, too, recounts how he carried the first account of the discovery of the flint implements in the drift to Baron Bunsen, Max Müller's friend and patron; and goes on to tell how that distinguished man "in his pleasant home at Heidelberg" rejoiced at the news "which he of course seized on as confirmatory evidence of his calculations of the twenty thousand years of Egyptian chronology." The Baron, by the way, had previously saved his face by declaring the Egyptians to be a surviving "antediluvian" people.[3] We may be sure, then, that Tylor was well abreast of the archæological knowledge of the day when in *Researches* he wrote his striking chapter on "The Stone Age—Past and Present."[4] Its originality consists mainly in the way in which the prehistoric and modern facts are brought together for comparative purposes; so that it presently leaps to the eye that the old and the recent savage are twin-brothers in their manner of ministering to their daily needs by drawing on Nature's supply-store for artificial aids of all kinds. One is amazed at the sheer

[1] *Anthrop. Essays*, –2.

[2] A. Tylor, "On the Amiens Gravel," in *Journ. Geol. Soc.*, 1867, for May.

[3] In a review of "A Memoir of Baron Bunsen," *F.R.*, N.S., 3 (1868), 718.

[4] *R.*, ch. VIII.

amount of the curious information at his disposal, and at the wonder-working skill with which every odd pebble in his mosaic can be made to serve as a strike-a-light. Even the classics have been ransacked; and one would like to know how many scholars would be ready offhand to discuss *ceraunіæ*, *cuneus*, *brontia* and *Jupiter lapis* in their bearing on the thunderstone myth.

No doubt if one looks back from the position reached to-day in prehistoric research it is possible to measure the immense distance between the latest knowledge and what Tylor could then know on that side of his subject; though on the other side, namely the ethnological, he has a certain advantage over us in that living Stone-Age folk have mostly disappeared in the interval. Yet somehow these seers of the divine foretime managed to get their main values right from the start; and one has only to read Lyell or Lubbock or Sir John Evans to feel that theirs was the age of the prophets, whereas ours are rather the days of mass-production, when factory-hands are more in demand than masters of glamour who can read the signs in the sky. Tylor has to employ clumsy expressions such as Unground Stone Age and Ground Stone Age, because it was only in that very year that Sir John Lubbock invented the terms "palæolithic" and "neolithic"[1] to indicate the division of periods which we have since learnt to bridge with the help of the third term "mesolithic." Again, the earlier series is subdivided by Tylor simply into the "drift" and the "cave" types in that order of sequence—all very rough, but as it has turned out fairly true so far as it goes. The French caves, indeed, had as yet hardly

[1] In *Pre-Historic Times*, 1865.

yielded their more important secrets; but, together with his co-worker Lartet, Christy—alas! destined to die at that very moment—had been exploring them indefatigably, with results just then beginning to be made public.[1] Tylor is already well aware of the importance of typology, bidding the ethnographer take due note of the "individuality" of the workmanship as a guide to the temporal and local relationships between different varieties of implements. Indeed, he is ever watching for evidence of diffusion; and is inclined, for instance, to believe that polished celts of green jade from Victoria in Australia, though the material is found on the spot, may be the result of influences from some Malay or Polynesian centre where such "high-class weapons" could be matched and would be more appropriate to the general level of culture and taste. On the other hand, in favour of independent invention we have to consider the similarity of design that renders typological discrimination so precarious a pursuit. "If an observer," he said, "tolerably acquainted with stone implements, had an unticketed collection placed before him, the largeness of the number of specimens which he would not confidently assign, by mere inspection, to their proper countries would serve as a fair measure of their general uniformity. Even when aided by mineralogical knowledge, often a great help, he would have to leave a large fraction of the whole in an unclassed heap, confessing that he did not know within thousands of miles, or thousands of years, where and when they were made."[2] Yet, as he goes on to point out, the argument from similarity

[1] Lartet and Christy, *Reliquiæ Aquitanicæ* (ed. Jones), 1865-70.
[2] *Researches*, 203–4.

cuts both ways at once; and in the present case he thinks that some day, if not at once, the evidence from stone-work will admit of correlation with other proofs of common traits to enable us to deduce cultural connexions between peoples, and so "to centralize the early history of races of very unlike appearance."[1]

It is interesting to observe from the use to which it is put here how Tylor's famous method of survivals may well have been first suggested to him in an archæological context. He has indeed not yet invented the handy term "survival;" but the idea is already there, serving him again and again to infer former Stone-Age conditions from odd customs of metal-using peoples in which stone implements still figure for ritual rather than practical reasons. "I cannot but think," he writes, "that most, if not all, of the series are to be explained as being, to use the word in no harsh sense, but according to what seems its proper etymology, cases of superstition, of the "standing over" of old habits into the midst of a new and changed state of things, of the retention of ancient practices for ceremonial purposes, long after they had been superseded for the commonplace uses of ordinary life."[2] Thus the Jewish rite of circumcising with a flint knife; the practice of the Egyptian embalmer when preparing a body for mummification of employing a "slitter"—who must instantly take to flight as if under a curse—to make the first incision with an "Æthiopic stone"; and the self-mutilation of the priest of Cybele wrought with a sherd of Samian ware—all these observances, despite attempts to

[1] Ibid. 204. [2] *R.* 218.

ascribe them to some sanitary motive, are to be interpreted as relics of a time when metallurgy was as yet uninvented. Tylor also mentions the attempts of the philologists to draw like inferences from certain Aryan and Semitic roots—for example, from the common element that may underlie *saxum*, *sagitta*, *secare*, with parallels in Sanskrit, Old High German and Anglo-Saxon. But he feels that such matters of high linguistics lie outside his ken, and is evidently much happier when he returns to Algonquin, in which the names for copper and brass are "red-stone" and "yellow-stone";[1] showing how it is always by analogy that language advances from the known to the unknown. For the rest he searches in turn "every great district of the habitable globe," Christy providing him with the first cases of stone implements reported from North Africa, as found by himself in association with dolmens; and everywhere there is the same clear testimony that the predecessors of the present occupants of the soil, whether actual ancestors or not, were once content to make shift with stone.[2]

Speaking generally, however, Tylor does not feel himself so intimately concerned with the details of prehistoric archæology, which he can leave to his many friends who are exclusively interested in what the spade brings to light, as with those of savage technology, where he has the field largely to himself; though Klemm's masterly work, which he knew well, was there to draw on,[3] and soon Pitt-Rivers would be expounding the lessons to be learnt from his vast

[1] Ibid. 213–14.
[2] Ibid. 228.
[3] G. Klemm, *Allgemeine Kulturgeschichte des Menscheit*, 1843–, esp. part ii.

and various array of specimens.[1] After all, his main interest was by one means or another to demonstrate the truth of the Development-theory as against the carping criticisms of an opposition which made Degeneration their first line of defence, and, when unable to produce the necessary evidence, fell back on the *argumentum ex ignorantia*. Thus challenged, Tylor brings up his heavy guns one after the other in the form of particular examples of standard arts of human life showing a steady improvement, as tested, not by ideal values that might be disputed, but by the visible control over material that the technical processes in question can be shown to display in increasing measure. Those former saints on earth whom the degenerationists would have to be the predecessors, if not exactly of ourselves, at least of the less respectable residue of humanity, may have rejoiced in superior morals, but their material culture somehow "withered like grass." As Lyell pertinently asks, what has become of their "triumphs of inventive genius"?[2] We could judge of their minds better, were it possible to unearth a few of their machines. Meanwhile, Tylor is not for wasting his time on dialectics, but prefers to pile up proofs too solid and lasting for any talk to demolish. Thus we feel that we are on rock-bottom throughout when reading the chapter in *Researches* on "Fire, Cooking, and Vessels."[3] On the fire-making art especially there seems nothing left to say, and that though, in dealing with the subject, he did not even

[1] Col. Lane Fox, afterwards Gen. Pitt-Rivers, was lecturing from 1867 on the evolution of weapons, etc. See *J. United Service Inst.*, 1867–9.

[2] *Antiquity of Man*, Sir C. Lyell (1863,) ch. XIX. Cf. *P.C.* I. 58.

[3] *R.*, ch. IX.

have a terminology ready to his hand; so that the "fire-drill," the "stick-and-groove method," and so on, terms now familiar to every student, are entirely names of his coining. It is to be observed, too, how critical he is of his documents; and, though it would have been very agreeable to his purpose, had the stories about fire-less tribes been true—for then we might have had the whole evolution right away from its beginning—he puts them all aside; the exceptional case of the Andamanese, which seems authentic, not being before him. His descriptions of the various methods employed admirably convey the necessary instructions for putting them into practice, and could only come from one who had tried them out himself with the primitive apparatus and nothing more to help him. At this point, however, one may perhaps be permitted to interpolate a frivolous story showing how such experiments depend on *bona fides* no less than on manipulative skill. Tylor was lecturing on this very subject at the Royal Institution, and sought to show how the simple fire-drill was worked by twirling one stick against the other as nimbly as could be; but, possibly because the London atmosphere was unpropitious, nothing happened, and the lecturer seemed put out. Tyndall, who was there, offered to take on the duty, so that the discourse might continue. Instantly, fire flared up, and the audience applauded. "But, Tyndall," said Tylor afterwards, "I don't understand; you should have produced no more than a spark." "I'm afraid," was the reply, "that I added the head of a lucifer match, just to cheer the thing up!"

It is unnecessary to deal in detail with all the other

technological topics—one could number them up to a dozen or even twenty—that in the course of the *Researches* are passed in review, always with reference to some major theoretical issue such as their value to prove or disprove diffusion, but at the same time in such a substantial way as to do justice to each as a distinctive theme. A whole chapter for instance, is devoted to the development of the art of writing. Moreover, this is supplemented in another passage by a study of the Peruvian *quipu* and similar tallies, which, if mostly used for purposes of counting, might also have a mnemonic function; bringing them to that extent into line with the various systems of recording events by picturing either a given object or else the sound of that object's name, the latter device ultimately generating an alphabet. Much has been since discovered in regard to this subject since Tylor wrote, but even so he has the knack of always getting the right impression from such facts as have come his way. One notices how his Mexican experiences have set his mind working not only on picture-writing, but on calendars, floating gardens, the goldsmith's art, and so on. Meanwhile he collects his material quite impartially from all quarters of the globe; so that, for example, the process to which he gives the name of "stone-boiling" brings the Eskimo and North American Indians into touch with "wild Irish" reported about the year 1600 to warm their milk by means of a stone first cast into the fire.[1]

Arts and crafts scarcely come within the scope of *Primitive Culture*; though it must not be assumed that, while that work was taking shape in his head, he was

[1] Ibid. 268.

neglecting the other sides of his subject. Witness, for instance, an article on the prehistoric lake-dwellings of Switzerland,[1] which can still be read with profit, since it epitomizes Keller's famous discoveries that prepared the mind of Europe for longer vistas of time; though it is to be noted that even in 1868, when Tylor is aiming to show that "Biblical chronology cannot be regarded as binding on men's faith," he carries his scientific caution so far as to doubt whether the Swiss evidence, unimpeachable as it is, will take us back to the middle of the second millennium before Christ or even to the far-end of the first. In *Primitive Culture* he appeals to archæology only at the start in order that, for the purposes of his evolutionary history of culture, he be given a blank cheque on the Bank of Time such as will be honoured up to any amount that he may wish to draw. As big business is to petty trade, so will be the science of the future as compared with that of the past with no more than a capital of a few thousand years to turn over. "Criticizing an eighteenth-century ethnologist is like criticizing an eighteenth-century geologist."[2] They are out-dated in a twofold sense of the word. But, given his free hand in chronology, Tylor goes on at once to study human culture by way of its inner rather than its outer manifestations; for this is the only sound procedure. The mere technologist plays with a message-stick that has lost its message; or, to put the metaphor into a civilized instead of a savage dress, he is like some librarian who knows all about the paper, print and binding of his books, but does not also know how to read. No such charge, however,

[1] *Q.R.* 125 (1868), 418 f.; see esp. 439–40.
[2] *P.C.* I. 54.

could lie against Tylor who, when he handles material culture, never fails to remember that he is likewise,and primarily, a mind-reader. "Gravel-beds, caves, shell-mounds, terramares, lake-dwellings, earthworks"—there lie our documents in a magnificent series, but we have still to decipher them. As an "all-round" anthropologist Tylor is in a position to combine his archæological with his ethnological knowledge; so that, for instance, the Swiss lake-settlements can be brought to life again by a comparison with their modern analogues in the East Indies, Africa and South America.[1] But the ethnological facts themselves are not to be understood by simple inspection; and from the standpoint of the evolutionist it is necessary to distinguish decadent and aberrant types from those that are "in the line of progress"—he had been wiser to say "in some line," though his "unilinear" proclivities are not much in evidence on the whole. Indeed, on the face of them, most of these facts "may be compared to an Indian's canoe, stem and stern alike, so that one cannot tell by looking at it which way it is set to go."[1] So what are especially wanted are "pointer-facts," which like our own boats indicate by the cut of their bows the direction that they are designed to take. It was precisely in order to collect such "pointers" in the shape of linked series of artefacts exhibiting a cumulative triumph of inventiveness that Tylor's friend Pitt-Rivers planned his museum on a typological rather than on a purely ethnographical basis.

A liberal third of *Anthropology* is taken up with the subject of material culture and in many ways is the best part of an altogether excellent book; if only

[1] Ibid 62.

because it fills what is otherwise an aching void in the working library of the anthropologist, who, overwhelmed with *magna opera* on every other conceivable subject, still lacks his authoritative manual of technology compiled with an eye to the ancient and modern data alike. How it comes about that what was written in 1881 should retain its fresh perfume is an olfactory mystery to be solved only when literary genius has become amenable to scientific analysis; and in the meantime we can but enjoy.

Now the object of the present sketch of Tylor's work is not to provide an epitome of it; but, on the contrary, it is rather to encourage a more careful study of originals that not only embody much priceless information but, over and above this merit, have the greater one of imparting the true spirit of anthropological inquiry—its breadth of view, its sense of the brotherhood of Man, its faith in the destiny of so dauntless and dominating a child of Nature. But it is worth while to glance through these compendious chapters—some half-dozen in all—to note the way in which Tylor goes about his task, always reminding the "up-to-date" civilizations that they are living largely on resources slowly and with infinite toil accumulated for their benefit by ancestors of humble extraction. So humble, indeed, were these that at first they were presumably content with equipping themselves from that ready-made department open also to the other animals, where sticks and stones are procurable, though wanting just that finish which ambitious tastes must prefer. But the slightest touch in the way of an adaptation at once differentiates the human customer from the beasts. Not by flashes of genius so much as

by small successive changes does early invention proceed; increase in complexity being shown not only by improvement along a single line in the attainment of some particular end, but also by the discovery of side-lines along which some of the skill and energy can be diverted towards the realization of fresh designs. Thus the single instrument as it develops assumes different forms better suited for the several services that it once performed in but a wholesale way; as in the days when the same club was put into requisition "to break skulls and coco-nuts," or as in those not long departed times when the blacksmith used his pincers to draw teeth, because the dentist's forceps had not yet been born as its younger brother.[1] Moreover, these new functions to which the old implement is put in the course of its transformation are by no means confined to that utilitarian plane to which it originally belonged. Tylor could not attend the Royal Society without seeing that rudest of weapons, the mace, at first no more than an uprooted sapling in the style of Hercules' club, surviving as a symbol of the authority of Charles II as royal patron of science.[2] Again, a sporting contrivance may grow out of a weapon of war, and is apt to outlast it;[3] while sport itself, an outcome of the quest for food, subordinates the former motive to that of the excitement of the chase, so that vulgar "pot-hunting" is now regarded with scorn.[4] Once more, an æsthetic may evolve out of a practical need, as when body-paint, at first used to protect the body from heat and mosquitoes, is turned into a means of satisfying the aspirations of a dandy.[5] The develop-

[1] *A.*, 184. [2] Ibid 184. [3] Ibid. 193.
[4] Ibid. 210. [5] Ibid. 237.

ment of currency out of objects originally exchanged in order to be put to their natural use, and that of the child's toy out of something now or formerly of serious importance, are further examples of such an extended and altered application. Finally, there is the endless diversity of magico-religious symbolism to afford illustrations of the same process whereby technical appliances are modified as they are brought within the range of new wants and new meanings. Such considerations are enough to show how little is to be made of technology unless the whole sociological and psychological background can be filled in, so as to relate the material to the moral side of culture in that subtle interplay of means and ends—opportunity now giving rise to desire and now in turn waiting upon it—which only a science, and a mind, of the widest reach could even try to understand.

Then, apart from the task of tracing development as it advances, branches, interlaces, regresses and revives, there is the problem of ultimate origins. Strictly, of course, they do not exist; and Tubal Cain or Triptolemus is but a myth. Yet sometimes one can trace an invention—the so-called "artefact" or thing done by "art," that is, by fitting or adapting—pretty well back to the imaginary point at which the mere tool-user passes into the tool-maker.[1] A stout stick used as a cudgel or a hammer-stone is right at the divide; a spear, sharpened and perhaps provided with a head, and that head of flint and duly trimmed to a point, are, on the other hand, already works of art, possibly with a long history of progress by trial and error behind them. Again, to throw stone or stick comes

[1] *A.* 183.

naturally, but to devise the sling or the even less obvious spear-thrower was highly creditable on the part of, doubtless, very early folk; who passed them on until they served the Roman armies, if the *amentum* or thong that lent force to the javelin is really a lineal descendant of the spear-thrower which in its original form "is not found among any nation higher than the old Mexicans, and even among them seems to have been kept up ceremonially from old times rather than seriously used."[1] Be it noted in passing that a typological series in which one form seems to anticipate the next cannot be taken offhand to imply causal connexion, since there may be independent invention, or at least plural lines of development, to be reckoned with. Thus one may ask whether Tylor is as cautious as usual when he writes: "With the simple darts or pellets the blow-tube served for shooting birds, and it is often kept up as a toy, as in our boys' pea-shooters. When, however, gunpowder was applied in warfare, its use was soon adapted to make the blow-tube an instrument of tremendous power, when, instead of the puff of breath in a reed, the explosion of powder in an iron barrel drove out the missile."[2] This is pretty; but to work out the historical process with due regard for missing links might soon land us among plural causes and intermixed effects. The wheel is an important invention, which is all our own in the sense that it never reached the New World; the same being true of the plough. Tylor had given a great deal of attention to the subject, and only a year earlier than the appearance of *Anthropology* had elucidated the nature of two developments, the one from the roller, the

[1] Ibid. 195. [2] Ibid. 197.

other from the digging-stick or hoe, that finally unite in our composite instrument; his paper being the very pattern of what a technological demonstration should be.[1] It is characteristic of him to note how, whereas the solid wheels with fixed axle, as in the Roman farm-cart, were replaced by the spoke-wheels turning on their axles, the builders of the modern railway-carriage with iron wheels have reverted to the earlier type; for the evolutionary process is by no means in one straightforward line, nor is the civilized man exempt from its vagaries. Indeed Tylor is never tired of pointing out how anthropology is not concerned with savages but with all men alike; and uses technology again and again in order to point this moral. Thus he shows that the mill is a very ancient machine, since a roundish stone held in the hand with a larger hollowed stone for a bed will serve effectively to grind up wild seeds for food, or red ochre or charcoal for adornment; but that—not to speak of our pestle and mortar which keeps closely to this primitive arrangement—our modern flour mills, with steam-power instead of hand-power to drive them and all their other elaborate accompaniments, still have the upper stone rotating against the lower, so that "the essential principle of the primitive hand-mill is still there."[2]

Looking at these chapters from a sociological point of view, one perceives that Tylor is far more deeply interested in social matters than might appear, should we consider solely his contributions to the study of institutions, because he so often happens to approach them from the side of technology and its material evidences. His views on ecology, for instance, must

[1] *J.A.I.* 10 (1880), 74 f. [2] *A* 201.

be sought for in this connexion; and economic forces will be found to be thoroughly appreciated as conditioning the whole life of the community, more especially if pursuing a hand-to-mouth existence. Thus he displays a very intimate acquaintance with the gathering and hunting stages of the food-quest, noting in the one case how the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego comb their inhospitable beaches so as to produce kitchen-middens exactly like those that awakened the interest of the Danish archæologists in the early part of the nineteenth century; and in the other case entering into such minute particulars about how to catch an armadillo or a wallaby that, given primitive appliances, one might aspire to do it, and yet would almost certainly fail. Over the difficult question how food-finding passes into food-producing he slides rather easily; for in his opinion "agriculture is not to be looked on as a difficult or out-of-the-way invention; for the rudest savage, skilled as he is in the habits of the food-plants he gathers, must know well enough that if seeds or roots are put in a proper place in the ground they will grow."[1] But, then, if an Australian native knows this, why does he not do it? Again, the domestication of animals is supposed to arise out of "the taming of sociable creatures, like parrots and monkeys";[2] whence by insensible gradations, one may suppose, Man proceeded to tame the horse and the elephant, though it was rather a long way to go. Perhaps the reindeer, about which Tylor has a good deal to say, was the first animal, after the dog, to approve himself as a friend of the useful kind. Be all this as it may, Tylor takes stock not only of the

[1] *A.* 214. [2] *A.* 219.

purely economic conditions that cultivated plants and domesticated animals involve, but also of the further consequences of a more settled and prosperous way of existence; noting, for instance, that as a proof of what the higher pastoral life may achieve "the patriarchal herdsmen may belong to one of the great religions of the world"[1]—he might have added, may actually create it. Or, again, Tylor's interest in human society it not limited to what comes under the head of work as distinguished from play; and what he classifies as arts of pleasure turn out to have far-reaching effects—as witness the influence of the dance in religion—on every one of Man's noblest pursuits, intellectual, moral and æsthetic. Moreover, all human things alike are grist to the anthropological mill when evolutionary sequences and cultural distributions and diffusions have to be worked out. For instance, Tylor makes a mere game, *patolli*, as he had seen it played in Mexico, the occasion for a comparative study which can serve as a permanent model of ethnological induction.[2]

Finally, if one had to find an explanation of the fact that Tylor's writings belong to the earlier part of his life, whereas his zeal for Anthropology never flagged to the end of his working days, it might not be altogether unfair to accuse the Pitt-Rivers collections of having taken up more than a fair share of the time that he could ill spare from delivering over sixty terminal courses of lectures, writing innumerable articles and reviews, presiding over learned societies, organizing courses of academic instruction, and so on. After twenty years' intercourse at Oxford, one retains the impression of him as the very happiest of men,

[1] Ibid. 220.

[2] *J.A.I.* 8 (1878), 116.

and that because he was everlastingly finding something new to play with. Sometimes it was an idea, but oftener it was a toy. It might be a Tasmanian implement, that he would suddenly produce from his pocket; or it might be a Haida totem-post of such vast proportions that "all the King's horses and all the King's men"—reading "Curator" for "King"—could hardly get it into the Museum.[1] Of his lecture-courses, too, as many were taken up with technology as with religion and social organization together. Under his hands and those of his colleagues both at home and abroad the science that in his youth had to be championed fiercely, if it was to exist at all, had now entered into its acknowledged kingdom; and the order of the day was consolidation. Theory enough and to spare had been conceived and ventilated by the pioneers of the 'sixties and 'seventies. But he felt that the task of the 'eighties and 'nineties was verification; and, further, that for this purpose material culture provided the most effective instrument, at any rate pending more intensive field-research in regard to institutions and beliefs as conducted by that younger generation which he was trying to educate with that special end in view. For Anthropology, he always insisted, must be nothing less than plain and honest science—hard reasoning based on hard facts.

[1] Cf. his papers on these subjects, *J.A.I.* 23 (1893), 141 f.; ibid. 24 (1894), 335 f.; ibid. 28 (1898), 136 f.

CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION

MAN has been an anthropologist ever since he learnt to talk; for most of his talk has always been about himself. To turn such talk into science, however, has proved another matter altogether. Science is, or would be, true talk, thought made good in relation both to inward consistency and to outward fact, knowledge so organized as to answer to the joint tests of coherence and correspondence. Even so, the beginnings of a genuine Science of Man carry us a long way back. Of the anthropologists of the field and of the study respectively we may recognize the prototypes in Herodotus and Lucretius. So, too, from the Renaissance onwards ingenious minds pondered on human origins; and, of the three ultimate topics of philosophic interest, God, Man, and Nature, paid an increasing attention to the two latter, bringing them ever closer together as they did so. Yet a decisive moment came, a new era dawned, when, a little past the midday of the nineteenth century, the world was made to realize that the Book of Life is a continuous story, of which Man is perhaps the hero, and certainly is the scribe; being yet but part and parcel of a serial of complex plot that is still developing towards some unrevealed climax. Fortunate in the time of his birth —the year of the Reform Bill—Tylor had reached his prime just when in England intellectual, following on

the heels of political, liberation was calling for recruits in the inevitable struggle with the die-hards of the old order. One must not exaggerate, however, the intransigeance of an opposition that, British-fashion, knew how to pluck a grace from the very act of surrender, and, by making common cause with the moderate party among the victors, came in the end even to share their laurels and help to consolidate their gains. Yet, while the fight was on, it was a good fight, with plenty of hard hitting on both sides. Such a metaphor may nevertheless seem hardly appropriate in the case of a born Quaker; who yet finds himself somehow in the thick of the struggle, a man of weight exerting a gentle but irresistible pressure forwards with a "Friend, thou must e'en give way." It is the very candour of his literary style that disarms, that opens a path before his unaggressive but resolute advance.

Even Oxford could not withstand him, Oxford the reputed home of lost causes; which, earlier in the same decade that was agitated by the Darwinian revolution, had, notwithstanding, reorganized its educational system from top to bottom, and was quite ready to come to terms with Natural Science so long as its sansculottism was not too loud and uncouth. Tylor, indeed, had written *Primitive Culture*, thereby establishing his fame on a European basis, before Oxford had repented of its theological "tests." But no sooner were these abolished—Lang met Tylor for the first time at Oxford, he tells us, just about 1872[1]—than he was honoured with the D.C.L., and not long afterwards taken to the bosom of the University, to reside and teach there for the rest of his working days, covering

[1] *Anthrop. Essays*, 1.

a quarter of a century. *Vidit, vicit, venit* would best represent the order of events in his career, since first he discovered, then prevailed in argument, and finally planted a school where it could take firm root. Nor throughout does he ever appear as anything but the most ingenuous of men, open-minded because he is simple-minded, the friend of all mankind because he would be incapable of feeling otherwise; and withal hard-headed, of business antecedents, not easily fooled, pedestrian enough to prefer solid ground under his feet. In short, he is the plain man, but the plain man of genius. If British Anthropology on the whole adheres to facts and to common sense, we owe it to him.

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