

physical sciences. The whilom tyranny of the Sanscritists is happily past, and it is seen that hasty philological deductions require to be systematically checked by the conclusions of prehistoric archæology, craniology, anthropology, geology, and common sense."

The Science of Fairy Tales. By E. S. HARTLAND, F.S.A.
Contemporary Science Series, edited by Havelock Ellis.
London: Walter Scott.

To those familiar with the writings of Professor Tylor and of Mr. Andrew Lang, the views summarized and exemplified in this volume of the origin and meaning of the meaningless in fairy tales will not be entirely new; and those who have read Mr. Sidney Hartland's papers on the "Luck of Edenhall," etc., in the "Archæological Review," and Mr. Edward Clodd's "Rumpelstilzkin," in the "Folk-Lore Journal," will be prepared for a science of fairy tales, strange as it sounds. It is difficult even in these days of new sciences to think of nursery tales being gravely classified, arranged, and explained—their origin, growth, and metamorphoses shown and elaborately set forth like any other—"organism," shall we say? And to most readers the idea, we may venture to predict, will be both novel and distasteful.

In the first place let us disabuse our minds of the supposition that those delightful stories, "Jack and the Beanstalk," "The man who wanted to learn to shudder," "The Yellow Dwarf," and countless others, were invented to cause a cold chill in the nursery circle, or to stimulate small boys to deeds of daring in countries where the beans are wofully short and feeble. They were told, so we learn, in the first place by men to whom there seemed nothing unlikely in the events related.

Fairy tales are divided into two classes, those belonging to Sagas, and supposed to embody history or account for phenomena, and those simply told for amusement—*Märchen*. These latter, however, may, and often have been told, at some time or by some other nation as Sagas, but from one cause or another have degenerated into *Märchen*. There are, indeed, known instances of stories told by some savage tribe to account for the rise of their own nation, "at bottom identical with those told as *Märchen* among nations that have reached a higher plane."

What is the state of mind of the man who can hear and tell,

without seeing anything extraordinary about them, such incidents as the following, all common and occurring in the tales of nations widely separated both by race and geographical position?

Lovers, fleeing from a wizard or parent, throw down a comb in the way of their pursuer—it becomes a mighty hedge; they throw down a bottle of earth—it becomes a mountain; a bottle of water—it becomes the sea; a man obtains three oranges, breaks them open one after another, a bird flies out; on giving the bird water it becomes a beautiful maiden, whom he marries; a woman, jealous of the beauty of another, runs a pin into her head, and she changes to a bird. Strange things to us, but to those from whom the stories came there was nothing unlikely about them, and if such things did not happen every day, it was simply because there did not arise any sufficient occasion.

In the savage, "first we have that nebulous and confused frame of mind to which all things, animate or inanimate, human, animal, vegetable, or inorganic, seem on the same level of life, passion, or reason. The savage draws no hard and fast line between himself and the things in the world" ("Myth, Ritual, and Religion," by Andrew Lang, Vol. I., p. 47). "Conscious personality and human emotions are visible to him everywhere and in all things. It matters not to the savage that human form and speech are absent. These are not necessary, or, if they are, they can be assumed either at will or under certain conditions—for one of the consequences, or at least one of the accompaniments, of this stage of thought is the belief in change of form without loss of individual identity. The bear whom the savage meets in the woods is too cunning to appear and do battle with him as a man, but he could if he chose" ("Science of Fairy Tales," p. 26).

Such are some of the grounds on which our author and others of the school—which might be called the school of Dr. E. B. Tylor—found their claim for a "Science of Fairy Tales."

"It is not science to fill one's head with the follies of Phœnicians and Greeks, but it is science to understand what led Greeks and Phœnicians to imagine these follies," quotes Mr. Andrew Lang, so they boldly tackle the "follies," and the science grows.

The theory of "confusion in early Aryan thought and speech," as accounting for all the strange stories of the classic mythologies, gives way before the facts of the wide distribution of the tales among non-Aryan races.

The distorted-history theory breaks down also. Mr. Hartland is able to show how our own story of Lady Godiva has no historical foundation, but its incidents and the ceremonies connected with its celebration are traced from Coventry and St. Briavel's to Smyrna and the country of the Mahrattas, and have doubtless some origin quite independent of the good Leofric and Godgifa, Earl and Countess of the Mercians ("Science of Fairy Tales," pp. 71-92).

Mr. Hartland starts from ascertained facts in savage intellectual life. We have first the belief held by savages that man consists of body and spirit; that it is possible for the spirit to quit the body, and roam at will in different shapes; that in the spirit's absence the body sleeps; that the universe swarms with embodied and disembodied spirits—which it appears are as likely to do one thing as another, and that it is the spirit of a rock in it which makes it roll over and crush a man, is not less clear to the savage than that it is the spirit of a man in him which makes him pick up a stone and throw it at a stranger. Again, there is the belief of the possibility of change of form while preserving identity, and the belief that some people have power to cause these changes. In a word, the belief in spirits, in transformation, in witchcraft, accounts for all the extraordinary incidents in the tales of savages, which the evolution of civilization and accidents of conquest and borrowing have degraded from "history" taught and recited by the tribal bards to simple Märchen, still told by the old folk in the chimney corner in out-of-the-way places, but which Miss Edgeworth, in the preface to "Parents' Assistant," declares unfit for children, as they may thereby have their ideas of truth destroyed.

Where so much is excellent and the matter so interesting, it is unpleasant to find fault, but Mr. Hartland's system of references is most confusing. On pp. 120-121 there is a paragraph of 27 lines; in it are 11 different incidents from nine different authorities, all referred to one foot-note, so that it is very difficult to find out who is the author responsible for any particular statement.

To say that this is the only fault in the book is to say more than we know in these early days of the science, but it is at least a most able and interesting exposition of the method and views of the modern school of folk-lorists. Anyone who has carefully read the book will not for the future dismiss as mere nonsense the most wild-sounding superstition; and if the idea can be diffused that perhaps once there was sense in what

seems so foolish now, it may be that intelligent people will carefully note any strange tale or custom of which they may hear, and thus important links be found connecting modern superstitions with long-past religious festivals and ceremonies—the superfluous and unaccountable in civilization with everyday savage life.

Jacob Herbert. A Study in Theology. By the Rev. JOHN EVANS, B.A. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

For a writer to balance the opinions of three different schools of thought after the fashion of the author of this book is a form of literary juggling to which we are now-a-days little accustomed. We always know, however, which ball will come down safest, for each is marked, and one represents the real opinions of the author. Mr. Evans introduces us to three persons, representing the orthodox theologian, the scientific agnostic, and the broad evangelical, and the avowed object of their discussions is to show that more is claimed for science than can be sustained, and that dogmatism is not confined to theologians. Jacob Herbert, Roger Adam, and Jeremiah Smith are the representatives of the three schools above-mentioned, and their arguments are directed to the elucidation of such subjects as the universal belief in God (viewed from the moral, cosmical, and other points), the attributes and personality of God, the theory of evolution, etc. The book can scarcely be called either a metaphysical or a psychological work. It is rather a gymnastic exercise of a semi-religious nature, and it ends by giving the impression that science and religion are not always incompatible, but that where the former fails, the latter (seen from Jacob Herbert's, *i.e.*, Mr. Evans' point of view) is unerring, and if it does not agree with "Science" it is because the latter is incomplete. Surely, this is dogmatism *à l'outrance*, but it is, perhaps, what was to be expected from a divine with a large amount of reading on sectarianism and the political events of the day, a physiological education of rather more than a superficial character, and a knowledge of just such an amount of natural science as may be gained by the study of Darwin. It is not our experience that the best scientific men are inclined to doubt the fundamental truths of religion, although Mr. Evans