

strictly so-called, is an abandonment of the whole field of philosophical speculation. The two others, although violently opposed in many ways, have this in common—that they are dualistic. All dualism is anathema to Mr. Holmes, whether it be that of matter and spirit, of nature and the supernatural, or of any other pair of opposites. We agree that popular dualism has been the cause of much practical evil. But here again Mr. Holmes's opponents may say that he has not treated them quite fairly. Theologians, for example, might decline to admit the accuracy of some of his statements on dogma.

Having dealt faithfully with his adversaries, Mr. Holmes gives us his own philosophy, which is idealistic, and which he terms "intuitional." Feeling insists on intermingling itself with thought, and becoming the senior partner in the business of thinking. Our aim is to know reality, but we can do this only by living our way into the heart of reality. The necessary fusion of thought and feeling is what we call intuition, and this is trained in the school of experience. The true philosopher must be both prophet and mystic. Mysticism is by no means incompatible with the ordinary affairs of life; many a great mystic has been famous for his practicality, and Mr. Holmes illustrates this by references to the teaching of Gautama. Finally, he expounds his creed, in the form of five suggestive paradoxes.

The book will provoke controversy. Mr. Holmes is prepared for this: the lions in the path have no terror for him. But whatever may be the verdict on his philosophy, we feel that much of his teaching fits in well with modern psychology. Materialistic science has validity within its sphere, but it has lost its position as autocratic ruler of thought. In the past we laid too much stress upon reason, and too little upon emotion. This reproach is now being taken from us. It has been said, "He is a poor physician who knows all things except the human heart." We believe that Mr. Holmes would accept this saying as a not unfair summary of his views.

M. HAMBLIN SMITH.

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*The Vedic Gods.* By V. G. RELE, L.M. & S., F.C.P.S. Bombay: D. B. Taraporevala Sons & Co., 1931. Pp. xvi + 134. Price Rs. 6.8.

The origin of the Vedas has long been a subject of controversy among scholars. It has been generally supposed that these legends were symbolic representations of the phenomena of the external universe. On account of certain peculiarities in the description of the dawn, and of the sun's diurnal journey, it has been held that ancient Aryan civilization originated in a region of the Arctic zone, an area which was habitable in the inter-glacial epoch.

While he does not desire to controvert this Arctic hypothesis, Dr. Rele takes an entirely novel view of the Vedas. His theory is based

on the ancient philosophical idea that the individual is a miniature copy of the cosmos ; and that by self-identification with the cosmos the individual becomes one with the Absolute. Dr. Rele contends that the Vedas are books on the physiology of the nervous system, written in symbolic language, by authors who were well acquainted with the normal working of that system. For various reasons, anatomical knowledge had to be obtained with great secrecy, and the seers let it be understood that their information was derived through Divine inspiration. Dr. Rele elaborates his theory in detail, identifying the various Vedic gods with different parts of the nervous system.

In the absence of an extensive acquaintance with Vedic literature, any criticism of this book would be impertinent. But no reader can fail to be impressed by the ingenuity with which Dr. Rele has worked out his hypothesis. A perusal of the book gives us some insight into a highly interesting mythology, which is too little known in this country. Those whose recollection of cerebral anatomy is becoming a little hazy will find that Dr. Rele's diagrams recall information laboriously acquired in student days. Much striking symbolism is referred to, which might be elaborated in the light of the psycho-analytic theory. In this connection we would note the legend of Indra, who slew his father, and that of Aditi, the mother of the gods. Students of Swedenborg also will find much that is suggestive in the Vedic philosophy.

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*Proceedings at the First Latin-American Conference of Neurology, Psychiatry and Forensic Medicine.* Buenos Aires: The University Press, 1929. Two volumes. Pp. 708 and 966. Price not stated.

This conference was held at Buenos Aires from November 14 to 17, 1928, under the Presidency of Dr. Arturo Ameghino. The list of delegates shows that there was a good attendance. The social side of such a conference was not neglected, for a banquet and excursions are mentioned. But the scientific proceedings fill two mighty volumes, although the size is increased by the fact that a number of the contributions are reproduced both in Spanish and Portuguese. Considerably more than a hundred papers were presented ; the majority of these deal with topics connected with clinical psychiatry, although neurology is a good second. We are pleased to see several contributions relating to the connection between psychiatry and criminology. The papers vary in length, from elaborate monographs to the briefest of communications. The discussions which took place are reported. A large number of illustrations are reproduced, some of the micro-photographs being most beautiful.

It is impossible to give any detailed criticism of so vast a mass of work. As might be expected, the papers vary widely in their