

ROUTLEDGE REVIVALS

# The Mystic Rose

A Study of Primitive Marriage and of  
Primitive thought in its Bearing on  
Marriage

Ernest Crawley



*Routledge Revivals*

---

**THE  
MYSTIC ROSE**



**Taylor & Francis**

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

# THE MYSTIC ROSE

A Study of Primitive Marriage and  
of Primitive Thought in Its Bearing on Marriage

ERNEST CRAWLEY

revised and greatly enlarged by  
THEODORE BESTERMAN



Routledge  
Taylor & Francis Group

First published in 1960 by Meridian Books, Inc.

This edition first published in 2018 by Routledge  
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN  
and by Routledge  
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business*

©1960 Taylor & Francis

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

#### **Publisher's Note**

The publisher has gone to great lengths to ensure the quality of this reprint but points out that some imperfections in the original copies may be apparent.

#### **Disclaimer**

The publisher has made every effort to trace copyright holders and welcomes correspondence from those they have been unable to contact.  
A Library of Congress record exists under ISBN: 60012990

ISBN 13: 978-1-138-55595-2 (hbk)

ISBN 13: 978-0-203-70474-5 (ebk)

TO  
SIR J. G. FRAZER, O.M.  
IN  
GRATITUDE AND ADMIRATION



**Taylor & Francis**

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

THE  
MYSTIC ROSE



**Taylor & Francis**

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

THE  
MYSTIC ROSE

*A Study of Primitive Marriage and  
of Primitive Thought in Its Bearing on Marriage*

ERNEST CRAWLEY

revised and greatly enlarged by  
THEODORE BESTERMAN

MERIDIAN BOOKS, INC. *New York*

ERNEST CRAWLEY

*(Alfred) Ernest Crawley was born in 1869. He was the author of a number of works in anthropology, among them Studies of Savages and Sex and Dress, Drinks, and Drums. Ernest Crawley died in 1924.*



Published by Meridian Books, Inc. August 1960

First printing July 1960

Reprinted from the Second Edition (1927) by  
arrangement with Methuen & Co., Ltd. An earlier  
American edition was published by  
Boni & Liveright in the same year.

All rights reserved

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 60-12990

Manufactured in the United States of America

## EDITOR'S PREFACE

THOUGH this book had been out of print for a number of years and obtainable in the sale-room only at a high premium, other preoccupations for long prevented Mr Crawley from preparing a new edition. But, his work having in the course of time gained a very high degree of estimation, having, indeed, become one of the very few classics of anthropology and of primitive psychology, Mr Crawley was at last persuaded, two years ago, to undertake the necessary work. Immediately upon this decision followed his sudden death, in the prime of his life and of his intellectual power.

The interval had been too short to allow Mr Crawley any opportunity to determine the scope of his proposed revision, or even to make any notes, nor had I the means, not having had the privilege of his personal acquaintance, to ascertain the trend of his views during recent years. Thus, when I was invited to undertake this edition, I did not feel authorised to attempt any amendment of the theories herein expressed, and I have restricted my interference with the text to the extent about to be indicated.

I have verified (few corrections were necessary) and reduced to order the references to authorities, striking

out, together with the appropriate matter in the text, nearly all those taken at second-hand from such works as those of Featherman, Waitz-Gerland and Ploss-Bartels. Where I have been able, in a few instances, to trace such references to their sources, I have placed the new references within square brackets. A few paragraphs have been transposed, and in several cases the evidence has been rearranged into geographical sequences. The only other amendments of the text are the occasional verbal alterations involved by the addition of evidence and of arguments. The chief of these additions are shown in the Table following this Preface (the asterisks indicating extracts from Mr Crawley's scattered writings) and will be seen to consist, first, of evidence, or further evidence, where the argument seemed to require strengthening, and of specimens of the large accumulations of anthropological material during the last two decades, and, secondly, of replies to criticisms and of discussions of the more recently advanced theories. All the additions are enclosed in square brackets, and the extracts above-mentioned are further shown by inverted commas. To these revisions affecting the text I have added a Bibliography and a new and more comprehensive Index, the latter being supplemented by a considerable number of cross-references in the footnotes.

Having thus at least avoided the mutilation of his work, I trust that its new form will not be found to do an injustice to the memory of a brilliant and original scholar and writer.

I have to thank Messrs T. & T. Clark and the executors of Dr Hastings for permission to quote from

## EDITOR'S PREFACE

ix

some of Mr Crawley's numerous and valuable articles in the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, and the Clarendon Press for similar permission in respect of Mr Crawley's paper in *Anthropological Essays presented to Edward Burnett Tylor*.

TH. B.

*September, 1926*

## TABLE OF THE CHIEF ADDITIONS TO THE FIRST EDITION.

First Edition	Second Edition	CHIEF ADDITIONS.
<i>Page(s)</i>	<i>Page(s)</i> <i>vol. i</i>	
22-26	22-30	Further evidence of the savage's fear of the new, <i>etc.</i>
26	32-33	* Note on the abnormality in primitive thought of death and disease.
26-28	33-37	Further evidence of this belief.
49	61	Criticism of "functional psychology" anthropology.
49-50	62-65	Further evidence of the occupational separation of the sexes.
50-51	65-71	Further evidence of sexual separation before war, <i>etc.</i>
46-48	77-83	Further evidence of the influence of sexual taboo on language.
78	109	Criticism of Dr Freud's theory regarding the origin of taboo.
187	224-226	Reply to M. Reinach's criticism of the author's theory concerning the transmission of sexual characteristics.
204	242-244	Evidence of male dress worn by women of masculine temperament.
205	246-248	Evidence of the timidity of savage women.
206	248-249	Reply to Dr Marett's criticism of the author's theory concerning the male savage's fear of the transmission of female characteristics.
212	257 <i>n.</i>	Reply to M. Durkheim's criticism of the author's theory concerning the part played by blood in primitive thought.
219	265	Evidence of special sleeping-places for young men.
270	320-323	Evidence of boys disguised as girls, <i>etc.</i>
282	338-359	* Discussion of the nature and history of the kiss.
289	366-371 <i>vol. ii.</i>	* Discussion of the nature and early history of the dance.
304	13-15	Francis Parkman on the guardian spirits of the American Indians.
341	56-57	Discussion, and further evidence, of marriage to trees, <i>etc.</i>
344	61-62	Discussion of various theories concerning the deferment of consummation after marriage.
349	70-76	Discussion of Dr Freud's views concerning defloration artificially or by proxy.
364	91-92	Further evidence of the capture of the bride from the female sex.
371	101-115	* Survey of the exchange and inversion of dress.
378-379	124-128	Further evidence of eating together at marriage and betrothal.
387	137-138	Note on the exchange of gifts at marriage and betrothal.
388	139-140	Criticism of the view of bridal gifts as a form of compensation.
408	162-168	Reply to Dr Westermarck's criticism of the author's theory of separation between males and females related by marriage, with tables analysing such separations.
450	212-220	* Historical reconstruction of the origin of exogamy.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE present theory was outlined about seven years ago, and a preliminary portion was published in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute* for 1895 (vol. xxiv.). In that paper the main lines of the argument were laid down, and it was suggested that the explanation of marriage ceremonies and systems was to be developed thereon. The subsequent loss of a good deal of my materials, not yet all recovered, has been balanced by the publication of Messrs Spencer and Gillen's valuable researches amongst the Central Australian natives, which confirm my conclusions in many ways.

These conclusions were originally completed without reference to the prevalent doctrines, originated by Bachofen and McLennan, and developed by Morgan, Bastian, Lubbock, G. A. Wilken, Robertson Smith, Giraud-Teulon, Fison, Howitt, Tylor, Post, Lippert, and others, concerning the origin and development of marriage, such as the Matriarchate (Bachofen), Marriage by Capture (McLennan), Primitive Promiscuity and Communal Marriage, comprising the hypotheses that some marriage ceremonies are intended to make the husband and wife of the same tribal or blood-kinship, and that others are "expiation for

marriage" (Sir J. Lubbock); that is to say, these ceremonies are a compensation to the tribe or kin, individual marriage being an infringement of communal rights. These theories had to be taken into consideration. Previous study of the psychology of the lower races, starting from Professor Tylor's *Primitive Culture*, and Dr Frazer's *Golden Bough*, to both of which I owe a great intellectual debt, made it evident that these prevalent theories of marriage origins were based on an imperfect understanding of primitive custom and thought. It also appeared a mistake, in view of the undifferentiated character of early thought, to separate the study of marriage systems and marriage ceremonies. I have here attempted to supply a more adequate basis for the enquiry by an analysis of the simplest and most elemental aspects in which the individual appears in relation to society. The ultimate appeal in these questions is to universal facts of human physiology and psychology. In illustration, it is perhaps worth mentioning that I was led from a general study of primitive culture to the study of marriage, by an investigation into the curious custom of exchange of dress between men and women, which occurs in the most dissimilar connections and the strangest places. I found that all cases of the custom yielded on analysis the same psychological components as to the relations of the sexes generally, and marriage in particular.

In 1889 Professor E. B. Tylor first applied statistics to the study of these questions (*Journ. Anthropol. Inst.*, vol. xviii.). This was an important departure. It is first necessary, however, thoroughly to analyse every custom

and its adhesions in the light not only of the whole culture of the given peoples, but of all primitive and elemental psychology ; otherwise, tabulation leads to the pruning of facts, and a resulting neglect of essential characteristics which are apparently accidents. As MM. Langlois and Seignobos, our highest authorities on the methods of history, observe, the defect of statistical methods is that "they do not rest on a knowledge of the whole of the conditions under which the facts occur" (*Introduction to the Study of History*, p. 291, Eng. Trans.). So far as the data are correctly assigned and analysed, Professor Tylor's main results are, that there is a causal connection between (1) the mother-in-law avoidance custom and residence of the husband with the wife's family, (2) these and the custom of teknonymy (naming the parents after the child), (3) the couvade (the custom by which the husband pretends to lie-in) and temporary residence of the husband with the wife's family, (4) this temporary residence and marriage by capture. The cause, however, which he provisionally assumes is still the old maternal system, arising out of communism, with marriage by capture intervening to produce individual marriage. As will be seen, the cause which I suggest also serves to explain all these connections, and these statistical results, so far as they correctly represent the facts, supply a corroboration of the present theory. Many of the tables, however, when the customs are analysed, present a very different appearance.

The valuable series of fresh data, collected from the Dutch East Indies, did not lead the distinguished Dutch

ethnologist, the late Professor G. A. Wilken, to any new line of enquiry.

The late Professor Robertson Smith in 1885 first put one part of the problem, the question of the origin of bars to marriage, in a new light, by suggesting that whatever their origin, they are very early associated with the idea that it is not decent for housemates to intermarry (*Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*).

In 1890 Dr J. G. Frazer, in his monumental work *The Golden Bough* (second edition, 1900), which, like Professor Tylor's *Primitive Culture*, marks an epoch in the study of man, referred to the existence of a mass of facts showing that the origin of the marriage system was to be found in some primitive conception of danger attaching to the sexual act. This statement is the most important contribution yet made to the study of these questions. As will be seen, however, I do not confine the issue so narrowly.

In 1891 appeared Dr E. Westermarck's *History of Human Marriage* (third edition, 1901), which revolutionised the study of the origins and development of marriage. His most valuable contributions are that he weakened or destroyed several positions of the old theory of primitive communism and the matriarchate, and gave an excellent account of human marriage in its biological aspects. He, however, carries the biological method too far when he "applies biological analogies (selection, struggle for existence, inherited habits, and so on) to the explanation of social evolution, which is not produced by the operation of the same causes as

animal evolution" (Langlois and Seignobos, *op. cit.* p. 321), and not only takes no account of primitive psychology but neglects the importance of marriage ceremonies, of which he treats in one short chapter, without connecting them with other data. The general study not only of marriage ceremonies as a whole, which hitherto has not been systematically attempted, but of the whole question of marriage origins, is to be developed, as I have suggested, from that primitive religious mental habit, the characteristics of which have been so well analysed by Professor Tylor and in further issues by Dr Frazer.

I am much indebted to my friend Mr A. L. Bowley, one of our highest authorities on the methods of statistics, for working out for me some statistical problems.

E. C.



**Taylor & Francis**

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

# CONTENTS

## VOLUME I

EDITOR'S PREFACE . . . . .	Page	vii
TABLE OF THE CHIEF ADDITIONS TO THE FIRST EDITION . . . . .	„	x
AUTHOR'S PREFACE . . . . .	„	xi

## CHAPTER I

### *INTRODUCTORY*

Method of inquiry, 1-2—Typical problems, 2-3—Primitive thought and culture, 3-5—Religion in the relations of the sexes, both in ordinary life, marriage ceremonial and sexual crises, 6-12.

## THE TABOO IMPOSED, CHAPTERS II-IX

### CHAPTER II

#### *TABOO*

Taboo, 13—Social and sexual taboo, 13-15—Evil influences, 15-22—The abnormal and the new, 22-30—The supernatural character of emotions, of pain, of sickness, and of death, 30-37—Supernatural danger in human relations, 37-41.

### CHAPTER III

#### *SEXUAL TABOO*

The relations of man and woman, 42-44—Sexual taboo, 44-52—Sexual solidarity and sexual antagonism, 52-58—Sexual taboo in religion, 58-61—Sex and occupations, 61-71—Sexual taboo at sexual crises, 71-77—The influence of sexual taboo on language, 77-83—Preliminary analysis of sexual taboo, 84-87.

## CHAPTER IV

*HUMAN RELATIONS*

Evil spirits and material evil influences not distinguished, 88-91—Anthropomorphism, 91-93—Possession, 93—Personification and the memory-image, 94-95—The real and the ideal not distinguished, 95-96—Human and spiritual influence not distinguished, 96-104—In sexual and social relations human influence underlies spiritual, 104-106.

## CHAPTER V

*HUMAN RELATIONS (Continued)*

Contact the test of human relations, both sexual and social, 107-111—Substance and accidents, 111-112—Material transmission of states and properties, the basis of sexual and social taboo, 112—Contagion of various human qualities and states, 112-123—Contagion of degradation, dullness, timidity, stupidity, weakness, effeminacy, pain, sin and crime, sickness and disease, death, beneficence, love, friendship, strength and courage, 124-137—Contagion by means of parts or properties of the body, clothes, food, various forms of contact, stepping over the shadow, sight or mere proximity, 138-152—The intention, 153-155—Oaths and ordeals, 156-157—The method of *ngadhungi*, 157-165.

## CHAPTER VI

*HUMAN RELATIONS (Concluded)*

Care of functions and organs, 166-167—The mutilation of organs, 168-172—Disgust, uncleanness and shame in connection with sexual and social taboo, 172-174—Summary of the conceptions which underlie human relations, 174-176—Their result in primitive morality and etiquette, 176-181.

## CHAPTER VII

*COMMENSAL RELATIONS*

Contact by means of food, 182-183—Importance of nutrition, 183-185—Fasting, 186—Forbidden food, 186-187—Transmission of properties by food, 188—Magic by means of food, 188-189—Eating in solitude, 190-191—Taboos against eating with others, 191-198—Taboos against eating with the opposite sex at sexual crises, 199-201—The same in ordinary life, 202-214.

## CHAPTER VIII

*SEXUAL RELATIONS*

Contact by sexual intercourse, 215—Intercourse in secret, 215-217—Obscenity, 217—Modesty, 217-218—Fear in sexual intercourse, 218—Magic and the sexual organs, 218-221—Love-charms, 221-223—Contagion of weakness and effeminacy, 223-226—Sexual intercourse regarded as enervating and weakening, 226-229—The rupture of the *hymen*, 229-230—Beliefs concerning the origin of menstruation, 230-231—The serpent, 231-233—Seduction by evil spirits in human form, 233-235—Sun-taboos and their origin, 236-239—Sexual taboo and purification, 239-240.

## CHAPTER IX

*SEXUAL RELATIONS (Continued)*

Transmission of male and female properties, 241-243—Women of masculine temperament in male clothes, 243-244—Women regarded as weak and timid, 244-249—Priests dressed in women's clothes, 250-251—Transmission of female weakness by contact, 251-254—Customs of dressing weak, effeminate and impotent men in women's clothes, 255-256—Transmission by blood cannot account for all the phenomena, 256-259—Summary of sexual taboo, 259-260—Its results in separating the young, both within and without the house, 260-269—Incest and promiscuity, 269-270.

## THE TABOO REMOVED, CHAPTERS X-XIV

## CHAPTER X

*THE BREAKING OF TABOO*

The breaking of taboo, 271—Avoiding the dangers of taboo by the use of barriers, veils, dummies and substitutes, 271-274—The sacrifice of a part to preserve the whole, 274-275—Fasting, 276—Purification from taboo, 276-278—Methods of removing taboo, 278-280—Inoculation, 280-284.

## CHAPTER XI

*THEORY OF UNION*

Mutual inoculation and union, 285-286—The relation of *ngia ngiampe*, 287—Its use in love, hospitality, friendship, artificial brotherhood, the making of peace and in settling disputes, 288-296—Exchange of wives, 296-297—Guilds, 298—Its results in mutual respect and assistance, 298-300—The taboo resulting from it, 300-306—Summary of the *ngia ngiampe* relation, 306-309—The categories of union and identity, 309-311—The primitive conception of relationship, 311-314—Bars to marriage, 314-316.

## CHAPTER XII

*THEORY OF CHANGE AND EXCHANGE*

Disguise, 317-318—Wearing the dress of the opposite sex, 318-320—Change of name and of identity, 321-324—The idea of new life at initiation, at puberty and at periodic festivals, 324-329—New food, 329-331—Representatives and substitutes, 332—New dress, 333—Disguise and change pass into exchange, 333—Saturnalia, 333-335—Exchange of wives, 335-337—The nature of the kiss, 338-343—Its history, 343-359—The breaking of taboo, 359—Union, 360—Duplicates and proxies, 360-361—Promiscuity, 362-363—Funeral observances, 363-365—Scapegoats, 366—Wardances, 366-367—The nature of the dance, 367-372—The principle of make-believe in custom, etiquette and punishment, 372-375.

# THE MYSTIC ROSE

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

ALL study of the origins of social institutions must be based on what ethnology can tell us of the psychology of the lower races and on the primitive conceptions of human relations which are thus established. It is only in early modes of thought that we can find the explanation of ceremonies and systems which originated in primitive society ; and, if ceremony and system are the concrete forms in which human relations are expressed, an examination, ethnological and psychological, of human relations, is indispensable for enquiry into human institutions. It is necessary to lay stress upon this principle, for students of the history of marriage have hitherto ignored it, or rather, while using the facts of ethnology, have shown no sympathy with primitive thought. They have interpreted primitive custom by ideas which are far from primitive, which, in fact, are relatively late and belong to the legal stage of human culture. The attribution of legal conceptions to primitive thought has had the usual effect of *a priori* theory, and has checked enquiry.

In his *History of Human Marriage*<sup>1</sup> Dr Westermarck made a much-needed protest, and refuted several of these pseudo-syntheses. In the constructive portion of his

<sup>1</sup> E. Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage* (1891 [5th ed. 1921, 3 vols.]).

work he uses the biological argument. This was also necessary ; the facts of biology must supply the preliminaries of investigation. But he goes too far with biology in one direction, and in another not far enough. The latter line of enquiry is sex. One of the most remarkable defects of the legal school of anthropology is its neglect to take sexual relations into account when discussing a sexual relation like that of marriage.

In the following pages we have followed the principle that marriage, both in ceremony and in system, is grounded in primitive conceptions of sexual relations. Many collateral phenomena will be discussed, which illustrate and are themselves explained by these conceptions, and though the lines of the argument lead from human relations through sexual relations to meet in marriage, yet by the way they will touch upon the connection of morality and religion with the social life of mankind.

At the outset it may be well to bring forward a few striking facts of custom, as types of the problems to be solved, and as a help towards clearness. Such are the following, which may be put, after the fashion of Plutarch, as questions :

(1) Why, according to a very general custom, are husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, required to avoid each other in one or more ways, and why, in particular, may they not eat together ?

(2) Why do betrothed persons also, as is frequently the case, avoid each other with religious caution ?

(3) Why, again, do men and women, generally, practice the same religious caution of each other ?

(4) Why, according to a common custom, is it

necessary for the bridegroom to take his bride by violence? ("Marriage by capture.")

(5) Why are the bride and bridegroom in, for instance, Bengal, first married to two trees?

(6) Why did the bride in ancient Argos wear a beard in the bridal chamber, and why in Kos was the bridegroom arrayed in women's clothes when he received his bride?

(7) Why, according to a widely spread custom, which, like the next, has excited the laughter of mankind, should a man and his mother-in-law religiously avoid each other to the extent of hiding the face and of being "ashamed"?

(8) Why, as is the practice in several parts of the world, and as was reported of the Tibarenoi by Greek writers, and of the King of Torelore by the *jogleor* who wrote *Cest daucassin et de nicolete*,<sup>1</sup> does the husband lie-in and pretend to be a mother when his wife is confined? (*Couvade*).

The primitive mental habit in its general features is best described negatively by the term *unscientific*, and positively by *religious*, in the ordinary connotation of that term. *Superstitious* would be preferable, were it not too narrow; as to *magic*, we do not here distinguish—magic being simply the superstitious or religious *method* as opposed to the scientific.<sup>2</sup> This primitive

<sup>1</sup> [For marriage customs in the 13th century, see e.g., B. Barth, *Liebe und Ehe im altfranzösischen Fabel und in der mittelhochdeutschen Novelle* (1910), and O. Zollinger, *Die Ebeschliessung im Nibelungenlied und in der Gudrun* (1923); cp. M. Lacombe, *Essai sur la Coutume Poitevine du mariage* (1910).]

<sup>2</sup> [The suggestions put forward in this paragraph have since been exhaustively developed by M. Lévy-Bruhl, in his *Les fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures* (1910), and *Primitive Mentality* (1923), whose views, apart from what appears to me to be the weakest part of them—his theory about "collective representations"—are indistinguishable from those expressed in the present work.]

thinking does not distinguish between the natural and the supernatural, between subjective and objective reality. Primitive man regards the creations of his own imagination as being no less real than the existences for which he has the evidence of sense-perception, in a way more real, precisely because they elude sense-perception, though dealt with in the same way as objective reality; and, while the latter is always changing, these ideal existences, like the ideas of Plato, never pass away. Objective reality also takes on some properties of ideal reality, so that for primitive man the supernatural and the natural interchange, or rather, are not distinguished. This philosophy is truly monistic, and is neither materialist nor idealist, but undifferentiated. Matter is spiritual, and spirit is material, though sometimes invisible. Primitive logic corresponds to this metaphysic; it is likewise undifferentiated and is chiefly guided by "material fallacies" and a Realism more pronounced than that of the Schoolmen. Such inference necessarily includes true results, inductive and deductive, but no less necessarily these true results are not distinguished from the false; inextricably confused with fallacy, which often owes its continuance to the association, truth is held but is not recognised as a distinct species. As to "survivals" of primitive speculation and custom into civilised periods and places, the term is misused when it is implied that these are dead forms, surviving like fossil remains or rudimentary organs; the fact is that human nature remains fundamentally primitive, and it is not easy even for those most favoured by descent to rise above these primitive ideas, precisely because these ideas "spring eternally" from permanent functional causes. Every one would still be primitive were it not for education and environment, and the importance of

these elements in the evolution of the race can hardly be over-estimated.

The undifferentiated character of primitive culture, its reference of all departments of thought and practice to one psychological habit, the superstitious or religious, may be illustrated from higher stages. "The political and religious Governments of the Kaffir tribes are so intimately connected that the one cannot be overturned without the other ; they must stand or fall together."<sup>1</sup> The great pagan civilisations show exactly the same homogeneity. The ideal society of early Christians was one where there should be no separation between Church and State, where public and private life and thought, politics and domestic affairs, individual and social morality, speculation and science, should all be subsumed under religion, and directed by the religious method. Such an ideal differs in degree only from the actual condition of primitive society ; whatever term be used to describe this, it is homogeneous and monistic in practice and theory ; one method is applied to its philosophy of nature and of man, its politics and public life, its sociology and human relations, domestic and social, its medical science and practice, its ethics and morality, its ordinary thought and action in everyday life, its behaviour and etiquette. Thus, as will also be shown by the way, there is a religious meaning inherent in the primitive conception and practice of all human relations, a meaning which is always ready to become actualised ; and the same is true of all individual processes of sense and emotion and intellection and, in especial, of those functional processes that are most easily seen in their working and results. Not only "the Master knot of

<sup>1</sup> J. Maclean, *A Compendium of Kafir Laws and Customs* (1858), p. 107.

Human Fate," but all human actions and relations, all individual and social phenomena, have for primitive man, always potentially and often actually, a full religious content. So it is with that sub-division of human nature and human life caused by sex ; all actions and relations, all individual and social phenomena conditioned by sex, are likewise filled with a religious meaning. Sexual relations and sexual processes, as all human relations and human processes, are religious to the primitive mind. The conception of danger, neither material nor spiritual, but both, which is the chief characteristic of early religious thought and practice, and which is due to the unscientific character of early speculation, is here intensified by the importance, psychical and physiological, of the sexual life. As we proceed, this characteristic of sexual relations and sexual life, will be made clear ; it is seen in the phenomena of the individual life and of social relations, both in ordinary circumstances and, naturally intensified, in sexual crises. Thus, birth and baptism, confirmation and marriage, are attended by religious ceremonies. There is indeed a tendency amongst enquirers, due to the legal method of investigation, to ignore the religious character of the marriage ceremony ; but it is only in later culture that marriage is a "civil act," and though in early Catholic times marriage was not necessarily performed by the Church, it was still in essence a religious rite, and had been so before Christianity, and was so in the earliest ages. One of the crudest modes of marriage known, that of the Arunta and other Central Australian tribes, is proved by a note of Messrs Spencer and Gillen to be a religious act,<sup>1</sup> though to all appearance this would

<sup>1</sup> Sir W. B. Spencer and F. J. Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* (1899), p. 93.

seem impossible. As we shall see, even the ordinary intercourse of man with woman has for primitive man this religious meaning.

The primitive conception of danger, which leads to these precautions, religious or superstitious, so characteristic of early ritual, appears in two forms, the predication of evil influences and the imposition of taboos. Let us take a few preliminary instances, from ordinary life, and from sexual crises. In the Marquesas Islands the use of canoes is prohibited to the female sex by taboo: the breaking of the rule is punished with death. *Tapamaking* belongs exclusively to women, and it is taboo for men to touch it.<sup>1</sup> The Kaffirs will not from superstitious motives allow women to touch their cattle.<sup>2</sup> Amongst the Dakotas custom and superstition ordain that the wife must carefully keep away from all that belongs to her husband's sphere.<sup>3</sup> In New Zealand, to mention only one more of many similar cases, a man who has any important business in hand, either in peace or in war, is taboo and must keep away from the female sex.<sup>4</sup>

The fear of evil spirits shows itself from time to time during the long and wearisome marriage ceremonies of South Celebes, and methods are used to frustrate their evil intentions against the happiness of the young pair. There is also a fear that the soul of the bridegroom may

<sup>1</sup> H. Melville, *Narrative of a four months' residence among the natives of the Marquesas Islands* (1846), pp. 13, 245.

<sup>2</sup> E. Holub, "The Central South African Tribes," *J.A.I.* (1881), x. 11; cp. H. L. Roth, "On the Origin of Agriculture," *J.A.I.* (1887), xvi. 119.

<sup>3</sup> [H. R. Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information respecting . . . the Indian tribes of the United States* (1851-1860), iii. 230.]

<sup>4</sup> [E. Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand* (1843), ii. 85-86.]

fly away from sheer happiness.<sup>1</sup> In China, a new bride is apt to be attacked by evil spirits, causing her to be ill; hence the figure of "a great magician" (a Taoist priest), brandishing a sword, is painted on the sedan-chair which she uses on the wedding-day.<sup>2</sup> The sedan-chair in which a Manchu bride goes to the house of the bridegroom, is "disinfected" with incense to drive away evil spirits, and in it is placed a calendar containing the names of idols who control the spirits of evil.<sup>3</sup> The Druses "have a superstition that leads them to suppose that Gins or evil spirits are more than usually busy on the occasion of marriage," and may interfere with the happiness of the pair.<sup>4</sup> In English folklore "the malevolence of witchcraft seems to have taken the greatest pleasure in subtle assaults upon those just entering the married state."<sup>5</sup> In Russia all doors, windows, and even the chimney, are closed at a wedding, to prevent malicious witches flying in and hunting the bride and bridegroom.<sup>6</sup> The Chuvashes honour their wizards (*iemzyas*) and always invite them to weddings, for fear that an offended *iemzya* might destroy the bride and bridegroom.<sup>7</sup>

Savages, in common, we may add, with the rest of mankind, are very secretive concerning their functional life. This attitude is emphasised when the sexual act is in question. Thus amongst the natives of the Ceramlaut

<sup>1</sup> B. F. Matthes, *Bijdragen tot de Ethnologie van Zuid-Celebes* (1875), pp. 30, 33, 39; R. van Eck, "De Mangkasaren en Boegineezen," *De Indische Gids* (1881), III. ii. 1038.

<sup>2</sup> J. Doolittle, *Social Life of the Chinese* (1867), i. 95.

<sup>3</sup> J. H. S. Lockhart, "The Marriage Ceremonies of the Manchus," *Folk-Lore* (1890), i. 487.

<sup>4</sup> G. W. Chasseaud, *The Druses of the Lebanon* (1849), p. 168.

<sup>5</sup> J. Brand, *Popular Antiquities* (1849), iii. 305.

<sup>6</sup> W. R. S. Ralston, *The Songs of the Russian People* (1872), p. 381.

<sup>7</sup> V. M. Mikhailovskii, "Shamanism in Siberia," *J.A.I.* (1895), xxiv. 156.

Archipelago, between Celebes and Papua, where there is a veneer of Islam, it is the custom for both man and wife to say the well-known formula of good Muslims before the sexual act.<sup>1</sup> This is indeed a general rule in Islam, especially on the first night of marriage.<sup>2</sup> The old Romans similarly invoked *Dea Virginensis* while ceremonially loosing the zone.<sup>3</sup> The natives of Amboina believe in a witch, *Pontianak*, who steals away not only infants, but the genital organs of men.<sup>4</sup> In South Celebes the evil spirit most feared by the male sex is one that makes a man incapable of performing his marital duties.<sup>5</sup> A similar belief is very common in European folklore.

[Again, as we shall see later,<sup>6</sup> these beliefs and taboos apply with still greater force to women at their sexual crises. At puberty, during the menstrual periods, in pregnancy, at and after child-birth, women are more in danger from evil influences than normally, and are therefore themselves more particularly taboo than commonly.] In all these relations and functional crises connected with sex, a religious state is, as it were, entered upon. There is not needed to prove this the major premiss that all primitive practice and belief are essentially religious; the particular instances which we shall survey themselves point clearly to a connection with religion.

It may be objected that the presence of evil spirits in some of these cases proves nothing. But all we wish to point out just now is the actual presence of evil or danger. We are far from wishing to imply that the evil spirits or dangerous influences present on all these

<sup>1</sup> J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesbarige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua* (1886), p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> A. Bastian, *Der Mensch in der Geschichte* (1860), iii. 293.

<sup>3</sup> St Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, iv. 11.

<sup>4</sup> J. G. F. Riedel, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

<sup>5</sup> B. F. Matthes, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

<sup>6</sup> [Below, i. 71 *et seq.*]

occasions are those against which the ceremonies of baptism, marriage and the like, were instituted as safeguards. In some of these cases the evil influence stated is that which has caused the rite or taboo ; in others it is not so ; other cases again are examples of a belief in the process of crystallisation into ceremony, superimposed upon an already crystallised ceremony of similar origin, such as in the cases of marriage taken from South Celebes, Manchuria and Russia ; whilst yet others show an original ceremony in the process of development from belief, as in the cases of the Indian girl at puberty,<sup>1</sup> and the Veddas at menstruation,<sup>2</sup> and in those above of the Muslim and Roman bridegrooms, where the Roman ceremony is obviously the crystallisation of an idea similar to the Muslim. In the higher stages of culture it is hardly necessary to quote instances to prove that baptism, confirmation, the "churching" of women and marriage, are religious ceremonies, but it is important to mark the continuity of these with the ritual of early man. A long array of facts might be given to show that the main line of development in ritual is from the propitiation or insulation of evil influences to the conciliation of beneficent powers. The change is effected in this way : the dangers feared are originally insulated before and during the exercise of the function, as is the natural course, then, at the end of the use of the function, the expulsion of the dangers is performed for the last time and often shows a twofold character, purification and propitiation, such as, to take the case of child-birth, the purification of the woman with water and the propitiation of the spirits by food. The practice of performing the chief ceremony at the end of a functional crisis was more sure of continuance, precisely

<sup>1</sup> [Below, i. 75.]

<sup>2</sup> [Below, i. 76.]

because the danger is then usually over, and the ceremony therefore cannot be discredited. Further, keeping the same instance of purification after child-birth, the deliverance from danger is naturally ascribed to some beneficent spirit, and the water with which the woman is purified of that danger takes on the character of "holy" accordingly. The examples drawn from the Veddas<sup>1</sup> and from an East Central African tribe<sup>2</sup> are here instructive, as showing the necessary components of a ceremony and illustrating its origin.

We must next point out the fact that the rules and restrictions (taboos) imposed in these sexual relations or sexual crises, some of which are expressly called taboo, are identical with those imposed in other taboo states such as hunting, war and the preparation therefor, mourning, also in the case of those sacred persons, at once more and less than man, of whom Sir James Frazer treats in his great work. But the plurality of causes, which makes it unsafe to infer similarity of cause from similar effects, necessitates an analysis of particular results.

The ideas underlying these examples of taboo are in some cases connected with "spiritual" dangers and, to that extent, are religious. In the further analysis of these and other cases, the religious character of practice and belief will be made more clear, and the precise nature of the danger will be investigated. For the present let us take one or two of these cases, which might be multiplied indefinitely, to show the identity of the ideas underlying Polynesian taboo and similar religious states elsewhere. A Maori woman at menstruation is taboo and anyone touching her is taboo. Now, the Siamese, who imagine that evil spirits swarm in the air, believe

<sup>1</sup> [Below, i. 76.]

<sup>2</sup> [Below, i. 74.]

that it is these who enjoy the first-fruits of their girls and who cause the "wound" which renews itself every month, a "wound" of which the menstrual blood is the result and proof.<sup>1</sup> It is contact with this blood of which the Maori male is so afraid; add to this the fact that the Maoris themselves not only identify menstrual blood with an evil spirit, *Kahukahu*, but also hold that the taboo state generally is due to the influence of ancestral spirits,<sup>2</sup> and identification of taboo and "spiritual" influence is so far complete.

Now, if behind any sexual relation or sexual functional crisis, and behind the relations between the sexes resulting in connection with it, there are found ideas identical with those underlying any taboo or religious condition, we may infer for all such ideas in primitive thought not only correlation but identity of origin.

As we proceed we shall find evidence not only for identifying this religious state of "spiritual" danger with the dangers underlying taboo, and with those proceeding from evil agencies, material, spiritual, or both, but also for ascribing this state to the functional crises of sex and the ensuing sexual attitude, and even to the ordinary relations of the sexes.

<sup>1</sup> S. de La Loubère, *Du royaume de Siam* (1691), i. 203.

<sup>2</sup> E. Shortland, *The Southern Districts of New Zealand* (1851), pp. 67-68.

# THE TABOO IMPOSED

## CHAPTER II

### TABOO

WE have seen reason to suppose that men and women at marriage, women during menstruation, pregnancy and child-birth, boys and girls at puberty, infants, not to mention other critical conditions and circumstances, are regarded by early man as being in that mysterious religious state which necessitates the imposition of restrictions and safeguards, of taboos in a word, and to which mourners and kings, warriors and priests alike are called. In the last case cited from the Maoris we see very clearly the two-fold nature of the state in which these *sacrae personae* find themselves. Sir James Frazer has here most happily applied the language of electricity. The person charged with this electric force, which is both dangerous and beneficent, must be insulated by various taboos.

The Polynesian taboo, especially in Hawaii and New Zealand, is the basis of society ; it is the support of all religious, moral and social institutions, for all of which it supplies a supernatural sanction. The system is indeed a good example of the religious character of early society. Used by priests and nobles for their own ends and no less for the good of the community, it early divided into religious, political and social taboo. Every priest and every gentleman is *tabu*, "sacred." The

opposite state is *noa*, "common." This is the system after a long development. Here we wish to deal rather with the ideas underlying taboo in its human aspect. These are universal human ideas, arising directly from the simplest human relations and physical functions, and we therefore propose, after having shown cause why the identity should be recognised, to apply the term taboo to all similar phenomena throughout mankind, and not only to the restrictions but to the whole series of persons, beliefs and practices. All these are potentially what the Polynesian taboo is actually. Also, as will be seen, taboo as thus extended is identical with a considerable part of religion in the sense already described as characteristic of primitive culture. We do not wish to imply that these ideas underlying taboo have developed the whole of religion ; and, as in this enquiry we have to discuss the relations of man with man and of man with woman, that is, taboo in its social aspect, the terms Social Taboo and Sexual Taboo may well be used. They will serve both to avoid misconceptions as to religion in general, and to mark the fact that here we meet with fundamental ideas which lie beneath the relations of man with man and beneath the system of morality derived from those relations. In those ideas may be seen the basis of evolutionary ethics.

Primitive taboo exists now in all its pristine strength, though it has split into religious, moral and social habits, each distinguished by a more or less different terminology. To illustrate the continuity of culture and the identity of the elementary human ideas in all ages, it is sufficient to point to the ease with which the word taboo has passed into modern languages [since Captain Cook first described the Tongan system only a century and a half ago].<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean* (1784).

There is no more interesting or more important study than to trace the continuity of culture, and when we take any taboo custom of early man and follow it up to modern times, we find at our end not a mere survival but a living duplicate, often identical in form and content with its prototype. Many cases of this will appear in the following pages. As an example we may quote a common feature of primitive taboo in its social aspect, the placing of a cloth or stick or other mark on a piece of property to show that it belongs to some one and is therefore sacred. Well, at this end of the chain we find the same thing in the familiar piece of unwritten law which respects the seat thus tabooed in a railway carriage. The only difference is that in the Polynesian case there is a deep religious meaning behind the form and a terrible supernatural sanction to support it, while in the modern custom there is human courtesy only ; behind both there is the universal sense of human nature. Indeed, as we shall see later, such an example points to the fact that ordinary universal human ideas, chiefly connected with functional needs, produce the same results in all ages ; and many so-called survivals, which have on the face of them too much vitality to be mere fossil remains, at once receive a scientific explanation which is more than antiquarian.

Having found that the persons with whom we have to deal are, so far, taboo, in danger and dangerous, and concern us in their human relations, which are governed by what we call social taboo, we now proceed to investigate the nature of this danger, apart from the vague though ubiquitous evil spirits. The omnipresence of evil spirits according to early thought has been often illustrated, but, to point the case, we may give some evidence of this here.

An excellent observer says of the Indian of British Guiana that "his whole world swarms with beings. He is surrounded by a host of them, possibly hurtful. It is therefore not wonderful that the Indian fears to be without his fellow, fears even to move beyond the light from his camp-fire, and when obliged to do so carries a firebrand with him, that he may have a chance of seeing the beings among whom he moves. Nor is it wonderful that occasionally the neighbourhood of their settlement seems to the Indians to become so oppressively full of gathering beings, that the *peaiman* who has the power of frightening these beings, even when they are invisible, is employed to effect a general clearance of the air."<sup>1</sup> [However dreadful the belief in such ambient powers for evil must be, these Indians are at least fortunate to have among themselves one who can fight these powers on a footing higher even than one of equality. This is not always the case. Thus] among the Sonthals evil spirits are ubiquitous, and offerings of grain are placed on the paths to appease them.<sup>2</sup> [We shall find the same limitation of defensive powers among other peoples. The Khonds of Orissa have tutelary deities who have power over the operations of nature and over everything relating to human life in it. The number of these deities is unlimited ; not only do they fill all nature, they are also cognizant of every human action, want and interest.<sup>3</sup> While these deities may act for good, that is not the case in Siam, where the evil spirits that swarm in the air are believed by the people, as we have already seen, to enjoy the first-fruits of the virgins.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sir E. F. Im Thurn, *Among the Indians of Guiana* (1883), p. 372.

<sup>2</sup> V. Ball, *Jungle Life in India* (1880), p. 235.

<sup>3</sup> S. C. Macpherson, *Memorials of Service in India* (1865), p. 90.

<sup>4</sup> S. de La Loubère, *Du royaume de Siam* (1691), i. 203.

In Africa we find that in the opinion of the Malinke, a people of Mandingo stock, our planet is peopled by a multitude of spirits.<sup>1</sup> The Bantus of West Africa hold the universe to be peopled with a crowd of spirits, almost all of whom are malevolent.<sup>2</sup> In Egypt the *Ginn* pervade everything ; they inhabit rivers, ruins, houses, wells, baths, ovens and latrines. Hence, when entering the last-mentioned place, when letting down a bucket into a well, and when doing any one of many other things, it is the custom to exclaim, "Permission," or "Permission, ye blessed," which words are sometimes prefaced by a prayer for protection against evil spirits.<sup>3</sup> The Algonkin Indians base their religion on the belief "that the whole visible and invisible creation is animated with various orders of malignant or benign spirits, who preside over the daily affairs and over the final destinies of men."<sup>4</sup> The Ten'a of the Yukon Valley believe themselves to be in almost continual intercourse with certain undesirable denizens of the spirit-world. Manifestations of these spirits are as familiar to the Ten'a as the blowing of the wind or the singing of the birds. On one occasion Father Jetté, who reports these facts, was present when a spirit was sighted ; he started in pursuit of the monster, and when he failed to find any signs of it, the Indians said with relief : "And it is well for you that you did not ! He would have eaten you up !"<sup>5</sup> In short, not to multiply instances, among all the American

<sup>1</sup> — Brun, "Notes sur les croyances . . . des Malinkés fétichistes," *Anthropos* (1907), ii. 728.

<sup>2</sup> M. H. Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa* (1897), p. 443.

<sup>3</sup> E. W. Lane, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (1871), i. 282.

<sup>4</sup> H. R. Schoolcraft, *Algie Researches* (1839), i. 41.

<sup>5</sup> J. Jetté, "On the Superstitions of the Ten'a Indians," *Anthropos* (1911), vi. 721-722.

natives "any remarkable features in natural scenery or dangerous places became objects of superstitious dread and veneration, because they were supposed to be the abodes of gods."<sup>1</sup>

The Maoris of New Zealand think that all the natural features of their country are inhabited by hordes of monstrous beings.<sup>2</sup> The same belief was held by the Tasmanians, the crevices and caverns of whose rocky mountains were tenanted for them by a plurality of powerful and evil-disposed beings.<sup>3</sup> As for the aborigines of Australia, "the number of supernatural beings, feared if not loved, that they acknowledge, is exceedingly great; for not only are the heavens peopled with such, but the whole face of the country swarms with them; every thicket, most watering-places, and all rocky places abound with evil spirits."<sup>4</sup> In certain cases the natives do not seem to make a clear distinction between the evil potentialities of these omnipresent spirits and the evil that may surround them through human agencies.] In one respect, it is said, the life of the Kurnai was one of dread. "He lived in fear of the visible and invisible. He never knew the moment when the lurking *Brajerak* might not spear him from behind, and never knew the moment when some secret foe among the Kurnai might not succeed in passing over him some spell, against which he could not struggle, or from which the most potent counter-charms given him by his ancestors could not free him."<sup>5</sup> The natives of Hatam in New Guinea had a

<sup>1</sup> R. M. Dorman, *The Origin of Primitive Superstitions* (1881), p. 300.

<sup>2</sup> R. Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui* (1870), pp. 49, 53; E. Shortland, *The Southern Districts of New Zealand* (1851), pp. 53 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> F. R. Nixon, *The Cruise of the Beacon* (1857), p. 182.

<sup>4</sup> A. Oldfield, "On the Aborigines of Australia," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London* (1865), n.s., iii. 228.

<sup>5</sup> L. Fison and A. W. Howitt, *Kamilaroi and Kurnai* (1880), p. 259.

great dread of poison infused into the atmosphere.<sup>1</sup> Thus these last two cases form a link between the natural and the supernatural.

We see from these few typical examples that in the thought of many peoples man's whole environment is more or less full of the agencies or influences of evil. As we may presuppose the same psychological material for all mankind, we may infer a similarity of psychological result for all peoples at a given stage of culture, [nor have the recent studies of the diffusionist school of ethnologists shown sufficient reason for doubting this general conclusion, one which is strongly supported by the universality of the belief in these ubiquitous spirits].

The term "evil spirit" is often misused: many evil influences which are not anthropomorphic at all are too readily called "spirits." Supernatural personification will not cover all the cases of primitive spiritualism. These dangers are still indifferenced and combined in one *genus* in which there is no distinction between natural and supernatural, real and ideal, nor between persons and other existences or *entia*. These "spirits" are really material, though unseen, and many are simply "influences," states of matter, impersonal forces. The atmosphere is thus charged with "spiritual" electricity, with bacteria of invisible mischief. Man needs to walk warily: at any time he may be subjected to dangers coming from this hylo-idealistic force. The conduction or induction, contagion or infection, may result in death or sickness, spiritual or material danger, real or but vaguely apprehended.

These influences are of the kind which produce the state of religious peril or taboo. When we take our

<sup>1</sup> L. M. d'Albertis, *New Guinea* (1880), 1. 122.

attention from the mysterious force of taboo and analyse its subject, we find that it is the "spiritual" danger which makes him taboo and dangerous to others as soon as it descends upon and fills him with virus or electric force. It is no inconsistency that a man is often taboo before the danger attacks him, for he is expecting it, or that people like Sir James Frazer's incarnate gods or even the ordinary Maori gentleman, are always taboo. These *sacrae personae* have the religious condition imposed upon them every day, they are *cottidie feriatae*. It is a natural extension with persons on whom the safety of the world depends, as in the case of the incarnate gods, and no less with persons like the Maori, who has been led by the development of a system combining the characteristics of Roman Catholicism with those of Feudalism, to believe, like many a modern aristocrat, that he is somewhat more than the salt of the earth.

The next commonest form in which the danger resulting in taboo is presented, is that of contagion of a sickness neither real nor imaginary, neither natural nor supernatural, but both. This predication of "spiritual" sickness, though almost universal, and, as will be seen, of very great importance in the history of human relations, does not cover all the facts, for we also want to know the origin of this idea. We have found the danger to come from the environment of the individual and then to settle upon him. We may then look for its original character in the actual environment, not as it may really be, but as it is conceived to be, that is, as it is conditioned by the individual's conception of it; and further, in that part of the individual's environment which is humanity, we may look for it in the characteristics attributed by him to his fellows who form that human environment. Now we find after

examining the facts that there is one characteristic which inheres in all these manifold dangers feared by primitive man. Things and persons are potentially dangerous, acts and functions are potentially liable to danger, which are strange, unfamiliar, unusual, abnormal, in a word, more or less unknown. Man's ignorance is the occasion of his fears, and he fears anything and everything which he does not understand. Of the savage it may most truly be said, *omnia exeunt in mysterium*. Man's superstitious fears are found to be in the exact ratio of man's ignorance. To all these potential dangers he naturally ascribes the results which he knows to ensue from real physical danger, and of course this wide generalisation includes cases of real injury inextricably confused with a thousand empty terrors. As man's earliest thinking is anthropomorphic, in terms of himself, he attributes to agencies he cannot understand not only the conscious powers and methods of human beings, but the involuntary influence or deleterious properties of dangerous men, such as enemies or diseased persons; and these imaginary results coming from things and persons feared because they are not understood, are actually accentuated by the very fact that the things or persons do not harmonise with man's knowledge of himself. Wonder becomes uneasiness, and eventually produces an attitude of religious caution. Again, man's fears are for himself, and especially for those parts and functions of his organism which are most important for life and health and are actually most liable to injury. Here there falls to be considered what may be called physiological thought, subconsciously arising from and concentrating upon physiological functions. Especially important in human psychology is the physiological thought arising from the two chief physical functions of

nutrition and of sex. For these and other complex and delicate functions, man's ignorance creates many potential dangers, and this leads to various attitudes of religious caution in their performance.

Let us take some cases which illustrate this potentiality of danger inhering through man's subjective conceptions, in things and acts and states which are different from what is usual and ordinary, which more or less break the comfortable routine of life, or which he cannot explain. [Not the least striking support which this theory receives is that of a linguistic nature. The Dakotas, for instance, refer to their deities by a term, *wakan*, which they use also for anything they cannot understand, for whatever is "wonderful, mysterious, superhuman or supernatural."<sup>1</sup> In Fiji "the native word expressive of divinity is *kalou*, which, while used to denote the people's highest notion of a god, is also constantly heard as a qualification of anything great or marvellous."<sup>2</sup> We have seen that the Maori term, *noa* means common, as opposed to *tapu*,<sup>3</sup> and common in the sense of normal or regular. Further, the Maori word for god is *atua*, which is also used for spirits in general and, significantly, for all things they do not understand, including not only exotic objects like a compass or a barometer, but menstruation and the like.]<sup>4</sup> In South Celebes the Buginese word *pemâli*, which corresponds to taboo, denotes all things unusual and such as are supposed to bring evil consequences in

<sup>1</sup> H. R. Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information Respecting . . . the Indian Tribes of the United States* (1851-1860), iv. 642.

<sup>2</sup> T. Williams and J. Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians* (1870), i. 183.

<sup>3</sup> [Above, i. 13-14.]

<sup>4</sup> E. Best, "The Lore of the *Whare-Kobanga*," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* (1905), xiv. 210.

their train.<sup>1</sup> These examples show how strangeness, potential danger and spiritual power go together in the savage mind. "The Masai conception of deity (*ngăi*) is vague," as Joseph Thomson pointed out. "I was *Ngăi*. My language was *Ngăi*. . . . In fact, whatever struck them as strange or incomprehensible, that they at once assumed had some connection with *Ngăi*."<sup>2</sup> [This report is confirmed by other travellers among the Masai, who render this word *ngăi* by "the Unknown."<sup>3</sup> The Monbuttu word for deity is *kilima*, which they also use for thunder, shadows and reflections, in short, for whatever they cannot understand.<sup>4</sup> Precisely the same thing was reported of the Malagasy by Ellis; these natives use the same term, *ndria manitra*, both for god and for anything beyond the reach of their understanding.<sup>5</sup>

Apart from this linguistic evidence, a considerable body of facts can be quoted to show the danger held to inhere in the strange and unknown. We can distinguish here between different kinds of strangeness; a first group can be formed of things abnormal. Thus we have seen that the American Indians dread those features of natural scenery which are remarkable or dangerous.]<sup>6</sup> Of the Guiana Indian Sir Everard Im Thurn states that if "he sees anything in any way curious or abnormal, and if soon after an evil befall him, he regards the thing and the evil as cause and effect. Just as some rocks, *viz.* the more peculiar, are more malignant than others, so it is not every river, but every bend and portion of a river that has a spirit; spirits of falls and rapids are still

<sup>1</sup> B. F. Matthes, *Bijdragen tot de Ethnologie van Zuid-Celebes* (1875), p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> J. Thomson, *Trough Masai Land* (1887), p. 260.

<sup>3</sup> S. L. and H. Hinde, *The Last of the Masai* (1901), p. 99.

<sup>4</sup> G. Burrows, *The Land of the Pigmies* (1898), p. 100.

<sup>5</sup> W. Ellis, *History of Madagascar* (1838), i. 390.

<sup>6</sup> [Above, i. 18.]

more dreaded, therefore people are more frequently drowned there.”<sup>1</sup> The Kadiaks believed that every act is done under the influence of some object, stone or the like, especially if the said object is strange in appearance.<sup>2</sup> [Among the Samoyeds “a curiously twisted tree, a stone with an uncommon shape would receive, and in some quarters still receives, not only veneration but actual ceremonial worship.”<sup>3</sup> The Ostyaks worshipped only such natural objects as were abnormal in shape or quality.<sup>4</sup> The Lapps made offerings in addition to such places as were difficult to pass or where an accident or some other abnormal event had occurred.<sup>5</sup> The Ainu of Japan deify all objects and phenomena which appear to them extraordinary or dreadful.<sup>6</sup> In China “a steep mountain, or any mountain at all remarkable, is supposed to have a special local spirit, who acts as guardian.”<sup>7</sup> The crowing of a hen is regarded in Chinese folklore, as well as in European, as ominous of something unusual about to happen.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, when animals act in a manner contrary to their ordinary habits, the Kaffirs of Natal regard such actions as omens.<sup>9</sup> They honour persons who are subject to fits, though they refuse to eat out of such a person’s vessels.<sup>10</sup> These natives begin the career of diviner or doctor by being ill, and especially

<sup>1</sup> Sir E. F. Im Thurn, *op. cit.*, pp. 370 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> U. Lisiansky, *A Voyage Round the World* (1814), p. 243.

<sup>3</sup> F. G. Jackson, “Notes on the Samoyads of the Great Tundra,” *J.A.I.* (1895), xxiv. 398.

<sup>4</sup> M. A. Castrén, *Nordiska resor och forskningar* (1852-1858), iii. 227.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, iii. 210.

<sup>6</sup> K. Sugamata, “Notes ethnographiques sur les Aïnos,” quoted in *L’Anthropologie* (1899), x. 98.

<sup>7</sup> J. Edkins, *Religion in China* (1878), p. 221.

<sup>8</sup> J. Doolittle, *Social Life of the Chinese* (1867), ii. 328.

<sup>9</sup> J. Shooter, *The Kaffirs of Natal and the Zulu Country* (1857), p. 165.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 218.

the appearance of epileptic symptoms in a Kaffir shows that he is becoming a seer.<sup>1</sup> Very similarly neuropaths are much honoured in the islands of Leti, Moa and Lakor.<sup>2</sup> The Bakgalagali, a weak and timorous race, are protected by the notion that it is uncannily to meddle with them.<sup>3</sup> And with the former case may be compared that of the Patagonians, among whom any unfamiliar object was supposed to possess an evil spirit; and any boy or girl who was odd or peculiar was marked out for the profession of wizard.<sup>4</sup> [To return, we find that the natives of Sierra Leone dedicate to their spirits places which "inspire the spectator with awe, or are remarkable for their appearance, as immensely large trees rendered venerable by age, rocks appearing in the midst of rivers, and having something peculiar in their form, in short, whatever appears to them strange or uncommon."<sup>5</sup> The natives of the Gold Coast worship and propitiate the spirit which they believe to occupy any remarkable natural feature.<sup>6</sup> "In Morocco places of striking appearance are generally supposed to be haunted by *jnún* (*jinn*) or are associated with some dead saints."<sup>7</sup> All these cases show the fear of and respect for common and natural things which have something abnormal

<sup>1</sup> H. Callaway, *The Religious System of the Amazulu* (1868-1870), p. 299; J. Shooter, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluk- en kroesbarige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua* (1886), p. 378.

<sup>3</sup> W. H. R. Bevan, "Some Beliefs Concerning the Bakgalagali," *Folk-Lore Journal* (Cape Town, 1880), ii. 32 n.

<sup>4</sup> G. C. Musters, *At Home with the Patagonians* (1873), pp. 181-182.

<sup>5</sup> T. Winterbottom, *An Account of the Native Africans in the Neighbourhood of Sierra Leone* (1803), i. 223.

<sup>6</sup> Sir A. B. Ellis, *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast of West Africa* (1887), p. 21.

<sup>7</sup> E. Westermarck, *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas* (1912-1917), ii. 589.

about them. Dr Marett has shown good cause, on the basis of some of these cases, for believing the feelings which we are surveying, feelings of mystic strangeness, or of awe, to use his terminology, to be as primitive as any known to us, and certainly pre-animistic.<sup>1</sup> An opportunity occurs here to emphasise again that the term primitive is used in a purely relative sense, as indicating stage of development and not age. "Indeed," as Dr Westermarck points out, "the superstitious dread of unusual objects is not altogether dead even among ourselves. It survives in England to this day in the habit of ascribing grotesque and striking landmarks or puzzling antiquities to the devil, who became the residuary legatee of obsolete superstitions in Christian countries."<sup>2</sup>

We must now proceed to consider briefly the fear inspired by new things.] Amongst the commonest cases are those borderline ones where potentiality of danger is ascribed to strangers.<sup>3</sup> The Guarani suspected every stranger of hostility.<sup>4</sup> [The Gambier Islanders took the newly arrived missionaries for malevolent gods come to do them harm.<sup>5</sup> The Savage Islanders in Western Polynesia, one of the latest groups of natives in that region to be reached by the missionaries, were found to believe that not only all foreigners but all natives who had come into contact with them as well, were bringers

<sup>1</sup> R. R. Marett, *The Threshold of Religion* (1914), pp. 96-97; cp. F. B. Jevons, *An Introduction to the History of Religion* (1902), p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> E. Westermarck, *op. cit.*, ii. 589-590; cp. Sir A. C. Lyall, *Asiatic Studies* (1882), p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> [The whole subject of the treatment of strangers has been exhaustively discussed by Dr Westermarck, *op. cit.*, see Index, *s.v.*, and by Sir P. J. H. Grierson, "Strangers," *E.R.E.* (1920), xi. 883-896; and general taboos on intercourse with strangers by Sir James Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (1911-1915), iii. 101 *et seq.*]

<sup>4</sup> M. Dobrizhoffer, *Historia de Abiponibus* (1784), i. 163.

<sup>5</sup> H. Laval, in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi* (1837), x. 202.

of disease to their island.]<sup>1</sup> D'Albertis was requested by the Alfoers opposite Ramoi to leave their village because his presence brought bad luck. "The people began to die," the natives complained to him, "as soon as you looked at us. Five have died in three days."<sup>2</sup> The Samoans fear evil influence from strangers. On entering a strange country the Maoris perform a ceremony to make it *noa*, as it may have been *tapu*, potentially dangerous.<sup>3</sup> When an Australian tribe approaches another that is unknown, they carry burning sticks "to purify the air."<sup>4</sup> [In San Salvador, writes Bentley, "there was much anxiety as to the effect of our presence in the country. There was a pretty general fear that death and disaster would follow,"<sup>5</sup> or that they would stop the rain and bring a drought.<sup>6</sup> While on other occasions, adds Mrs Bentley, "the natives insisted that the missionaries brought death and famine."<sup>7</sup> Sir Richard Burton collected evidence to demonstrate the fear and dislike of strangers, and instances the linguistic evidence of the "Hebrew Goyi (Gentile), the Hindu Mlenchla (mixed or impure breed), the Greek *βάρβαρος*, the Latin *Barbarus*, and the Chinese Fan Kwei (foreign devil)."<sup>8</sup>

From these typical examples we may proceed to others which show that] strange meats, such, for instance, as are non-indigenous, are feared, as by the Indians of Guiana, among whom they were rendered eatable by the *peaiman*,

<sup>1</sup> A. W. Murray, *Missions in Western Polynesia* (1863), pp. 360, 388.

<sup>2</sup> L. M. d'Albertis, *New Guinea* (1880), i. 53.

<sup>3</sup> E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders* (1854), p. 103.

<sup>4</sup> R. B. Smyth, *The Aborigines of Victoria* (1878), i. 134.

<sup>5</sup> W. H. Bentley, *Pioneering on the Congo* (1900), i. 137.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 166.

<sup>7</sup> H. M. Bentley, *W. Holman Bentley . . . the Life and Labours of a Congo Pioneer* (1907), p. 212; cp. A. Bastian, *Ein Besuch in San Salvador* (1859), p. 104.

<sup>8</sup> Sir R. F. Burton, *The Captivity of Hans Stade* (1874), p. lxx.

but occasionally by an old woman blowing on them certain times, so as to expel the "spirit."<sup>1</sup> In German folklore there is the custom of blowing thrice into a strange spoon before eating with it.<sup>2</sup> The Indians of Guiana are afraid of the food of strangers, and of anything belonging to such strangers.<sup>3</sup> [Such fears are especially common in New Guinea. The Kiwai Papuans "fall dead" on eating unaccustomed food, on seeing fire for the first time, etc.<sup>4</sup> The Arabi River Papuans, though friendly, refused food offered to them by a white man.<sup>5</sup> Similarly the Sambigi Papuans, who live in an isolated spot 6000 ft. up, north-west of Mount Murray, refuse food to which they are not used.<sup>6</sup> The Managulasi Papuans have been observed to starve rather than cook their food in a new way.<sup>7</sup> A peculiarly interesting case, throwing light on more than one aspect of our problem, is that of the Northern Australians, who ascribe the existence of a half-caste child not to intercourse with a white person, but, they say, the child is pale because "too much we been eat em white man's flour."<sup>8</sup> To conclude with a case from Africa we have that of] the Zulus, who taboo all foods that are strange or unknown.<sup>9</sup> We may also compare the common belief that danger attaches to the first of any fruits or meats, as in the

<sup>1</sup> Sir E. F. Im Thurn, *op. cit.*, p. 368.

<sup>2</sup> F. Panzer, *Beitrag zur Deutschen Mythologie* (1848), p. 257.

<sup>3</sup> W. H. Brett, *The Indian Tribes of Guiana* (1868), p. 363.

<sup>4</sup> G. Landtman, "The Folk-Tales of the Kiwai Papuans," *Acta Societatis Scientiarum Fennicæ* (1917), xlvii. 95; *cp. ibid.*, p. 551, n. 13.

<sup>5</sup> E. R. Oldham, in *Papua: Annual Report for . . . 1913-1914*, p. 89.

<sup>6</sup> Hon. M. S. C. Smith, "Kikori Expedition," *Papua: Annual Report for . . . 1911*, p. 170.

<sup>7</sup> A. E. Oelrichs, in *Papua: Report for . . . 1912*, p. 128.

<sup>8</sup> Sir W. B. Spencer, *Native Tribes of the Northern Territory of Australia* (1914), pp. 25-26.

<sup>9</sup> D. Leslie, *Among the Zulus and Amatongas* (1875), p. 197.

ceremony of first-fruits amongst the Kaffirs<sup>1</sup> and many other peoples, such "holiness" as attaches thereto being undistinguished from any kind of potential danger.

A similar idea underlies the common diffidence about beginning an act or doing something for the first time or handselling a new object. Before shooting a cataract for the first time, or the first sight of any new place, striking rocks, etc., the Guiana Indian seeks to arrest the ill-will of the spirits. The dreaded objects are not mentioned, are not looked at more than is necessary, and artificial means of blinding the eyes, with pepper juice, are used to avoid the dreaded sight.<sup>2</sup> The Sandwich Islanders prayed before they ate, before tilling the ground, before building houses, launching boats and casting nets.<sup>3</sup> This kind of thing is world-wide, and a special group of these fears may be made of those associated with dwelling-places. In the Luang Sermata Islands enquiries are made as to whether a projected new house will be unlucky.<sup>4</sup> In the Babar Islands, before entering a new house offerings are thrown inside that the spirit, *Orlou*, may not make the inmates ill.<sup>5</sup> In the Sandwich Islands before the owner entered a new house the priest performed ceremonies and slept in it to prevent evil spirits resorting to it and to secure the inmates from the effect of malicious incantation.<sup>6</sup> Similar practices are found in Persia and in China.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, when an interval of disuse has elapsed, dwelling-houses become dangerous. Thus the

<sup>1</sup> J. Shooter, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-27.

<sup>2</sup> Sir E. F. Im Thurn, *op. cit.*, p. 380.

<sup>3</sup> W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches* (1859), i. 350.

<sup>4</sup> J. G. F. Riedel, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 343.

<sup>6</sup> W. Ellis, *Narrative of a Tour through Hawaii* (1826), p. 293; *id.*, *Polynesian Researches* (1859), iv. 322.

<sup>7</sup> J. Pinkerton, *A General Collection of Voyages and Travels* (1808-1814), ix. 260; J. Doolittle, *op. cit.*, ii. 325.

Bashkirs on returning from their nomadic life of the summer to their winter quarters, approach these dwellings with reluctance, believing that *Sheitan* has taken up his abode there. The women therefore are sent forward first, armed with sticks, with which they strike the doors, uttering curses ; when the women have made their round, the men ride forward at full speed, with terrific shouts, to banish the dreaded demon from his hiding-place.<sup>1</sup>

[Turning now from primitive man's beliefs in this regard about his surroundings to those which he holds about himself and his fellows, we find precisely the same fears and supernatural ascriptions. We may proceed from emotion and pain to illness and death.] The Andamanese<sup>2</sup> and Maoris ascribe internal pains to evil spirits ; and amongst the latter people when a chief is in pain he is thereby accounted taboo.<sup>3</sup> Also, when a Maori warrior was afraid, the *tohunga* invoked a friendly spirit to repulse the evil spirit causing the fear.<sup>4</sup> It will be remembered that the Maori taboo implies that one is under the influence of the ancestral spirits ; and the apparent inconsistency that a Maori gentleman, who is always taboo, can become taboo at various crises, and, as will be seen later, can contract such taboo as to injure his inherent taboo, is quite natural and needs no explanation. Further, the Battas attribute not only diseases but also such phenomena as anger to evil spirits, which also, according to them, force men to do murder and to commit other crimes.<sup>5</sup> Such states as idiocy, hysteria and

<sup>1</sup> G. A. Erman, *Reise um die Erde* (1835-1841), i. 103.

<sup>2</sup> E. H. Man, "The Andamanese and Nicobarese Objects presented to Maj.-Gen. Pitt Rivers," *J.A.I.* (1882), xi. 284.

<sup>3</sup> E. Shortland, *Traditions and Superstitions of the New Zealanders* (1854), p. 82 ; W. Yate, *An Account of New Zealand* (1835), p. 104.

<sup>4</sup> E. Shortland, *The Southern Districts of New Zealand* (1851), pp. 67-68.

<sup>5</sup> F. Junghuhn, *Die Battaländer auf Sumatra* (1847), ii. 156.

various forms of neurosis are, as is well known, explained by savages in the same way. We still have the phrase "an inspired idiot." Intoxication is similarly explained, also such apparently irregular conditions as ecstasy and enthusiasm. In the same way popular thought and language prove this to be so with love no less than with other periodic emotional crises. Both the Yoruba and the Ewe-speaking peoples attribute sexual desire to possession by the god of love, *Legba*.<sup>1</sup> It is very natural that savage ignorance should ascribe to possession by supernatural influences those strong impulses which carry a man away and render him for the moment a blind automaton. The very word "passion" preserves the primitive idea that such states are due to external agency: yet these facts limit still further primitive man's knowledge of himself. Again, in the case of normal, non-emotional functions, which are unusual in so far as they are only periodic, it is natural that danger from spiritual agencies should be thought of chiefly when the crisis is worse than usual. Thus in the Aru Islands it is at difficult labour that means are taken against evil spirits, by, for instance, the banging of drums; <sup>2</sup> so in the island of Wetar <sup>3</sup> and in the Ceramlaut Archipelago.<sup>4</sup> If labour is difficult the Chinese suppose it is due to an evil spirit that prevents the child's appearance; <sup>5</sup> and in the Philippines, when the birth is delayed, witches are supposed to be responsible and are driven away by exploding gunpowder from a mortar improvised out of a bamboo.<sup>6</sup> If the new-born child howls the Babar natives attribute it to the influence

<sup>1</sup> Sir A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa* (1890), p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> J. G. F. Riedel, *op. cit.*, p. 265.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 449.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>5</sup> J. Doolittle, *op. cit.*, i. 118.

<sup>6</sup> Sir J. Bowring, *A Visit to the Philippine Islands* (1859), p. 144.

of an evil spirit, and food is spread for it outside the house.<sup>1</sup> This case is somewhat surprising, but perhaps it is excessive squalling that is referred to. More naturally, if a Chinese child will not suck nor cry and appears lifeless, the belief is that it is exposed to evil influences.<sup>2</sup>

Again, there is an almost universal belief that sickness and death are unnatural and abnormal. These are strange conditions of which the savage cannot solve the mystery, [for in primitive thought, so far as we can analyse it, life and death are not the balanced opposites which civilised contemplation has made them. To early man life and health are the normal conditions, death and illness catastrophes, miraculous and terrible. In the case of sicknesses exceptions are generally made of those which occur frequently enough to be reckoned almost normal; and in the case of death an exception is often made when a man kills his quarry or foe; here the satisfaction of an end achieved inhibits the feelings aroused by the seemingly non-violent death of a tribesman. Thus, according to Australian philosophy men would live on indefinitely except for the result of actual physical violence or of sorcery, a refined form of it, or of the act of a supernatural being.<sup>3</sup> This is the usual view of the savage, and the great complexity of his views about the supernatural causes of death is not surprising, for, though apparently incapable of abstract views on life, vitality, as such, the constant rage which characterises his attitude towards death involves a permanent concern with the supposed causes of an event which, though he must confess it to be inevitable, remains a mystery and

<sup>1</sup> J. G. F. Riedel, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

<sup>2</sup> J. Doolittle, *op. cit.*, i. 120.

<sup>3</sup> W. E. Roth, *Ethnological Studies among the North-West-Central Queensland Aborigines* (1897), p. 161.

a violation of natural law.<sup>1</sup> The attitude of the savage towards death may be not inaptly compared to that of Mr Shaw's "Ancients," who, doomed normally to an infinite life, pass their time in contemplation and in the fearless anticipation of a fatal accident.<sup>2</sup>

These generalisations may now be substantiated with a few typical cases. An observation about the Australian belief has already been quoted from Queensland]; amongst the Dieri and neighbouring tribes of South Australia, "no native contracts a disease or complaint from natural causes; the disease is supposed to be caused by some enemy." In any serious case the Koonkies or doctors are called in to beat "the devil" out of the camp. "This is done by the stuffed tail of a kangaroo, by beating the ground in and out of the camp, chasing him away for some distance."<sup>3</sup> The Kurnai could not conceive of death by disease. It was regarded as due to the magical influence of enemies or of evil spirits. Death, according to their ideas, could only occur through accident, open violence or secret magic.<sup>4</sup> Amongst the tribes of Central Australia "no such thing as natural death is realised by the native; a man who dies has of necessity been killed by some other man, or perhaps even by a woman, and sooner or later that man or woman will be attacked. However old or decrepit a man or woman may be when death takes place, it is at once supposed that it has been brought about by the magic

<sup>1</sup> This passage is based on one in A. E. Crawley, "Life and Death (Primitive)," *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (1915), viii. 9.

<sup>2</sup> G. B. Shaw, *Back to Metbuselab* (1921), pp. 254, 257.

<sup>3</sup> S. Gason, "The Tribes, Dieyerie, Auminie, Yandrawontha, Yarawaurka, Pilladopa," *J.A.I.* (1895), xxiv. 170.

<sup>4</sup> L. Fison and A. W. Howitt, *Kamilaroi and Kurnai* (1880), pp. 251, 258.

influence of some enemy.”<sup>1</sup> [A New Zealander who was ill refused remedies, the “deluded man said Atua was within him eating his vitals.”<sup>2</sup> Dr Malinowski, who has lived among Melanesians almost as one of them and who has thus had exceptional opportunities for observing them, writes that health to the Melanesian is a natural state of affairs and that they ascribe illness and death principally to supernatural interference.<sup>3</sup> More specifically, in New Guinea natives “never believe in being sick from anything but spiritual causes, and that death, unless by murder, can take place from nothing but the wrath of the spirits.”<sup>4</sup> The Kai Papuans declare that no one dies a natural death, all phenomena of this kind being due to witchcraft,<sup>5</sup> while the Bukaua, although they know and name many of the organs of the body, ascribe illness to spirits or to sorcery.<sup>6</sup> The natives of Keisar, one of the Moluccas, ascribe sickness to a malignant spirit, to the god of the sky or of the sun, or to the spirits of the dead whom they have failed to honour.<sup>7</sup> The curious diversity of views in this region is illustrated by the inhabitants of the other islands in the same group, Kola and Kobroor, who hold that death is due to the spirits of ancestors, who kill men in order to feed on their souls.]<sup>8</sup> Almost all deaths, sicknesses and other calamities are attributed by the Andamanese to evil spirits.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sir W. B. Spencer and F. J. Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* (1899), pp. 48, 476, 530; cp. *idd.*, *The Northern Tribes of Central Australia* (1904), pp. 526 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> — Kendal, in *The Missionary Register* (1817), pp. 348-349.

<sup>3</sup> B. Malinowski, “Magic, Science and Religion,” in *Science, Religion and Reality*, ed. by N. J. T. M. Needham (1925), p. 33.

<sup>4</sup> J. Chalmers, “Taoriipi,” *J.A.I.* (1898), xxvii. 329.

<sup>5</sup> C. Keysser, “Aus dem Leben der Kaileute,” in R. Neuhaus, *Deutsch Neu Guinea* (1911), iii. 140.

<sup>6</sup> S. Lehmer, “Bukaua,” in R. Neuhaus, *op. cit.*, iii. 466.

<sup>7</sup> J. G. F. Riedel, *op. cit.*, p. 419.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 271.

<sup>9</sup> E. H. Man, *op. cit.*, xi. 288-289.

In Africa these beliefs are very general ; the Zulus believe no one to die a natural death except in battle or in a row.<sup>1</sup> Amongst the Basutos sickness is attributed to ill-wishers who bewitch one.<sup>2</sup> Among most Congo tribes death is seldom regarded in the light of a natural event.<sup>3</sup> [Thus in Lukolela, on the Upper Congo, one day a missionary “saw one of his workmen sitting in the cold wind on a rainy day. He advised his going home and changing his wet cloth for a dry one, but he [the native] said, “It does not matter. People do not die of a cold wind ; people only get ill and die from witchcraft.”<sup>4</sup> From the same place a case is reported of the killing of a man by a crocodile, the man’s death, in common with the destruction of poultry and the like, being ascribed to the operation of an evil spirit.<sup>5</sup> Similarly when a Bakongo chief was killed by an elephant the medicine-man had to settle whether the death was due to witchcraft or to the will of the Great Spirit.<sup>6</sup> Among the Baganda, west of Victoria Nyanza, there is no such thing as death from natural causes ; disease and death are caused by “ghosts,” and are either merited or brought about by malicious invocation.<sup>7</sup> In Loango there was not even held to be such a thing as a fatal accident ; all such were caused by the sorcery of enemies.<sup>8</sup> We have an interesting account from a doctor of the belief of the natives of Sierra Leone, who “conceive that

<sup>1</sup> D. Leslie, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> E. Casalis, *The Basutos* (1861), p. 277.

<sup>3</sup> H. Ward, “Ethnographical Notes Relating to the Congo Tribes,” *J.A.I.* (1895), xxiv. 287.

<sup>4</sup> W. H. Bentley, *op. cit.*, ii. 247.

<sup>5</sup> E. J. Glave, *Six Years of Adventure in Congo-Land* (1893), p. 92.

<sup>6</sup> H. Ward, *Five Years with the Congo Cannibals* (1890), pp. 43-44.

<sup>7</sup> J. Roscoe, “Further Notes on the Manners and Customs of the Baganda,” *J.A.I.* (1902), xxxii. 40.

<sup>8</sup> O. Dapper, *Naukeurige Beschrijvinge der Afrikaensche Gewesten* (1676), ii. 152-153.

no death is natural or accidental, but that the disease or the accident by which it is immediately caused, is the effect of supernatural agency. In some cases it is imagined that death is brought about by the malign agency of some individual, who employs witchcraft for that purpose : in other cases it is supposed that death is inflicted by the tutelar demon of some one on whom the deceased, when discovered and punished by the avenging hand of griffee, was practising incantations. It is most usual to assign the former cause for the sickness and death of chiefs, and other people of consequence, and their connections ; and the latter for any of those of the lower class.”<sup>1</sup> Finally, before we leave this continent, may be quoted a specimen of the numerous myths invented to explain the abnormality of death, myths which are to be found in all parts of the world.] This interesting case, containing the idea of “ death and his brother sleep,” is the myth of the Yaos and Wayisa of East Central Africa. They say that death is largely caused by wizards ; it was originally brought into the world by a woman, who taught two men to go to sleep. One day, while they slumbered, she held the nostrils of one of them, till his breath ceased and he died.<sup>2</sup>

[To the Lengua Indians of the Paraguayan Chaco anything in the nature of sickness or death is the result of a direct act of either evil spirits or of a distant wizard.<sup>3</sup> Among the Araucanos death, except in war but not excluding one resulting from a violent accident, is supposed to be caused by sorcery.<sup>4</sup> The Abipones

<sup>1</sup> T. Winterbottom, *An Account of the Native Africans in the Neighbourhood of Sierra Leone* (1803), i. 235-236 ; cp. F. J. Clozel and R. Villamur, *Les coutumes indigènes de la Côte d'Ivoire* (1902), p. 363 ; J. Spieth, *Die Ewe Stämme* (1906), p. 255.

<sup>2</sup> J. Macdonald, “ East-Central African Customs,” *J.A.I.* (1893), xxii. 1111-1112.

<sup>3</sup> W. B. Grubb, *An Unknown People in an Unknown Land* (1911), p. 161.

<sup>4</sup> R. E. Latham, “ Ethnology of the Araucanos,” *J.A.I.* (1909), xxxix. 364.

thought themselves immortal but for witchcraft and the presence of the Spaniards,<sup>1</sup> though the latter clause was obviously a late addition. To the Cherokees disease and death are not natural but due to the evil influence of spirits, ghosts or witches.]<sup>2</sup> The Navajos ascribe death to Chinde, "the devil," who remains in the vicinity of the dead. Those who perform the burial protect themselves from the evil influence by smearing their naked bodies with tar.<sup>3</sup> All illness and bodily evil in British Guiana is the work of spirits, occasionally supposed to act in human form, but generally not, "therefore disease is more common than assault by bodily foes."<sup>4</sup>

[In this brief survey of primitive man's ideas concerning the supernatural causes of death and disease, no attempt has been made to classify those ideas. To do so it will be necessary to distinguish the injuries caused by supernatural beings from those brought about by sorcery, and again from those in the first class but instigated by sorcery, and other subtler distinctions would be called for. To these distinctions and to their significance, we shall have to return.]

Thus if we survey the whole of human life and human relations, we find that all states in which there is danger to be apprehended or something unusual or unusually important to be done or suffered are taboo.

<sup>1</sup> M. Dobrizhoffer, *op. cit.*, ii. 92-93.

<sup>2</sup> J. Mooney, "The Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees," *Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (1891), vii. 322; J. Haywood, *Natural and Aboriginal History of East Tennessee* (1823), pp. 267-268.

<sup>3</sup> H. C. Yarrow, "A Further Contribution to the Study of the Mortuary Customs of the North American Indians," *Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (1881 for 1879-1880), i. 123.

<sup>4</sup> Sir E. F. Im Thurn, *op. cit.*, p. 366.

We have considered those cases which all men experience ; in addition every one is taboo in time of war, at the arrival of strangers, at the planting of the new seed, and at other periodic performances, as Sir James Frazer has so amply demonstrated in his volume on *Taboo*. We shall also find later that occasions where the performance of bodily functions is in question are frequently taboo, and practically always when the functions are sexual or nutritive. We have also seen that even emotional states such as pain, anger, fear and love, are ascribed to supernatural agencies and are taboo states ; and at last the remarkable fact becomes clear that in primitive thought most of what a man or woman does is actually, and all is potentially taboo. It is not merely the incarnate god, the king and the priest, the sick and the mourner, the warrior and the hunter, the boy and the girl at puberty, the infant, the mother in child-bed, and the like, that are in this religious condition, but all human beings, as such, are potentially taboo, dangerous and in danger, all alike, as it were, kings and priests. This tendency arising from subjective conceptions as to the danger of acts and things unfamiliar, out of the routine or not understood, grows out of man's egoistic sensibility, that animal form of the instinct of self-preservation and the will to live, which causes the individual to insulate himself from potential danger. Such danger centres in particular upon the organs of sense and function, the mysterious and complex working of which produces in the thinking organism a subconscious impulse, in the ratio of their importance and complexity, towards their preservation and thereby the preservation of the individual himself. Thus subconscious impulse develops into ideas which are religious in their character and which in their turn suggest the

various methods of taboo. These ideas are religious in their content of "spiritual," as not distinguished from material, danger, and these dangers are conceived of materially and dealt with as such. In all these facts can also be seen between the lines the identity of the taboo state with the dangerous condition caused by evil spirits.

Turning now to the other side of these states, in which the person concerned is dangerous as well as in danger, we are told by Messrs Spencer and Gillen that they "were constantly impressed with the idea that one black fellow will often tell you that he can and does do something magical, whilst all the time he is perfectly well aware that he cannot, and yet firmly believes that some other man can really do it. In order that his fellows may not be considered in this respect as superior to himself, he is obliged to resort to what is really a fraud; but in course of time he may even come to loose sight of the fact that it is a fraud which he is practising upon himself and his fellows."<sup>1</sup> In short amongst savages it is not only professional sorcerers who possess magic power and influence, every man is supposed to have these more or less. For another instance from Australia, most of the old men are sorcerers, and are "able both to cause and cure disease, rain, wind, thunder and hail."<sup>2</sup>

Thus all persons are potentially dangerous to others, as well as potentially in danger, in virtue simply of the distinction between man and man. The individual *quā* individual is potentially in danger from other individuals and dangerous to them. This egoistic sensibility and caution are intensified when things or persons present some unexplained strangeness, and we may conclude

<sup>1</sup> *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* (1899), p. 130.

<sup>2</sup> E. J. Eyre, *Journals of Expeditions of Discovery into Central Australia* (1845), ii. 359, 384.

that the mere fact of sexual differentiation is enough to form the basis of a similar religious caution between men and women. In the second place, functional crises are accentuated forms of this sexual differentiation, and their apparent abnormality causes uneasiness to the individual and to the other sex also. The following case sums up the argument ; the Indians of Costa Rica believe that the ceremonial "uncleanness" called *bu-ku-ru* is very virulent. It is most dangerous from a woman in her first pregnancy. "She infects the whole neighbourhood, and all deaths are laid at her door." Also, "a place which has not been visited for a long time, or one approached for the first time, is infected with *bu-ku-ru*."<sup>1</sup> Here then we have an ultimate origin for the religious precautions used not only at birth, puberty and pregnancy, but at the entering upon a new relation, and that a sexual relation, such as marriage. [To sum up, the "argument is directed to show that all relations between human beings are regarded by primitive man as having an element of danger, and that this conception of danger is intensified whenever there is anything unusual or abnormal in the relation. This idea of danger becomes especially prominent in connection with physiological functions, and several factors concur to intensify it in the case of marriage."]<sup>2</sup>

The whole series of phenomena, as may especially be seen in the ideas and practices concerned with things new and unusual, with the handselling of such, and with the entering upon strange or important acts and functions, illustrates well a characteristic of early man, which may

<sup>1</sup> W. M. Gabb, in *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* (1875), P. 505.

<sup>2</sup> W. H. R. Rivers, in a review of the first edition of *The Mystic Rose, Man* (1902), ii. 78-79.

be described as diffidence, lack of initiative and incapacity for responsibility, and which is the general result of ignorance and of inexperience. This mental and moral habit has, as the material on which it works, the very ignorance with which it is associated in origin. Later, this interesting stage of human development will be shown to have developed moral ideas which have profoundly influenced the progress of man.

## CHAPTER III

### SEXUAL TABOO

“IN the beginning, when Twashtri came to the creation of woman, he found that he had exhausted his materials in the making of man, and that no solid elements were left. In this dilemma, after profound meditation, he did as follows. He took the rotundity of the moon, and the curves of the creepers, and the clinging of tendrils, and the trembling of grass, and the slenderness of the reed, and the bloom of flowers, and the lightness of leaves, and the tapering of the elephant’s trunk, and the glances of deer, and the clustering of rows of bees, and the joyous gaiety of sunbeams, and the weeping of clouds, and the fickleness of the winds, and the timidity of the hare, and the vanity of the peacock, and the softness of the parrot’s bosom, and the hardness of adamant, and the sweetness of honey, and the cruelty of the tiger, and the warm glow of the fire, and the coldness of snow, and the chattering of jays, and the cooing of the *kókila*, and the hypocrisy of the crane, and the fidelity of the *chakrawáka*; and compounding all these together he made woman, and gave her to man. But after one week, man came to him, and said: Lord, this creature that you have given me makes my life miserable. She chatters incessantly, and teases me beyond endurance, never leaving me alone: and she requires incessant attention, and takes all my time up, and cries about nothing, and is always idle; and so I have come to give her back again, as I cannot live

with her. So Twashtri said : Very well : and he took her back. Then after another week, man came again to him, and said : Lord, I find that my life is very lonely since I gave you back that creature. I remember how she used to dance and sing to me, and look at me out of the corner of her eye, and play with me, and cling to me ; and her laughter was music, and she was beautiful to look at, and soft to touch : so give her back to me again. So Twashtri said : Very well : and gave her back again. Then after only three days, man came back to him again, and said : Lord, I know not how it is ; but after all, I have come to the conclusion that she is more of a trouble than a pleasure to me : so please take her back again. But Twashtri said : Out on you ! Be off ! I will have no more of this. You must manage how you can. The man said : But I cannot live with her. And Twashtri replied : Neither could you live without her. And he turned his back on man, and went on with his work. Then man said : What is to be done ! for I cannot live either with or without her.”<sup>1</sup>

This extract from one of Mr F. W. Bain's picturesque tales, illustrates a conception of the relations of man and woman which often occurs in literature. The same conception, due ultimately to that difference of sex and of sexual characters which renders mutual sympathy and understanding more or less difficult, is characteristic of mankind in all periods and stages of culture. Woman is one of the last things to be understood by man. Though the complement of man and his partner in health and sickness, poverty and wealth, woman is different from man, and this difference has had the same religious results as have attended other things which man does not understand. The same thing is true of woman's attitude to

<sup>1</sup> F. W. Bain, *A Digit of the Moon* (1901), pp. 13-15.

man. In the history of the sexes there have always been at work the two complementary physical forces of attraction and repulsion ; man and woman may be regarded, and not fancifully, as the highest sphere in which this law of physics operates ; in love the two sexes are drawn to each other by an irresistible sympathy, while in other circumstances there is more or less of antipathy and segregation, due to and enforced by human ideas of human relations.

The remarkable facts which follow show the primitive theory and practice of this separation of the sexes. Both in origin and results the phenomena are those of taboo, and hence we have applied to these facts the specific term of Sexual Taboo. At first sight this early stage of the relations between men and women may cause surprise, but when one realises the continuity of human ideas and analyses one's own consciousness, at one level or another, one may find therein potentially the same conception, though perhaps emptied of its religious content.

[We may begin with cases showing this sexual separation as we find it expressed in regulations and taboos connected with houses, resting-places, and allied instances.] In the Sandwich Islands there were six houses connected with every great establishment ; one for worship, one for the men to eat in, another for the women, a dormitory, a house for *kapa*-beating, and one where at certain intervals the women might live in seclusion.<sup>1</sup> In general the female sex was isolated and humiliated by taboo, and in their domestic life the women lived almost entirely by themselves.<sup>2</sup> In the Marquesas Islands the place where the men congregate and spend most of their time is taboo to women and protected by the penalty

<sup>1</sup> J. J. Jarves, *History of the Hawaiian or Sandwich Islands* (1843), p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> W. Ellis, *Narrative of a Tour through Hawaii* (1826), p. 359.

of death from the imaginary pollution of a woman's presence; the chiefs never trouble about any domestic affairs.<sup>1</sup> [So strong is this feeling that a woman is forbidden to carry or even to touch a thing that has once been in contact with or hung over the head of her husband or father.<sup>2</sup> According to an earlier traveller the taboo appears to have been still stronger in Nukuhiva, an island in the north-western region of the Marquesas group. Here] if a woman happened to sit upon or even to pass near an object which had become taboo by contact with a man, it could never be used again and the woman was put to death.<sup>3</sup> In the same island the houses of important men are not accessible to their own wives, who live in separate huts.<sup>4</sup> In Tahiti and the Society Islands generally, a woman was isolated by sexual taboo; she had to respect those places frequented by men, and the head of a husband and father was "sacred" from the touch of a woman, nor might a wife or daughter touch any object that had been in contact with these tabooed heads or step over them when their owners were asleep.<sup>5</sup> In Rapa, one of the Tubuai or Austral Islands, all men are taboo to women.<sup>6</sup> No woman may enter the house of a Maori chief.<sup>7</sup> In Fiji, husbands are as frequently away from their wives as with them; it is not, in Fijian

<sup>1</sup> C. E. Meinicke, *Die Inseln des Stillen Oceans* (1875-1876), ii. 370.

<sup>2</sup> M. Radiguet, *Les derniers sauvages* (1882), p. 156.

<sup>3</sup> J. S. C. Dumont d'Urville, *Voyage pittoresque autour du monde* (1834-1835), i. 505.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 504.

<sup>5</sup> W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches* (1859), i. 129; C. Letourneau, *La sociologie d'après l'ethnographie* (1880), p. 173.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 174.

<sup>7</sup> R. Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui* (1870), p. 165; E. Tregear, "The Maoris of New Zealand," *J.A.I.* (1890), xix. 118; *id.*, *The Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary* (1891), s.v. *Kabukabu*; E. Shortland, *Maori Religion and Mythology* (1882), p. 101 *id.*, *The Southern Districts of New Zealand* (1851), p. 295.

society, thought well for a man to sleep regularly at home.<sup>1</sup> Another account states that "it is quite against Fijian ideas of delicacy that a man ever remains under the same roof with his wife or wives at night." He may not take his night's repose anywhere except at one of the public *bures* of his town or village. The women and girls sleep at home. "*Rendezvous* between husband and wife are arranged in the depths of the forest, unknown to any but the two." All the male population, married and unmarried, sleep at the *bures*, or club-houses, of which there are generally two in each village. Boys till of age have a special one.<sup>2</sup> Another investigator states that women are not allowed to enter a *bure*, which is also used as a lounge by the chiefs.<sup>3</sup> In Uripiv of the New Hebrides there is a curious segregation of the sexes, beginning, at least in one respect, soon after a boy is born.<sup>4</sup> A peculiarity of conjugal life in New Caledonia is that men and women do not sleep under the same roof. The wife lives and sleeps by herself in a shed near the house. "You rarely see the men and women talking or sitting together. The women seem perfectly content with the companionship of their own sex. The men, who loiter about with spears in a most lazy fashion, are seldom seen in the society of the opposite sex."<sup>5</sup>

[The Australian is alarmed if a woman steps over him while he is asleep.<sup>6</sup> The Kurnai in south-eastern

<sup>1</sup> T. Williams and J. Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians* (1870), i. 137.

<sup>2</sup> B. Seemann, *Viti* (1862), pp. 110, 191.

<sup>3</sup> C. Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition during the Years 1838-42* (1845), iii. 97, 352.

<sup>4</sup> B. T. Somerville, "Notes on some Islands of the New Hebrides," *J.A.I.* (1894), xxiii. 4.

<sup>5</sup> J. Garnier, *Voyage autour du Monde, Océanie, les Iles des Pins, Loyalty et Tabiti* (1871), p. 186; J. W. Anderson, *Notes of Travel in Fiji and New Caledonia* (1880), p. 232.

<sup>6</sup> E. M. Curr, *The Australian Race* (1886-1887), i. 50.

Victoria have separate camps for men and women.<sup>1</sup> The Euahlayi of north-west New South Wales have a special bachelors' camp.<sup>2</sup> And the Arunta and other tribes in the centre of the continent have a "special part of the main camp where the men assemble and near to which the women may not go."<sup>3</sup> Every inhabited island in the Torres Straits has a certain area set apart for men into which no woman might enter. This place is sometimes considered "sacred," as in the western islands.]<sup>4</sup> In New Guinea the women sleep in houses apart, near those of their male relatives. The men assemble for conversation and meals in the *marea*, a large reception-house, which women are not allowed to enter. [West of Yule Island, off the south coast of New Guinea, the sexes are reported to have separate houses.<sup>5</sup> While in other districts there are communal houses, which, however, have end rooms set aside for men; women and children enter those houses by a side door.]<sup>6</sup> In New Britain there are two large houses in each village, one for men, the other for women: neither sex may enter the house of the other.<sup>7</sup> In the Admiralty Islands there is a house reserved in each village for the use of women, both married and single, while

<sup>1</sup> A. W. Howitt, "The Jeraeil, or Initiation Ceremonies of the Kurnai Tribe," *J.A.I.* (1885), xiv. 318 n.

<sup>2</sup> K. L. Parker, *The Euahlayi Tribe* (1905), p. 61.

<sup>3</sup> Sir W. B. Spencer and F. J. Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* (1899), p. 656.

<sup>4</sup> A. C. Haddon, "Introduction," in *Reports of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Straits* (1904), v. 3; A. C. Haddon, C. G. Seligmann and A. Wilkin, "Magic and Religion," in *ibid.*, v. 365-367.

<sup>5</sup> Sir W. MacGregor, *British New Guinea* (1897), p. 85.

<sup>6</sup> A. C. Haddon, "Studies in the Anthropogeography of British New Guinea," *The Geographical Journal* (1900), xvi. 421.

<sup>7</sup> W. Powell, *Wanderings in a Wild Country* (1883), p. 84.

the single men live together in a separate building.<sup>1</sup> A Solomon Islander will never pass under a tree fallen across the path, because a woman may have stepped over it before him.<sup>2</sup> After which it is not surprising to learn that in these islands women may not enter the men's taboo house, nor even cross the beach in front of it.<sup>3</sup> Of this racial area in general we have the observation that it is considered "degrading" for a Melanesian chief to go where women may be above his head: boys are forbidden to go beneath the women's bed-place.<sup>4</sup> In the Caroline Islands a chief's establishment has one house for the women, a second for eating and a third for sleeping.<sup>5</sup> In the Pelew Islands there is "a remarkable separation of the sexes." Men and women hardly live together and family life is impossible. The segregation is political as well as social.<sup>6</sup> In Ceram, women are forbidden to enter the men's club-house.<sup>7</sup> To a man of the Javanese island Bali *tête-à-tête* conversation with a woman is absolutely forbidden.<sup>8</sup>

In Cambodia a wife may never use the pillow or mattress of her husband, because "she would hurt his happiness thereby."<sup>9</sup> In Siam it is considered unlucky

<sup>1</sup> H. N. Moseley, "The Inhabitants of the Admiralty Islands," *J.A.I.* (1877), vi. 413.

<sup>2</sup> H. B. Guppy, *The Solomon Islands* (1887), i. 4. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 67.

<sup>4</sup> R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians* (1891), p. 233.

<sup>5</sup> C. E. Meinicke, *op. cit.*, ii. 370.

<sup>6</sup> J. S. Kubary, "Die Palau-Inseln in der Südsee," *Journal des Museum Godeffroy* (1873-1874), i. 219, 230; *id.*, *Die sozialen Einrichtungen der Palauer* (1885), pp. 33, 148; C. E. Meinicke, *op. cit.*, ii. 380; K. Semper, *Die Palau-Insein* (1873), pp. 318-319, 366.

<sup>7</sup> J. G. F. Riedel, *De sluik- en kroesbarige rassen tusschen Selebes en Papua* (1886), p. 110.

<sup>8</sup> F. Junghuhn, *Die Battaländer auf Sumatra* (1847), ii. 340.

<sup>9</sup> E. Aymonier, "Note sur les coutumes et croyances superstitieuses des Cambodgiens," *Cochinchine Française* (1883), vi. 162.

to pass under a woman's clothes hung out to dry,<sup>1</sup> but the interpretation of the custom by which the wife has a lower pillow than her husband, as a sign "to remind her of her inferiority,"<sup>2</sup> is probably late. Among the Karens of Burma going under a house where there are females within is avoided,<sup>3</sup> and in Burma generally it is thought an "indignity" to have a woman above the head—to prevent which the houses are never built with more than one storey.<sup>4</sup> But this explanation of an architectural peculiarity is doubtless *ex post facto*. Amongst the people of Rajmahal, in Bengal, if a man be detected by a woman sitting on her cot and she complains of the impropriety, he pays her a fowl as a fine, which she returns; on the other hand, if a man detects a woman sitting on his cot, he kills the fowl which she produces in answer to his complaint, and sprinkles the blood on the cot to purify it, after which she is pardoned.<sup>5</sup> [In "a high-class Hindu family, it is not customary for the husband and wife to sit together during leisure, to drive together, or to take their 'tea' together."]<sup>6</sup> In Seoul, the capital of Korea, "they have a curious curfew law called *pem-ya*. A large bell is tolled at about 8 p.m. and 3 a.m. daily, and between those hours only women are supposed to appear in the streets. In the old days men found in the streets during the hours allotted to women were severely punished, but the rule has been

<sup>1</sup> A. Bastian, *Die Voelker des oestlichen Asien* (1866-1871), iii. 230.

<sup>2</sup> J. Pinkerton, *A General Collection of Voyages and Travels* (1808-1814), ix. 585.

<sup>3</sup> E. B. Cross, "The Karens," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (1854), iv. 312.

<sup>4</sup> A. Bastian, *op. cit.*, ii. 150.

<sup>5</sup> T. Shaw, "The Inhabitants of the Hills near Rājmahall," *Asiatick Researches* (1795), iv. 88.

<sup>6</sup> B. A. Gupte, *A Prabhu Marriage* (1911), p. 2.

greatly relaxed of late years.”<sup>1</sup> Apart from this rule “family life, as we have it, is utterly unknown in Korea.”<sup>2</sup> Amongst the Samoyeds and Ostyaks a wife may not tread in any part of the tent except her own corner; after pitching the tent she must fumigate it before the men enter.<sup>3</sup> Among the former people whatever a woman steps over is unclean and has similarly to be fumigated.<sup>4</sup>

[The Thomson Indians of the interior of British Columbia have a special lodge in which they live when on a hunting-expedition; when a party of hunters are in occupation of such a lodge they are handed their meat through a hole in the back of it, because the door is used by women. Some of the hunters, indeed, eat only such food as has been cooked by an old woman.]<sup>5</sup> The Ojebway Peter Jones thus writes of his own people: “I have scarcely ever seen anything like social intercourse between husband and wife, and it is remarkable that the women say little in the presence of the men.”<sup>6</sup> The Shastika Indians of California have a town-lodge for men and another for women.<sup>7</sup> Other Californian tribes possess the former institution, which women may not enter.<sup>8</sup> According to another account of the Indians of this region, a man never enters his wife’s wigwam

<sup>1</sup> H. B. Saunderson, “Notes on Corea and its People,” *J.A.I.* (1895), xxiv. 305.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, xxiv. 306.

<sup>3</sup> J. G. Georgi, *Description de toutes les nations de l'Empire de Russie* (1736), pp. 15, 137.

<sup>4</sup> P. von Stenin, “Das Gewohnheitsrecht der Samojedien,” *Globus* (1891), lx. 173.

<sup>5</sup> J. Teit, “The Thompson Indians of British Columbia,” *Publications of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition* (1898-1900), i. 347-348.

<sup>6</sup> P. Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians* (1861), p. 60.

<sup>7</sup> S. Powers, *The Tribes of California* (1877), p. 244.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.