

any valid apprehension of the Christian revelation on the part of the Church in terms which are not either meaningless or contradictory.

IAN HISLOP, O.P.

THE ORIGINS AND HISTORY OF RELIGIONS. By John Murphy. (Manchester University Press; 25s.)

LITTÉRATURE RELIGIEUSE. Edited by Joseph Chaine and René Grousset. (Armand Colin, Paris; n.p.)

Dr Murphy has written an excellent account of the findings of recognised authorities on the Origins of Religion. He provides a description of the development of religious beliefs from those of the Primitive Horizon to the great historic cults of the Civilised Horizon. His account of Primitive and Tribal religion are the best parts of the book, though he might well have made more use of psychological interpretations. It may seem at first sight more objective to rely on Ecology to provide the key, but in advancing theories which account for stimulation one must not overlook the subtle (even at the Primitive level) nature of the reaction.

Dr Murphy's book is full of interesting hints, but like so many works on the subject far too much space is given to the hypotheses of urbane dons about primitive religion and too little evidence is advanced to support some of the argumentation. Dr Murphy certainly deals Father Schmidt some shrewd blows but the fact remains that 'Primitive Religion' is still 90 per cent hypothesis and ten per cent evidence. The sections on Tribal Religion are full of an interest, which dies away when the great historic religions are discussed, for though each account is sound enough in itself, they, for the most part, leave the reader wondering why on earth anyone ever really followed such systems. In fact for all his learning Dr Murphy avoids, perhaps he means to, answering the question, what is all this theory and fact about?

*Littérature Religieuse* is a collection of excerpts from the written texts of the great world religions. Competent commentaries and smudgy illustrations are provided for all the sections, as well as bibliographical information. A notable omission from the commentary is any account of the reversal of scholars' interpretations of various elements in Hindu thought owing to the discoveries at Mohenjo-daro.

IAN HISLOP, O.P.

SIR ARTHUR EDDINGTON: MAN OF SCIENCE AND MYSTIC. (The second A. S. Eddington Memorial Lecture.) (Cambridge University Press; 2s.)

In this slight lecture the author touches glancingly on Eddington's work, confining himself in the main to generalities about the Universe, Light and Movement. His concern is to relate the point of view of physics to the realities of religion and mysticism. Although he makes no contribution to systematic thought, his approach may help to break down the notion that science is the sole road to truth.