

among the Zulus suffered from them for a few years after conversion. They are identical with the 'ecstasy' and prophetic 'manteia' (*i. e.*, mania) which played such a large part in the orgiastic rites of Greece and, indeed, of the whole ancient world. The human soul was everywhere regarded as a gift of, or akin to, the Divine, and in its nature, prophetic; so that when, in these moments of strange emotion, it spake with tongues and entered into rapt communion with the Spirit, it simply expressed its true nature and noble origin.

Christianity, which taught that 'the gods of the heathen are devils,' changed the meaning of *daimon* from a beneficent guardian to a diabolic imp, and called the inspiration of the Pythoness a 'possession by the devil.'

Psychology, unable to recognize the god as the devil in these attacks, sees in them the emotional outbreaks of the sub-liminal consciousness, examples of pathological psychic automatism, occurring always in weak or weakened minds, excited by auto- or collective suggestion, limited always by the boundaries of the individual mind itself, never in any proved instance exceeding its powers, though sometimes seeming so to do, owing to deficient observation on the part of the observer. The proof of the correctness of this position is that experienced alienists never see a case of demonic possession. Their arrival is as certain to dispel it as is, according to Dr. Nevius and many other good men, the 'sacred name' itself. What the alienist sees is hysteric or epileptoid convulsions, or emotional contagious mania, and the like; and this is all that any one will see who carefully studies such conditions.

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Naual oder die Die Hohe Wissenschaft der Architectonischen und Künstlerischen Composition bei den Maya-Völkern deren Descendenten und Schülern. By A. EICHORN. Berlin. 1896. Pp. 1-126.

It seems the time has not yet come when it will be understood that the treatment of anthropological problems requires as much training and knowledge as work in other branches of science; else a book like the present would

not have been published with any serious pretensions. The scientific method of the author is sufficiently characterized by the naïve etymology of meander from the Maya word *mai*, hand, and *andros*, genitive of *ánhrp*, *i. e.*, a man's hand. His other etymologies are of the same value. The author treats words in the most arbitrary manner, changing the order of sounds and syllables, and fits this material to fanciful theories on a heroic language of the Mexicans, and to no less fanciful interpretations of sculptures. As a scientific contribution the work is of no value.

F. BOAS.

SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIES.

NEW YORK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, SECTION OF GEOLOGY AND MINERALOGY, OCTOBER 19.

THE first paper of the evening was by Arthur Hollick, entitled 'Geological Notes; Long Island and Block Island.' Previous investigations on Staten Island, Long Island, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket have proved a unity of geologic conditions throughout, and it was confidently expected that a careful examination of Block Island would show this also to be part of the same general series. During the past summer the island was visited and proofs were obtained of drift phenomena, identical with those of the other localities. A collection of fossils was made which demonstrated the former existence of cretaceous strata on the island. The material collected consisted of plant remains, imperfectly preserved and of mollusks in a good state of preservation. These latter were identified by Prof. R. P. Whitfield and the list numbers ten species, in addition to fragmentary remains of perhaps half a dozen more. They are typical of the lower green-sand marl and were found as drift material in the moraine, under the same conditions in which similar fossils have been found in the other localities mentioned. It was also thought advisable to visit again the eastern end of Long Island in order to ascertain whether more definite fossil remains could be found on Montauk Point, where imperfectly preserved fossils had been discovered on a previous occasion. Here also well preserved mollusks were found, likewise identified by Prof. Whitfield, who has