

have been some influences upon the traditions of human sacrifice in Japan. The story of Riu-jin, the dragon deity, is the most conspicuous one evidently introduced from China. Some other traditions probably originated with the Stone Age people who lived in Japan before the Yamato race came and subjugated them.

According to our investigations of the Japanese tradition of human sacrifices, those connected with the water-deity are the oldest and most numerous, and then those concerning baboons. It should be noticed that the water-deities and monkeys were often tempted by their opponent to do something or another, e. g., to sink the gourds as we described above, to disclose their inability. The Hito-bashira or "human pillar" traditions are always connected with some important enterprise and mostly with water. In large enterprises human lives are often lost in the work itself, therefore in some cases such loss of human life would have been looked upon as a human sacrifice.

It is, however, most remarkable that stories of human sacrifice were most numerous composed in the Tokugawa period, i. e., during the last three centuries. The killing of monstrous serpents or baboons to rescue poor victims, or to give happiness to the people, was an indispensable element in the popular heroic stories of this period. These stories were mostly derived from the older traditions which we described. By such popular traditions, a spirit of self-sacrifice was inspired in the people. It is, therefore, highly interesting to note that the Japanese traditions of human sacrifice were made use of, in a pretty well advanced stage of society, for social education both by means of popular literary works and religious customs and manners.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

LIBERAL JUDAISM AND HELLENISM, AND OTHER ESSAYS. By *C. G. Montefiore*. London: Macmillan & Co., 1918. Pp. xii. 328. Price, 6s. net.

The essays—many of them undelivered lectures—which make up this interesting and persuasive volume all deal with aspects of liberal Judaism, and are mainly concerned with the question whether the Jewish religion, which survived the changes and chances of so many centuries, can survive the more

potent solvent of higher criticism. It is, in fact, the expression of Jewish modernism, by the ablest of its representatives. Liberal Judaism is bound to accept the assured conclusions of historical and critical investigation. "Whither the argument of truth leads, thither liberal Judaism must follow;" can it survive this pursuit? In the opinion of Mr. Montefiore, it can.

In spite of concessions to criticism, in spite of disbelief in its miraculous element, in spite of a new conception of inspiration, the Bible to him still holds a special and peculiar place. For it contains the belief in the one righteous God, "the simple ethical monotheism of social and practical life, the simple yet profound and intimate (and even adequately mystical) monotheism of our private life of prayer and communion." The wide scholarship and charm of the chapter upon liberal Judaism and Hellenism will appeal to many readers outside the circle of Jewish modernists to whom Mr. Montefiore chiefly addresses himself. μ

ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE UNSEEN: an Examination of the Phenomena of Spiritualism and of the Evidence for Survival After Death. By *Sir William F. Barrett*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd.; New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1917. Pp. xx, 336. Price 6s. 6d. net.

Sir William Barrett, who was for many years professor of Experimental Physics in the Royal College of Science for Ireland, has produced the nearest thing to a scientific book upon spiritualism in this book, which is his *On the Threshold of a New World of Thought* (1908) recast and added to. Although a believer in the phenomena of spiritualism, he presents the evidence with notable fairness and absence of credulity. He describes the so-called physical phenomena in Part II as "bizarre and repellent," criticises the sources of "spirit teachings" (p. 188), and restricts his evidence as far as possible to that obtained from mediums who are not paid. He has put together a body of evidence which will help in the future scientific discussion of the subject. μ

CHRISTIANITY AND IMMORTALITY. By *Vernon F. Storr*. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1918. Pp. x, 195. Price 7s. 6d. net.

Canon Storr has given a fresh and ably written restatement of an old problem. He gives prominence to an interesting theory "published by the Rev. R. Vaughan in the *Church Quarterly Review*, Jan. 1916, as to the post-Resurrection appearance of Christ; and advances a suggestion, in relation to human survival, that it is not impossible that we are making for ourselves," either within the particles of the existing body or outside of it, a "spiritual body of finer material." The main difficulties of the Christian doctrine of immortality are faced with candor, together with the apocalyptic element in Christ's teaching. He gives a summary and critical examination of what spiritualism has to contribute to the problem of survival, and a theory that the fate of the wicked is to be extinction, "the progressive disintegration of the personality as it finds itself unable to cooperate with the great purpose of God." μ