

thought. The scheme is comprehensive and well carried out in a brief compass.

Dr. Donath notes several of the prevalent errors in such investigations, as lack of discrimination between a given stage of culture and the psychic faculties of those who exhibit it, the mistake of assuming that mental power is correlated to cranial capacity, and especially the incorrectness of supposing a parallelism between the psychical evolution of a child and the race, as Bucke, Baldwin and others have too literally assumed. ('Die Anfänge des Menschlichen Geistes,' pp. 47; F. Encke, Stuttgart, 1898.)

MUSHROOM-SHAPED IMAGES.

THEOBERT MALER and others have published illustrations of stone pillars with mushroom-shaped summits, occurring in Yucatan, Guatemala and elsewhere in Mayan territory.

In the *Globus* for May 28th Dr. Carl Sapper gives a picture of one in excellent preservation, about 30 centimeters in height, from San Salvador. On the shaft the face of a man (or monkey) is roughly outlined. Over it is the umbrella-like expansion.

These have generally been considered phallic emblems. Dr. Sapper doubts this, and in fact there is no evidence for it beyond a vague resemblance. He advances, however, no other explanation.

I would offer a suggestion. They resemble in shape mushrooms or toadstools, and why should not that be their intention? Why should it be? Because the word for mushroom in Maya (Tzental dialect) is *hu*, sufficiently near to the word for moon, *uh* or *yuh*, to recall it in sound, and the night growth of the fungus would strengthen the mythical alliance. They would thus be emblematic of the lunar and nocturnal divinity.

AMERICAN INDIAN GAMES.

THIS subject is treated in an interesting manner from ample material by Mr. Stewart

Culin in the *Bulletin* of the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, No. 3, Vol. I. He selects for analysis the game of dice or tossed staves, which he finds among sixty-one North American tribes. With much ingenuity he compares their implements and the decorations upon them, reaching the conclusion that they were all derived from some center in northern Mexico or near there; the thread of connection which leads him being the throwing-stick, or *atlaltl*, of the Mexicans.

This is ingenious, but not wholly convincing. One may ask why the *atlaltl* might not have drawn its local symbols and trappings from the game, rather than *vice versa*. The symbolism is surely more recent than the game; *atlalts* are found elsewhere without it; and there are simpler explanations of the elementary symbolism of the game in the northern tribes. In the study of development it is usually wiser to begin with the simple and proceed to the complex, rather than the reverse.

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SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS.

PREVENTIVE INOCULATION AGAINST PLAGUE.

M. HAFKINE made recently an address on the above subject at Poona, in the course of which, according to the report in the *London Times*, he compared the invasion of India by the plague bacillus to the invasion of Australia by rabbits, to the invasion of certain soils in south Europe by the phylloxera, and to the invasion of South Africa by the organism of the rinderpest, and used these analogies to show that there are, in both the animal and vegetable worlds, diseases of which the cause, the morbid organism, can live and propagate outside the patient's body, can grow in the soil, in water, be carried by clothing, bedding, instruments, by any living or dead object. If it happens that the natural conditions of a country are favorable to the life and propagation of such an infectious organism, and as long