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The Future of Anthropology in Africa or Elsewhere

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Robert Sutherland Rattray

Hodge's reply to this does not survive either in the Southwest Museum or in the Holmes papers in the National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution. However, it can be deduced from Holmes' next, very curt, letter to Hodge: "I have your recent favor and am surprised that you should wish the continuance of the Prussian regime, the vicious, scheming minority of the association has ruled long enough, and if it is to continue I shall close my connection with anthropology for good."

CLIO'S FANCY--DOCUMENTS TO PIQUE THE HISTORICAL IMAGINATION

THE FUTURE OF ANTHROPOLOGY IN AFRICA OR ELSEWHERE

The following item appeared under the above title in the transactions of the anthropological section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1934 (Reports, p. 354). It came from the pen of Captain Robert Sutherland Rattray, who as Government Anthropologist on the Gold Coast in the 1920s wrote a number of monographs on the Ashanti. After his retirement from government service in the early 1930s, Rattray published several items reflecting a more radical identification with native aspirations than his formal monographs suggest. They included a romantic novel, The Leopard Princess, dedicated to Paul Robeson, as well as articles expressing certain reservations about the prevailing orthodoxy of "Indirect Rule." The argument rather elliptically sketched in this BAAS abstract was developed at somewhat greater length in "Present Tendencies of African Colonial Government" (Journal of the African Society 33:22-36).

Is this science, which the European has built up around African and other races under the name of Anthropology, destined in the future to be regarded by the subjects of these scientific investigations as just so much interesting archaeological data concerning their own dead past?

Alternatively: Will these peoples come to recognise anthropology as something which has been a living vital factor in shaping their own destinies?

The answer to these questions would seem largely to depend

on two things:

- (a) Whether the European can, before it is too late, enlist the whole-hearted interest and co-operation, in his anthropological experiments, of the more highly educated members of such communities;
- (b) Ability and understanding to discriminate--among the mass of data which we have now accumulated--between what is, and what is not, vital for the attainment of the object which we have in view.

This object may perhaps be defined as the retention of the particular genius and individuality of the races concerned.

BIBLIOGRAPHICA ARCANA

THE PSEUDONYMS OF LORIMER FISON, 1857-1883

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H. R. Hays in From Ape to Angel leaves Fison at 1880, after the publication of Kamilaroi and Kurnai, by simply adding that "during the latter part of his life he gave up anthropology"--which is quite incorrect. At this time Fison was signing all his work and Hays should have located it. To the end Fison corresponded with Frazer, Howitt and others. His last book, Tales of Old Fiji (which he had researched in the 1870s), came out in 1904 (reprinted 1907) just before he died.

Between Kamilaroi and Kurnai and Tales of Old Fiji he maintained a flow of published articles, some showing the influence of Lewis Henry Morgan, but many indicating original research on marriage patterns, burial rites, religious cults, word studies, riddles and material culture. Six of these appeared in the Journal of the Anthropological Institute (a door opened to him by E. B. Tylor), along with several others co-authored with Howitt and Codrington; four were papers read to the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science; and others appeared in Australian and American journals, including the Sydney Morning Herald, Argus, American Anthropologist, Annual Report of New Guinea and Australasian Monthly Magazine. He wrote the article on "Aborigines of Victoria" for Baldwin Spencer's Handbook of Melbourne (1891).

However, what is generally not known is that Fison wrote a great deal under pseudonyms from 1857, when he edited the