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Hinduism being also discussed. In a Conclusion the author finds that the monasteries and monks of India's decadent and moribund Buddhism "indirectly saved Hinduism from Mohammedan looting, as being taken for forts and soldiers respectively". He also defies us to deny "that Tantric culture is the greatest contribution made by India towards the world's civilization". We have a good deal to learn before we shall be prepared to endorse that.

I could say more as to perspectives taken in the opening chapters, but refrain. The reader will consult this book not for them, but for information in Tantrism. That no reference is made to those earlier fellow-workers—let criticism here be confined to this.

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C. A. F. RHYS DAVIDS.

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ETHNOLOGICAL AND LINGUISTICAL ASPECTS OF THE URAL-ALTAIC HYPOTHESIS. By S. M. SHIROKOGOROFF.  $10\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ , pp. 198. Peiping: The Commercial Press, Ltd., 1931.

The object of this elaborate work, which is reprinted from vol. vi of the *Tsing Hua Journal*, is a twofold one.

The first part is devoted to an exposition of the author's views on ethnical and linguistic evolution. They are somewhat intricate and unconventional, and are made no easier by the extraordinary terminology which the author finds himself compelled to employ. The following sentence (pp. 34-5) is not perhaps a fair sample, but it is a pretty hard nut to crack, particularly without any explanation of the symbols:—

"The effect of the interethnical pressure may be better seen when the difference of the ethnical value of the units is considered. The ethnoses [*sic!*] are found under the pressure of all other units. So if the ethnical value of the ethnos is defined as shown,  $f = \frac{1}{\omega} q^2$ , and its interethnical actual value

is increased, owing to the impulsive pressure of all neighbouring ethnical units, i.e.  $\epsilon = \frac{1}{\omega} q^2 \Sigma i$ , where  $\Sigma i$  is the sum of all impulses of variations active among these units, then the intensity of the interethnical pressure and its effectiveness may be realized."

However, even if such vagaries be discounted, it is difficult to believe that the author's theories will command much general support, particularly since they appear to be framed with specific reference to the peculiar conditions of central Asia, and are marked by a fundamental scepticism regarding the possibility of attaining certainty on the subject of the relationship between languages and their grouping in families.

In the second part, which is devoted to a study of A. Sauvageot's *Recherches sur le vocabulaire des langues ouralo-altaïques*, the author is on securer ground, since he has a very considerable knowledge of the Tungus dialects, and is able to correct a number of mistakes and misapprehensions in the earlier work.

At the same time, it is difficult to accept his exaggerated scepticism regarding the inter-relationship of the "Altaic" languages. If one discards all the cases where the phonetic resemblance is not too good as unproven, and puts down almost all those where it is satisfactory as loan-words, it is not difficult to make hay of any theory of relationship.

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G. L. M. CLAUSON.

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FINIANUS. DIE ABENTEUER EINES AMERIKANISCHEN SYRERS.

Translated by ENNO LITTMANN.  $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ , pp. viii + 74.

Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1932.

This story, first published in 1902, is the work of a Syrian resident in Brazil. It is written in the Lebanon dialect, and so is quite unintelligible to those who know only other forms of Arabic. It is translated because it is a good story, not to promote the study of vulgar Arabic, though some of the notes (though brief, they are all to the point) deal with words.