

# Ancient Beliefs

**THE MYTHOLOGY OF ALL RACES.**  
to be completed in thirteen volumes. is an ambitious undertaking. That it will be carried thru in a scientific and trustworthy way is guaranteed by its able editors, Prof. Louis Herbert Gray and Prof. George Foot Moore. It is planned to cover the entire field, collecting into a single series the myths of the whole human race. More than a dozen specialists, American, Oriental and European, are coöperating in the task of bringing together and organizing the scattered materials of this important subject.

In the case of some peoples, such as the Babylonians, Hebrews, Greeks and Romans, their mythological systems and traditions are fairly well known. Their literatures, which have strongly influenced our own culture and religion, have made their myths common knowledge and they are set forth in many classic and popular writings. But in the case of many peoples, such as the Slavic, Siberian and American Indian races, few comprehensive works are to be found, and in the case of some, as the Armenians, none at all.

In the first volume the Greek and Roman section is excellently set forth by Professor Fox, of Princeton. The abundance of material in this field has proved a perplexing problem for the author under the allotted space limitations, and he has exercised great skill in the organization and presentation of the subject. In his valuable introduction he discusses the nature, purpose

and value of myths, the character and classification of Greek myths, and their relations to ethics, science and art. The volume is beautifully illustrated with more than sixty plates, many of them finely colored.

Two more volumes in the series have already come from the press. These are of special interest to American readers because the peoples whose myths they record are largely under the American flag. That by Professor Dixon, of Harvard, is devoted to "Oceanic Mythology," covering the Hawaiian Islands and the Philippines as well as Australia, New Zealand and the other islands of the Pacific. The value of the work for comparative study of the universal human inquiry into origins may be seen in the Hawaiian account of the drama of creation, which develops the evolutionary motive, and parallels in many ways the old Babylonian and Sumerian account of the creation of the world, partly preserved for us in Biblical stories.

The study of the *North American* races is by Professor Alexander, of the University of Nebraska. Altho many partial accounts and special treatises on the Indian myths have been in existence, this is the first systematic and comprehensive treatment of the subject. Both volumes are beautifully illustrated with pictures of primitive art, religious symbols and picture-language signs and supplied with helpful maps.

Thus far the work is a model of clearness, comprehensiveness and convenient form. Critical appendices with notes and bibliographies assist in making appeal to the scholar as well as to the general reader.

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