

# SCIENCE

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## THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE THE ETHNOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF CULTURE<sup>1</sup>

DURING the last few years great additions have been made to our store of the facts of anthropology—we have learned much about different peoples scattered over the earth and we understand better how they act and think. At the same time we have, I hope, made a very decided advance in our knowledge of the methods by means of which these facts are to be collected, so that they may rank in clearness and trustworthiness with the facts of other sciences. When, however, we turn to the theoretical side of our subject, it is difficult to see any corresponding advance. The main problems of the history of human society are little, if at all, nearer their solution, and there are even matters which a few years ago were regarded as settled which are today as uncertain as ever. The reason for this is not far to seek; it is that we have no general agreement about the fundamental principles upon which the theoretical work of our science is to be conducted.

In surveying the different schools of thought which guide theoretical work on human culture, a very striking fact at once presents itself. In other and more advanced sciences the guiding principles of the workers of different nations are the same. The zoologists or botanists of France, Germany, America, our own and other countries, are on common ground. They have in general the same principles and the same methods, and the work of all

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<sup>1</sup> Address of the president to the Anthropological Section. Portsmouth, 1911.

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