

that it can now formulate in confident and systematic detail its principles and laws—it is important that all such beginners should be disillusioned without delay.’<sup>1</sup> Comparative Religion is emphatically a science of the twentieth century, and accordingly no very pronounced results need be looked for as yet. ‘It is still a science in the making. It is only gradually assuming concrete and confident form. The contents of this volume—and, not least, the carefully-ordered arrangement of those contents—serve in the best possible way to demonstrate that most existing books on Comparative Religion are merely preliminary treatises.’<sup>1</sup> The ground, in many places, is still in process of being broken up. At other points, the seed sown has already produced an excellent harvest. It is quite correct to say, with Dr. Clifford, that ‘the literature is astonishingly extensive, and it is growing from month to month’,<sup>2</sup> provided the pronoun ‘its’ be not substituted for the definite article. The books thus far available lead towards a goal which, even in 1916, is apparently somewhat remote. No popular or scientific Manual has thus far been produced. Less than a dozen expositions of Comparative Religion have been penned—whether in Great Britain, America, or on the Continent—during the last six years! Of systematic and adequate expositions, even after the lapse of nearly fifty years, there are none. Several such volumes are at present in course of preparation; some of them, it is well known, have long been in hand; but not one of them has been completed and printed. No *Journal of Comparative Religion*, national or international in its scope, has yet been launched. Even in the standard Encyclopædias the subject is still very imperfectly dealt with. In the latest ‘Ready Reference’ copy of the *Subject-Index* of the British Museum Library, even in 1916, the heading ‘Comparative Religion’ is sought for in vain!<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, of volumes which throw a good deal of light upon this study, the number is practically unlimited.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jordan, *Comparative Religion: A Survey of its Recent Literature, 1910–1913*: vide *supra*, foot-note, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. John Clifford, *Comparative Religion and Missions to Non-Christian Peoples*, p. 4. London, 1912. Professor Geden goes inordinately far when he says that ‘Comparative Religion is already abundantly furnished with handbooks and introductions’: cf. Alfred S. Geden, *Studies in the Religions of the East*, p. viii. London, 1913.

<sup>3</sup> In the latest printed volumes of the *Subject-Index* (1901–1905 and 1906–1910), books on Comparative Religion must be looked for under the heading ‘The History of Religions’.