

ANIMISM.

BY PROF. TYLOR, AUTHOR OF "PRIMITIVE CULTURE."

V.

FAR from a life after death being held by all men as the destiny of all men, whole classes are formally excluded from it. In the Tonga Islands, the future life was a privilege of caste, for while the chiefs and higher orders were to pass in divine ethereality to the happy land of Bolotu, the lower ranks were believed to be endowed only with souls that died with their bodies; and although some of these had the vanity to claim a place in paradise among their betters, the populace in general acquiesced in the extinction of their own plebeian spirits. The Nicaraguans believed that if a man lived well, his soul would ascend to dwell among the gods, but if ill, it would perish with the body, and there would be an end of it. Granted that the soul survives the death of the body, instance after instance from records of the lower culture shows this soul to be regarded as a mortal being, liable like the body itself to accident and death. The Greenlanders pitied the poor souls who must pass in winter or in storm the dreadful mountain where the dead descend to reach the other world, for then a soul is like to come to harm, and die the other death where there is nothing left, and this is to them the dolefullest thing of all. Thus the Fijians tell of the fight which the ghost of a departed warrior must wage with the soul-killing Samu and his brethren; this is the contest for which the dead man is armed by burying the war-club with his corpse, and if he conquers, the way is open to him to the judgment-seat of Ndengei, but if he is wounded his doom is to wander among the mountains, and if killed in the encounter he is cooked and eaten by Samu and his brethren. But the souls of unmarried Fijians will not even survive to stand this wager of battle; such try in vain to steal at low water round to the edge of the reef past the rocks where Nangananga, destroyer of wifeless souls, sits laughing at their hopeless efforts, and asking them if they think the tide will never flow again, till at last the rising flood drives the shivering ghosts to the beach, and Nangananga dashes them to pieces on the great black stone, as one shatters rotten firewood.

Such, again, were the tales told by the Guinea negroes of the life or death of departed souls. Either the great priest before whom they must appear after death would judge them, sending the good in peace to a happy place, but killing the wicked a second time with the club that stands ready before his dwelling; or else the departed shall be judged by their god at the river of death, to be gently visited by him to a pleasant land if they have kept feasts and oaths and abstained from forbidden meats, but, if not, to be plunged in the river of the god, and thus drowned and buried in eternal oblivion. Even common water can drown a negro ghost, if we may believe the story of the Matamba widows having themselves