

Now as to the origin of the word; we have seen above that Rochefort was the first to use the expression *faire la couvade*. This author, or at least the author (see *Barbier, Ouvrages anonymes*) of the *Histoire naturelle . . . des Iles Antilles*, which was published for the first time at Rotterdam, in 1658, 4to., writes: "C'est qu'au même tems que la femme est delivrée le mary se met au lit, pour s'y plaindre et y faire l'acouchée: coutume, qui bien que Sauvage et ridicule, se trouve neantmoins à ce que l'on dit, parmy les paysans d'une certaine Province de France. Et ils appellent cela *faire la couvade*. Mais ce qui est de fâcheux pour le pauvre Caraïbe, qui s'est mis au lit au lieu de l'acouchée, c'est qu'on luy fait faire diète dix ou douze jours de suite, ne luy donnant rien par jour qu'un petit morceau de Cassave, et un peu d'eau dans la quelle on a aussi fait bouillir un peu de ce pain de racine. . . . Mais ils ne font ce grand jeusne qu'à la naissance de leur premier enfant . . ." (II. pp. 607-608).

Lafitau (*Mœurs des Sauvages Américains*, I. pp. 49-50) says on the authority of Rochefort: "Je la trouve chez les Ibériens ou les premiers Peuples d'Espagne . . . elle est aujourd'hui dans quelques unes de nos Provinces d'Espagne."

The word *couvade*, forgotten in the sense of lying-in bed, recalled by Sacombe, has been renovated in a happy manner by Dr. Tylor.

As to the custom itself, there can be no doubt of its existence, in spite of some denials. Dr. Tylor, in the third edition of his valuable *Early History of Mankind*, published in 1878 (Murray), since the last edition of *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, has added (pp. 291 *seqq.*) many more proofs to support what he had already said on the subject.

There may be some strong doubts as to the *couvade* in the south of France, and the authors who speak of it in Béarn and the Basque Countries seem to have copied one another, but there is not the slightest doubt of its having been and of its being actually practised in South America. There is a very curious account of it in the *Voyage dans le Nord du Brésil* made by Father Yves d'Evreux in 1613 and 1614 (see pp. 88-89 of the reprint, Paris, 1864, and the note of the learned Ferdinand Denis, pp. 411-412). Compare with *Durch Central-Brasilien . . . im Jahre 1884 von K.v. den Steinen*. But the following extract from *Among the Indians of Guiana. . . . By Everard im Thurn* (1883), will settle, I think, the question:

"Turning from the story of the day to the story of the life, we may begin at the beginning, that is, at the birth of the children. And here, at once, we meet with, perhaps, the most curious point in the habits of the Indians; the *couvade* or male child-bed. This custom, which is common to the uncivilized people of many parts of the world, is probably among the strangest ever invented by the human brain. Even before the child is born, the father abstains for a time from certain kinds of animal food. The woman works as usual up to a few hours before the birth of the child. At last she retires alone, or accompanied only by some other women, to the forest, where she ties up her hammock; and then the child is born. Then in a few hours—often less than a day—the woman, who, like all women living in a very unartificial condition, suffers but little, gets up and resumes her ordinary work. According to Schomburgk, the mother, at any rate among the Macusis, remains in her hammock for some time, and the father hangs his hammock, and lies in it, by her side; but in all cases where the matter came under my notice, the mother left her hammock almost at once. In any case, no sooner is the child born than the father takes to his hammock and, abstaining from every sort of work, from meat and all other food, except weak gruel of cassava meal, from smoking, from washing himself, and, above all, from touching weapons of any sort, is nursed and cared for by all the women of the place. One other regulation, mentioned by Schomburgk, is certainly quaint; the interesting father may not scratch himself with his finger-nails, but he may use for this purpose a splinter, specially provided, from the mid-rib of a cokerite palm. This continues for many days, and sometimes even weeks. *Couvade* is such a wide-spread institution, that I had often read and wondered at it; but it was not until I saw it practised around me, and found that I was often suddenly