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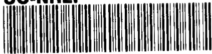

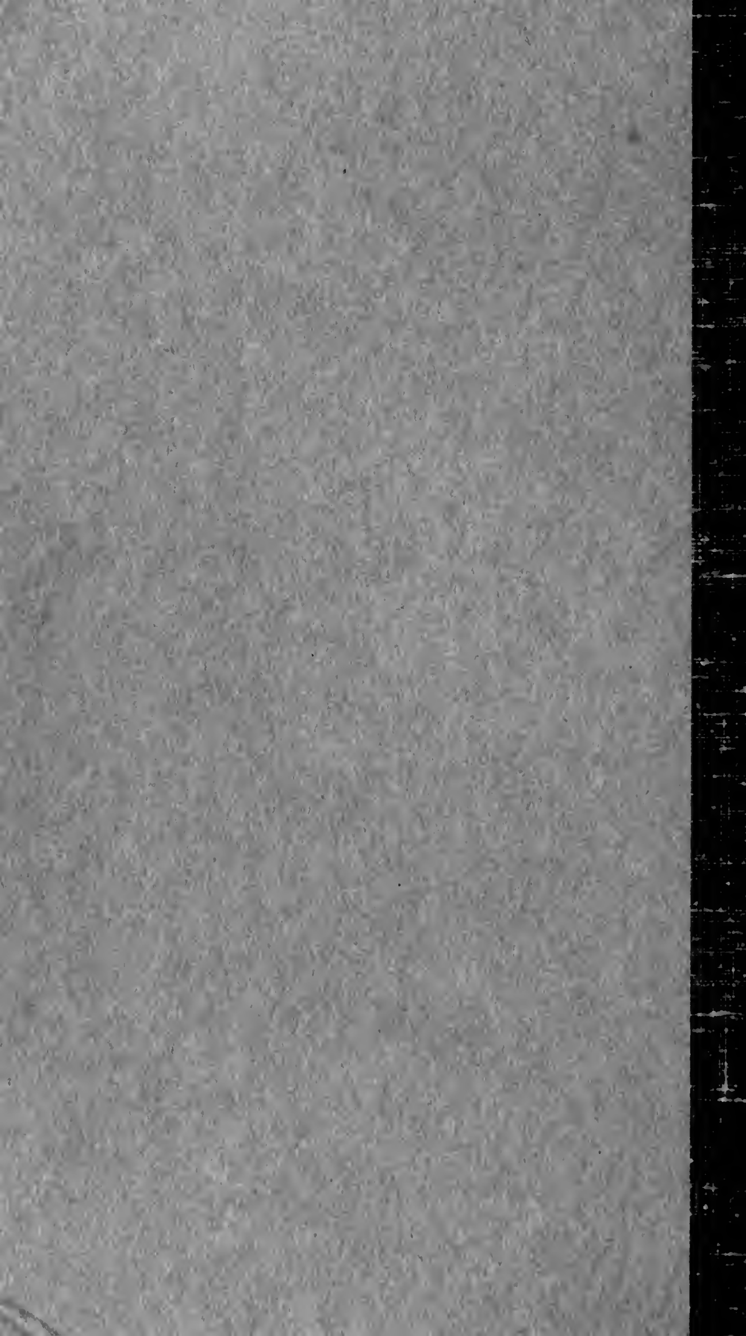

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THE BIRTH AND GROWTH OF MYTH.

BY EDWARD CLODD, F.R.A.S.,

AUTHOR OF "THE CHILDHOOD OF RELIGIONS," "THE CHILDHOOD OF THE WORLD," ETC.

I.

ATURE AS VIEWED BY PRIMITIVE MAN.

THE application of the scientific method) the study of man has given a wider neaning to the word "myth" than that ommonly found in the dictionaries. 'hese explain it as fable, as designedly ctitious, whether for amusement only, or) point a moral. The larger meaning hich it holds to-day includes much more ian this—to wit, the whole area of intel- ctual products which lie beyond the his-)ric horizon and overlap it, effacing on earer view the lines of separation. For ie myth, as fable only, has no place for ie crude fancies and grotesque imagin- igs of barbarous races of the present ay, and of races at low levels of culture the remote past. And so long as it as looked upon as the vagrant of fancy, ith no serious meaning at the heart of and as corresponding to no yearning man after the truth of things, sober eatment of it was impossible. But now at it, with its prolific offspring, legend id tradition, is seen to be a necessary availing through which the mind of man ssed in its slow progress toward cer- ude, the study and comparison of its anifold, yet, at the center, allied forms, d of the conditions out of which they arose, takes rank among the serious inquiries of our time.

Not that the inquiry is a new one. Five hundred years before Christ, *i.e.*, in the days of Euripides, the Greeks had identified the gods of their Olympus with the sun and sky, although Anaxagoras was sentenced to death and afterward banished for calling the moon a lump of lifeless matter, and in succeeding times myths were either emptied of their meaning or exalted to historic rank. In the hands of Christian apologists, from the ages of the Fathers to the present day "heathen" mythologies have been cited as witnesses to the corruptions of the faith, and, under the solvent of blundering etymologies, have been made to yield traces of a primitive revelation and of the doctrine of a Trinity! But if the inquiry is not a new one, the method of its prosecution is—a method justified by its works. Because, for the assigning of its due place in the order of man's mental and spiritual development to myth, there is needed that knowledge concerning his origin, concerning the conditions out of which he has emerged, and concerning the mythologies of lower races and their survival in unsuspected forms in the higher races, which was not only beyond the reach, but the conception also, of men until this century.

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Except, therefore, as curiosities of literature, we may dismiss the Lemprière of our school-days, and with him "Casaubon"-Bryant and his key to all the mythologies—a key that fits no lock; with him, too, in all respect be it added, Mr. Gladstone, with his visions of the Messiah in Apollo, and of the Logos in Athênê.

After this short preface, we may start with the brief and plain statement, to be justified by what follows, that the birthplace of myth is in the endeavor of primitive man to interpret the meaning of his surroundings. By primitive man, I do not, of course, mean the nameless savage of the old Stone Age, who, if he had brains and leisure enough to make guesses about things, has left us no witness of the fact. His relics, and those of his successors to a period which is but as yesterday in the history of our kind, are material only, and not until we possess the symbols of man's thought, whether in language or rude picture, do we get an inkling of the meaning which the universe had for him, in the detail of his pitiless daily life, in the shapes and motions of surrounding objects, and in the majesty of the heavens above him. Even then the thought is more or less crystallized, and if we would watch it in the fluent form, we must have keen eye for the like process going on among savages yet untouched by the Time-Spirit, although higher in the scale than the Papuans and hill tribes of the Vindhya. For we cannot so far lull our faculty of thought as to realize the mental vacuity of the savage, but we may, from survivals nowadays, lead up to reasonable guesses of savage ways of looking at things in bygone ages, and the more so when we can detect relics of these among the ignorant and superstitious of modern times.

What meaning, then, had primitive man's surroundings to him when eye and ear could be diverted from prior claims of the body, and he could repose from watching for his prey and from listening to the approach of wild beast or enemy? He had the advantage, from greater demand for their exercise, in keener senses of sight, hearing, smell, and touch than we enjoy; nor did he fail to take in facts in plenty. Only there was this vital defect and difference, that in his brain every fact was pigeon-holed, charged with its own narrow meaning only, as in small minds among ourselves we find place given to inane, peddling detail, and no advance made to general and wide conception of things. In sharpest contrast to the poet's utterance—

> "Nothing in this world is single;
> All things by a law divine
> In each other's being mingle,"

every fact is unrelated to every other fact, and, therefore, interpreted wrongly.

Man, in his first outlook upon Nature, was altogether ignorant of the character of the forces by which he was environed; ignorant of that unvarying relation between effect and cause which it needed the experience of ages and the generalizations therefrom to apprehend, and to express as "laws of nature." He had not even the intellectual resource of later times in inventing miracle to explain where the necessary relation between events seemed broken or absent.

His first attitude was that of wonder, mingled with fear—fear as instinctive as the dread of the brute for him. The sole measure of things was himself; consequently, everything that moved or that had power of movement, did so because it was alive. A personal life and will was attributed to sun, moon, clouds, river, waterfall, ocean, and tree, and the varying phenomena of the sky at dawn or noonday, at gray eve or black-clouded night, were the manifestation of the controlling life that dwelt in all. In a thousand different forms this conception was expressed. The thunder was the roar of a mighty beast; the lightning a serpent darting at its prey, an angry eye flashing, the storm demon's outshot forked tongue; the rainbow a thirsty monster; the water-spout a long-tailed dragon. This was not a pretty or powerful conceit, not imagery, but an explanation. The men who thus spoke of these phenomena meant precisely what they said. What does the savage know about heat, light, sound, electricity, and the other modes of motion through which the Proteus force beyond our ken is manifest? How many persons who have enjoyed a "liberal" education can give correct answer, if asked off-hand, explaining how glaciers are born of the sunshine, and why two sounds, travelling in opposite directions at equal velocities, "interfere" and cause silence? I have been surprised at the number of young men, hailing from schools of renown, who have given me the most ludicrous replies when asked the cause of day and light, and the distance of the earth from the sun.

That the comparison between things inanimate and animate arising from su-

perficial analogies is inborn in the savage, is illustrated all the world over. The North American Indians prefer a hook that has caught a big fish to the handful of hooks that have never been tried, and they never lay two nets together, lest they should be jealous of each other. The Bushmen thought that the traveler Chapman's big wagon was the mother of his smaller ones; and the natives of Tahiti sowed in the ground some iron nails given them by Captain Cook, expecting to obtain young ones. When that ill-fated discoverer's ship was sighted by the New Zealanders, they thought it was a whale with wings. The king of the Coussa Kaffirs, having broken off a piece of the anchor of a stranded ship, soon afterward died, upon which all the Kaffirs made a point of saluting the anchor very respectfully whenever they went near it, regarding it as a vindictive being. But, perhaps, one of the most striking and amusing illustrations is that quoted by Sir John Lubbock from the "Smithsonian Reports," concerning an Indian who had been sent by a missionary to a colleague with four loaves of bread, accompanied by a letter stating their number. The Indian ate some of the bread, and his theft was, of course, found out. He was sent on a second errand with a similar batch of bread and a letter, and repeated the theft, but took the precaution to hide the letter under a stone while he was eating the loaves, so that it might not see him!

As the individual is a type of the race, so in the child's nature we find analogy of the mental attitude of the savage ready to hand. To the child everything is alive. With what timidity and wonder he first touches a watch, with its moving hands and clicking works; with what genuine anger he beats the door against which he has knocked his head, whips the rocking-horse that has flung him, then kisses and strokes it the next moment in token of forgiveness and affection. Even among civilized adults, as Mr. Grote remarks, "the force of momentary passion will often suffice to supersede the acquired habit, and an intelligent man may be impelled in a moment of agonizing pain to kick or beat the lifeless object from which he has suffered." The mental condition which causes the wild native of Brazil to bite the stone he stumbled over, may, as Dr. Tylor has pointed out in his invaluable work on "Primitive Culture," be traced along the course of history, not merely in impulsive habit, but in formally enacted law. If among barbarous peoples we find, for example, the relatives of a man killed by a fall from a tree taking their revenge by cutting the tree down and scattering it in chips, we find a continuity of idea in the action of the court of justice held at the Prytaneum in Athens to try any inanimate object, such as an axe, or a piece of wood, or stone, which had caused the death of any one without proved human agency, and which, if condemned, was cast in solemn form beyond the border. "The spirit of this remarkable procedure reappears in the old English law, repealed only in the present reign, whereby not only a beast that kills a man, but a cart-wheel that runs over him, or a tree that falls on him and kills him, is deodand, or given to God, *i.e.*, forfeited and sold for the poor." Among ancient legal proceedings in France we read of animals condemned to the gallows for the crime of murder, and of swarms of caterpillars which infected certain districts being admonished to take themselves off within a given number of days on pain of being declared accursed and excommunicated. When the New Zealander swallows his dead enemy's eye that he may see further, or gives his child pebbles to make it stony and pitiless of heart; when the Abipone eats tiger's flesh to increase his courage, such confusion in the existence of transferable qualities as these acts imply, has its survivals in the old wives' notion that the eye-bright flower, which resembles the eye, is good for diseases of that organ, in the medical remedy for curing a sword-wound by nursing the weapon that caused it, and in the old adage, "take a hair of the dog that bit you"—as the Scandinavian Edda says, "Dogs, hairs heal dogs, bites."

II.

PERSONIFICATION OF THE POWERS OF NATURE.

In selecting illustrations from the literature of savage mythology, the material overburdens us by its richness. Much of it is old, and, like refuse-heaps in our mining districts, once cast aside as rubbish, but now made to yield products of value, it has, after long neglect, been found to contain elements of worth, which patience and insight have extracted from its travelers' tales and quaint speculations. That for which it was most prized in the

days of our fathers is now of small account; that within it which they passed by we secure as of lasting worth. Much of that literature is, however, new, for the impetus which has in our time been given to the rescue and preservation of archaic forms has reached this, and a host of accomplished collectors have secured rich specimens of relics, which in the lands of their discovery have still the authority of the past, unimpaired by the critical exposure of the present.

The subject itself is, moreover, so wide reaching, bringing the ancient and the modern into hitherto unsuspected relation, showing how in customs and beliefs, to us unmeaning and irrational, there lurk the degraded representations of old philosophies, and in what seems to us burlesque, the survivals of man's most serious thought.

One feels this difficulty of choice and this temptation to digress in treating of that confusion inherent in the savage mind between things living and not living, which was the main subject of my former paper. By numberless illustrations at hand, this confusion might be shown to extend to the names or images of persons, and to the persons themselves, as well as to other relations which are purely symbolical.

For example, the practice of burning or hanging in effigy, by which a crowd expresses its feelings toward any unpopular person, is a relic of the old belief in a real and sympathetic connection between a man and his image; a belief extant among the unlettered in by-places of civilized countries. When we hear of North American tribes making images of their foes, whose lives they expect to shorten by piercing these images with their arrows, we remember that these barbarous folk have their representatives among us in the Devonshire peasant, who hangs in his chimney a pig's heart stuck all over with thornprickles, so that the heart of his enemy may likewise be pierced. The practice among the Dyaks of Borneo, of making a wax figure of the foe, so that his body may waste away as the wax is melted, will remind the admirers of Dante Rossetti, how he finds in a kindred mediæval superstition the subject of his poem "Sister Helen," while they who prefer the authority of sober prose may turn to that storehouse of the curious, Brand's "Popular Antiquities." Brand quotes from King James, who, in his "Dæmonology," book ii. chap. 5, tells us that "the devil teacheth how to make pictures of wax or clay, that by roasting thereof the persons that they bear the name of may be continually melted or dried away by continual sickness;" and also cites Andrews, the author of a "Continuation of Henry's Great Britain," who, speaking of the death of Ferdinand, Earl of Derby, by poison, in the reign of Elizabeth, says: "The credulity of the age attributed his death to witchcraft. The disease was odd, and operated as a perpetual emetic; and a waxen image, with hair like that of the unfortunate earl, found in his chamber, reduced every suspicion to certainty." The passage from practices born of such beliefs to the use of charms as protectives against the evil-disposed and those in league with the devil, and as cures for divers diseases, is obvious. But upon this it is not needful to dwell; what has been said will suffice to show that the superstitious man is on the same plane as the savage, but, save in rare instances, without such excuse for remaining, as Bishop Hall puts it, with "old wives and starres as his counsellors, charms as his physicians, and a little hallowed wax as his antidote for all evils."

But we have traveled in brief space a long way from our picture of primitive man, weaving out of streams and breezes and the sunshine his crude philosophy of personal life and will controlling all, to the peasant of to-day, his intellectual lineal descendant, with his belief in signs and wonders, his forecast of fate and future by omens, by dreams, and by such pregnant occurrences as the spilling of salt, the howling of dogs, and changes of the moon—in short, by the great mass of superstitions which yet more or less influence the intelligent, terrorize the ignorant, and delight the student of human development.

As, however, a good deal hinges upon the evidences in savage myth-making of the personification of the powers of nature, we must return to this for awhile. Obviously, the richest and most suggestive material would be supplied by the striking phenomena of the heavens, chiefly in sunrise and sunset, in moon, star, star-group, and meteor, cloud and storm, and, next in importance, by the strange and terrible among phenomena on earth, whether in the restless waters, the unquiet trees, the grotesquely-shaped rocks, and the fear inspired in man by creatures more powerful than himself. Though the whole range of the lower culture, sun, moon, and constellations are spoken of as living creatures, often as ancestors, he-

roes, and benefactors who have departed to the country above, to heaven, the *heaved* uplifted land. The Tongans of the South Pacific say that two ancestors quarreled respecting the parentage of the first born of the woman Papa, each claiming the child as his own. No King Solomon appears to have been concerned in the dispute, although at last the infant was cut in two. Vatea, the husband of Papa, took the upper part as his share and forthwith squeezed it into a ball and tossed it into the heavens, where it became the sun. Tonga-iti sullenly allowed the lower half to remain a day or two on the ground. But seeing the brightness of Vatea's half, he compressed his share into a ball and tossed it into the dark sky, during the absence of the sun in the nether world. Thus originated the moon, whose paleness is owing to the blood having all drained out of Tonga-iti's half as it lay upon the ground. Mr. Gill, from whose valuable collection of southern myth this is quoted, says that it seems to have its origin in the allegory of an alternating embrace of the fair Earth by Day and Night. But despite the explanations, more or less strained, which some schools of comparative mythologists find for every myth, the savage is not a conscious weaver of allegories, or an embryo Cabalist, and we shall find ourselves more in accord with the laws of his intellectual growth if, instead of delving for recondite and subtle meanings in his simple-sounding explanations of things, we take the meaning to be that which lies on the surface. More on this, however, anon. Among the Red Races, one tribe thought that sun, moon, and stars were men and women who went into the sea every night and swam out by the east. The Bushmen say that the sun was once a man who shed light from his body, but only for a short distance, until some children threw him into the sky while he slept, and thus he shines upon the wide earth. The Australians say that all was darkness around them till one of their many ancestors, who still shine from the stars, shedding good and evil, threw, in pity for them, an emu's egg into space, when it became the sun. Among the Manacicas of Brazil, the sun was their culture-hero, virgin-born, and their jugglers, who claimed power to fly through the air, said that his luminous figure, as that of a man, could be seen by them, although too dazzling for common mortals.

The sun has been stayed in his course in other places than Gibeon, although by mechanical means of which Joshua appears to have been independent. Among the many exploits of Maui, abounding in Polynesian myth, are those of his capture of the sun. He had like Prometheus, snatched fire from heaven for mortals, and his next task was to cure Ra, the sun-god, of his trick of setting before the day's work was done. So Maui plaited thick ropes of cocoanut fiber, and taking them to the opening through which Ra climbed up from the nether world, he laid a slipnoose for him, placing the other ropes at intervals along his path. Lying in wait as Ra neared, he pulled the first rope, but the noose only caught Ra's feet. Nor could Maui stop him until he reached the sixth rope, when he was caught round the neck and pulled so tightly by Maui that he had to come to terms, and agree to slacken his pace for the future. Maui, however, took the precaution to keep the ropes on him, and they may still be seen hanging from the sun at dawn and eve. In Tahitian myth, Maui is a priest, who, in building a house which must be finished by daylight, seizes the sun by its rays and binds it to a tree till the house is built. In North American myth, a boy had snared the sun, and there was no light on the earth. So the beasts held council who should undertake the perilous task of cutting the cord, when the dormouse, then the biggest among them, volunteered. And it succeeded, but so scorched was it by the heat that it was shriveled to the smallest of creatures. Such a group of myths is not easy of explanation; but when we find the sun regarded as an ancestor, and as one bound, mill-horselike, to a certain course, the notion of his control and check would arise, and the suncatchers take their place in tradition among those who have deserved well of their race. It is one among numberless aspects under which the doings of the sun and of other objects in nature are depicted as the doings of mortals, and the crude conceptions of the Ojibwas and the Samoans find their parallel in the mythologies of our Aryan ancestors. Only in the former we see the mighty one shorn of his dignity, with noose round his neck or chains on either side; whilst in the latter we see him as Herakles, with majesty unimpaired, carrying out the twelve tasks imposed by Eurystheus, and thus winning for himself a place among the immortals.

III.

THE SUN AND MOON IN MYTHOLOGY.

THE names given to the sun in mythology are as manifold as his aspects and influences, and as the moods of the untutored minds that endowed him with the complex and contrary qualities which make up the nature of man. *Him*, we say, not *it*, thus preserving in our common speech a relic, not only of the universal personification of things, but of their division into sex.

The origin of gender is most obscure, but its investment of both animate and inanimate things with sexual qualities shows it to be a product of the mythopœic stage of man's progress, and demands some reference in these papers. The languages of savages are in a constant state of flux, even the most abiding terms, as numerals and personal pronouns, being replaced by others in a few years. And the changes undergone by civilized speech have so rubbed away and obscured its primitive forms that, look where he may, the poverty of the old materials embarrassess the inquirer. If the similar endings to such undoubtedly early words as father, mother, brother, sister, in our own and other related languages, notably Sanskrit, afford any clue, it goes rather to show that gender was a later feature than one might think. But there is no uniformity in the matter. It seem pretty clear that in the early forms of our Indo-European speech there were two genders only, masculine and feminine. The assignment of certain things conceived of as sexless to neither gender, *neutrius generis*, is of later origin. Some of the languages derived from Latin, and, to name one of a different family, the Hebrew, have no neuter gender, whilst others, as the ancient Turkish and Finnish, have no grammatical gender. In our own, under the organic changes incident to its absorption of Norman and other foreign elements, gender has practically disappeared (although ships and nations are still spoken of as feminine), the pronouns *he*, *she*, *it*, being its representative. Such a gain is apparent when we take up the study of the ancestral Anglo-Saxon, with its masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns, or of our allied German with its perplexities of sex, as, *e.g.*, its masculine spoon, its feminine fork, its neuter knife. Turning for a moment to such slight aid as barbaric speech gives, we find in the languages of the hill tribes of South India a curious distinction made; rational beings, as gods and men, being grouped in a "high caste or major gender," and living animals and lifeless things in a "casteless or minor gender." The languages of some North American and South African tribes make a distinction into animate and inanimate gender; but, as non-living things, the sun, the thunder, the lightning, are regarded as persons, they are classed in the animate gender.

Further research into the radicals of so relatively fixed a language as Chinese, and into more mobile languages related to it, may, perhaps, enlighten the present ignorance; but one thing is certain, that language was "once the scene of an immense personification," and has thereby added vitality to myth. Analogies and conceptions apparent to barbaric man, and in no way occurring to us, caused him to attribute sexual qualities not only to dead as to living things, but to their several parts, as well as, in the course of time, to intellectual and abstract terms. Speaking broadly, things in which were manifest size and qualities, as strength, independence, governing or controlling power, usually attaching to the male, were classed as masculine; whilst those in which the gentler and more subordinate features were apparent were classed as feminine. Of course, marked exceptions to this will at once occur to us, as, *e.g.*, in certain savage and civilized languages, where the sun is feminine and the moon is masculine, but in the main the division holds good. The big is male, and the small is female. The Dyaks of Borneo call a heavy downpour of rain a *he* rain; and, if so strength-imparting a thing as bread is to be classed as either masculine or feminine, we must agree with the negro who, in answer to his master's question, "Sambo, where's the bread?" replied, "De bread, massa? him lib in de pantry." The mediæval Persians are said to have distinguished between male and female even in such things as food and cloth, air and water, and prescribed their proper use accordingly; while, as Dr. Tylor, from whom the above is quoted, adds, "even we, with our blunted mythologic sense, cannot give an individual name to a lifeless object, such as a boat or a weapon, without in the very act imagining for it something of a personal nature."

But we must not stay longer in these attractive byways of philology, however warranted the digression may be, and must return to the many-titled sun.

While in the more elaborate mythologies of classic peoples we find him addressed in exalted terms which are still the metaphors of poetry, we are nearer the rough material out of which all myth is shaped when among races who speak of sun, moon, and stars as father, mother, and children, and who mean exactly what they say. We may find similar relationships in the solar and lunar deities of Egyptian and classic myth, but profound moral elements have entered into these and dissolved the material. We are face to face with the awful and abiding questions personified in Osiris and Isis, in Œdipus and Jocaste, where for us the sunlight pales and the storm clouds are dispersed before the dazzling mysteries of human life and destiny.

No such matters confront us when in Indian myth we read that the moon is the sun's sister, an aged, pale-faced woman, who in kindness led to her brother two of the tribe who had sprung through a chasm in the sky to the pleasant moonlit land. Neither do they in Australian myth, which shows that the dwellers on Olympus had no monopoly of conjugal faithlessness. For in it the moon's motions are explained as the chase of a jealous husband, one of the bright stars, who found the inconstant in the act of eloping with the moon. Among the bushman, the moon has incurred the sun's anger and is hacked smaller and smaller by him, till, begging for mercy, a respite is given. But as soon as he grows larger the sun hacks him again. In Slavonic myth the sun cleaves him through, for loving the morning star. The Indians of the far west say that, when the moon is full, evil spirits begin nibbling at it, and eat a portion every night till it is all gone; then a great spirit makes a new moon, and, weary with his toil, falls asleep, when the bad spirits renew their attack. Another not uncommon group of myths is that which speaks of sun and moon as borne across the heavens on the backs of ancestors, as in Greek myth Atlas supports the world.

But a still larger and more widespread body of myth has its source in the patches on the moon's face. In the Samoan Islands there are said to be a woman, a child, and a mallet. A woman was once hammering out paper cloth, and seeing the moon rise, looking like a great bread-fruit tree, she asked it to come down and let her child eat a piece of it. But the moon was very angry at the idea of being eaten, and gobbled up woman, child, and mallet, and there they are to this day. The Selish Indians of North-Western America say that the little wolf was in love with the toad, and pursued her one moonlight night, till, as a last chance, she made a desperate spring on to the face of the moon, and there she is still. In Greenland myth, the moon was in love with his sister and stole in the dark to caress her. She, wishing to find out who her lover was, blackened her hands so that the marks might be left on him, which accounts for the spots. The Khasias of the Himalaya say that the moon falls in love every month with his mother-in-law, who, like a well-conducted matron, throws ashes in his face.

Comparing these with our familiar myths, we have our own Man in the Moon, who is said to be the culprit found by Moses gathering sticks on the Sabbath, although his place of banishment is a popular addition to the Scripture narrative. According to the German legend he was a scoffer who did the same heinous offense on a Sunday, and was given the alternative of being scorched in the sun or frozen in the moon. The Frisians say that he stole cabbages, the load of which he bears on his back. In Icelandic myth the two children familiar to us as Jack and Jill were kidnaped by the moon, and there they stand to this day with bucket on pole across their shoulders, falling away one after the other as the moon wanes,—a phase described in the couplet:

> Jack fell down and broke his crown,
> And Jill came tumbling after.

Mr. Baring Gould, whose essay on this subject in his "Curious Myths of the Middle Ages" gives a convenient summary of current legends, contends that Jack and Jill are the Hjuki and Bil of the Edda, and signify the waxing and waning of the moon, their bucket indicating the dependence of rainfall on her phases,—a superstition extant among us yet.

Poetry has made the man in the moon its theme. Dante calls him Cain: Chaucer describes him

> Bearing a bush of thorns on his back
> Whiche for his theft might clime so ner the heaven;

and Shakespeare refers to him in "Midsummer Night's Dream" and the "Tempest."

The group of customs observed

among both barbaric and civilized peoples at the changes of the moon, customs which are meaningless except as relics of lunar worship, will be more fitly referred to when we deal with the passage of mythology into religion, of personifying into deifying.

IV.

THE THEORIES OF CERTAIN COMPARATIVE MYTHOLOGISTS.

MANIFOLD are the phases of Nature; manifold is the life of man; and we must not lend a too willing ear to theories which refer the crude explanations of an unscientific age, when the whole universe is Wonderland, to one source. *Cave hominem unius libri*, says the adage, and we may apply it, not only to the man of one book, but also to the man of one idea, in whom the sense of proportion is lacking, and who sees only that for which he looks. Here such caution is introduced as needful of exercise toward the comparative mythologists who, not content with showing—as abundant evidence warrants—that myth has its germs in the investment of the powers of nature with personal life and consciousness, contend that the great epics of our own and kindred races are, from their broadest features to minute detail, but nature-myths obscured and transformed.

Certain scholars, notably Sir G. W. Cox and Professor de Gubernatis, as interpreters of the myths of the Indo-European peoples, and Dr. Goldziher, as an interpreter of Hebrew myth and cognate forms, maintain that the names given in the mythopœic age to the sun, the moon, and the changing scenery of the heaven as the myriad shades and fleeting forms passed over its face, lost their original signification wholly or partially, and came to be regarded as the names of veritable deities and men, whose actions and adventures are the disguised descriptions of the sweep of the thunder-charged clouds and of the victory of the hero-god over their light-engulfing forces. But it is better to state the theory in the words of its exponents, and for that purpose a couple of extracts from Sir George Cox's "Mythology of the Aryan Nations" will suffice.

"In the spontaneous utterances of thoughts awakened by outward phenomena, we have the source of myths which must be regarded as *primary*. But it is obvious that such myths would be produced only so long as the words employed were used in their original meaning. If once the meaning of the word were either in part or wholly forgotten, the creation of a new personality under this name would become inevitable, and the change would be rendered both more certain and more rapid by the very wealth of words which were lavished on the sights and objects which most impressed their imagination. A thousand phrases would be used to describe the action of a beneficent or consuming sun, of the gentle or awful night, of the playful or furious wind; and every word or phrase become the germ of a new story as soon as the mind lost its hold on the original force of the name. Thus, in the polyonymy" (by which term Sir Geo. Cox means the giving of several names to one object) "which was the result of the earliest form of human thought we have the germ of the great epics of later times, and of the countless legends which make up the rich stores of mythical tradition. . . . . and the legends so framed constitute the class of *secondary* myths" (p. 42).

"Henceforth the words which had denoted the sun and moon would denote not merely living things but living persons. . . . Every word would become an attribute, and all ideas, once grouped round a single object, would branch off into distinct personifications. The sun had been the lord of light, the driver of the chariot of the day; he had toiled and labored for the sons of men, and sunk down to rest, after a hard battle, in the evening. But now the lord of light would be Phoibos Apollôn, while Helios would remain enthroned in his fiery chariot, and his toils and labors and death-struggles would be transferred to Herakles. The violet clouds which greet his rising and his setting would now be represented by herds of cows which feed in earthly pastures. There would be other expressions which would still remain as floating phrases, not attached to any definite deities. These would gradually be converted into incidents in the life of heroes, and be woven at length into systematic variations. Finally, these gods and heroes, and the incidents of their mythical career, would receive each 'a local habitation and a name.' These would remain as genuine history when the origin and meaning of the words had been either wholly or in part forgotten" (p. 51).

Such is the "solar myth" theory, the general principles of which are sound enough, but the unqualified application of which has caused recoil in many minds inclined to its acceptance. "We can hardly," as Mr. Matthew Arnold says, "now look up at the sun without having the sensations of a moth," and if occasion has not been given to the adversary to blaspheme, he has been supplied with

ample material for banter and ridicule. Some of the happiest illustrations of this are made by Mr. Foster in his amusing and really informing essay on "Nature Myths in Nursery Rhymes," reprinted in "Leisure Studies," an essay which it seems the immaculate critics took *au sérieux!* With a little exercise of one's invention, given also ability to parody, it will be found that many noted events, as well as the lives of the chief actors in them, yield results comforting to the solar mythologists. Not only the Volsungs and the Iliad, but the story of the Crusades and of the conquest of Mexico; not only Arthur and Baldr, but Cæsar and Bonaparte, may be readily resolved, as Professor Tyndall says we all shall be, "like streaks of morning cloud, into the infinite azure of the past." Dupuis, in his researches into the connection between astronomy and mythology, had suggested that Jesus was the sun, and the twelve apostles the zodiacal signs; and Goldziher, analyzing the records of a remote period, maintains the same concerning Jacob and his twelve sons. M. Senart has satisfied himself that Gautama the Buddha, is a sun-myth. Archbishop Whately, to confound the skeptics, ingeniously disproved the existence of Bonaparte; and a French ecclesiastic has by witty etymological analogies shown that Napoleon is cognate with Apollo, the sun, and his mother Letitia identical with Leto, the mother of Apollo; that his *personnel* of twelve Marshals were the signs of the zodiac, his retreat from Moscow a fiery setting, and his emergence from Elba, to rule for twelve years, and then be banished to St. Helena, the sun rising out of the eastern waters to set in the western ocean after twelve hours' reign in the sky. But upon this solar theory, let us cite what Dr. Tylor, whose soberness of judgment renders him a valuable guide along the zigzag path of human progress, says:—"The close and deep analogies between the life of nature and the life of man have been for ages dwelt upon by poets and philosophers, who, in simile or in argument, have told of light and darkness, of calm and tempest, of birth, growth, change, decay, dissolution, renewal. But no one-sided interpretation can be permitted to absorb into a single theory such endless many-sided correspondences as these. Rash inferences which, on the strength of mere resemblance, derive episodes of myth from episodes of nature, must be regarded with utter mistrust, for the student who has no more stringent criterion than this for his myths of sun and sky and dawn, will find them wherever it pleases him to seek them."

The investigations of comparative mythologists, more particularly in this country and Germany, have thrown such valuable light on the history of civilization that it will be instructive to learn what excited the inquiry, on what facts the solar theory rests, and what other facts its supporters overlook.

The researches of Niebuhr and his school into the credibility of early history made manifest that the only authority on which the chroniclers relied was tradition. To them—children of an uncritical age—that tradition was venerable with the lapse of time, and binding as a revelation from the gods. To us the charm and interest of it lie in detecting within it the ancient deposit of a mythopœic period, and in deciphering from it what manner of men they must have been among whom such explanation of the beginnings had credence. And in such an inquiry nothing can be "common or unclean," nothing too trivial or puerile for analysis; for where the most grotesque and impossible are found, there we are nearer to the conditions of which we would know more.

The serious endeavor to get at the fact underlying the fabulous was extended to the great body of mythology which had not been incorporated into history, and the interpretations of which satisfied only those who suggested them. As hinted already, the Greeks had sought out the meaning of their myths, with here and there a glimpse of the truth gained; but this was confined to the philosophers and poets. Euhêmeros degraded them into dull chronicle, making Herakles a thief who carried off a crop of oranges; Jove a king crushing rebellion; Atlas an astronomer; Python a freebooter; Æolus a weather-wise seaman, and so on. Plutarch tried to "restore" them, but only defaced them, and after centuries of neglect they were discovered by Lord Bacon to be allegories with a moral. Then Banier and Lempriere emptied out of them what little life Euhêmeros had left, and the believers in Hebrew as the original speech of mankind saw in them the fragments of a universal primitive revelation! Even the distinguished scholar, Professor Max Müller, is so upset by the many loathsome and revolting stories in a mythology current in the land of Lykurgos and Solon, that he can account for

them only by assuming "a period of temporary insanity through which the human mind had to pass," and a degradation from lovely metaphor to coarse fact which only a "disease of language" explains. There is, however, no need for assumptions of this or of any other kind, for language itself reveals the origin of myth, and shows it to be in keeping with all that is elsewhere established concerning primitive modes of thinking.

V.

ARYAN MYTHOLOGY.

We said that language lays bare the mental condition under which myths are formed; in other words, that speech reveals the limitations of thought. It would be a useful corrective of theories concerning the origin of language to which many are yet wedded to show that not only terms for things material and concrete, but also for things immaterial and abstract, are of purely physical origin—that is to say, have been chosen from their analogy to something real. As an example, the several verbs whose relics survive in the substantive verb *to be* had each a distinct physical meaning. "Am," "are," "is," are derived from *as* (in Sanskrit *asu*, "life,"), meaning "to breath" or "sit"; "was" and "were" from *vas*, "abide"; and in "be" and "been" (from *bnû*, a Sanskrit cognate with Latin *fu*, Greek *phy*, "to grow") are contained the idea of *growing*. But to follow this would take us from the main business of these papers; enough that, out of manifold combinations of a few inarticulate or unjointed sounds, the larger proportion of which were imitative, have arisen the languages of the world, from the meager stock of words of the unlearned and the savage, to the nobly and expanding vocabularies of educated men.

Passing to the facts upon which the solar theory of myths rests, the following stands foremost. The researches of scholars, notably of the German Bopp and Jacob Grimm, have shown that the languages spoken in Europe by the Keltic, Teutonic, Slavonic, Greek, and Latin races, and in Asia by the Hindus, Persian, and some lesser people, are the common decendants, under modifications through various causes, of one mother-tongue known as the Aryan (from a Sanskrit word cognate with the root *ar* to plow) a term applied in the Vedas to the dominant occupiers of the soil, the "tillers" in India, who spoke it. The above group of languages is also called the Indo-Germanic, and, with more appropriateness, as roughly defining the races included therein, the Indo-European. Of course, wherever the several branches of the old Aryan family finally settled they mixed more or less with the aboriginal races, whom they conquered. But, making such allowances as this demands, it holds good that people to-day, so unlike in complexion, physique, color of hair, and speech, as the Hindoo and the Icelander, the Russian and the Englishman, the Persian and the German, are the offspring of common ancestors, of whom, although no material relics survive, language remains to attest what considerable advance from primitive savagery they had made. Wave after wave of immigrants, among the earliest being the Kelt, followed one another westward, to wrestle for the fairest lands; so that when, centuries later, the veteran legions of Cæsar crossed swords with the Belgæ in this island, they fought against men remotely kin to themselves both in language and in blood.

Furthermore, the evidence which has yielded this most interesting fact also shows that the old Aryans, before they separated into tribes, each of varying dialect, had a common mythology. This, which had its source, as myth everywhere had, in man's endeavor to interpret the meaning of his surroundings, developed into a deification of the powers of nature, and likewise become the groundwork of traditional history, as well as the source of legend, folk-lore, and folk-tale. So venerable are these last-named in their antiquity, that the nursery stories told in Iceland and in the Tyrol, in the Highlands and in the Deccan, are identical. After allowing for local coloring, and for changes incident to the lapse of time, they are the variants of stories related to children in the Aryan fatherland at a period historically remote, and moreover are told in words which are phonetically akin. Their correspondences, often extending to minor detail, are not explained by any theory of borrowing, for no trace of intercourse between Aryans of the East and West occurs until long after the domiciling of the stories where we find them. Nor did they, with such close resemblances as appear between the German Faithful John, and the Hindu Rama, and

Luxman, and between our own Cinderella, the German Aschenputtal, and the Hindu Sodrwa Bai, spring native from their respective soils. And there is just that unlikeness in certain detail which might be expected from the different positions and products of the several Aryan lands. They explain, for example, the absence from Scandinavian folk-love of creatures like the elephant, the giant ape and turtle, which figure in Brahmanic beast epic. Now, what is true of the folk-tales applies with added force to the mythologies. In the great epics of the Greeks, the Iliad and Odyssey; of the Norsemen, the Volsungs; of the Germans, the Nibelungs; of the English, King Arthur and his Round Table Knights; of the Hindus, the Ramâyanâ and Mahâbhâratâ; of the Persians, the Shâh Nâmeh; we find similarities of incident and episode which are inexplicable, except upon the theory of a common origin. So far as the names and characteristics of the heroes and heroines are concerned, their phonetic identity reveals that common origin, while their analysis explains their common meaning.

The key to this is the Sanskrit language. In the history of the Indo-European family of speech, it served as the starting-point, because, although not the ancestor, it is the eldest member, and has more than the others preserved its roots and suffixes in a more perfect form. And in the history of Indo-European mythology, it is in the ancient Vedic texts, chiefly the Rig-Veda, that we find the materials for comparative study, since in these venerable hymns of a Bible older than our own are preserved the earliest extant forms of Aryan myth.

The method adopted was to compare a number of the Greek names of gods and heroes of somewhat obscure meaning with names of Vedic deities whose meaning is clear. The phonetic relationship between the two sets of names, hidden as it is by the interchange of sounds, is proved by the law which governs such interchange or "permutation of consonants," known, after its discoverer, as "Grimm's law." The causes of this are not easy to ascertain, but they are referable to physical influences, as climate and conditions of life, which in the course of time bring about changes in the organs of speech—such, for example, as make *th* so difficult of pronunciation to a German, in whose language *d* takes its place, as *drei* for *three*, *durstig* for *thirsty*, *dein* for *thine*, etc. We may note tendencies to variation in children of the same household, their prattle often affording striking illustration of Grimm's law, and it is easy to see that among semi-civilized and isolated tribes, where no check upon the variations is imposed, they would tend to become fixed and give rise to new dialects.

The method has been justified by its works. The familiar myth of the birth of Athênê gives a good illustration of this. She is said to have been the daughter of Zeus, and to have sprung from his forehead. Now the Greek *Zeu*, the Latin *Deus* (whence the French *Dieu* and our *deity*), the Lithuanian *diewas*, and the Sanskrit *Dyaus*, all come from an old Aryan root *div*, or *dyu*, meaning "to shine." The Sanskrit *dyu*, as a noun, means "sky" or "day," and in the Veda, *Dyaus* is the bright sky or heaven. Athênê is the Sanskrit Atanâ, one of the many Vedic names for the dawn. Thus the primitive meaning of the myth comes out; the dawn springs from the forehead of the sky; the daybreak appears rising from the East. But the Greek, in whose Pantheon Zeus had been exalted as god of gods, did not dream that to his remote ancestor that god was but the sky personified and deified; even his philosophers had traced it to the root *zeu*, "to live," and forever lost the track.

Ouranos, or Uranus, is the Vedic Varuna, the all-surrounding heaven, from a root *var*, to veil or cover; Helen, stolen by Paris (in Sans. *Pani*, "the deceiver") from Sparta, is the Vedic Saramâ, the dawn, from the root, *sar*, to creep; the Charites, or Graces, are the Harits, or bright courses of the sun, from *ghar*, to shine, whence the idea of splendor in its transfer to the fair women who attended Aphrodite; the Erinyes, or Furies, are the Saranyû, or dawn, which brings evil deeds to light. Hence, they who did this became regarded as avengers, whose fury pursued the wrong-doer.

These comparisons might be followed throughout the whole range of classic as well as of Teutonic and other epic with the like result. They apply equally to the mythical phrases in which the adventures and general career of the gods and heroes are narrated, for the details of which my readers are referred to such works as Sir G. W. Cox's "Mythology of the Aryan Nations" and "Tales of Ancient Greece." That these majestic epics have one and all their germs in the phenomena of the natural world and the course of the day and year, seems to me demonstrated. But when the solar mythologists contend that "there is absolute-

ly nothing left for furthur analysis in the stories," that every incident has its birth in the journey of the sun, the death of the dawn, the theft of the twilight by the powers of darkness, we rebel against so sweeping an application of the theory. They are nature-myths, but they are much more than that; the impetus that has shaped them as we now know them came from other forces than clouds and storms, and it is with these that our next paper must be concerned.

VI.

THE PRIMITIVE-NATURE MYTH TRANSFORMED.

In a former paper, the facts on which the solar theory rests were summarized as witnessing to its inherent soundness, and we must now glance at certain other facts which are overlooked by its exponents. A needful task; because the claims preferred on its behalf to explain every incident in the complex mythology of the Greek and other races has caused a recoil in minds otherwise well disposed toward it. In fact, any one reading, without such caution as this paper is designed to supply, the minute analyses of myths in the writings of those who interpret them solely by the philological method, would conclude that it had laid bare the meteorological origin of every epic and folk-tale among the Indo-European peoples. He would learn that in a way rudely analogous to the supernatural guidance of the Christian Church, the several Aryan tribes had received from the fathers of the race an unvarying canon of interpretation of the primitive myths, a canon preserved with the jealous veneration with which the Jew regarded the Thorah and the Brahman the Veda. He would also learn that the details of Norse and classic myth can be traced to the Veda, that these details, not of incident alone, but of thought and expression, survived unimpaired by time and untouched by circumstance, while, strange to say, the more prominent names and the leading characters became obscured in their meaning. Strange indeed, but not true. For what is the fact?

Long before the hymns of the Rig-Veda existed as we know them (and they have remained an inviolate sacred text since 600 B.C., when every word, verse, and syllable were counted), the Aryan tribes had swarmed from their parent hive across boundless steppes and over winding mountain passes, some westward into Europe, others southward into Hindustan. Among the slender intellectual capital of which they stood possessed was the common mythology of their ancestors, in which, as we have seen, sun and moon, storm and thunder-cloud, and all other natural phenomena, were credited with personal life and will. But that mythology had certainly advanced beyond the crude primitive form and entered the heroic stage, wherein the powers of nature were half human, half divine. Their language had passed into the inflective, or highest stage, and had undergone such changes that the relationship between its several groups and their origin from one mother-tongue were obscured and remained so until laid bare in our day. In short, the Aryan tribes had attained no mean state of civilization, some being more advanced than the others, according as external circumstances helped or hindered, and, one by one, they passed from the condition of semi-civilized nomads to become fathers and founders of nations that abide to this day.

These being the facts to which language itself bears witness, how was it possible for their mythologies, *i.e.*, their stock of notions about things, to remain unaffected and secure of transmission without organic change? The myths, unfixed in literary form, yielded themselves with ease as vehicles of new ideas; their ancient meaning, already faded, paled before the all-absorbing significance of present facts. These were more potent realities than the kisses of the dawn; the human and the personal, in its struggles of mightier interest than the battle of rosy morn or purple eve with the sons of thunder; and Homer's music would long since have died away were Achilles' "baneful wrath" but a passively told tale of the sun's grief for the loss of the morning.

In brief, the complex and varying influences which have transformed the primitive myth, are the important factors which the solar theorists have omitted in their attempted solution of the problem. They have forgotten the part which, to borrow a term from astronomy, "personal equation" has played. They have not examined myth in the light of the history of the race; and the new elements which it took into itself, while never wholly ridding itself of the old, have escaped them. They have secured a mechanical unity whereas, by combination of the historical with their own method, they might have secured a vital unity.

To all which classic myth itself bears record. The Greeks were of Aryan stock, but when they arrived in Europe is unknown. The period between their settlement and the Homeric age was, however, long enough to admit of their advance to the state of a nation rejoicing in the fulness of intellectual life. They remembered not from what rock they were hewn, from what pit they were digged. The nature-gods of their remote ancestors had long since changed their meteorological character and appeared in the likeness of men—or, at least played very human pranks on Olympus. In the Veda, the primitive-nature myth, although exalted and purified, is persistent; under one name or another it is still the ceaseless battle between the darkness and the light; Dyaus was still the bright sky, the cattle of Siva were still the clouds. But the Greek of Homer's time and his congener in the far north, had forgotten all that; the war in heaven was transferred to the strife of gods and men on the shores of the Hellespont and by the bleak seaboard of the Baltic. Their gods and goddesses, improved by age and experience, put off their physical and put on the ethical; the Heaven-father became king of gods and men, source of order, law and justice; the sun and the dawn, Apollo and Athênê, became wisdom, skill, and guardianship incarnate. And the story of human vicissitudes found in solar myth that "pattern of things in the heavens" which conformed to its design. Thus Homer, in whose day the old nature-myth had become confused with the vague traditions of veritable deeds of kings and heroes but dimly remembered, touched it as with heavenly fire unquenchable. The siege of Troy, so say the solar mythologists, "is a repetition of the daily siege of the east by the solar powers that every evening are robbed of their highest treasures in the west." It is surely with a truer instinct that while we contend for that physical origin of the great epics to which their remarkable agreement witnesses, we also feel that the vitality which inheres in them is due to whatever of human experience, joy, and sorrow are the burden of their immortal song. As to the repulsive features of Greek myth, one can neither share the distress of the solar theorists nor feel their difficulties. Both are self-created, and are aggravated by the assumption of "periods of temporary insanity through which the human mind had to pass," as the rude health of childhood is checked by whooping-cough and measles. They are explained by the persistence with which the lower out of which man has emerged asserts itself, as primary rocks pierce through and overlap later strata. The ancestors of the Aryans were savages in the remote past, and the "old Adam" was never entirely cast out; indeed, it is with us still. There are superstitions and credulities in our midst, in drawing-rooms as well as gypsy camps, quite as gross in nature, if less coarse in guise, as those extant among the Greeks. The future historian of our time, as he turns over the piles of our newspapers, will find contrasts of ignorance and culture in our midst as startling as any existing in the land of Homer, of Archimedes, and Aristotle. Spirit-rapping and belief in the "evil eye" have their cult among us, although Professor Huxley's "Hume" can be bought for two shillings, and knowledge has free course. And it certainly accords best with all that we have learnt as to the mode of human progress to believe that the old lived into the new, than that the old had been cast out, but had gained re-entry, making the last state of the Greeks to be worse than the first.

In this matter the Vedic hymns do not help us much. They are the products of a relatively highly-civilized time; the conception of sky and dawn as living persons has passed out of its primitive simplicity; these heavenly powers have become complex deities; there is much confounding of persons—the same god called by one or many names. The thought is that of an age when moral problems have presented themselves for solution and the references to social matters indicate a settled state of things far removed from the fisher and the hunter stage. Nevertheless, there lurk within these sacred writings survivals of the lower culture, traces of coarse rites, bloody sacrifices, of repulsive myths of the gods, and of cosmogonies familiar to the student of barbaric myth and legend.

Enough has been said to show that the extreme and one-sided interpretations of the solar theorists are due to a one-sided method. The philological method has yielded splendid results; this they have done; the historical yields results equally rich and fertile; this they have left undone. Language has given us the key to the kinship between the several members of the great body of Aryan myths; the study of the historical evolution of myths, the comparison of these, without

regard to affinity of speech, will give us the key to the kinship between savage interpretation of phenomena all the world over. The mythology of Greek and Bushman, of Kaffir and Scandinavian, of the Red Man and the Hindu, springs from the like mental condition. It is tne uniform and necessary product of the human mind in the childhood of the race.

VII.

THE STARS IN MYTHOLOGY.

"REVENONS à nos moutons," as the impatient client who had lost some sheep reminded his rambling advocate.

In the great body of nature-myth, the stars are prominent members. In their multitude; their sublime repose in upper calms above the turmoil of the elements; their varying brilliancy, "one star differing from another star in glory"; their tremulous light; their scattered positions, which lend themselves to every vagary of the constellation maker; their slow procession, varied only by sweeping comet and meteor, or falling showers of shooting stars; they lead the imagination into gentler ways than do the vaster bodies of the most ancient heavens. Nor, although we may compute their number, weigh their volume, in a few instances reckon their distance, and, capturing the light that has come beating through space for unnumbered years, make it reveal the secret of their structure, is the imagination less moved by the clear heavens at night, or the feeling of awe and reverence blunted before that "mighty sum of things forever speaking."

In barbaric myth the stars are spoken of as the children of the sun and moon, but more often as men who have lived on the earth, translated without seeing death, The single stars are individual chiefs or heroes; the constellations are groups of men or animals. To the natives of Australia the brilliant Jupiter is a chief among the others, and the stars in Orion's belt and scabbard are young men dancing a corroboree, the Pleiades being girls playing to them. The Kasirs of Bengal say that the stars are men who climbed to the top of a tree, and were left in the branches by the trunk being cut away. To the Eskimos the stars in Orion are seal-hunters who have missed their way home; and in German folk-lore they are spoken of as the mowers, because, as Grimm says, "they stand in a row, like mowers in a meadow." In North American myth two of the bright stars are twins who have left a home where they were harshly treated, and leaped into the sky, whither their parents followed them, and ceaselessly chase them. In Greek myth the faintest star of the seven Pleiades is Merope, whose light was dimmed because she alone among her sisters married a mortal. In German star-lore, the small star just above the middle one in the shaft of Charles's Wain, is a wagoner who, having given our Saviour a lift, was offered the kingdom of heaven for his reward, but who said he would sooner be driving from east to west to all eternity, and whose desire was granted—a curious contrast to the legend of the Wandering Jew, cursed to move unresting over the earth till the day of judgment, because he refused to let Jesus, weary with the weight of the cross, rest for a moment on his doorstep. The Housatonic Indians say that the stars in Charles's Wain are men hunting a bear, and that the chase lasts from spring to autumn, when the bear is wounded, and its dripping blood turns the leaves of the trees red. With this may be cited the myth that the red clouds at morn and eve are the blood of the slain in battle. In the Northern Lights, the Greenlanders see the spirits of the departed dancing, the brighter the flashes of the Aurora the greater the merriment; while the Dacotahs say of the meteors that they are spirits flying through the air.

Of the Milky Way—so called because Hêrê, indignant at the bantling Heraklês being put to her breast, spilt her milk along the sky (the solar mythologers say that the "red cow of evening passes during the night across the sky, scattering her milk"); the Ottowas say that it was caused by a turtle swimming along the bottom of the sky, and stirring up the mud. According to the Patagonians, it is the track along which the departed tribesmen hunt ostriches; in African myth it is some wood-ashes long ago thrown up into the sky by a girl, that her people might be able to see their way home at night; in Eastern myth, it is chaff dropped by a thief in his hurried flight.

But the idea of a land beyond the sky—be it the happy hunting-ground of the Indian, or the paradise of Islam, or the new Jerusalem of the Apoçalypse—would not fail to be imagined, and in both the Milky Way and the Rainbow barbaric fancy sees the ladders and bridges whereby the departed pass from earth to heaven. So we

find in the lower and higher culture alike the beautiful conceptions of the *chemin des ames*, the Red man's road of the dead to their home in the sun; the ancient Roman path of, or to, the gods; the road of the birds, in Lithuanian myth, because the winged spirits flit thither to the free and happy land. In prosaic contrast to all this, it is curious to find among ourselves the Milky Way described as Watling Street! That famous road, which ran from Richborough through Canterbury and London to Chester, now gives its name to a narrow, bustling street of Manchester warehousemen in the City. But who the Wætlingas were, and why their name was transferred from Britain to the sky,* we do not know, although the fact is plainly enough set down in old writers, foremost among whom is Chaucer. In his "House of Fame" † he says:—

> "Lo, there, quod he, cast up thine eye,
> se yonder, to, the galaxie,
> the whiche men clepe the Milky Way,
> for it is white, and some parfay
> ycallin it han Watlingestrete."

To the savage, the rainbow is a living monster, a serpent seeking whom it may devour, coming to earth to slake its unquenchable thirst, and preying on the unwary. But in more poetic myth, its mighty mani-colored arch touching, as it seems to do, the earth itself, is a road to glory. In the Edda it is the three-colored bridge Bifroset, the "quivering track" over which the gods walk, and of which the red is fire, so that the Frost-giants may not cross it. In Persian myth it is Chinvad, the "bridge of the gatherer," flung across the gloomy depths between this world and the home of the blessed; in Islam it is El-Sirat, the bridge thin as a hair and sharp as a scimitar, stretching from this world to the next; among the Greeks it was Iris, the messenger from Zeus to men, charged with tidings of war and tempest; to the Finns it was the bow of Tiernes, the god of thunder; whilst to the Jew it was the messenger of grace from the Eternal, who did set "his bow in the clouds" as the promise that never again should the world be destroyed by flood. Such belief in the heavens as the field of activities profoundly affecting the fortunes of mankind, and in the stars as influencing their destinies, has been persistent in the human mind. The delusions of the astrologer are embalmed in language, as when, forgetful of a belief shared not only by sober theologians, but by Tycho Brahe and Kepler, we speak of "disaster," of our friends as "jovial," "saturnine," or "mercurial." But the illusions of the savage or semi-civilized abide as an animating part of many a faith, undisturbed by a science which has swept the skies and found no angels there, and whose keen analysis separates forever the ancient belief in a connection between the planets and man's fate. For convenience' sake, we retain on our celestial maps and globes the men and monsters pictured by barbaric fancy in the star-positions and clusters noting these as interesting examples of survival. Yet we are the willing dupes of illusions nebulous as these, and, charm he never so wisely, the Time-Spirit fails to disenchant us.

If the sun and moon are the parents of the stars, the heavens and the earth are the parents of all living things. Of this widely-found myth, one of the most striking specimens occurs among the Maoris. From Rangi, the heaven, and Papa, the earth, sprang all living things; but earth and sky clave together, and darkness rested on them and their children, who debated whether they should rend them asunder or slay them. Then Tanemahuta, father of forests, reasoned that it was better to rend them so that the heaven might become a stranger, and the earth remain as their nursing-mother. One after another they strove to do this, but in vain, until Tanemahuta, with giant strength and strain, pressed down the earth and thrust upward the heaven. But one of his brothers, father of wind and storm, who had not agreed to this parting of his parents followed Rangi into the sky, and thence sent forth his progeny, "the mighty winds, the fierce squalls, the clouds dense and dark, wildly drifting, wildly hunting," himself rushing on his foe, snapping the huge trees that barred his path, and strewing their trunks and branches on the ground, while the sea was lashed into high-crested waves, and all the creatures therein affrighted. The fish darted hither and thither, but the reptiles fled into the forests, causing quarrel between Tangaron, the ocean-god, and Tane-mahuta for giving them shelter. So the brothers fought, the ocean-god wrecking the canoes and sweeping houses and trees beneath the waters, and had not Papa hidden the gods of the tilled food and the wild within her bosom, they would have perished. Wars of revenge

* Perhaps the converse is true; if the name was a totem which the family adopted, and which was given, as tribute to an important clan, to one of the main roads of this island.

† II., 427.

followed quickly one upon the other; the storm-god's anger was not soon appeased; so that the devastation of the earth was well-nigh complete. But, at last, light arose, and quiet ensued, and the dry land appeared. Rangi and Papa, parted for ever, quarreled no more, but helped the one the other, and "man stood erect and unbroken on his mother Earth."

VIII.

MYTHS OF THE DESTRUCTIVE FORCES OF NATURE.

THE beliefs of the ancient Finns in the world as a divided egg, of which the white is the ocean, the yolk the earth, and the arched shell the sky, and of the Polynesians that the universe is the hollow of a vast cocoanut shell, at the tapering bottom of which is the root of all things, are to us so grotesque that it is not easy to regard them as explanations seriously invented by the human mind. Yet these, together with the notions of the two halves of the shell of Brahma's egg, and of the two calabashes which form the heaven and the earth in African myth, find their correspondences in the wide-spread conception of the overarching firmament as a hard and solid thing,* with holes (or windows †) to let the rain through, with gates through which angels descend,‡ or through which prophets peer into celestial mysteries; § a firmament outside which other people live, as instanced by the Polynesian term for strangers, "papalangi," or "heaven-bursters."

They are the less refined forms of myths which have held their ground from pre-scientific times till now, and the rude analogies of which are justified by the appearances of things as presented by the senses. Man's intellectual history is the history of his escape from the illusions of the senses, it is the slow and often reluctant discovery that nature is quite other than that which it seems to be. And this variance between appearances and realities remained hidden until the intellect challenged the report about phenomena which the sense-perceptions brought. For in the ages when feeling was dominant, and the judgment scarce awakened, the simple explanations in venerable legends sung by bard or told by aged crone—legends to which age had given sanctity which finally placed them among the world's sacred literatures—were received without doubt or question. But, as belief in causality spread, men were not content to rest in the naïve explanations of an uncritical age. What man had guessed about nature gave place to what nature had to say about herself, and with the classifying of experience science had its birth.

Meanwhile, until this quite recent stage in man's progress was reached, the senses told their blundering tale of an earth flat and fixed, with sun, moon, and stars as its ministering servants, while gods or beasts upbore it, and mighty pillars supported the massive firmament. In Hindoo myth the tortoise which upholds the earth rests upon an elephant, whose legs *reach all the way down!* In Bogotà the culture-god Bochica punishes a lesser and offending deity by compelling him to sustain the part of Atlas, and it is in shifting his burden from shoulder to shoulder that earthquakes are caused. The natives of Celebes say that they are due to the world-supporting Hog as he rubs himself against a tree; the Thascaltecs that they occur when the deities who hold up the world relieve one another; the Japanese think that they are caused by huge whales creeping underground, an idea probably confirmed by the discovery of monster fossil bones.

As the myths about earth-bearers prevail in the regions of earthquakes, so do those about subterranean beings in the neighborhood of volcanoes. The superstitions which mountainous countries especially foster are intensified when the mountains themselves cast forth their awful and devastating progeny, "red ruin" and the other children born of them. Man in his dread, "caring in no wise for the external world, except as it influenced his own destiny; honoring the lightning because it could strike him, the sea because it could drown him," * could do naught else than people them with maleficent beings, and conceive of their sulphur-exhaling mouths as the jaws of a bottomless pit.

Indeed, if in freeing ourselves from the tyranny of the "solar" theory we

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* "And said the gods, let there be a hammered plate in the midst of the waters, and let it be dividing between waters and waters." Gen. i. 6. The verb from which the substantive is derived signifies, among other meanings, "to beat out into thin plates."

† Gen. viii. 2. ‡ Gen. xxviii. 17.

§ Ezekiel i. 1.

* "Modern Painters," Vol. III., 154.

shackled ourselves with some other, we should certainly prefer that which is known as the "meteorological," and which, in the person of Kuhn and other supporters, finds a more rational and persistent source of myth in phenomena which are fitful and startling, such as hurricane and tempest, earthquake and volcanic outburst. Sunrises and sunsets happen with a regularity which failed to excite any strong emotion or stimulate curiosity, and the remotest ancestor of the primitive Aryan soon shook off the habit—if, indeed, he ever acquired it—of going to bed in fear and trembling lest the sun should not come back again. Nature, in her softer aspects and her gracious bounties—in the spring-time with its promise, the summer with its glory, the autumn with its gifts—has moved the heart of man to song and festival and procession; as, by contrast, the frost that nipped the early buds and the fierce heat that withered the approaching harvest gave occasion for plaintive ditty and somber ceremony. It is in the fierce play and passionate outburst of the elements, in the storm, the lightning, and the thunder, that the feelings are aroused and that the terror-stricken fancy sees the strife of wrathful deities or depicts their dire work among men. Hence, all the world over, the Storm-God and the Wind-God have played a mighty part.

To the savage, the wind, blowing as it listeth, its whence and whither unknown, itself invisible, yet the sweep and force of its power manifest and felt, must have ranked among the most striking phenomena. And, as will be seen hereafter, the correspondences between wind and breath and the connection between breath and life, added their quota of mystery in man's effort to account for the impalpable element. In the legends of the Quiches, the mysterious creative power is Hurakan (whence *hurricane*); among the Choctaws the original word for Deity is Hush-toli, the storm wind, and in Peru to kiss the air was the commonest and simplest sign of adoration to the collective divinities. The Guayacuans of South America, when a storm arose and there was much thunder or wind, all went out in troops, as it were to battle, shaking their clubs in the air, shooting flights of arrows in that direction whence the storm came.* But we are some steps nearer to the primitive myth when we find the wind conceived of as a mighty bird—which, indeed, is in both old and new world mythology a common symbol of thunder and lightning also. On this matter Dr. Brinton's remarks bear quoting:—

> Like the wind, the bird sweeps through the aërial spaces, sings in the forests, and rustles on its course; like the cloud, it floats in mid-air, and casts its shadow on the earth; like the lightning, it darts from heaven to earth to strike its unsuspecting prey. These tropes were truths to savage nations, and led on by that law of language which forced them to conceive everything as animate or inanimate, itself the product of a deeper law of thought which urges us to ascribe life to whatever has motion, they found no animal so appropriate for their purpose here as the bird. Therefore the Algonkins say that birds always make the winds, that they create the waterspouts, and that the clouds are the spreading and agitation of their wings; the Navajos, that at each cardinal point stands a white swan, who is the spirit of the blasts; so, also, the Dakotas frequently explain the thunder as the sound of the cloud-bird flapping his wings; the lightning as the fire that flashes from his tracks, like the sparks which the buffalo scatters when he scours over a stony plain.

Turning to the literatures of higher races, we find in the prose Edda, when Gangler asks whence comes the wind, that Har answers him: "Thou must know that at the northernmost point in the heavens sits a giant,

> "In the guise of an eagle;
> And the winds, it is said,
> Rush down on the earth
> From his outspreading pinions."

In the Veda, the Maruts, or Storm-gods, to whom many of the hymns are addressed, "make the rocks to tremble and tear asunder the kings of the forest," like Hermes in his violence and like Boreas in his rage. Whether or no they become in Scandinavian legend the grim and fearful Ogres swiftly sailing in their cloud-ships, we may see in them the "crushers" and "grinders,"* as their name imports, the types of northern deities like Odin, long degraded into the Wild Huntsman and his phantom crew, whose uncouth yells the peasant hears in the midnight air.

Of this personification of the elements, the following Ojibway folk-tale, cited by Dorman, gives poetic illustration:—"There were spirits from all parts of the country. Some came with crashing steps

* Dorman's "Primitive Superstitions," p. 350.

* From Sans. *mar*, "to grind." Ares and Mars come from the same root.

and roaring voice, who directed the whirlwinds which were in the habit of raging about the neighboring country. Then glided in gently a sweet little spirit, which blew the summer gale. Then came in the old sand-spirit, who blew the sand-squalls in the sand-buttes toward the west. He was a great speech-maker, and shook the lodge with his deep-throated voice, as he addressed the spirits of the cataracts and waterfalls, and those of the islands who wore beautiful green blankets."

In his valuable book on the Myths of the Red Race, Dr. Brinton has brought together a mass of evidence in support of a theory that the sanctity in which the number Four is held among that people is due to the adoration of the cardinal points, which are identified with the four winds, who, in hero myths, are the four ancestors of the human race. Certainly the illustrations with which the argument is supported are both numerous and valuable; but any elaborate system of mythology based upon a definite number of winds has, like the solar theory, to make the facts square with it, and while it explains much, to leave much unexplained. Here this bare reference to it must suffice.

Estimates differ much as to the size of the Thunder-Bird. In one tradition, an Indian found its nest, and secured a feather which was above two hundred feet long, while in another tradition the bird is said to be no bigger than one's little finger! But among the Western Indians he is an immense eagle. "When this aërial monster flaps his wings, loud peals of thunder roll over the prairie; when he winks his eye it lightens; when he wags his tail the waters of the lake which he carries on his back overflow and produce rain." The old and universal belief that stones were hurled by the Thunder-God is not so far-fetched as we, in our pride of science, might think, for the flints which are mistaken for thunderbolts, and which become objects of adoration as well as charms, produce a flash when struck by the lightning. Mixcoatl, the Mexican Cloud-serpent, as well as Jove, carries his bundle of arrows or thunderbolts, which in the hand of Thor are represented by his mighty club or hammer.

As in the conflict raging in the sky during gale or tempest, when the light and the darkness alternately prevail, the barbaric mind sees war waged between the heroes of the spirit-land who have carried their unsettled blood-feuds thither, so in many myths the lightning is no comrade of the thunder, but its foe, the battle of bird with serpent. The resemblances of the lightning flash to the sharp, sudden, zigzag movements of a creature so mysterious, to barbaric man, in its unlikeness to the beasts of the field, account for the myth, the interest of which lies for us in the correspondences which it suggests with the group of storm-myths and sun-myths of the Aryan race, the battle between Indra and Vritra, Ormuzd and Ahriman, Thor and Midgard, Hercules and Cacus, Apollo and Python, and St. George and the Dragon. It is with the physical origin and, for us, deep theological significance of these, that the succeeding paper will deal.

IX.

THE HINDU SUN-AND-CLOUD MYTH.

THESE papers would not be worth the reader's attention if they were solely concerned with bringing together illustrations of myths from semi-savage races. Their other, and indeed their primary, concern is with the origin and growth of man's effort to understand the nature and meaning of things around him, and of his own acts and feelings. In this lies primitive philosophy, theology, and science, the beginnings of all knowledge that has been and that ever will be, and in the unbroken sequence of which we find the explanation of the existence of beliefs among us which are discredited whenever examined. It is the persistence of these which has made it increasingly difficult, as these papers proceed, to deal with the primitive myth apart from its later and more serious forms. Myth was the product of man's emotion and imagination, acted upon by his surroundings, and it carries the traces of its origin in its more developed forms, as the ancestral history of the higher organisms is embodied in their embryos. Man wondered before he reasoned. Awe and fear are quick to express themselves in rudimentary worship; hence the myth was at the outset a theology, and the gradations from personifying to deifying are too faint to be traced. Thus blended, the one as inevitable outcome of the other, they cannot well be treated separately, as if the myth was earth-born and the theology heaven-sent. And to treat them as one is to invade no province of religion,

which is quite other than speculation about gods. The awe and reverence which the fathomless mystery of the universe awakens, which steal within us unbidden as the morning light, and unbroken on the prism of analysis; the conviction, deepening as we peer, that there is a Power beyond humanity, and upon which humanity depends; the feeling that life is in harmony with the Divine order when it moves in disinterested service of our kind—these theology can neither create nor destroy, neither verify nor disprove. They can be bound within no formula that man or church has invented, but undefined—

> "Are yet the fountain life of all our day,
> Are yet a master light of all our seeing."

If thus far my readers are with me as to the unrelation between religion and formulated theology, and if these papers have shown with any clearness the emergence of the latter from primitive speculations about the gods and their doings, their sympathetic interest may be reckoned on in what has now to follow concerning the survival of some old weather-myths in beliefs that have had profound and direful influence upon human conduct and fate.

All the Aryan nations have among their legends, often exalted into epic themes, the story of a battle between a hero and a monster. In each case the hero conquers, and releases treasures, or in some way renders succor to man, through his victory. In Hindu myth this battle is fought between Indra and Vritra.

Indra, one of the Vedic gods, comes, according to Professor Max Müller, from the same root as the Sanskrit *indu*, drop, sap, but the etymology is doubtful. What is not doubtful is that he is the god of the bright sky, and, although like the other gods invoked in the hymns of the Rig-Veda, a departmental or tribal deity, a sort of *primus inter pares*, of whose many titles, Vritrahan, or "Vritraslayer," is the pre-eminent one. The benefits showered by him upon mortals caused the attribution of moral qualities to him, and he was adored as "lord of the virtues," while the juice of the sacred soma plant was offered in his honor, for which reason he is also called Somapâ, or "soma-drinker." It is his struggle with Vritra which is a constant theme of the Vedic hymns, the burden of which remind us of the praises offered in the Psalms to Yahweh as a man of war, as mighty in battle. "The gods do not reach thee, nor man, thou overcomest all creatures in strength. . . . Thou, thunderer, hast shattered with thy bolt the broad and massive cloud into fragments, and hast sent down the waters that were confined in it to flow at will; verily thou alone possessest all power." The primitive physical meaning of the myth is clear. Indra is the sun-god, armed with spears and arrows, for such did the solar rays appear to barbaric fancy. The rain-clouds are imprisoned in dungeons or caverns by Vritra, the "enveloper," the thief, serpent, wolf, wild boar as he is severally styled in the Rig-Veda. Indra attacks him, hurls his darts at him; they pierce the cloud-caverns, the waters are released, and drop upon the earth as rain.

Surely a most rational explanation; self-consistent as fitting into crude philosophy of personal life and volition in sun and cloud, and fraught with deep truth of meaning in regions like the Punjaub, where drought brought famine in its train.

The Aryans were a pastoral people, their wealth being in flocks and herds.* The cow yielded milk for the household; her dung fertilized the soil; her young multiplied the wealth of the family at an ever-increasing rate, and she naturally became the symbol of fruitfulness and prosperity, ultimately an object of veneration; while, for the functions which the bull performed, he was the type of strength. The Aryan's enemy was he who stole or injured the cattle; the Aryan's friend was he who saved them from the robber's clutch.

Intellectually, the Aryan tribes were in the mythopœic stage, and the personification of phenomena was rife among them. Their barbaric fancy, as kindred myths all the world over testify, would find ample play in the fleeting and varied scenery of the cloud-flecked heavens, suggestive, as this would be, of bodies celestial and bodies terrestrial. To these children of the plain the heavens were a vast, wide expanse, over which roamed supramundane beasts, the two most prominent figures in their mythical zoology being the cow and the bull. The sun, giver of blessed light, was the bull of majesty and strength; the white clouds were cows, from whose swelling udders dropped the milk of heaven—the blessed rain. But there were dark clouds also, clouds of night and clouds of storm, and within these lurked the monster rob-

* Both "pecuniary" and "fee" are, as established by Grimm's law, from *pecu*. Lat. *pecu-a*, pl. *pecus*, "cattle"; Sansk. *paçu*, "cattle" from *pac*, to fasten (that which is tied up, *i.e.*, domestic cattle). Cf. Skeats's Etymol. Dict. *in loc.*

ber; into them he lured the herds, and withheld both light and rain from the children of men. To the sun-god, therefore, who smote the thief-dragon, Vritra, with his shaft, and set free the imprisoned cows, went up the shout of praise, the song of gratitude. This myth, as hinted already, survives, in many legends of the Aryan race, and their family likeness is unmistakable. In its Latin guise, it appears as Hercules* and Cacus, although the preciseness of detail narrated by Virgil, Livy, and other writers, has given it quasi-historical rank. Hercules, after his victory over Geryon, stops to rest by the Tiber, and while he is sleeping the three-headed monster, Cacus, steals some of his cattle, dragging them by their tails into his cavern in Mons Avertinus. Their bellowing awakens Hercules, who attacks the cavern, from the mouth of which Cacus vomits flames, and roars as in thunder. But the hero slays him and frees the cattle, a victory which the earlier Romans celebrated with solemn rites at the Ara Maxima. In Greek myth the most familiar examples are the struggles between the sun-god, Apollo, and the storm-dragon, Python, and the deliverance of the Princess Andromeda by Perseus from the sea-monster sent by Poseidon to ravage the land. In the northern group we have the battle of Siegfried with the Niflungs, or Niblungs, and of Sigurd with the dragon of Fafnir, who guards golden treasures; while, in the Eddor, Thor goes fishing with the giant Hymir, and, baiting his hook with a bull's head, catches the great serpent Midgard. Among ourselves, Beowulf, hero of the poem of that name, attacks Grendel, the grim and terrible Jotun that haunts a marsh by the German Ocean (the watery habitat of these monsters is a noticeable common feature), and carries off young and old alike, so that the land is desolated. With mighty grip Beowulf tears him limb from limb, and when, later on, another "winged worm," devourer of fair damsels and hoarder of stolen riches, appears, Beowulf slays him with his enchanted sword.

These brief illustrations would hardly be complete without some reference to our national saint. Opinions differ as to his merits, Gibbon stigmatizing him as a fraudulent army contractor,† while the researches of M. Ganneau seek to establish his relation to the Egyptian Horus and Typhon. Be this as it may, the stirring old legend tells how George of Cappadocia delivered the city of Silene from a dragon dwelling in a lake hard by. Nothing that the people could give him satisfied his insatiate maw, and in their despair they cast lots who among their dearest ones should be flung to the dread beast. The lot fell to the king's daughter and she went unflinchingly, like Jephthah's daughter, to her fate. But on the road the hero learns her sad errand, and bidding her fear not, he, making sign of the cross, brandishes his lance, attacks and transfixes the dragon, and leading him into Silene, beheads him in sight of all the people, who, with their king, are baptized to the glory of Him who made Saint George the victor.*

While, however, the myth of Indra and Vritra has in its Western variants remained for the most part a battle between heroes and dragons, the moral element rarely or never obscuring the undoubted physical features, it gave rise among the Iranians, or ancient Persians, to a definite theology, the strange fortunes of which have profoundly affected Christendom. How this came about needs another paper to tell.

X.

DEMONOLOGY.

ALTHOUGH in the Vedic hymns the features of the primitive nature-myth reappear again and again, Indra himself boasting, "I slew Vritra, O Maruts, with might, having grown strong with my own vigor; I who hold the thunderbolt in my arms, I have made these all-brilliant waters to flow freely for man," we find an approach in them to some conception of that spiritual conflict of which the physical conflict was so complete a symbol. Indra, as victor, is an object of adoration and invested with purity and goodness; Vritra, as the enemy of men, is an object of dread, and invested with malice and evil.

But while in the Zend-Avesta, the Scriptures of the old Iranian religion, the struggle between Thraetaôna and the three-headed serpent Azhi-Dahâka (in which names are recognizable the Traitana and Ahi of the Veda and the Feri-

* Not the same as the Greek Herakles. The similarity of name led the Romans to identify their Hercules, who was a god of boundaries, like Jupiter Terminus, with the Greek hero. *Cacus* is not cognate with Gr. *kakos*, bad, but was originally *Cæcius*, the "blinder" or "darkener."

† "Decline and Fall," vol. iii., c. xxiii., 171. (Smith's Ed.).

* See Ralston's "Russian Folk-Tales," p. 347, for similar Bulgarian legend about St. George.

dum and Zohak of Persian epic) is narrated, the normal idea is dominant throughout. The theme is not the attack of the sun-god to recover stolen milch cows from the dragon's cave, but the battle between Ormuzd, the Spirit of Light, and Ahriman, the Spirit of Darkness. The one seeks to mar the earth which the other has made. Into the fair paradise, Airayana-Vaêjô, "a delightful spot," as the Avesta calls it, "with good waters and trees," and into other smiling lands which Ormuzd has blessed, Ahriman sends "a mighty serpent . . . . strong, deadly frost . . . . buzzing insects, and poisonous plants. . . . toil and poverty," and, worse than all, "the curse of unbelief."* Between these two spiritual powers and their armies of good and bad angels the battle rages for supremacy in the universe for possession of the citadel of Mansoul.

Early in the history of the Aryan tribes there had arisen a quarrel between the Brahminic and Iranian divisions. The latter had become a quiet-loving, agricultural people, while the former remained marauding nomads, attacking and harassing their neighbors. In their plundering inroads they invoked the aid of spells and sacrifices, offering the sacred soma-juice to their gods, and nerving themselves for the fray by deep draughts of the intoxicating stuff. Not only they, but their gods as well, thereby became objects of hatred to the peaceful Iranians, who forswore all worship of freebooters' deities, and transformed these *devas* of the old religion into demons. That religion, as common to the Indo-European race, was polytheistic, a worship of deities each ruling over some department of nature, but a worship exalting now one, now another god, be it Indra, or Varuna, or Agni, according to the indications of the deity's supremacy, or according to the mood of the worshiper. As remarked by Jacob Grimm, "the idea of the devil is foreign to all primitive religions," obviously because in all primitive thought evil and good are alike regarded as the work of deities. In the Old Testament, Yahweh is spoken of as the author of both;† the angels, whether charged with weal or woe, are his messengers. In the "Iliad," Zeus dispenses both:—

"Two urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood.
The source of evil one, the other good;
From thence the cup of mortal man he fills,
Blessings to these, to those distribute ills,
To most, he mingles both."*

and 'tis a far way from this to the loftier conception of Euripides: "If the gods do evil, then are they no gods." So there was a monotheistic—or, as Prof. Max Müller terms it, a henotheistic—element in the Vedic religion which in the Iranian religion, and this mainly through the teaching of the great thinker and reformer, Zarathushtra (Zoroaster), was largely diffused. In his endeavor to solve the old problem of reconciling sin and misery with Omnipotent goodness, he supposes "two primeval causes," one of which produced the "reality," or good mind; the other the "non-reality," or evil mind. Behind these was developed belief in a philosophical abstraction, "uncreate time," of which each was the product; but such doctrines were too subtle for the popular grasp, and, wrapped in the old mythological garb, they appeared in concrete form as dualism. Vritra survived in Ahriman, who, like him, is represented as a serpent; and in Ormuzd we have the phonetic descendant of Ahura-mazdas.

Now, it was with this dualism, this transformed survival of the sun and cloud myth, that the Jews came into association during their memorable exile in Babylon. Prior to that time, their theology, as hinted above, had no devil in it. But in that belief in spirits which they held in common with all semi-civilized races, as a heritage from barbarous ancestors, there were the elements out of which such a personality might be readily evolved. Their *satan*, or "accuser," as that word means, is no prince of the demons, like the Beelzebub of later times; no dragon, or old serpent, as of the Apocalypse, defying Omnipotence and deceiving the whole world; but a kind of detective who, by direction of Yahweh, has his eye on suspects, and who is sent to test their fidelity. In all his missions he acts as the intelligent and loyal servant of Yahweh. But although therefore not regarded as bad himself the character and functions with which he was credited made easy the transition, from such theories about him to theories of him as inherently evil, as the enemy of goodness, and, therefore, of God. He who, like Vritra, was an object of dread, came to be regarded as the incarnation of evil, the author and abetter of things harmful to man. Persian dualism gave concrete form to this

* Haig's "Essays on the Parsis," tr. Vendidâd, pp. 225, ff.
† Cf. Isaiah xlv. 7; 1 Kings xxii. 21-23; Amos iii. 6.

* "Iliad," Book xxiv. p. 663, ff.

conception, and from the time of the Exile we find Satan as the Jewish Ahriman, the antagonist of God. Not he alone, for "the angels that kept not their first estate" were the creatures of his evil designs, creatures so numerous that "every one has 10,000 at his right hand and 1000 at his left hand, and because they rule chiefly at night no man should greet another lest he should salute a demon. They haunt lonely spots, often assume the shape of beasts, and it is their presence in the bodies of men and women which is the cause of madness and other diseases." *

From the period when the Apocryphal books, especially those having traces of Persian influence, were written,† this doctrine of an archfiend with his army of demons received increasing impetus. It passed on without check into the Christian religion, and wherever this spread the heathen gods, like the *devas* of Brahminism among the Iranians, were degraded into demons, and swelled the vast crowd of evil spirits let loose to torment and ruin mankind.

This doctrine of demonology, it should be remembered, was but the elaborated form of that ancestral belief in spirits referred to above. In the Christian system it was associated with that belief in magic which has its roots in fetishism, and from the two arose belief in witchcraft. The universal belief in demons in early and mediæval times supplied an easy explanation of disasters and diseases; the sorcerers and charm-workers, the wizards and enchanters, had passed into the service of the devil. For power to work their spite and malevolence, they had bartered their souls to him, and sealed the bargain with their blood. It was enough for the ignorant and frightened sufferers to accuse some poor, misshapen, squinting old woman of casting on them the evil eye, or of appearing in the form of a cat, to secure her trial by torture and her condemnation to an unpitied death. The spread of popular terror led to the issue of Papal bulls and to the passing of statutes in England and in other countries against witchcraft, and it was not until late in the eighteenth century that the laws against that imaginary crime were repealed.

There is no sadder chapter in the annals of this tearful world, than this ghastly story of witch-finding and witch-burning. Sprenger computes that during the Christian epoch no less than *nine millions* of persons, mostly women of the poorer classes, were burned; victims of the survival into relatively civilized times of an illusion which had its source in primitive thought. It was an illusion which had the authority of Scripture on its side;* the Church had no hesitation concerning it, such men as Luther, Sir Thomas Browne, and Wesley never doubted it, the evidence of the bewitched was supported by honest witnesses, and judges disposed to mercy and humanity had no qualms in passing the dread sentence of the law on the condemned.†

And although it exists not to-day, save in by-places where gross darkness lurks, it was not destroyed by argument, by disproof, by direct assault, but only through the growth of the scientific spirit, before which, like the miasma of the Campagna before the planting of the Eucalyptus, it has dispersed. It could not live in an atmosphere thus purified, an atmosphere charged with belief in unchanging causation, and in a definite order unbroken by caprice or fitfulness, whether in the sweep of a planet or the pulsations of a human heart.

Of course the antecedents of the archfiend himself could not fail to be the subject of curious inquiry in the time when his existence was no matter of doubt. The old theologians scraped together enough material about him from the sacred books of the Jews and Christians to construct an elaborate biography of him; but in this they would seem to have explained too much in certain directions and not enough in others, thus provoking a reaction which ultimately discredited their painful research. Their genealogy of him was carried further back than they intended or desired, for the popular notions credited him with both a mother and grandmother. Their theory of his fall from Heaven gave rise to the droll conception of his lameness and to the legends of which the "devil on two sticks" is a type. Their infusion of foreign element into his nature aided his pictorial presentment in motley form and garb. To Vedic descriptions of Vritra's darkness may perchance be traced his murkiness and blackness; Greek satyr and German forest-sprite his goat-like body,

* Vide my "Jesus of Nazareth," p. 144.

† Notably "Tobit" and "Baruch," and cf. "Book of Wisdom," II. 24, for earliest indications of the belief. The Asmodeus of Tobit iii. 8 and 17, appears to be the Aeshmô dârvô of the Zend-Avesta.

* Exodus xxii. 18.

† For details of witch trials in this island, cf. Mrs. Lynn Linton's "Witch Stories," *passim.*

his horns, his cloven hoofs, his tail; to Thor his red beard and trident, vulgarized into a pitchfork; to dwarfs and goblins his red cloak and nodding plume; to theories of transformation of men and spirits into animals his manifold metamorphoses, as black cat, wolf, hellhound, and the like.

But his description was his doom; it was by a natural sequence that the legends of mediæval times present him, not, with the Scotch theologians, as a scholar and a swindler, disguising himself as a parson, but as gullible and stupid, as overreaching himself, and as befooled by mortals. And, like the Trolls of Scandinavian folk-lore who burst at sunrise, it needed only the full light thrown upon his origin and development by the researches of comparative mythologists to dissipate this creation of man's fears and fancies into the vaporous atmosphere where he had his birth.

XI.

METEMPSYCHOSIS AND TRANSFORMATION.

THE belief that human beings could change themselves into animals was alluded to in my remarks on witchcraft, but, in view of its large place in the history of illusions, too incidentally, and it is proposed to give it further reference here.

Superstitions which now excite a smile, or which seem beneath notice, were no sudden phenomena, appearing now and again at the beck and call of willful deceivers of their kind. That they survive at all, like organisms, atrophied or degenerate, which have seen "better days," is evidence of remote antiquity and persistence. Every seeming vagary of the mind had serious importance, and answered to some real need of man as a sober attempt to read the riddle of the earth and get to its inmost secret.

So with this belief. It is the outcome of that early thought of man which conceived a common nature and fellowship between himself and brutes, a conception based on rude analogies between his own and other forms of life, as also between himself and things without life, but having motion, be they waterspouts or rivers, trees or clouds, especially these last, when the wind, in violent surging and with howling voice, drove them across the sky. Where he blindly, timidly groped, we walk as in the light, and with love that casts out fear. Where rough resemblances suggested to him like mental states and actions in man and brute, the science of our time has, under the comparative method, converted the guess into a certainty; not to the confirmation of his conclusions, but to the proof of identity of structure and function, to the demonstrating of a common origin, however now impassable the chasm that separates us from the lower animals.

The belief in man's power to change his form and nature is obviously nearly connected with the widespread doctrine of metempsychosis, or the passing of the soul at death into one or a series of animals, generally types of the dead man's character, as where the timid enter the body of a hare, the gluttonous that of a swine or vulture.

"Fills with fresh energy another form,
And towers an elephant or glides a worm;
Swims as an eagle in the eye of noon;
Or wails a screech-owl to the deaf, cold moon,
Or haunts the brakes where serpents hiss and glare,
Or hums, a glittering insect, in the air."

But while in transmigration the soul returns not to the body which it had left, transformation was only for a time, occurring at stated periods, and effected by the will of the transformed, or by the aid of sorcery and magic, or sometimes imposed by the gods as a punishment for impious defiance and sin.

Other causes, less remote, aided the spread of a belief to which the mind was already inclined. Among these were the hallucinations of men who believed themselves changed into beasts, and who, retreating to caves and forests, issued thence howling and foaming, ravening for blood and slaughter; hallucinations which afflicted not only single persons, as in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, whose milder monomania (he, himself, saying in the famous prize poem :—

"As he ate the unaccustomed food,
It may be wholesome, but it is not good.")

rather resembled that of the daughters of Prætus, who believed themselves cows, but which also spread as virulent epidemic among whole classes. It is related that, in 1600, multitudes were attacked by the disease known as lycanthropy, or wolf-madness (from Greek, *lukos*, a wolf, and *anthropos*, a man), and that they herded and hunted in packs, destroying and eating children, and keeping in their mount-

ain fastnesses a cannibal or devil's Sabbath, like the nocturnal meetings of witches and demons known as the Witches' Sabbath. Hundreds of them were executed on their own confession, but some time elapsed before the frightful epidemic, and the panic which it caused, passed away. Besides such delusions, history down to our own time records instances where a morbid, innate craving for blood, leading sometimes to cannibalism, has shown itself. Mr. Baring-Gould, in his "Book of Werewolves," cites a case from Gall of a Dutch priest who had such a desire to kill and to see killed that he became chaplain to a regiment for the sake of witnessing the slaughter in battle. But still more ghastly are the notorious cases of Elizabeth, an Hungarian lady of title, who inveigled girls into her castle and murdered them that she might bathe her body in human blood to enhance her beauty; and of the Maréchal de Retz who, cursed with the abnormal desire to murder children, allured them with promises of dainties into his kitchen, and killed them, inhaling the odor of their blood with delight, and then burned their bodies in the huge fireplace in the one room devoted to these horrors. When the deed was done, the Maréchal would lie prostrate with grief "would toss weeping and praying on a bed, or recite fervent prayers and litanies on his knees, only to rise with irresistible craving to repeat the crime."

Such instances as the foregoing, whether of delusion or morbid desire to destroy, are among secondary causes; they may contribute, but they do not create, being inadequate to account for the world-wide existence of transformation myths. The animals which are the supposed subject of these vary with the habitat but are always those which have inspired most dread from their ferocity. In Abyssinia we find the man-hyæna; in South Africa, the man-lion; in India, the man-tiger; in Northern Europe, the man-bear; and in other parts of Europe the man-wolf or were-wolf (from A.-S. *wer*, a man).

Among the many survivals of primitive thought in the Greek mythology, which are the only key to its coarser features, this of belief in transformation occurs, and, indeed, along the whole line of human development it appears and re-appears in forms more or less vivid and tragic. The gods of the South, as of the North, came down in the likeness of beasts and birds, as well as of men, and among the references to these myths in classic writers, Ovid, in the "Metamorphoses," tells the story of Zeus visiting Lykaon, king of Arcadia, who placed a dish of human flesh before the god to test thereby his omniscience. Zeus detected the trick, and punished the king by changing him into a wolf, so that his desire might be toward the food which he had impiously offered to his god.

> "In vain he attempted to speak; from that very instant
> His jaws were bespluttered with foam, and only he thirsted
> For blood, as he raged among flocks and panted for slaughter.
> His vesture was changed into hair, his limbs became crooked.
> A wolf—he retains yet large traces of his ancient expression,
> Hoary he is as afore, his countenance rabid,
> His eyes glitter savagely still, the picture of fury."

But we may pass from this and suchlike tales of the ancients to the grim realities of the belief in mediæval times.

XII.

TRANSFORMATION IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

THE closing remarks in my last paper made reference to the terribly real form which belief in transformation assumed in the middle ages.

If wolves abounded, much more did the were-wolf abound. According to Olaus Magnus, the sufferings which the inhabitants of Prussia and neighboring nations endured from wolves were trivial compared with the ravages wrought by men turned into wolves. On the feast of the Nativity, these monsters were said to assemble and then disperse in companies to kill and plunder. Attacking lonely houses, they devoured all the human beings and every other animal found therein. "They burst into the beer-cellars and there they empty the tuns of beer or mead, and pile up the empty casks one above another in the middle of the cellar, thus showing their difference from natural wolves." In Scandinavia it was believed that some men had a second skin, out of which they could slip and appear in the shape of a beast. Perhaps the phrase "to jump out of one's skin" is a relic of this notion. The Romans believed that the were-wolf simply effected the change

by turning his skin inside out, hence the term "versipellis," or "skin-changer." So in mediæval times it was said that the wolf's skin was under the human, and the unhappy suspects were hacked and tortured for signs of such hairy growth. Sometimes the change was induced, it is said, by putting on a girdle of human skin round the waist; sometimes by the use of magical ointment. Whatever the animal whose shape a man took could do, that he could do, plus such power as he possessed in virtue of his manhood or acquired by sorcery, his eyes remaining as the only features by which he could be recognized. If he was not changed himself, some charm was wrought on the eyes of onlookers whereby they could see him only in the shape which he was supposed to assume. The genuine monomaniacs aided such an illusion. The poor demented one who conceived himself a dog or a wolf, who barked, and snapped, and foamed at the mouth, and bit savagely at the flesh of others, was soon clothed by a terror-stricken fancy in the skin of either brute, and believed to have the canine or lupine appetite in addition to his human cunning. The imagination thus projects in visible form the specters of its creation; the eye in this, as in so much else, sees the thing for which it looks. Some solid foundation for the belief would, however, exist in the custom among warriors of dressing themselves in the skins of beasts to add to their ferocious appearance. And it was amid such that the remarkable form of mania in Northern Europe known as the Berserkr rage ("bear-sark" or "bear-skin" wearer) arose. Working themselves by the aid of strong drink or drugs and contagious excitement into a frenzy, these freebooters of the Northland sallied forth to break the back bones and cleave the skulls of quiet folk and unwary travelers. As with flashing eyes and foaming mouth they yelled and danced, seemingly endowed with magic power to resist assault by sword or club, they aroused in the hysterically disposed a like madness, which led to terrible crimes, and which died away only as the killing of one's fellows became less the business of life.

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the belief in men-beasts reached its maximum, and met with no tender treatment at the hands of a Church whose Founder had manifested such soothing pity toward the "possessed" of Galilee and Judæa. That Church had a cut-and-dried explanation of the whole thing, and applied a sharp and pitiless remedy. If the devil, with countless myrmidons at his command, was "going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it," what limit could be put to his ingenuity and arts? Could he not as easily change a man into a wolf or a bear, as a woman into a cat; and had not each secured this by a compact with him, the foe of God and His Church? The evidence in support of the one was as clear and cogent as in support of the other; hence were-wolf hunting and burning became as Christian a duty and as paying a profession as witch-smelling and torturing. Any cruelty was justified by its perpetrators when the object in view was the vindication of the majesty of God; and not until the advancing intelligence of men recoiled against the popular explanations of witchcraft and lycanthropy were the laws against both repealed.

Those explanations were survivals of savage mental philosophy blended with a crude theology. To the savage, all diseases are the work of evil spirits. If a man hurts himself against a stone, the demon in the stone is the cause. If the man falls suddenly ill, writhes or shrieks in his pain, the spirit which has smuggled itself in with the food or the drink or the breath is twisting or tearing him; if he has a fit, the spirit has flung him; if he is in the frenzy of hysteria, the spirit within him is laughing in fiendish glee. And when the man suddenly loses his reason, goes, as people say, "out of his mind," acts and looks no longer like his former self, still more does this seem the work of an evil agent within him. It is kindred with the old belief that the sickly and ugly infant had been left in the cradle by the witch in place of the child which she had stolen before its baptism.* And the thing to do is to find some mode of conjuring or frightening or forcing the demon out of the man just as it became a sacred duty to watch over the newly born until the sign of the Cross had been made on its forehead, and the regenerating water sprinkled over it.

"Presbyter is but old priest writ large." And the theory of demoniacal agency was but the savage theory in a more elaborate guise. To theologians and jurists it was a sufficing explanation; it fitted in with the current notions of the government of the universe, and there was no

* Spenser says:—
"Such, men do *changelings* call, so changed by fairies' theft."

need to frame any other. Body and mind were to them as separate entities, as they are to the savage and the ignorant. Each regarded the soul as independent of the body, and framed his theories of occasional absence therefrom accordingly. But science has taught us to know ourselves not as dual, but as one. She lays her finger on the subtle, intricate framework of man's nervous system, and finds in the derangement of this the secret of those delusions and illusions which have been so prolific in agony and suffering. She makes clear how the yielding to morbid tendencies can still foster delusions, which, if no longer the subject of pains and penalties in the body politic, are themselves ministers of vengeance in the body where they arise. And in the recognition of a fundamental unity between the physical and the mental, in the healthy working of the one as dependent on the wholesome care of the other, she finds not only the remedy against mental derangement and all forms of harmful excitement, but also the prevention which is better than cure.

XIII.

THE BELIEF IN TRANSFORMATION UNIVERSAL.

TRADITIONS of transformation of men into beasts are not confined to the Old World. In Dr. Rink's "Tales of the Eskimo" there are numerous stories both of men and women who have assumed animal form at will, as also incidental references to the belief in stories such as that telling how an Eskimo got inside a walrus skin, so that he might lead the life of that creature. And among the Red Races, that rough analogy which led to the animal being credited with life and consciousness akin to the human, still expresses itself in thought and act. If even now it is matter of popular belief in the wilds of Norway that Finns and Lapps, who from remote times have passed as skillful witches and wizards, can at pleasure assume the shape of bears, the common saying, according to Dr. Dasent, about an unusually daring and savage beast being, "that can be no Christian bear," we may not be surprised that lower races still ascribe power of interchange to man and brute. The werewolf superstition is extant among the North-Western Indians, but free from those diabolical features which characterized it in mediæval times among ourselves. It takes its place in barbaric myth generally, and although it may have repellant or cruel elements, it was never blended with belief in the demoniacal. The Ahts say that men go into the mountains to seek their manitou (that is, the personal deity, generally the first animal seen by the native in the dream produced by his fasting on reaching manhood), and, mixing with wolves, are after a time changed into these creatures. Although the illustration bears more upon what has to be said concerning the barbaric belief in animal ancestors, it has some reference to the matter in hand to cite the custom among the Tonkanays, a wild and unruly tribe in Texas, of celebrating their origin by a grand annual dance. One of them, naked as he was born, is buried in the earth, then the others, clothed in wolfskins, walk over him, sniff around him, howl in wolfish style, and then dig him up with their nails. The leading wolf solemnly places a bow and arrow in his hands, and, to his inquiry as to what he must do for a living, advises him "to do as the wolves do—rob, kill, and rove from place to place, never cultivating the soil." Dr. Brinton, in quoting the above from Schoolcraft, refers to a similar custom among the ancient dwellers on Mount Soracte.

As in past times among ourselves, so in times present among races such as the foregoing, their wizards and shamans are believed to have power to turn themselves as they choose into beasts, birds, or reptiles. By whatever name these professional impostors are known, whether as medicine-men, or, as in Cherokee, by the high-sounding title of "possessors of the divine fire," they have traded, and wherever credulity or darkest ignorance abide, still trade, on the fears and fancies of their fellows by disguising themselves in voice and gait and covering as the animal which they pretend to be. Among races believing in transformation such tricks have free course, and the more dexterous the sorcerer who could play bear's antics in a bear's skin proved himself in throwing off the disguise and appearing suddenly as a man, the greater his success, and he more firmly grounded the belief.

The whole subject, although presented here only in the barest outline, would not be fitly dismissed without some reference to the survival of the primitive belief in men-animals in the world-wide stories known as Beast-fables, in which animals act and talk like human beings. When

to us all Nature was wonderland, and among our playfellows were the four-footed, the birds, and the fishes; when in fireside tale and rhyme they spoke our language and lived that free life which we then shared and can never share again, the feeling of kinship to which the old fables gave expression may have checked mady a wanton act, and, if we learned it not fully then, at least have taken the lesson to heart since,

> Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
> With sorrow of the meanest thing that lives.

And then those "Fables" of Æsop, even with the tedious drawback of the "moral," as powder beneath the jam, did they not lighten for us in school-days the dark passages through our Valpy (for the omniscient Dr. William Smith was not then the tyro's dread), and again give us communion with the fowl of the air and the beast of the field? Now, our mature thought may interest itself in following the beast-myths to the source whence Babrius and Phædrus, knowing not its springhead and antiquity, drew their vivid presentments of the living world, and find in the storied East the wellspring that fed the imagination of youngsters thousands of years ago. With some authorities the Egyptians have the credit of first inventing the beast-fable, but among them, as among every other advanced race, such stories are the remains of an earlier deposit; relics of a primitive philosophy, in which wisdom, and skill, and cunning are no monopoly of man's. The fondness of the negro races, whose traditions are not limited to South and Central Africa, for such fables is well known, as witness the tales of which "Uncle Remus" is a type, and it is strikingly illustrated in the history of the Vai tribe, who having, partly through contact with whites elaborated a system of writing, made the beast-fable their earliest essay in composition.*

In former papers, the evidence in support of the common ancestry of the languages spoken by the leading peoples in Europe, and by such important historical races in Asia as the Hindu and the Persian, has been summarized. That evidence is likewise conclusive, not only as to the origin of the myths on which the great Indo-European epics are founded, but also as to the possession by the several clans of a common stock of folk-lore and folk-tale, in which, of course, the beast-fable is included, these being the relics in didactic or humorous guise of that serious philosophy concerning the life of man and beast among the barbaric ancestors of the Indo-Europeans, upon which stress enough has been laid.

Even if the common origin could be disproved, the evidence would merely be shifted from local to general foundations, because the uniform attitude of mind before the same phenomena would be proven; but the resemblances are too minute in detail to be explained by a theory of independent creation of the tales where now we find then. The likenesses are many; the unlikenesses are few, being the result of local coloring, historical fact blended with the fiction, popular belief, and superstition, all affected by the skill of the professional story-teller. As in the numerous variants of the familiar Cinderella, Beauty and the Beast, Punchkin, and the like, the same fairy prince or princess, the same wicked magician and clever, versatile Boots peep through, disclosing the near relationship of Hindu nursery tales to the folk-tales of Norway and the Highlands, of Iceland and Ceylon, of Persia and Serbia, of Russia and the lands washed by the Mediterranean. In the venerable collection of "Buddhist Birth Stories," now in course of translation by Dr. Rhys Davids,* and to which he has prefaced an interesting introduction on the source and migration of folk-tales, we are face to face with many a fable familiar to us in the "Æsop" of our school-days. There is the story of the Ass in the Lion's Skin, not in which, as Æsop has it, the beast dressed himself, but which the hawker put on him to frighten the thieves who would steal his goods. Left one day to browse in a field while his master refreshed himself at an inn, some watchmen saw him, and, raising hue and cry, brought out the villagers, armed with their rude implements. The ass, fearing death, made a noise like an ass, and was killed. Long might he, adds the ancient moral,

> Clad in a lion's skin
> Have fed on the barley green;
> But he brayed!
> And that moment he came to ruin.

The variants of this old fable are found in mediæval, in French, German, Indian, and Turkish folk-lore, as are also those of the tortoise who lost his life through

* Cf. Mahaffy's "Prolegomena to Ancient History," p. 392.

* Vol. I. Trübner & Co. See also, for some valuable illustrations from early English and other sources, an article by Rev. Dr. Morris, in *Contemp. Rev.*, May, 1881.

"much speaking." Desiring to emigrate, two ducks agreed to carry him, he seizing hold of a stick which they held between their beaks. As they passed over a village, the people shouted and jeered, whereupon the irate tortoise retorted, "What business is it of yours?" and, of course, thereby let go the stick and, falling down, split in two. Therefore

> Speak wise words not out of season;
> You see how, by talking overmuch,
> The tortoise fell."

In Æsop, the tortoise asks an eagle to teach him to fly; in Chinese folk-lore he is carried by geese.

Jacob Grimm's researches concerning the famous mediæval fable of "Reynard the Fox," revealed the ancient and scattered materials out of which that wonderful satire was woven, and there is no feature of the story which reappears more often in Eastern and Western folk-lore than that cunning of the animal which has been for the lampooner and the satirist the type of self-seeking monk and ecclesiastic. When Chanticleer proudly takes an airing with his family, he meets master Reynard, who tells him he has become a "religious," and shows him his beads, and his missal, and his hair shirt, adding in a voice "that was child-like and bland," that he had vowed never to eat flesh. Then he went off singing his Credo, and slunk behind a hawthorn. Chanticleer, thus thrown off his guard, continues his airing, and the astute hypocrite, darting from his ambush, seizes the plump hen Coppel. So in Indian folk-tale, a wolf living near the Ganges is cut off from food by the surrounding water. He decides to keep holy day, and the god Sakka, knowing his lupine weakness, resolves to have some fun with him, and turns himself into a wild goat. "Aha!" says the wolf, "I'll keep the fast another day," and springing up he tried to seize the goat, who skipped about so that he couldn't be taken. So Lupus gives it up, and says as his solatium: "After all, I've not broken my vow."

The Chinese have a story of a tiger who desired to eat a fox, but the latter claimed exemption as being superior to the other animals, adding that if the tiger doubted his word, he could easily judge for himself. So the two set forth, and, of course, every animal fled at sight of the tiger, who, too stupid to see how he had been gulled, conceived high respect for the fox, and spared his life.

Sometimes the tables are turned. Chanticleer gets his head out of Reynard's mouth by making him answer the farmer, and in the valuable collection of Hottentot tales which the late Dr. Bleek, with some warrant, called "Reynard in South Africa," the cock makes the jackal say his prayers, and flies off while the outwitted beast folds his hands and shuts his eyes.

But I must forbear quoting further. Enough if it is made clear to the reader that the beast-fable is the lineal descendant of barbaric conceptions of a life shared in common by man and brute, and another link thus added to the lengthening chain of the continuity of human history.

XIV.

BEAST-FABLES.

THE beast-fables cited in my last paper were drawn from widely-severed sources, as illustrative of ideas common to all barbarous races, concerning the community of life in man and brute.

They are thus shown to embalm the relics of a serious philosophy, and the like is true of the great mass of folk-tales of which they are a branch. The connection of the two is, indeed, manifest in the group of which "Beauty and the Beast" is a well-known example, in which the husband or wife is of fair human form by night and a hideous monster by day, until freed from the sorcerer's enchantment. Such tales have not fallen in the East to the low level which they have reached here, because they yet accord in some degree with extant superstitions in India, whereas in Europe they find little or nothing to which they correspond. But, dismissing these, we will deal with a group of stories culled from various collections, the leading idea of which is the dwelling apart of the soul or heart, as the seat of life, from the body, in some secret place, as in an egg, or a necklace, or a flower; the destruction of the soul involving that of the body.

In the Norse tale of "The giant who had no heart in his body," the monster turns six princes and their wives into stone, whereupon the seventh and only surviving son, Boots, sets out to avenge their fate. On his journey he saves the lives of a raven, a salmon, and a wolf, and the wolf, having eaten his horse, compensates Boots by carrying him to the giant's castle, where the lovely princess who is

to be his bride is confined. She promises to find out where the giant keeps his heart, and by blandishments and divers arts known to the fair sex both before and since the time of Delilah, she worms out the secret. He tells her that "far, far, away in a lake lies an island; on that island stands a church; in that church is a well; in that well swims a duck; in that duck is an egg; and in that egg there lies my heart, you darling!" Boots, taking fond farewell of the princess, rides on the wolf's back to the island. Then the raven he had befriended flies to the steeple and fetches the key of the church; the salmon, in like return for kindness, brings him the egg from the well where the duck had dropped it.

Then the wolf told him to squeeze the egg, and as soon as ever he did so, the giant screamed out. "Squeeze it again," said the wolf; and when the prince did so, the giant screamed still more piteously, and begged and prayed so prettily to be spared, saying he would do all that the prince wished if he would only not squeeze his heart in two. "Tell him if he will restore to life again your six brothers and their brides, you will spare his life," said the wolf. Yes, the giant was ready to do that, and he turned the six brothers into kings' sons again, and their brides into kings' daughters. "Now squeeze the egg in two," said the wolf. With questionable morality, doing evil that good might come, Boots squeezed the egg to pieces, and the giant burst at once.

Some interesting variants of this story are given by Mr. Ralston in his "Russian Folk-Tales," in which Koshchei is the counterpart of the giant, his death being brought about by the destruction of the object in which his soul is hidden. In one story he is killed by a blow on the forehead inflicted by the mysterious egg—that last link in the magic chain by which his life is darkly bound. In another version the fatal blow is struck by a small stone found in the yolk of an egg, which is inside a duck, which is inside a hare, which is inside a stone, which is on an island. In another variant, Koshchei attempts to deceive his fair captive, pretending that his "death" resides in a besom, or in a fence, both of which she adorns with gold in token of her love. Then he confesses that his "death" really lies in an egg, inside a duck, inside a log which is floating on the sea. Prince Ivan gets hold of the egg, and shifts it from one hand to the other. Koshchei rushes wildly from side to side of the room. At last the prince breaks the egg, and Koshchei falls on the floor and dies.

In Serbian folk-tale the strength of a baleful being who had stolen a princess lies in a bird which is inside the heart of a fox, and when the bird was taken out of the heart and set on fire, that moment the wife stealer falls down dead, and the prince regains his bride. In Bohemian, Gaelic, Greek, Finnish, as also among the Hottentot and Samoyed folk-tales, the same incident occurs of an external soul, generally hidden in an egg, the breaking of which ends the life of giant or other monster. In the "Arabian Nights" the Jinni's soul is enclosed in the crop of a sparrow, and the sparrow is imprisoned in a small box, and this again in seven other boxes, which are put into seven chests, contained in a coffer of marble, which is sunk in the ocean that surrounds the world. Seyfel-Mulook raises the coffer by the aid of Suleyman's seal-ring, and having extricated the sparrow, strangles it, whereupon the Jinni's body is converted into a heap of black ashes.

The most venerable form in which we possess the myth of a man's soul outside his body comes to us from the valley of the Nile, but before narrating this we must seek in the "storied East" the close parallels to the folk-lore of the Western Aryans. As in the Rig-Veda we are in certain respects nearer to the older forms of the parent language of the Indo-European peoples, so in the folk-tales of Bengal and the Deccan we are nearer the earliest forms of the fireside stories of both east and west.

In the story of "Punchkin" given in Miss Frere's "Old Deccan Days," a Rajah has seven daughters, and his wife dying when they were quite children, he marries the widow of his prime minister. Her cruelty to his children made them run off to a jungle, where seven neighboring princes, who were out hunting, found them, and each took one of them to wife. After a time they again went hunting, and did not come back. So when the son of the youngest princess, who had also been enchanted away, grew up, he set out in search of his mother and father and uncles, and at last discovered that the seven princes had been turned into stone by the magician Punchkin, who had shut up the princess in a tower because she would not marry him. Recognizing her son, she plotted with him to feign agreement to marry Punchkin if he would tell her where the secret of his life was hidden. Overjoyed at her yielding to his wish, the magician told her that it was true that he was not as others.

Far, far away, hundreds of thousands of miles from this, there lies a desolate country covered with thick jungle. In the midst of the jungle grows a circle of palm-trees, and in the center of the circle stand six chattees full of water, piled one above another; below the sixth chattee is a small cage which contains a little green parrot; on the life of the parrot depends my life, and if the parrot is killed I must die. But, he added, this was not possible, because thousands of genii "surround the palm-trees, and kill all who approach the place."

The princess told her son this, and he set forth on his journey. On the way he rescued some young eagles from a serpent, and the grateful birds carried him until they reached the jungle, where, the genii being overcome with sleep by the heat, the eaglets swooped down. "Down jumped the prince; in an instant he had overthrown the chattees full of water and seized the parrot, which he rolled up in his cloak," then mounted again into the air and was carried back to Punchkin's palace. Punchkin was dismayed to see the parrot in the prince's hands, and asked him to name any price he willed for it, whereupon the prince demanded the restoration of his father and his uncles to life. This was done; then he insisted on Punchkin doing the like to "all whom he had thus imprisoned," when, at the waving of the magician's wand, the whole garden became suddenly alive.

"Give me my parrot!" cried Punchkin. Then the boy took hold of the parrot, and tore off one of his wings; and as he did so the magician's right arm fell off. He then pulled off the parrot's second wing, and Punchkin's left arm fell off; then he pulled off the bird's legs, and down fell the magician's right leg and left leg. Nothing remained of him save the limbless body and the head; but still he rolled his eyes, and cried, "Give me my parrot!" "Take your parrot, then," cried the boy, and with that he wrung the bird's neck, and threw it at the magician, and as he did so, Punchkin's head twisted round, and, with a fearful groan he died. Of course, all the rest "lived very happily ever afterward," as they do in the plays and the novels.

In the story of "Sodewa Bai," the Hindu Cinderella, the heroine's soul is contained in a string of golden beads, and in the Bengali tale, "Life's Secret," a Rajah's favorite wife gives birth miraculously to a boy, whose soul is bound up in a necklace in the stomach of a boal-fish. In both instances the jewels are stolen, and while they are worn by the thieves, prince and princess alike are lifeless, while with the recovery of the jewels, life returned to each.

The family likeness of these Indian folk-tales to those given above is explicable on no theory of borrowing, and finds its sole and rational explanation in the possession of a common stock of folklore by the several ancestors of the Indo-European races. As Sir G. W. Cox remarks, "the substantial identity of stories told in Italy, Norway, and India can but prove that the treasure-house of mythology was more abundantly filled before the dispersion of the Aryan tribes than we had taken it to be."

The Egyptian tale of the "Two Brothers" is of great value on account of its high antiquity, and, moreover, specially interesting as recording an incident similar to that narrated in the life of Joseph. It is contained in the d'Orbiney papyrus preserved in the Bibliothèque Impériale, the date being about the fourteenth or fifteenth century B.C.

There were two brothers, Anepou and Satou, joined as one in love and labor. One day Satou was sent to fetch seed-corn from Anepou's house, where he found his brother's wife adorning her hair. She urged him to stay with her, but he refused, promising, however, to keep her wickedness secret. When Anepou returned at even, she, being afraid, "made herself to seem as a woman that had suffered violence," and told him exactly the reverse of what had happened. Anepou's wrath was kindled against Satou, and he went out to slay him; but Satou called on Phra to save him, and the god placed a river between the brothers, so that when day dawned Anepou might hear the truth. At sunrise Satou tells his story, and, mutilating himself, he says that he will leave Anepou and go to the valley of the cedar, in the cones of which he will deposit his heart, "so that if the tree be cut, his heart would fall to the earth, and he must die."

Space forbids further outline of the venerable story, which finally ends with the reconciliation of the two brothers.

For us the value of these folk-tales lies in the relics of barbaric notions concerning the nature of man and his relation to external things which they preserve. They have amused our youthhood: they may instruct our manhood. Not if we go to the solar mythologist for their interpretation. We shall learn from Sir G. W. Cox that "the magician Punchkin and the heartless giant are only other forms

of the Panis who steal bright treasures from the gleaming west," that "Balna herself is Helen shut up in Ilion . . . the eagles the bright clouds," * and from Professor de Gubernatis that the duck is the dawn and the egg the sun.

These venerable tales have a larger, richer meaning than this, expressive of the wonder deep-seated in the heart of man. Like the beautiful prisms of topaz and beryl revealed when a "drusy" cavity in granitic rock is broken open, they hold within them the crystallized thought of the past. The soul existing apart from the body, whether in bird or casket, and determining its fate, is the relic of barbaric belief in one or more entities *in* the body, yet not *of* it—a belief extant among tribes still uncivilized, and surviving in unsuspected forms among more advanced races.

XV.

TOTEMISM.

In addition to the beliefs in the transformation of men into animals and in the transmigration of souls into the bodies of animals, we find among barbarous peoples a belief which is probably the parent of one and certainly nearly related to both, namely, in descent from the animal or plant, more often the former, whose name they bear. Its connection with transmigration is seen in the belief of the Moquis, an Indian tribe, that after death they live in the form of their totemic animal, those of the Deer family becoming deer, and so on through the several clans. The belief survives in its most primitive and vivid forms among two races, the aborigines of Australia and the North American Indians. The word "totemism," given to it both in its religious and social aspects, is derived from the Algonquin "dodaim" or "dodhaim," meaning "clanmark." Among the Australians, the word "kobong," meaning "friend" or "protector," is the generic term for the animal or plant by which they are known. It is akin in significance to the Indian words "manitou," "oki," etc., comprehending "the manifestations of the unseen world, yet conveying no sense of personal unity," which are commonly translated by the misleading word "medicine;" hence, "medicine-men."

The family name, or second name borne by all the tribes in lineal descent, and which corresponds to our surname, *i.e.*, *super nomen*, or "over-name," is derived from names of beasts, birds, etc., around which traditions of their transformation into men linger. Sir Geo. Grey* says that there is a mysterious connection between a native and his kobong. It is his protecting angel, like the "daimon" of Socrates, like the "genius" of the early Italian. "If it is an animal, he will not kill one of the species to which it belongs, should he find it asleep, and he always kills it reluctantly and never without affording it a chance of escape. The family belief is that some one individual of the species is their dearest friend, to kill whom would be a great crime," as, in Hindu belief, when a Rajah was said to have entered at death into the body of a fish, a "close time" was at once decreed. Among the Indian tribes we find well-nigh the whole fauna represented, their totem being the Bear, Turtle, Deer, Hawk, Eagle, Pike, Buffalo, etc. Like the Australians, these tribes regarded themselves as being of the breed of their particular animal-totem, and avoided hunting, slaying and eating (of which more presently) the creature under whose form the ancestor was thought to be manifest. The Chippaways carried their respect even further. Deriving their origin from the dog, they at one time refrained from employing their supposed canine ancestors in dragging their sledges. The Bechuana and other people of South Africa will avoid eating their tribe-animal or wearing its skin. The same prohibitions are found among tribes in Northern Asia, and the Vogulitzi of Siberia, when they have killed a bear, address it formally, maintaining "that the blame is to be laid on the arrows and iron, which were made and forged by the Russians!" Among the Delawares the Tortoise gens claimed supremacy over the others, because their ancestor, who had become a fabled monster in their mythology, bore their world on his back. The Californian Indians are in interesting agreement with Lord Monboddo when, in claiming descent from the prairie wolf, they account for the loss of their tails by the habit of sitting, which, in course of time, wore them down to the stump! The Kickapoos say their ancestors had tails, and that when they lost them the "impudent fox sent every morning to ask how their tails were, and the bear shook his fat sides at the joke."

* "Mythology of the Aryan Nations," Vol. I., p. 140, *n.*

* "Travels in N. W. and W. Australia," Vol. II., 229.

The Patagonians are said to have a number of animal deities, creators of the several tribes, some being of the caste of the guanaco, others of the ostrich, etc. In short, the group of beliefs and practices found among races in the lower stages of culture point to a widespread common attitude toward the mystery of life around them. In speaking of totemism among the Red Races, Dr. Brinton thinks that the free use of animate symbols to express abstract ideas, which he finds so frequent, is the source of a confusion which has led to their claiming literal descent from wild beasts. But the barbaric mind bristles with contradictions and mutually destructive conceptions; nothing is too wonderful, too *bizarre* for its acceptance, and the belief in actual animal descent is not the most remarkable or far-fetched among the articles of its creed.

The subject of totemism is full of interest both on its religious and social side:—

On its religious side it has given rise, or, if this be not conceded, impetus, to that worship of animals which assuredly had its source in the attribution of mysterious power through some spirit within them, making them deity incarnate.

On its social side it has led to prohibitions which are inwoven among the customs and prejudices of civilized communities. But before speaking of these prohibitions, the barbaric mode of reckoning descent should be noticed.

The family name borne by any Australian tribe is perpetuated by the children, whether boys or girls, taking their mother's name. Precisely the same custom is found among the American Indians—the children of both sexes being of the mother's clan. Now, the family, as we define it, does not exist in savage communities, nor, as Mr. McLennan says in his very remarkable work on "Primitive Marriage," had "the earliest human groups any idea of kinship, . . . the physical root of which could be discerned only through observation and reflection." Where the relations of the sexes were confused and promiscuous, the oldest system in which the idea of blood-ties was expressed was a system of kinship through the mother. The habits of the "much-married" primitive men made mistake about any one's mother less likely than mistake about his father; and, if in civilized times it is, as the saying goes, a wise child that knows its own father, he was, in barbarous times, a wise father who knew his own child. Examples tracing the kinship through females, father and offspring being never of the same clan, abound in both ancient and modern authorities, and perhaps the most amusing one that can be given is found in Dr. Morgan's "Systems of Consanguinity." He says that the "natives of the province of Keang-se are celebrated among the natives of the other Chinese provinces for the mode, or form, used by them in address, namely, 'Laon peaon,' which, freely translated, means, 'Oh, you old fellow, brother mine by some of the ramifications of female relationship!'"

The prohibitions arising out of totemism are two: 1. Against intermarriage between those of the same name or crest. 2. Against the eating of the totem by any member of the tribe called after it.

I. Among both Australians and Indians a man is forbidden to marry his own clan, *i.e.*, any woman of his own surname or badge, no matter where she was born or however distantly related to him.

Were this practice of "Exogamy," as marriage outside the tribe is called, limited to one or two places, it might be classed among exceptional local customs based on a tradition, say, of some heated blood-feud between the tribes. But its prevalence among savage or semi-savage races all the world over points to reasons the nature of which is still a *crux* to the anthropologists. The late Mr. McLennan, whose opinion on such a matter is entitled to the most weight, connects it with the custom of female infanticide, which, rendering women scarce, led at once to polyandry, or one female to several males, within the tribe, and to the capturing of women from other tribes. This last-named practice strengthens Mr. McLennan's theory. He cites numerous instances from past and present barbarous races, and traces its embodiment in formal code until we come to the mock relics of the custom in modern times—as, for example, that harmless "survival" in bride-lifting, that is, stealing, as in the word "cattle-lifting."

Connected with this custom is the equally prevailing one which forbids intercourse between relations, as especially between a couple and their fathers and mothers-in-law, and which also forbids mentioning their names. (I have, by the way, heard more than one cynical son-in-law express regret that certain features of this custom had not survived among ourselves.) So far as the aversion which the savage has to telling his own name, or uttering that of any person (especially the dead), or thing feared by him is concerned,

the reason is not far to seek. It lies in that confusion between names and things which marks all primitive thinking. The savage, who shrinks from having his likeness taken in the fear that a part of himself is being carried away thereby, regards his name as something through which he may be harmed. So he will use all sorts of roundabout phrases to avoid saying it, and even change it that he may elude his foes, and puzzle or cheat Death when he comes to look for him. But why a son-in-law should not see the face of his mother-in-law, for so it is among the Aranaks of South America, the Caribs and other tribes of more northern regions, the Fijians, Sumatrans, Dayaks, the natives of Australia. the Zulus, in brief, along the range of the lower culture, is a question to which no satisfactory answer has been given, and to which reference is here made because of its connection with totemism.

II. That the animal which is the totem of the tribe should not be eaten, even where men did not hesitate to eat their fellows, is a custom for which it is less hard to account. The division of flesh into two classes of forbidden and permitted, of clean and unclean, with the resulting artificial liking or repulsion for food which custom arising out of that division has brought about, is probably referable to old beliefs in the inherent sacredness of certain animals. The Indians of Charlotte Island never eat crows, because they believe in crow-ancestors, and they smear themselves with black paint in memory of that tradition; the Dacotahs would neither kill nor eat their totems, and if necessity compels these and like barbarians to break the law, the meal is preceded by profuse apologies and religious ceremonies over the slain. The abstention of the Brahmins from meat, the pseudo-revealed injunction to the Hebrews against certain flesh-foods (that against pork has its origin, it has been suggested, in the tradition of descent from a boar) need no detailing here. But, as parallels, some restrictions among the ancient dwellers in these islands are of value. It was, according to Cæsar,* a crime to eat the domestic fowl, or goose, or hare, and to this day the last-named is an object of disgust in certain parts of Russia and Brittany. The oldest Welsh laws contain several allusions to the magical character of the hare, which was thought to change its sex every month or year, and to be the companion of the witches, who often assumed its shape.* The revulsion against horseflesh as food may have its origin in the sacredness of the white horses, which, as Tacitus remarks,† were kept by the Germans at the public cost in groves holy to the gods, whose secrets they knew, and whose decrees regarding mortals their neighings interpreted. That this animal was a clan-totem among our forefathers there can be no doubt, and the proofs are with us in the white horses carved in outline on the chalk hills of Berkshire and the west, as in the names and crests of clan descendants.

The survival of the totem in heraldry is worth more than a passing remark, and will have further reference in a succeeding chapter.

* "De Bell. Gall.," V., c. 12.

* Elton's "Origins of English History," p. 297.
† Germania, IX., 10.

XVI.

HERALDRY: ANCESTOR-WORSHIP.

As we have seen, the totem is the clan-name indicating descent from a common ancestor. It is also the clan-symbol, badge, or crest. Where the tribes among whom it is found are still in the picture-writing stage, *i.e.*, when the idea is expressed by a portrait of the thing itself instead of by some sound-sign—a stage in writing corresponding to the primitive stage in language, when words were imitative—there we find the rude hieroglyphic of the totem a means of intercourse between different tribes, as well as with whites. A striking example of this is given in the sketch (Fig. 1), which is a copy of a petition sent by some Western Indian tribes to the United States Congress for the right to fish in certain small lakes near Lake Superior.

The bird represents the leading clan, the crane; then follow three martens, as totems of three tribes; then the bear, the man-fish, and the cat-fish, also totems. From the eye and heart of each of the animals runs a line connecting them with the eye and heart of the crane, to show that they are all of one mind, and the eye of the crane has also a line connecting it with the lakes on which the tribes have their eyes, and another line running toward Congress.

In the barbaric custom of painting or carving the totem on oars, on the bows and sides of canoes, on weapons, on pillars in the front of houses, and on the

houses themselves; in tattooing it on various parts of the body (in the latter case, in some instances, together with pictures of exploits; so that the man carries on his person an illustrated history of his own life) we have the remote and forgotten origin of heraldic emblems. The symbols of civilized nations, as, *e.g.*, the Imperial eagle, which so many states of ancient and modern renown have chosen; the crests of families of rank, with their fabulous monsters, as the cherub, the Greek *gryps*, surviving in the griffin, the dragon, the unicorn; which, born of rude fancy or terrified imagination, are now carved on the entrance-gates to the houses of the great; the armorial bearings on cariages; the crest engraven on ring or embossed on writing-paper, these are the lineal descendants of the totem; and the Indians, who could see no difference between their system of manitous and those of the white people, with their spread-eagle or their lion-rampant, made a shrewd guess that would not occur to many a *parvenu* applying at the Heralds's College for a crest. The continuity is traceable in the custom of the Mexicans and other civilized nations of painting the totemic animals on their banners, flags, crests, and other insignia; and it would seem that we have in the totem the key to the mystery of those huge animal-shaped mounds which abound on the North American continent.

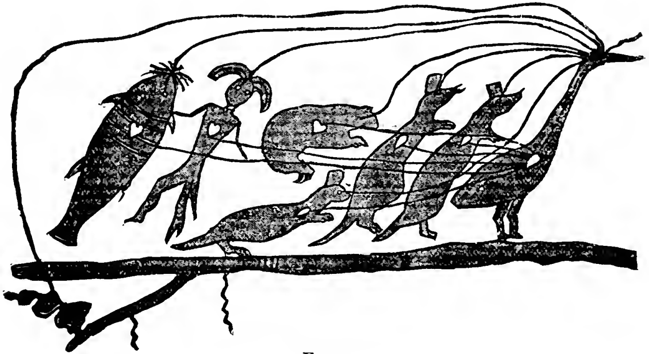

FIG. 1.

The arbitrary selection in the "ages of chivalry" of such arms as pleased the knightly fancy, or ministered to its pride, or, as was often the case, resembled the name in sound, together with the ignorance then and till recently existing as to the origin of crests, and also the discredit into which a seemingly meaningless vanity had fallen, have made it difficult to trace the survival of the totem in the crests even of that numerous company of the Upper Ten who claim descent from warriors who came over with the Conqueror. But there is no doubt that an inquiry conducted on the lines suggested above, and not led into by-paths by false analogies, would yield matter of interest and value. It would add to the evidence of that common semicivilized stage out of which we have risen. Such names as the Horsings, the Wylfings, the Derings, the Ravens, the Griffins, may hold within themselves traces of the totem name of the horse, wolf, deer, raven, and that "animal fantasticall," the griffin. In Scotland we find the clan Chattan, or the wild cat; in Ireland "the men of Osory were called by a name signifying the wild red deer." On the other hand such names may have been given merely as nicknames (*i.e.*, ekename, or the *added* name, from *eke*, "also," or "to augment"), suggested by the physical or mental likeness to the thing after which they are called.

But it is time to turn to the religious significance of the totem, as shown among races worshiping the animal which is their supposed ancestor.

At first glance this seems strong argument in support of Mr. Herbert Spencer's theory that all forms of religion (and all myth) have their origin in ancestor-worship. The mysterious power of stimulation, of excitation to frenzy, or of heal-

ing and soothing, or of poisoning, which certain plants possess, has been attributed to indwelling spirits, which, as Mr. Spencer contends, are regarded as human and ancestral. Very many illustrations of this occur, as, *e.g.*, the worship of the Soma plant, and its promotion as a deity among the Aryans; the use of tobacco in religious ceremonies among the tribes of both Americas; while now and again we find plants as totems. The Pueblos have a tribe called the tobacco-plant, and also one called the red grass. One of the Peruvian Incas was called after the native name of the tobacco-plant; and among the Ojibways the buffalo grass was carried as a charm, and its god said to cause madness. Its manlike character is seen in the accompanying picture (Fig. 2).

FIG. 2.

The worship of animals is on the like theory explained as due to the giving of a nick-name of some beast or bird to a remote ancestor, the belief arising in course of time that such animal was the actual progenitor, hence its worship. We call a man a bear, a pig, or a vampire, in symbolic phrase, and the figure of speech remains a figure of speech with us. But the savage loses the metaphor and it crystallizes into hard matter-of-fact. So the traditions have grown, and Black Eagle, Strong Buffalo, Big Owl, Tortoise, etc., take the shape of the actual forefathers of the tribe having their name and crest. According to the same theory, the adoration of sun, moon, and mountains, etc., is due to a like source. Some famous chief was called the Sun; the metaphor was forgotten; the personal and concrete, as the more easily apprehended, remained; hence, worship of the powers of nature "is a form of ancestor-worship, which has lost in a still greater degree the character of the original."*

The objection raised in former papers of this series to the extreme application of the solar theory applies, so it seems to me, with equal force to Mr. Spencer's limitation of the origin of myth and religion to one source. Having cleared Scylla, we must not dash against Charybdis. Religion has its origin neither in fear of ghosts, as Mr. Spencer's theory assumes, nor in a perception of the Infinite inherent in man, as Professor Max Müller holds. Rather does it lie in man's sense of vague wonder in the presence of powers whose force he cannot measure, and his expressions toward which are manifest. There is underlying unity, but there are, to quote St. Paul, "diversities of operation." There is just that surface unlikeness which we might expect from the different physical conditions and their resulting variety of subtle influences surrounding various races; influences shaping for them their gods, their upper and nether worlds; influences of climate and soil which made the hell of volcanic countries an abyss of sulphurous, stifling smoke and everlasting fire, and the hell of cold climates a place of deadly frost; which gave to the giant-gods of northern zones their rugged awfulness, and to the goddesses of the sunny south their soft and stately grace. The theory of ancestor-worship as the basis of every form of religion does not allow sufficient play for the vagaries in which the same thing will be dressed by the barbaric fear and fancy, nor for the imagination as a creative force in the primitive mind even at that lowest at which we know it. And of course beneath that lowest lies a lower never to be fathomed. We are apt to talk of primitive man as if his representatives were with us in the black fellows who are at the bottom of the scale, forgetting that during unnumbered ages he was a brute in everything but the capacity by which at last the ape and tiger were subdued within him. of the beginnings of his *thought* we can know nothing, but the fantastic forms in which it is first manifest compel us to regard him as a being whose feelings were uncurbed by reason. That ancestor-worship is one mode among others of man's attitude toward the awe-begetting, mystery-inspiring universe, none can deny. That his earliest temples, as defined sacred spots, were tombs; that he prayed to his dead dear ones, or his dead feared ones, as the case might be, is admitted. From its strong personal character, ancestor-worship was, without doubt, one of the earliest expressions of man's attitude before the world which his fancy filled with spirits. It

* "Principles of Sociology," p. 413.

flourishes among barbarous races to-day; it was the prominent feature of the old Aryan religion; it has entered into Christian practice in the worship of the saints, and perhaps the only feature of religion which the modern Frenchman has retained is the *culte des morts.* That it was a part of the belief of the Emperor Napoleon III. the following extract from his will shows:—" We must remember that those we love look down upon us from heaven and protect us. It is the soul of my great-uncle which has always guided and supported me. Thus will it be with my son also if he proves worthy of his name.

But the worship of ancestors is not primal. The remarks in my former paper on the late recognition of kinship by savages, among whom some rude form of religion existed, tell against it as the earliest mode of worship. Moreover, nature is bigger than man, and this he was not slow to feel. Even if it be conceded that sun-myth and sun-worship once arose through the nick-naming of an ancestor as the Sun, we must take into account the force of that imagination which enabled the unconscious myth-maker, or creed-maker, to credit the moving orbs of heaven with personal life and will. The faculty which could do that might well express itself in awe-struck forms without intruding the ancestral ghost. Further, the records of the classic religions, themselves preserving many traces of a primitive nature-worship, point to an adoration of the greatness and bounty, as well as to a sense of the maleficent and fateful, in earth and heaven which seem prior to the more concrete worship of forefathers and chieftains.

If for the worship of these last we substitute a general worship of spirits, there seems little left on which to differ. As aid to the explanation of the belief in animal ancestors and their subsequent deification and worship, as of the lion, the bull, the serpent, etc., we have always present in the barbaric mind the tendency to credit living things, and indeed lifeless, but moving ones, with a passion, a will, and a power to help or harm immeasurably greater than man's. This is part and parcel of that belief in spirits everywhere, which is the key to savage philosophy, and the growth of which is fostered by such secondary causes as the worship of ancestors.

XVII.

SURVIVAL OF MYTH IN HISTORICAL NARRATIVES.

BEFORE bringing this series of papers to an end, it may be well to give an illustration or two of the survival of myth in historical narrative.

For proofs of the emergence of the higher out of the lower in philosophy and religion, to say nothing of less exalted matters, whether the beast-fable or the nursery rhyme as holding barbaric thought in solution, examples have necessarily been drawn from the mythology of past and present savage races. But these are too remote in time or standpoint to stir other than a languid interest in the reader's mind; their purpose is served when they are cited and classified as specimens. Not thus is it with examples drawn nearer home from sources at which our young thirst for the stirring and romantic was slaked. When we learn that famous names and striking episodes are in some instances only transformed and personified natural phenomena, or, as occurring everywhere, possibly variants of a common legend, the far-reaching influence of primitive thought comes to us in more vivid and exciting form. And although one takes in hand this work of disenchantment in no eager fashion, the loss is more seeming than real. Whether the particular tale of bravery, of selflessness, of faithfulness, has truth of detail, matters little compared with the fact that its reception the wide world over witnesses to human belief, even at low levels, in the qualities which have given man empire over himself and ever raised the moral standard of the race. Moreover, in times like these, when criticism is testing without fear or favor the trustworthiness of records of the past, whether of Jew or Gentile, the knowledge of the legendary origin of events woven into sober history prepares us to recognize how the imagination has fed the stream of tradition, itself no mean tributary of that larger stream of history, the purity of which is now subject of analysis. As a familiar and interesting example let us take the story of William Tell.

Everybody has heard how, in the year 1307 (or, as some say, 1296) Gessler, Vogt (or governor) of the Emperor Albert of Hapsburg, set a hat on a pole as symbol of the Imperial power, and ordered every one who passed by to do obeisance to it; and how a mountaineer named Wilhelm Tell, who hated Gessler and the tyranny

which the symbol expressed, passed by without saluting the hat, and was at once seized and brought before Gessler, who ordered that, as punishment, Tell should shoot an apple off the head of his own son. As resistance was vain, the apple was placed on the boy's head, when Tell bent his bow, and the arrow, piercing the apple, fell with it to the ground. Gessler saw that Tell, before shooting, had stuck a second arrow in his belt, and, asking the reason, received this for answer: "It was for you; had I shot my child, know that this would have pierced your heart."

Now, this story first occurs in the chronicle of Melchior Russ, who wrote at the end of the fifteenth century, *i.e.*, about one hundred and seventy years after its reputed occurrence. The absence of any reference to it in contemporary records caused doubt to be thrown upon it three centuries ago. Guillimann, the author of a work on Swiss Antiquities, published in 1598, calls it a fable, but subscribes to the current belief in it, because the tale is so popular! The race to which he belonged is not yet extinct. A century and a half later, a more fearless skeptic, who said that the story was of Danish origin, was condemned by the Canton of Uri to be burnt alive, and in the well-timed absence of the offender, his book was ordered to be burnt by the common hangman. But the truth is great, and prevails. G. von Wyss, the Swiss historian, has pointed out that the name of Wilhelm Tell does not occur even once in the history of the three cantons, neither is there any trace that a "Vogt" named Gessler ever served the house of Hapsburg there. Moreover, the legend does not correspond to any fact of a period of oppression of the Swiss at the hands of their Austrian rulers.

"There exist in contemporary records no instances of wanton outrage and insolence on the Hapsburg side. It was the object of that power to obtain political ascendency, not to indulge its representatives in lust or wanton insult," and, where records of disputes between particular persons occur, "the symptoms of violence, as is natural enough, appear rather on the side of the Swiss than on that of the aggrandizing imperial house." *

Candor, however, requires that the evidence in support of the legend should be stated. There is the fountain on the supposed site of the lime-tree in the market-place at Altdorf by which young Tell stood, as well as the colossal plaster statue of the hero himself which confronts us as we enter the quaint village. But more than this, the veritable cross-bow itself is preserved in the arsenal at Zurich!

* *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1869, p. 134. Article on Rilliet's "Origines de la Confédération Suisse: Histoire et Légende."

However, although the little Tell's chapel, as restored, "was opened with a national *fête* in the presence of two members of the Federal Council, in June last," * the Swiss now admit in their school-teaching that the story of the *Apfelschusz* is legendary.

Freudenberger, who earned his death-sentence for affirming that the story came from Denmark, was on the right track, for the following variant of it is given by Saxo Grammaticus, a Danish writer of the twelfth century, who puts it as happening in the year 950:—

"Nor ought what follows to be enveloped in silence. Palnatoki, for some time in the body-guard of King Harold (Harold Gormson, or Bluetooth), had made his bravery odious to many of his fellow-soldiers by the zeal with which he surpassed them. One day, when he had drunk too much, he boasted that he was so skilled a bowman that he could hit the smallest apple, set on the top of a stick some way off, at the first shot, which boast reached the ears of the king. This monarch's wickedness soon turned the confidence of the father to the peril of the son, for he commanded that this dearest pledge of his life should stand in place of the stick, adding a threat that if Palnatoki did not at his first shot strike off the apple, he should with his head pay the penalty of making an empty boast. This command forced him to attempt more than he had promised, and what he *had* said, reported by slanderous tongues, bound him to accomplish what he had *not* said. Yet did not his sterling courage, though caught in the snare of slander, suffer him to lay aside his firmness of heart. As soon as the boy was led forth, Palnatoki warned him to await the speeding of the arrow with calm ears and unbent head, lest by any slight movement of the body he should frustrate the archer's well-tried skill. He then made him stand with his back toward him, lest he should be scared at the sight of the arrow. Then he drew three arrows from his quiver, and with the first that he fitted to the string he struck the apple. When the king asked him why he had taken more than one arrow from his quiver, when he

* London *Times's* telegram from Geneva, June 25, 1883.

was to be allowed to make but one trial with his bow, he made answer, "That I might avenge on thee the swerving of the first by the points of the others, lest perchance my innocence might have been punished, while your violence escaped scot-free.'"*

Going further northward we find tales corresponding in their main features to the above, in the Icelandic Saga, the Vilkina; in the Norse Saga of Saint Olaf or Thidrik; and in the story of Harold, son of Sigurd. In the Olaf Saga it is said that the saint or king, desiring the conversion of a brave heathen, named Eindridi, competed with him in various athletic sports, swam with him, wrestled with him, and then shot with him. Olaf then dared Eindridi to strike a writing-tablet from off his son's head with an arrow, and bade two men bind the eyes of the child and hold the napkin so that the boy might not move when he heard the whizz of the arrow. Olaf aimed first, and the arrow grazed the lad's head. Eindridi then prepared to shoot, but the mother of the boy interfered and persuaded the king to abandon this dangerous test of skill. The story adds that had the boy been injured, Eindridi would have revenged himself on the king.†

Somewhat like this, as from the locality might be expected, is the Faroe Isles variant. King Harold challenges Geyti, son of Aslak, and, vexed at being beaten in a swimming match, bids Geyti shoot a hazel-nut from off his brother's head. He consents, and the king witnesses the feat, when Geyti

> "Shot the little nut away,
> Nor hurt the lad a hair."

Next day Harold sends for the archer, and says:—

> "List thee, Geyti, Aslak's' son,
> And truly tell to me,
> Wherefore hadst thou arrows twain
> In the wood yestreen with thee?"

To which Geyti answers:—

> "Therefore had I arrows twain
> Yestreen in the wood with me,
> Had I but hurt my brother dear
> The other had pierced thee."

With ourselves it is the burden of the ballad of William of Cloudeslee, where the brave archer says:—

> "I have a sonne seven years old;
> Hee is to me full deere;
> I will tye him to a stake—
> All shall see him that bee here—
> And lay an apple upon his head,
> And goe six paces him froe;
> And I myself with a broad arroe
> Shall cleave the apple in towe."

In the *Malleus Maleficarum*, Puncher, a magician on the Upper Rhine, is required to shoot a coin from off a lad's head; while traveling eastward, as far as Persia, we find the Tell myth as an incident in the poem "Mantic Ultraïr," a work of the twelfth century.

Thus far I have spoken of the variants of the legend found among Aryan peoples, and it is tempting to base upon this diffusion of a common incident a theory of its origin among the Central Asian ancestors of the Swiss and the Norseman, the Persian and the Icelander. But it is found among non-Aryans also. The ethnologist, Castren, whose researches in Finland have secured a valuable mass of fast-perishing materials, obtained this tale in the village Ultuwa. "A fight took place between some freebooters and the inhabitants of the village of Alajärai. The robbers plundered every house, and carried off among their captives an old man. As they proceeded with their spoils along the strand of the lake, a lad of twelve years old appeared from among the reeds on the opposite bank, armed with a bow and amply provided with arrows; he threatened to shoot down the captors unless the old man, his father, was restored to him. The robbers mockingly replied that the aged man would be given to him if he could shoot an apple off his head. The boy accepted the challenge, pierced the apple, and freed his father." Among a people in close contact with an Aryan race as the Finns are in contact with both Swedes and Russians, the main incident of the Tell story may easily have been woven into their native tales. But in reference to other non-Aryan races Sir George Dasent, who has treated of the diffusion of the Tell story very fully in the Introduction to his "Popular Tales from the Norse" (a reprint of which would be a boon to students of folk-lore), says that it is common to the Turks and Mongolians, and a legend of the wild Samoyedes, who never heard of Tell or saw a book in their lives, relates it, chapter and verse, of one of their marksmen. What shall we say, then, but that "the story of this bold master-shot was prominent among many

* Bk. x., p. 166. Cf. Baring Gould's "Curious Myths," p. 117; and Fiske's "Myths and Myth-makers," p. 4.
† Baring Gould, p. 119.

tribes and races, and that it only crystallized itself round the great name of Tell by that process of attraction which invariably leads a grateful people to throw such mythic wreaths, such garlands of bold deeds of precious memory, around the brow of its darling champion." * Of course the solar mythologists see in Tell the sun or cloud deity; in his bow the storm-cloud or the iris; and in his arrows the sun-rays or lightning darts.

This is a question which we might leave to the champions concerned to settle. Apart from the evidence of the survival of legend in history, and the lesson of caution in accepting any ancient record as gospel which we should learn therefrom, it is the human element in the venerable tale which interests us most.

Remote in time, far away in place, as its origin it moves us yet. The ennobling qualities incarnated in some hero (whether he be real or ideal matters not) meet with admiring response in the primitive listeners to the story, else it would have been speedily forgotten. Thus does it retain for us witness to the underlying oneness of the human heart beneath all surface differences.

XVIII.

MYTHS OF KING ARTHUR AND LLEWELLYN.

WIDESPREAD as a myth may be, it takes depth of root according to the more or less congenial soil where it is dropped. That about Tell found favorable home in the uplands and the free air of Switzerland; with us, S. George, falling on times of chivalry, had abiding place, as also, less rugged of type than the Swiss marksman, had Arthur, the "Blameless King," who, if he ever existed, is smothered in overgrowth of legends both native and imported.

For such cycle of tales as gathered round the name of Arthur, and on which our youthhood was nourished, is as mythical as the wolf that suckled Romulus and Remus. Modern criticism and research have thoroughly sifted the legendary from the true, and if the past remains vague and shadowy, we at least know how far the horizon of certainty extends. The criticism has made short work of the romancing chronicles which so long did duty for sober history, and has shown that no accurate knowledge of the sequence of events is obtainable until late in the period of the English invasions. Save in scattered hints here and there, we are quite in the dark as to the condition of this island during the Roman occupation, while for anything that is known of times prior to this, called for convenience "pre-historic," we are dependent upon unwritten records preserved in tombs and mounds. The information gathered from these has given us some clue to what manner of men they were who confronted the first Aryan immigrants, and, enriched by researches of the ethnologist and philologist, enabled us to trace the movements of races westward, until we find old and new commingled as one English-speaking folk.

All or any of which could not be known to the earlier chronicles. When Geoffry of Monmouth set forth the glory and renown of Arthur and his court, he recorded and embellished traditions six hundred years old, without thought of weighing the evidence or questioning the credibility of the transmitters. Whether there was a king of that name who ruled over the Silures, and around whom the remnant of brave Kelts rallied in their final struggle against the invading hordes, and who, wounded in battle, died at Glastonbury, and was buried, or rather sleeps, as the legend has it, in the Vale of Avilion, "hath been," as Milton says, "doubted heretofore, and may again, with good reason, for the Monk of Malmesbury and others, whose credit hath swayed most with the learned sort, we may well perceive to have known no more of this Arthur nor of his doings than we now living."

The comparative mythologists say that he is a myth pure and simple; a variant of Sigurd and Perseus; the winning of his famous sword but a repetition of the story of the Teutonic and Greek heroes; the gift of Guinevere as fatal to him as Helen to Menelaus; his knights but reproductions of the Achaian hosts. Much of which is doubtless true. But the romance corresponded to some probable event; it fitted in with the national traditions. There were struggles between the Kelts and subsequent invaders—Romans, Angles, Saxons, Jutes. There were brave chieftains who led forlorn hopes or fought to the death in their fastnesses. There were, in the numerous tribal divisions, petty kings and queens ruling over mimic

* Introd. xxxv.

courts, with retinues of knights bent on chivalrous, unselfish service. These were the nuclei of stories which were the early annals of the tribe, the glad theme of bards and minstrels, and from which a long line of poets, to the latest singer of the "Idylls of the King," have drawn the materials of their epics. The fascination which such a cycle of tales had for the people, especially in days when the ballad was history and poetry and all literature rolled into one, was so strong, that the Church wisely imported an element which gave loftier meaning to the knightly life, and infused religious ardor into the camp and court. To the stories of Tristram and Gawayne already woven into the old romance, she added the half-Christian, half-pagan, legend of the knights who left the feast at the Round Table to travel across land and sea that they might free the enslaved, remove the spell from the enchanted, and deliver fair women from the monsters of tyranny and lust, set forth on what in her eyes was a nobler quest—to seek and look upon the San Graal, or Holy Vessel used by Jesus at the Last Supper, and into which Joseph of Arimathea collected the blood and water that streamed from the side of the crucified Jesus. This mystic cup, in which we have probably a sacrificial relic of the old British religion imported into the Christian incident with which it blended so well, floated, according to Arthurian legend, suddenly into the presence of the King and his Round Table knights at Camelot as they sat at supper, and was as suddenly borne away, to be henceforth the coveted object of knightly endeavor. Only the baptized could hope to behold it; to the unchaste it was veiled; hence only they among the knights who were pure in heart and life vowed to go in quest of the San Graal, and return not until they had seen it. So to Sir Galahad, the "just and faithful," Tennyson sings how the sacred cup appeared,

> "Sometimes on lonely mountain meres
> I find a magic bark;
> I leap on board: no helmsman steers:
> I float till all is dark.
> A gentle sound, an awful light!
> Three angels bear the holy Grail:
> With folded feet, in stoles of white,
> On sleeping wings they sail.
> Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!
> My spirit beats her mortal bars,
> As down dark tides the glory slides,
> And, star-like, mingles with the stars."

While in such legends as the Arthurian group the grain of truth, if it exists, is so imbedded as to be out of reach, there are others concerning actual personages, notably Cyrus and Charlemagne, not to quote other names from both "profane" and sacred history, in which the fable can be separated from the fact without difficulty. Enough is known of the life and times of such men to detach the certain from the doubtful, as, *e.g.*, when Charlemagne is spoken of as a Frenchman and as a Crusader before there was a French nation, or the idea of Crusades had entered the heads of Most Christian Kings; and as in the legends of the infancy of Cyrus, which are of a type related to like legends of the wonderful round the early years of the famous.

This, however, by the way, since, leaving illustration of the fabulous in heroic story, it will be interesting to trace it through such a tale of pathos and domestic life as the well-known one of Llewellyn and his faithful hound, Gellert.

Whose emotions have not been stirred by the story of Llewellyn the Great going out hunting, and missing his favorite dog; of his return, to be greeted by the creature with more than usual pleasure in his eye, but with jaws besmeared with blood; of the anxiety with which Llewellyn rushed into the house, to find the cradle where had lain his beautiful boy upset, and the ground around it soaked with blood; of his thereupon killing the dog, and then seeing the child lying unharmed beneath the cradle, and sleeping by the side of a dead wolf, from whose ravenous maw the faithful Gellert had delivered it? Most of us, in our visits to North Wales, have stood by Gellert's grave at Beddgelert, little suspecting that the affecting story occurs in the folk-lore of nearly every Aryan people, and of several non-Aryan races, as the Egyptians and Chinese.

Probably it comes to us as many other tales have come, through collections like the well-known "Gesta Romanorum," compiled by mediæval monks for popular entertainment. In the version given in that book, the knight who corresponds to Llewellyn, after slaying his dog, discovers that it had saved his child from a serpent, and thereupon breaks his sword and departs on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. But the monks were no inventors of such tales; they recorded those that came to them through the pilgrims, students, traders, and warriors who traveled from West to East and from East to West in the Middle Ages, and it is in the native

home of fable and imagery, the storied Orient, that we must seek for the earliest forms of the Gellert legend. In the Panchatantra, the oldest and most celebrated Sanskrit fable book, the story takes this form :—An infirm child is left by its mother while she goes to fetch water, and she charges the father, who is a Brahman, to watch over it. But he leaves the house to collect alms, and soon after this a snake crawls toward the child. In the house was an ichneumon, a creature often cherished as a house pet, who sprang at the snake and throttled it. When the mother came back, the ichneumon went gladly to meet her, his jaws and face smeared with the snake's blood. The horrified mother, thinking it had killed her child, threw her water-jar at it, and killed it; then seeing the child safe beside the mangled body of the snake, she beat her breast and face with grief, and scolded her husband for leaving the house.

We find the same story, with the slight difference that the animal is an otter, in a later Sanskrit collection, the Hitopadesa, but we can track it to that fertile source of classic and mediæval fable, the Buddhist Jatakas, or Birth Stories, a very ancient collection of fables, which, professing to have been told by Buddha, narrates his exploits in the 550 births through which he passed before attaining Buddhahood. In the Vinaya Pitaka of the Chinese Buddhist collection, which, according to Mr. Beal, dates from the fifth century A.D., and is translated from original scriptures supposed to have existed near the time of Asoka's council in the third century B.C., we have the earliest extant form of the tale. That in the Panchatantra is obviously borrowed from it, the differences being in unimportant detail, as, for example, the nakula, or mongoose, is killed by the Brahman on his return home, the wife having neglected to take the child with her as bidden by him. He is filled with sorrow, and then a Devá continues the strain :—

Let there be due thought and consideration,
Give not way to hasty impulse,
By forgetting the claims of true friendship
You may heedlessly injure a kind heart (person)
As the Brahman killed the nakula.

The several versions of the story which could be cited from German, Russian, Persian, and other Aryan folk-lore, would merely present certain variations due to local coloring and to the inventiveness of the narrators or transcribers; and, omitting these at the demand of space, it will suffice to give the Egyptian variant or corresponding form, in which the tragical has given place to the amusing, save, perhaps, in the opinion of the Wali. This luckless person "once smashed a pot full of herbs which a cook had prepared. The exasperated cook thrashed the well-intentioned but unfortunate Wali within an inch of his life, and when he returned, exhausted with his efforts at belaboring the man, he discovered among the herbs a poisonous snake."

In pointing to the venerable Buddhist Birth Stories as the earliest extant source of Aryan fables, it should be added that these were with Buddha and his disciples the favorite vehicle of carrying to the hearts of men those lessons of gentleness and tenderness toward all living things which are a distinctive feature of that non-persecuting religion, and thus of diffusing a spirit which would have us.

Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that lives.

XIX.

SEMITIC MYTHS AND LEGENDS.

WITH the important exception of reference to the change effected in the Jewish doctrines of spirits, and its resulting influence on Christian theology, by the transformation of the mythical Ahriman of the old Persian religion into the archfiend Satan, but slight allusion has been made in these pages to the myths and legends of the Semitic race. Under this term, borrowed from the current belief in their descent from Shem, are included extant and extinct people, the Assyrians, Chaldeans or Babylonians, Phœnicians, Arabs, Syrians, Jews and Ethiopians.

The mythology of the Aryan nations has had the advantage of the most scholarly criticism, and the light which this has thrown upon the racial connection of peoples between whom all superficial likeness had long disappeared, as well as upon the early condition of their common ancestors, is of the greatest value as aid to our knowledge of the mode of man's intellectual and spiritual growth. And the comparisons made between the older and cruder forms underlying the elaborated myth and the myths of semi-barbarous races have supported conclusions concerning man's primitive state identical with those de-

duced from the material relics of the Ancient and Newer Stone Ages, namely, that the savage races of to-day represent not a degradation to which man has sunk, but a condition out of which all races above the savage have, through much tribulation, emerged. An important exception to this has, however, been claimed on behalf of at least one branch of the Semitic race—namely, the Hebrews or Jews. This claim has rested on their assumed selection by the Deity for a definite purpose in the ordering and directing of human affairs; a theory of the divine government which this journal is concerned neither to defend nor deny. No assumption of supernatural origin can screen documents of disputed authorship and uncertain meaning from the investigation applied to all ancient records; nor can the materials elude dissection because hitherto regarded as organic parts of revelation. The real difficulties are in the structure of the language and in the scantiness of the material as contrasted with the flexile and copious mythology of the Aryan race. And the investigation has been in some degree checked by the mistaken dicta of authorities such as M. Renan and the late Baron Bunsen; the former contending that "the Semites never had a mythology," and the latter (although any statement of his carries far less weight) that "it is the grand, momentous, and fortunate self-denial of Judaism to possess none."

But, independently of the refusal of the student of history to admit that exceptional place has been of direct Divine purpose accorded to any particular race, the discoveries of literatures much older than the Hebrew, and in which legends akin to those in the earlier books of the Old Testament are found, together with the proofs of historical connection between the peoples having these common legends, have given the refutation to the distinctive character of the Semitic race claimed by M. Renan. That a people dwelling for centuries, as the Hebrews did, in a land which was the common highway between the great nations of antiquity; a people subject to vicissitudes bringing them, as the pipkin between iron pots, into collision and subject relations to Egyptians, Persians, and other powerful folk, should remain uninfluenced in their intellectual speculations and religious beliefs, would indeed be a greater miracle than that which makes their literature inspired in every word and vowel-point. The remarkable collection of cuneiform inscriptions (so called from their wedge-like shape: Lat. *cuneus*, a wedge) on the baked clay cylinders and tablets of the vast libraries of Babylon and Nineveh, has brought out one striking fact, namely, that the Semitic civilization, venerable as that is, was the product of, or at least greatly influenced by, the culture of a non-Semitic people called the Akkadians, from a word meaning "highlanders." These more ancient dwellers in the Euphrates valley and uplands were not only non-Semitic, but non-Aryan, and probably racionally connected with the complex group of peoples embracing the Tartar-Mongolians, the distinguishing features of whose religion are Shamanistic, with belief in magic in its manifold forms. "In Babylonia, under the non-Semitic Akkadian rule, the dominant creed was the fetish worship, with all its ritual of magic and witchcraft; and when the Semites conquered the country, the old learning of the land became the property of the priests and astrologers, and the Akkadian language the Latin of the Empire." *

It was during the memorable period of the Exile that the historical records of the Jews underwent revision, and from that time dates the incorporation into them of legends and traditions which, invested with a purity and majesty distinctively Hebrew, were borrowed from the Babylonians, although primarily Akkadian. They are here, as elsewhere, the product of the childhood of the race, when it speculates and invents, framing its theory of the beginnings, their when and how; when it prattles of the Golden Age, which seems to lie behind, in the fond and not extinct delusion that "the old is better;" when it frames its fairy tales, weird or winsome, in explanation of the uncommon, the unknown, and the bewildering.

The Babylonian origin of the early biblical stories is now generally admitted, although the dogmas based upon certain of them still retard the acceptance of this result of modern inquiry in some quarters. That reluctance is suggestively illustrated in Dr. Wm. Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," where, turning to the heading "Deluge," the reader is referred to "Flood" and hence to "Noah!"

So much for the legendary; but the analysis, of the more strictly mythical, the names of culture-ancestors and heroes, sons of Anak and of God, scattered over the Pentateuch, is not so easy a matter. The most important work in this direction has been attempted by Dr. Gold-

* *Academy*, Nov. 17, 1877, p. 472.

ziher,* but even his scholarship has failed to convince sympathetic readers that Abraham and Isaac are sun-myths, and that the twelve sons of Jacob are the zodiacal signs! Under the Professor's etymological solvent the personality of the patriarchs disappears, and the charming idylls and pastorals of old Eastern life become but phases of the sun and the weather. The Hebrew, like the Aryan myth-maker, speaks of the relations of day and night, of gray morning and sunrise, of red sunset and the darkness of night, as of love and union, or strife and pursuit, or gloomy desire and coy evasion. Abh-râm is the High or Heaven-Father (from *râm*, "to be high") with his numberless host of descendants. Yis-châk, commonly called Isaac, denotes "he who laughs," and so the Laughing one, whom the High Father intends to slay, is the smiling day or the smiling sunset, which gets the worst of the contest with the night sky and disappears. Sarah signifies princess, or the moon, the queen who rules over the great army glittering amid the darkness. The expulsion of Hagar (derived from a root *hajara*, meaning "to fly," and yielding the word hijrâ or "flight," whence the Mohammedan Hegira) is the Semitic variant of the inexhaustible theme of all mythology, the battle of Day and Night; Hagar flying before the inconstant sun and the jealous moon. And so on through the whole range of leading characters in Hebrew history; Cain and Abel, in which the critic overlooks the more likely explanation of the story as a quarrel between nomads and tillers of the soil; Jephthah, in which the sun-god kills at mid-day the dawn, his own offspring; Samson, or more correctly Shimshôn, from the Hebrew word for sun, the incidents of whose life, as expounded by Professor Steinthal,† are more clearly typical of the labors of the sun; Jonah and the fish, a story long ago connected with the myth of Herakles and Hêsionê; "as on occasion of the storm the dragon or serpent swallows the sun, so when he sets he is swallowed by a mighty fish, waiting for him at the bottom of the sea. Then when he appears again on the horizon, he is spat out on the shore by the sea-monster." ‡

These bare references must suffice to show that there is in Hebrew literature a large body of material which must undergo the sifting and the criticism which has been applied with success to Indo-European and non-Aryan myth. This done, the Semitic race will contribute its share of evidence in support of those conditions under which it has been the main purpose of these papers to show that myth has its birth and growth.

* "Mythology among the Hebrews, and its Historical Development." London: Longmans. 1877.
† "Goldziher," pp. 392, ff.
‡ Ibid. p. 103.

XX.

CONCLUSION.

THE serial form of publication * has its advantages in these run-and-read days in compelling the writer to pack his thoughts closely together, but it has its disadvantages in breaking their sequence, and compelling the reader to turn to back numbers for the missing links.

The multitude of subjects traversed in these chapters compelled presentment in so concise a form that any attempt to gather into a few sentences the sum of things said would be as a digest of a digest, and it is, therefore, better to briefly emphasize the conclusions to which the gathered evidence points. It was remarked at the outset, when laying stress on the serious meaning which lies at the heart of myths, that they have their origin in the endeavor of barbaric man to explain his surroundings. The mass of fact brought together illustrates and confirms this view, and has thereby tended to raise what was once looked upon as fantastic, curious, and lawless, to the level of a subject demanding sober treatment and examination on strictly scientific methods.

Archbishop Trench, in his "Study of Words," quotes Emerson's happy characterization of language as fossil poetry and fossil history: "Just as in some fossil, curious and beautiful shapes of vegetable or animal life, the graceful fern, or the finely-vertebrated lizard, such as have been extinct for thousands of years, are permanently bound up with the stone, so in words are beautiful thoughts and images, the imagination and the feeling of past ages of men long since in their graves, of men whose very names have perished, preserved and made safe forever." † In like manner, we may speak of myths as

* These papers were originally published in Mr. R. A. Proctor's weekly scientific magazine, *Knowledge*.
† "Study of Words," HUMBOLDT LIBRARY, No. 30, p. 2.

fossil ethics and fossil theology, but, with more appositeness, as embryonic ethics and theology, since they contain potentially all the philosophies and theologies "that man did ever find."

And to the student of the history of humanity who rejoices in the sure foundation on which, tested in manifold ways, the convictions of the highest and noblest of the race rest, the value of myth is increased in its being a natural outgrowth of the mind when, having advanced to the point at which curiosity concerning the causes of surrounding things arises, it frames its crude explanations. For not that which man claims to have received as a message from the gods, as a revelation from heaven, but that which he has learned by experience often painful and bitter, and which succeeding generations have either verified or improved upon, or disproved altogether, is, in the long run, of any worth. Through it alone, as we follow the changes wrought in the process from guess to certainty, can we determine what was the intellectual stage of man in his mental infancy, and how far it finds correspondences in the intellectual stage of existing barbaric races.

Thus, the study of myth is nothing less than the study of the mental and spiritual history of mankind. It is a branch of that larger, vaster science of evolution which so occupies our thoughts to-day and with which the philosopher and the theologian must reckon. The evidence which it brings from the living and dead mythologies of every race is in accord with that furnished by their more tangible relics, that the history of mankind is a history of slow but sure advance from a lower to a higher; of ascent, although with backslidings oft. It confirms a momentous canon of modern science, that the laws of evolution in the spiritual world are as determinable as they are in the physical. To this we, for the enrichment of our life and helpful service of our kind, do well to give heed. Wherever we now turn eye or ear the unity of things is manifest, and their unbroken harmony heard. With the theory of evolution in our hands as the master-key, the immense array of facts that seemed to lie unrelated and discrete, are seen to be interrelated and in necessary dependence—"a mighty sum of things forever speaking." That undisturbed relation of cause and effect which science has revealed and confirmed, extends backward as well as reaches forward; its continuity involves the inclusion of man as a part of nature, and the study of his development as one in which both the biologist and the mythologist engage toward a common end.

APPENDIX.

AN AMERICAN INDIAN MYTH.

[This interesting mythic tale is taken from J. W. Powell's "Mythology of the North American Indians" (First Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology). It is entitled "Ta-vwots' has a fight with the Sun."]

Ta-vwots', the little rabbit, was wont to lie with his back to the sun when he slept. One day he thus slept in camp while his children played around him. After a time they saw that his back was smoking, and they cried out, "What is the matter with your back, father?" Startled from his sleep, he demanded to know the cause of the uproar. "Your back is covered with sores, and full of holes," they replied. Then *Ta-vwots'* was very angry, for he knew that *Ta'-vi*, the sun, had burned him, and he sat down by the fire for a long time in solemn mood, pondering on the injury and insult he had received. At last, rising to his feet, he said, "My children, I must go and make war upon *Ta'-vi*." And straightway he departed.

Now his camp was in the valley of the Mo-a-pa [a stream in South-eastern Nevada]. On his journey he came to a hill, and standing on its summit he saw in a valley to the east a beautiful stretch of verdure, and he greatly marveled at the sight, and desired to know what it was. On going down to the valley he found a cornfield, something he had never before seen, and the ears were ready for roasting. When he examined them, he saw that they were covered with beautiful hair, and he was much astonished. Then he opened the husk, and found within soft white grains of corn, which he tasted. Then he knew that it was corn, and good to eat. Plucking his arms full he carried them away, roasted them on a fire, and ate until he was filled.

Now when he had done all this, he reflected that he had been stealing, and he was afraid; so he dug a hole in which to hide himself.

Cin-au'-äv was the owner of this field, and when he walked through and saw that his corn had been stolen he was ex-

ceedingly wroth, and said, "I will slay this thief *Ta-vwots'*; I will kill him, I will kill him." And straightway he called his warriors to him and made search for the thief, but could not find him, for he was hid in the ground. After a long time they discovered the hole, and tried to shoot *Ta-vwots'* as he was standing in the entrance, but he blew their arrows back. This made *Cin-au'-äv's* people very angry, and they shot many arrows, but *Ta-vwots'*'s breath was as a warder against them all. Then with one accord they ran to snatch him up with their hands, but, all in confusion, they only caught each other's fists, for with agile steps *Ta-vwots* dodged into his retreat. Then they began to dig, and said they would drag him out. And they labored with great energy, all the time taunting him with shouts and jeers. But *Ta-vwots'* had a secret passage from the main chamber of his retreat, which opened by a hole above the rock overhanging the entrance where they were at work.

When they had proceeded with this digging until they were quite under ground, *Ta-vwots'*, standing on the rock above, hurled the magical ball which he was accustomed to carry with him, and striking the ground above the diggers, it caved the earth in, and they were all buried. "Aha," said he, "why do you wish to hinder me on my way to kill the Sun? *A'-nier ti-tik-a-nûmp kwaik-ai'-gar* (fighting is my eating tool, I say; that's so)," and he proceeded on his way musing, "I have started out to kill; vengeance is my work; every one I meet will be an enemy. It is well; no one shall escape my wrath."

The next day he saw two men making arrow-heads of hot rocks, and drawing near he observed their work for a time from a position where he could not be seen. Then stepping forth he said, "Let me help you," and when the rocks were on the fire again and were hot to redness he said, "Hot rocks will not burn me." And they laughed at him. "May be you would have us believe that you are a ghost?" "I am not a ghost," said he, "but I am a better man than you are. Hold me on these hot rocks, and if I do not burn you must let me do the same to you." To this they readily agreed, and when they had tried to burn him on the rocks, with his magic breath he kept them away at a distance so slight they could not see but that the rocks did really touch him. When they perceived that he was not burned they were greatly amazed, and trembled with fear. But having made the promise that he should treat them in like manner, they submitted themselves to the torture, and the hot rocks burned them until, with great cries, they struggled to get free, but unrelenting *Ta-vwots'* held them until the rocks had burned through their flesh into their entrails, and so they died. "Aha," said *Ta-vwots'*, "lie there until you can get up again. I am on my way to kill the Sun. *A'-nier ti-tik-a-nûmp kwaik-ai'-gar*." And sounding the war-whoop he proceeded on his way.

The next day he came to where two women were gathering berries in baskets, and when he sat down they brought him some of the fruit and placed it before him. He saw there were many leaves and thorns among the berries, and he said, "Blow these leaves and thorns into my eyes," and they did so, hoping to blind him; but with his magic breath he kept them away, so that they did not hurt him.

Then the women averred that he was a ghost. "I am no ghost," said he, "but a common person. Do you not know that leaves and thorns cannot hurt the eye? Let me show you;" and they consented, and were made blind. Then *Ta-vwots'* slew them with his *pa-rûm'-o-kwi*. "Aha," said he, "you are caught with your own chaff. I am on my way to kill the Sun. This is good practice—I must learn how. *A'-nier ti-tik'-a-nûmp kwaik-ai'-gar*." And sounding the war-whoop he proceeded on his way.

The next day he saw some women standing on the Hurricane Cliff, and as he approached he heard them say to each other that they would roll rocks down upon his head and kill him as he passed; and drawing near, he pretended to be eating something and enjoying it with great gusto; so they asked him what it was, and he said it was something very sweet, and they begged that they might be allowed to taste of it also. "I will throw it up to you," said he; "come to the brink and catch it." When they had done so, he threw it up so that they could not quite reach it, and he threw it in this way many times, until, in their eagerness to secure it, they all crowded too near the brink, fell, and were killed. "Aha," said he, "you were killed by your own eagerness. I am on my way to kill the Sun. *A'-nier ti-tik'-a-nûmp kwaik-ai'-gar*." And sounding the war-whoop he passed on.

The following day he saw two women fashioning water-jugs, which are made of

willow-ware, like baskets, and afterward lined with pitch. When afar off he could hear them converse, for he had a wonderful ear. "Here comes that bad *Ta-vwots'*," said they; "how shall we destroy him?" When he came near, he said, "What was that you were saying when I came up?" "Oh, we were only saying, 'Here comes our grandson,'" * said they. "Is that all?" replied *Ta-vwots'*, and looking around he said, "Let me go into your water-jug;" and they allowed him to do so. "Now braid the neck." This they did, making the neck very small; then they laughed with great glee, for they supposed he was entrapped. But with his magic breath he burst the jug and stood up before them; and they exclaimed, "You must be a ghost!" but he answered, "I am no ghost. Do you not know that jugs were made to hold water, but cannot hold men and women?" At this they wondered greatly, and said he was wise. Then he proposed to put them in jugs in the same manner, in order to demonstrate to them the truth of what he had said; and they consented. When he had made the necks of the jugs and filled them with pitch he said, "Now jump out;" but they could not. It was now his turn to deride; so he rolled them about and laughed greatly, while their half-stifled screams filled the air. When he had sported with them in this way until he was tired he killed them with his magical ball. "Aha," said he, "you are bottled in your own jugs. I am on my way to kill the Sun; in good time I shall learn how. *A'-nier ti-tik'-a-nûmp kwaik-ai'-gar*." And sounding the war-whoop he passed on.

The next day he came upon *Kwi'-ats*, the bear, who was digging a hole in which to hide, for he had heard of the fame of *Ta-vwots'* and was afraid. When the great slayer came to *Kwi'-ats* he said, "Don't fear, my great friend, I am not the man from whom to hide. Could a little fellow like me kill so many people?" And the bear was assured. "Let me help you dig," said *Ta-vwots'*, "that we may hide together, for I also am fleeing from the great destroyer. So they made a den deep in the ground, with its entrance concealed by a great rock. Now *Ta-vwots'* secretly made a private passage from the den out to the side of the mountain, and when the work was completed the two went out together to the hill-top to watch for the coming of the enemy. Soon *Ta-vwots'* pretended that he saw him coming, and they ran in great haste to the den. The little one outran the greater, and going into the den hastened out again through his secret passage.

When *Kwi'-ats* entered he looked about, and not seeing his little friend he searched for him for some time, and still not finding him, he supposed that he must have passed him on the way, and went out again to see if he had stopped or been killed. By this time *Ta-vwots'* had perched himself on the rock at the entrance of the den, and when the head of the bear protruded through the hole below he hurled his *pa-rûm'-o-kwi* and killed him. "Aha," said *Ta-vwots'*, "I greatly feared this renowned warrior, but now he is dead in his own den. I am going to kill the Sun. *A'-nier ti-tik'-a-nûmp kwaik-ai'-gar*." And sounding the war-whoop he went on his way.

The next day he met *Ku-mi'-a-pöts*, the tarantula. Now this knowing personage had heard of the fame of *Ta-vwots'* and determined to outwit him. He was possessed of a club with such properties that, although it was a deadly weapon when used against others, it could not be made to hurt himself, though wielded by a powerful arm.

As *Ta-vwots'* came near, *Ku-mi'-a-pöts* complained of having a headache; moaning and groaning, he said there was an *u-nu'-pits*, or little evil spirit, in his head, and he asked *Ta-vwots'* to take the club and beat it out. *Ta-vwots'* obeyed, and struck with all his power, and wondered that *Ku-mi'-a-pöts* was not killed; but he urged *Ta-vwots'* to strike harder. At last *Ta-vwots'* understood the nature of the club and guessed the wiles of *Ku-mi'-a-pöts*, and raising the weapon as if to strike again, he dexterously substituted his magic ball and slew him. "Aha," said he, "that is a blow of your own seeking, *Ku-mi'-a-pöts*. I am on my way to kill the Sun; now I know that I can do it. *A'-nier ti-tik'-a-nûmp kwaik-ai'-gar*." And sounding his war-whoop he went on his way.

The next day he came to a cliff which is the edge or boundary of the world on the east, where careless persons have fallen into unknown depths below. Now to come to the summit of this cliff it is necessary to climb a mountain, and *Ta-vwots'* could see three gaps or notches in the mountain, and he went up into the one on the left; and he demanded to know

* This is a very common term of endearment used by elder to younger persons.

of all the trees which were standing by of what use they were. Each one in turn praised its own qualities, the chief of which in every case was its value as fuel. *Ta-vwots'* shook his head and went into the center gap, and had another conversation with the trees, receiving the same answer. Finally he went into the third gap—that on the right. After he had questioned all the trees and bushes, he came at last to a little one called *yu'-i-nump*, which modestly said it had no use, that it was not even fit for fuel. "Good," said *Ta-vwots'*, and under it he lay down to sleep.

When the dawn came into the sky *Ta-vwots'* arose and stood on the brink overhanging the abyss from which the Sun was about to rise. The instant it appeared he hurled his *pa-rŭm-o-kwi*, and striking it full in the face shattered it into innumerable fragments, and these fragments were scattered over all the world and kindled a great conflagration. *Ta-vwots'* ran and crept under the *yu'-i-nump* to obtain protection. At last the fire waxed very hot over all the world, and soon *Ta-vwots'* began to suffer and tried to run away; but as he ran his toes were burned off, and then slowly, inch by inch, his legs, and then his body, so that he walked on his hands; and these were burned, and he walked on the stumps of his arms; and these were burned, until there was nothing left but his head. And now, having no other means of progression, his head rolled along the ground until his eyes, which were much swollen, burst by striking against a rock, and the tears gushed out in a great flood which spread out over all the land and extinguished the conflagration.

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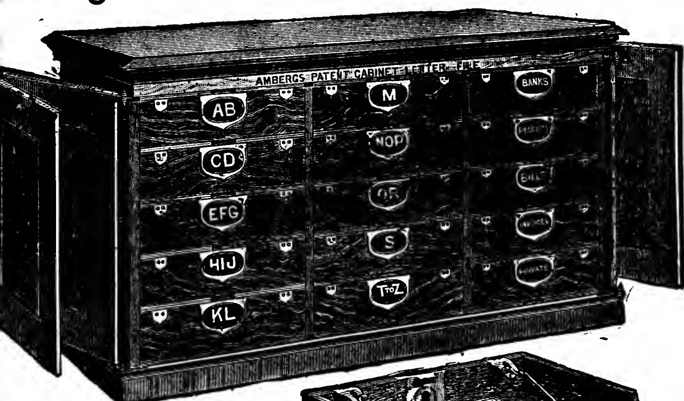

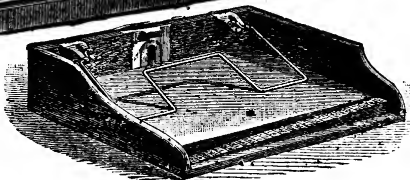

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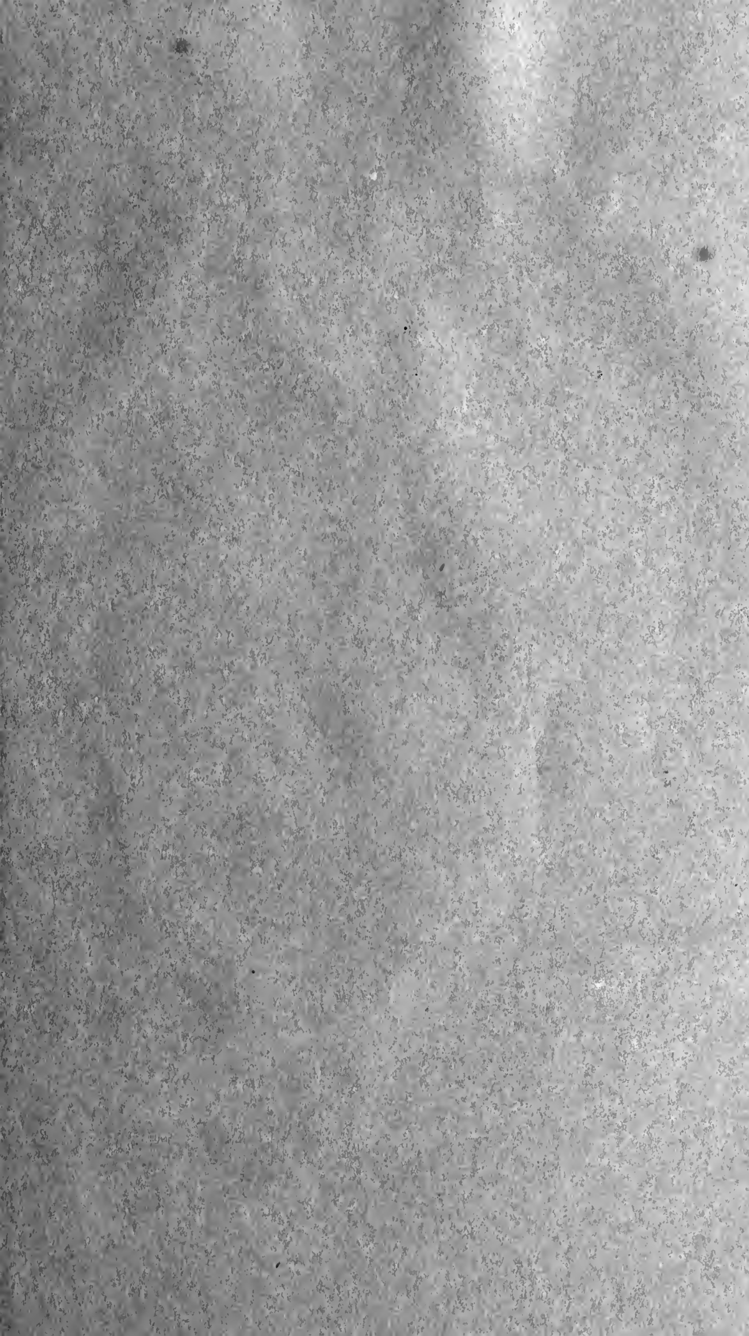

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