



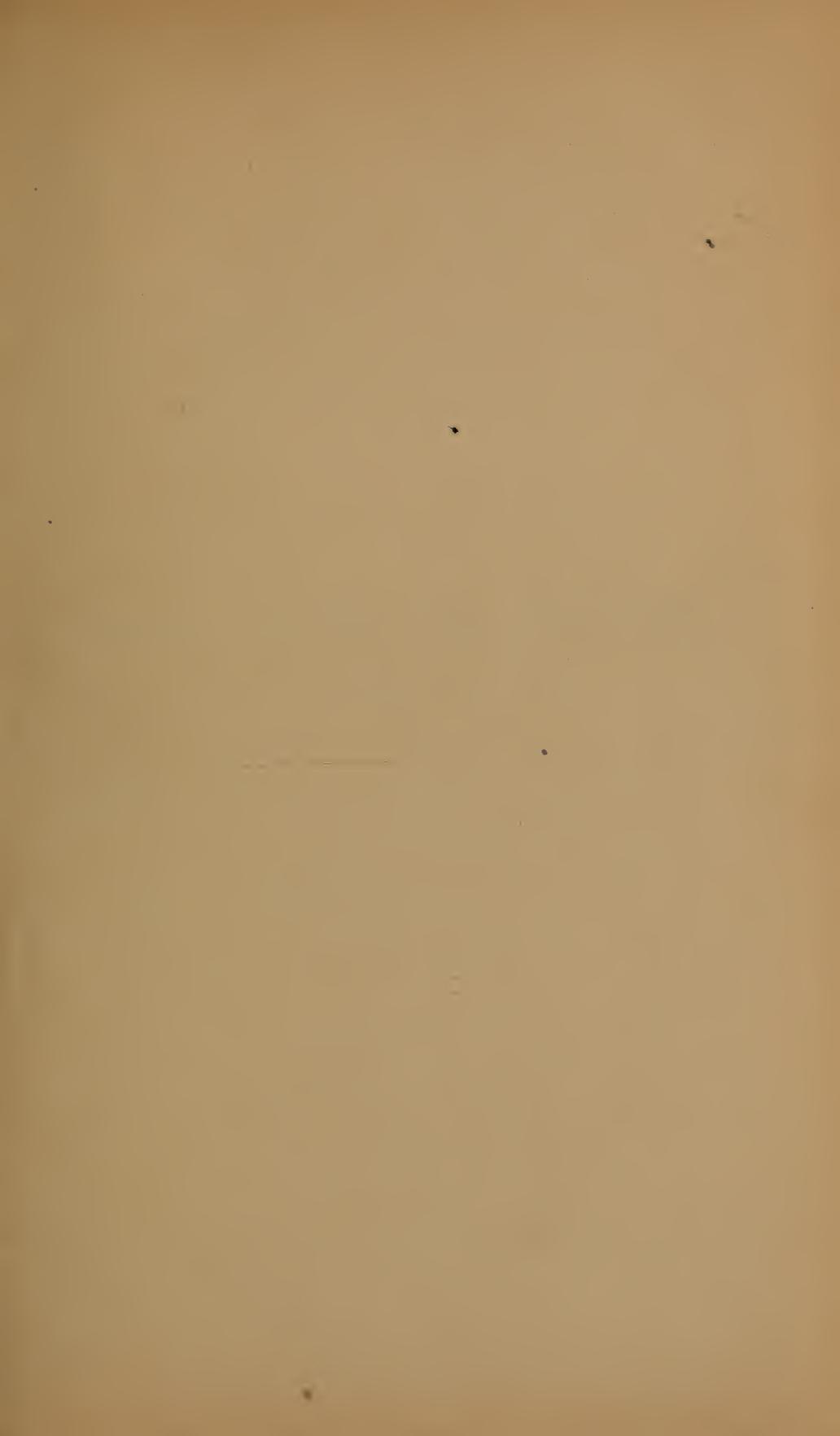
FROM DAWN TO SUNRISE





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Mrs J. G. Smith.







FROM DAWN TO SUNRISE.



FROM  
DAWN TO SUNRISE:

A REVIEW, HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL,

OF THE

RELIGIOUS IDEAS OF MANKIND.

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"It may be demonstrated that all ancient traditions are true, and that all paganism is but a system of displaced verities."—*Le Maître*.

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BY

MRS. J. GREGORY SMITH.

Smith, Ann Eliza (Brainard) "Mrs. J. G. Smith"



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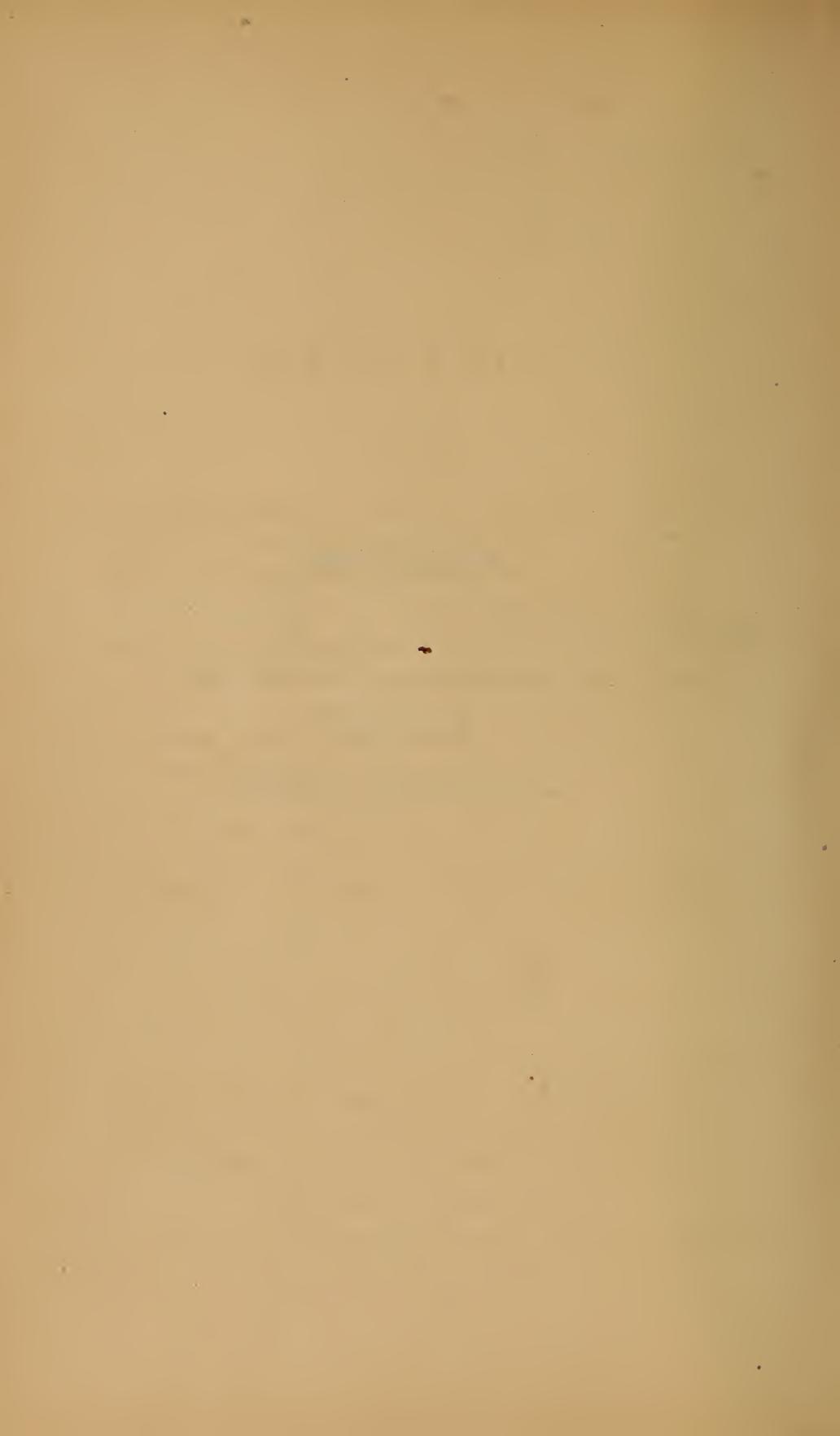
## To the Friends

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## INTRODUCTION.

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A FEAR agitates the mind of the Christian philosopher, at the present time, that another great religious eclipse is impending, such as have during historic times chilled the soul of mankind for ages and destroyed its liberty and spiritual vitality.

Europe lay under a penumbra of gloom and horror from the sixth to the sixteenth centuries,—the Dark Ages. Then religion, divorced from science, was wedded to superstition and priestcraft in the bands of an infernal wedlock, and the fearful progeny of such an unholy union was slavery, intellectual stupefaction, all crime known to human law, unnameable vice, and physical disease. At that melancholy period it was religiously taught that a man could purchase from another man, with money, exemption from penalty in this world and the world to come, even though committing the foulest murder and treason; but if he denied that the bread and wine in the hands of the priest was not miraculously transformed into the actual body of the crucified Saviour, if he refused to assert that the autocrat who sat in St. Peter's chair, steeped in venality, vice and crime, was the vicegerent of the Prince of Peace and Purity, if he dared to believe that the earth turned upon its axis, he was subjected to all the indignity and bodily torture the ingenuity of man, aided by the Devil, could devise. Witness the horrors of the

Inquisition in Spain and Holland, the reign of religious terror in France and England.

The extremists of the Church of Rome are attempting again to drag the world backward into the gloomy realms of paganism and priestcraft.

But another and an opposite peril also endangers the spiritual life of the world—science now sues for a divorce from religion; if this result were to be accomplished the soul of man, driven into the deadly ether spaces of Atheism, would be chilled and starved into moral atrophy and death. The modern school of Atheists offer to the inquiring soul only the antiquated principles of Buddha and Laotse.

Prof. Fiske, in one of the New York daily papers, advances this mystifying idea of Deity: "There exists a power in time and space, of which all phenomena are manifestations, but which one can only know through these manifestations," that is, there has never been, and cannot be, a revelation of God. He adds: "What is this wondrous Dynamis? Shall we call it gravitation, or light, or heat, or electricity, or life, or thought, or summing up all into one comprehensive epithet, call it Force?" Straus, Renan, Huxley, Spencer, Darwin, Tyndall, and many other scientific leaders, following the guides of past ages, puzzle themselves over Nature and Organic Law, The Universum, the Absolute, Force, Dynamis! "God shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision, for they have said in their hearts and have proclaimed to the world that *there is no God!* only blind law, without a law maker. Fortunately, average common sense men have clearer moral perception and greater intellectual integrity. Giving conscience, as well as reason, a candid

hearing, they know that beyond natural causes, there must be One who creates law and nature, a providential personal Ruler, to whom they are responsible, and they call this Being, God. Yet the attack of modern skepticism is so subtle, the arguments so specious, that the unthinking and unguarded are deceived, and weak faith is shaken. "At this moment a general doubt is coming up like a thunder-cloud against the wind. Those who cling most tenaciously to the faith in which they were educated confess themselves perplexed. They know what they believe, but why they believe it, or why they should require others to believe it, they cannot tell and cannot agree. The truth of gospel history is more widely doubted than at any time since the conversion of Constantine, and every Christian who desires to remain one, and who knows anything of what is passing in the world, is looking to be told on what evidence the New Testament claims to be received."<sup>1</sup> "We cannot foresee the exact influence of scientific discovery upon the future, but it is clear that once more men will be brought face to face with the deepest questions of religious belief."<sup>2</sup>

Beside these scientific infidels, there is another class of scholars who exalt the sacred writings of the Hindoos and Persians, now just becoming familiar, above those of the Jews and Christians. An Atheist enquired of me, a few years ago, if I was acquainted with these ancient books; confessing my ignorance, he startled me by saying, "I can show you in the Vedas and the Avesta, that which is far better and purer than anything to be found in your musty old Bible."

Unable to refute the assertion I could only answer,

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Froude.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. Mr. Fowle.

“By their fruits ye shall know them.’ Are the countries where their influence prevails better governed, more civilized, and happier, than ours where the Bible controls?

“Can those defiled Oriental temples or their tyrannical, immoral priests, be compared with our Christian churches and God-fearing clergymen?”

He was silent, but might he not have retorted, “Can I not show you in mediæval Europe, Christians, monks as vile, institutions as cruel, and fetichism as grovelling as anything Brahmanism has produced? Is any worship grosser than that of dead men’s bones, and rotten wood said to be relics of the true cross? and did any religion ever invent instruments of torture more infernal and ply them in such fiendish fashion, as did the Inquisition of Spain under his most Christian majesty Philip the Second, and his successors in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries? Look at the atrocities practised by one Christian sect towards another in France, when Huguenots and Waldenses perished by thousands, and in England, during the reign of Bloody Mary and James the Second, when the rack, the gibbet, the boot, and the fires of Smithfield, mutilated and tortured the bodies of men, made in the image of God?”

What answer could be given to these questions? I felt that Christianity could be defended, but how I knew not! With foes in its own citadel who would use its mantle of charity and its banner of liberty for the purpose of idolatry and despotism, assailed from without by scientific atheists who would prove its weakness and fallacy by their superior knowledge of natural law, and by sophists who would offer other sacred writings as a substitute for the New Testament, could Christianity stand?

Two paramount problems are offered to the perplexed inquirer. First, *What is Truth?* Second, Is the teaching of Jesus Christ its embodiment, or are we to have another revelation? Nothing is demonstrable but mathematical truth; there is no other positive science; theories with regard to natural law even are constantly changing; we cannot prove any religious truth by demonstration, better than we can prove the existence of God in that way, and "who by searching can find out God!" Yet if history proves anything, it is that man is a religious being, that "the intuition of God is a part of the original dowry of human nature." We know that we have come into the world like countless generations which have preceded us; birth or circumstances over which we have no control have determined our position in life; we are greatly absorbed in pursuits which, perhaps, are not of our own choice, and we are conscious that we are hurrying through this phase of existence, that in a limited time of which we are in ignorance, we shall disappear forever and our places be filled by the ever renewed, ever vanishing phantoms of human existence!

Who placed us here? Who controls our being? and *whither do we go?* are the momentous questions which agitate the soul in the solemn hours of thought. Then comes the feeling that there is a Supreme Power and the desire to be in accord with this Being, and religion dawns in the soul.

A tendency to atheism shows a defective mental constitution, in individual cases. Without the balance which a sense of responsibility to a Supreme Ruler gives to human character, the intellectual machinery (if I may be allowed the expression) runs irregularly and gets into

fatal disorder. In such organizations as Tyndall's, Huxley's, and Spencer's, there is little danger of immorality, for the sensorium is impoverished by an undue development of the reflective organs, passion and appetite are enfeebled, and the one-sided, ill-balanced nature exhibits a frozen intellectuality only less to be deplored than grosser faults. But among the middle ranks immorality and secret vice is the unhappy result, while lower and more brutal natures, freed from responsibility to a Higher Power who can punish sin, develop an amazing proclivity to monstrous crimes and nameless abominations. Where this form of disbelief becomes universal and takes possession of a nation, "the wave of ungodliness is a sure precursor of convulsion."<sup>1</sup> Such was the condition of Rome previous to its downfall, and France in the latter part of the eighteenth century. At that time the Abbé Gregoire said to the National Assembly: "Write the name of God at the head of the declarations, or you leave them without foundation; you declare not the rights of man, but the right of the strongest; you inaugurate a reign of violence." The assembly declined; they listened to the voice of atheistic monsters forced from the icy torpor of their original natures into active life by the fierce fires of fanaticism. Monsieur Proudhon said: "The Revolution looked Him in the face and said to itself, 'I will conquer Him; it is war we proclaim against God. Be it so, let us make war upon Him! Let us drive the eternal Father back into His remote heaven, His presence among us hangs upon a thread, the Revolution does not mince matters with the Deity!'" The Reign of Terror followed, anarchy, destruction, social chaos, was the inevitable consequence,

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<sup>1</sup> Froude.

and a reformation of society was impossible till there was a revival of religious faith.

Religion has been universal in all ages and nations, though the intuition of God has taken strange and diverse types. Imperfect man, in the search for truth, has ever mixed it with a great amount of fatal error! the natural religions are dark, burdensome, cruel, enslaving, not one of them represent God with the attribute of love; our humanity and moral sense are outraged and shocked by the indecency, ferocity and degradation with which they are characterized, so that we are ready to exclaim, "O religion, how many crimes have been committed in thy name!" We long to see God, but we would see Him in the light, not through the defiling smoke of lurid sacrifices; we would believe in a Being pure and good, unswayed by passion, of infinite and eternal repose. We feel the dignity of manhood and the strength of an immortal nature; we revolt at the thought of being slaves to a cruel despot or a blind Fate; we demand a religion of liberty as well as love, a God who can pardon as well as punish, and we sigh, "Oh, that we could find Him!" Many of the old religions are obsolete, and others give warning of decrepitude and dissolution. But from the very nature of things Truth is eternal. What then gives evidence of inherent vitality? What of religious truth has survived the shock of ages? We have been taught to believe that in the Christian religion God's eternal truth is found, but few can defend the assumption. Many in their own hearts are doubtful, and while the materialist calls our religion superstition and our faith credulity, we wonder if it is so.

The solution of the great problem cannot be found

in the old methods of proving religious truth. The inspiration of the Apostles, their supernatural power, or even the miracles of Christ, prove nothing at this time, for they must be received on the testimony of men, and that is always liable to error. The fact that our fathers so believed must pass for nothing ; we cannot *know* religious truth, we must feel it ; conscience, through reason, must be convicted of its inherent essential perfection and adaptation to the needs of humanity.

If by comparing Christianity with all the other religions of the world we are able to detect, from internal evidence, the indications of its superhuman origin ; if we perceive that while the others have been suited to a particular state of society, race, climate, or era, Christianity, from its elastic and progressive character, is adapted to every grade of intellectual development, every phase of human nature, all conditions and all ages ; if the religious ideas which have survived the wrecks of time are here embodied, then it is self-evident, that it must have been given by the All-Knowing One, who alone could have provided for every case and every emergency.

For this purpose we should in a candid spirit take up the history of the principal religions of the world, beginning with the oldest of them all, the religion of our primogenitors, Adam and Eve—a review of which necessitates an examination of the Mosaic writings contained in the first chapters of the Bible, as also other traditions of the great events therein described ; we should examine the supposed discrepancy between the Mosaic account of the creation and the revelations of modern science, discuss the nature and extent of the great Deluge and

the important events which followed the Confusion of Tongues and Dispersion of the Tribes, which resulted in diversities of language, race and religion.

Of these subsequent developments we should investigate the Chinese, ancient Persian, the religion and philosophy of India, Brahmanism and Buddhism, the religions of Egypt, Assyria, Greece and Rome, the Hebrew, Scandinavian and Mohammedan faiths, comparing them lastly with the religion which Christ brought into the world. In the pursuit of this great subject we should resort to the rich storehouses of tradition, history and natural science, and penetrate still further into the dim recesses of the pre-historic past; with the archæologist enter the tombs and pyramids of Egypt, walk through the amazing subterranean rock temples of India, visit the giant cities of Bashan, muse upon the Assyrian mounds and puzzle over their inscribed brick—linger by the strange rock inscriptions found throughout the Orient, ponder over the serpent mounds and other ruins of our own country, and gaze with awe at the ever recurring mystery of the obelisk! For us, the philologist should unlock the arcanum of language, his magic touch will unveil many a bright gem of thought concealed through the ages in the plain cover of a familiar word. Ethnology must also lend its aid, by which we shall become acquainted with the almost incredible changes and varieties which have been produced from one original stock, by climate, food, configuration of continents, pursuits of life, intermarriage and education. And this branch of our subject will lead us to look very charitably upon the religious practices of those whose constitutions and mental methods are so diverse from our own—we shall lose that self-conceit which

has led us unduly to exalt our own excellence, and we shall glorify one common Father and God, who has gathered to their rest and reward millions of souls whom we, in our bigotry, have sometimes supposed were lost: "I beheld, and lo a great multitude, that no man could number, of *all* nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and with palms in their hands." We should thus discover the transcendent superiority of the Christian religion; but learning how rapidly other religions have deteriorated and become corrupt, when they lost the simplicity of the founders, we shall be warned of our own danger in this respect, perceiving with dismay, that Christians do not embody Christianity, and that we have almost lost the original idea.

The following pages are the result of years of study in attempt to solve the great religious problem in this comprehensive manner; and although, as I am painfully conscious, it is very imperfectly done, if it serves to give any one arguments wherewith to defend his religious faith, if it leaves any with less bigotry and self-conceit, with more love for all mankind, with greater confidence in the final triumph of Christianity, and an increased desire for its practical possession, then shall I thank God, who sometimes "uses the weak things of this world to confound the mighty." The paths of this investigation have been ways of great pleasantness, and in the journey I have found exceeding peace, for although in travelling far back through the dim vistas of the shadowy past I have sometimes walked through the very valley and shadow of moral death, where frightful sounds and awful shapes assault the sense, and sometimes have groped in the

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twilight gleam of the ages, so far from the light of Truth that I could almost exclaim, like those condemned in the valleys of Danté's *Inferno*, "All hope abandon ye who enter here!" yet through all the devious way, I could ever discern a divine voice and a beckoning hand, leading onward and upward, till at last appeared upon Mount Calvary's summit the resplendent Sun of Righteousness, before whose beams the mists of error and darkness, sin and death shall forever flee away!



## CHAPTER I.

### GENESIS.

“Chaos and Old Night.”

**T**HE Beginning, when was it? The Dawn of Creation, whence came it? What caused the first glimmer of light that thrilled the heart of universal darkness?

To find the Beginning, we must go backward through the rolling ages, backward along the slowly rounding cycles, through the stillness of the awful aeons, till the soul, fainting upon the trackless limits of Time, incapable of further retrograde, sinks mute and motionless upon the verge of God's Eternity! At some point in this inconceivable period of duration was The Beginning, when a Pre-existent Power created the original atoms.

Tradition has been quaintly called “the heart of history,” “the faint reverberations of its distant bell,” its indications should never be neglected; for “although the echoes are many, the voice is one,” and that, we may be sure, is the voice of Truth. We will therefore begin the answer to our inquiries with traditions of the Creation which are not confined to the Hebrew Scriptures, but are common to all the tribes of men in the most disconnected and distant parts of the earth. Many of these are mixed with monstrous and incredible myths, but they preserve one general idea.

In the Rig Veda, the oldest of the Hindoo sacred books, the following remarkable passage occurs: "Nothing, yon bright sky was not, nor heaven's broad woof outstretched above! What covered all, what sheltered, what concealed? Was it the water's fathomless abyss? Darkness was there, and all was veiled in gloom profound, an ocean without light. The germ that still lay covered in the husk burst forth, one nature, from the fervent heat."

Phœnician cosmogony represents the brooding spirit on the deep, and the word *baan* is almost identical with the Hebrew *bohn*, both meaning void or empty.

The Greek fable of the war of giants who, when cut to pieces, resumed life in new forms, was no doubt intended to convey the idea of the conflict of elements and their reforming by gradations. Prometheus, one of these giants, formed the first human pair from clay, and stole fire from heaven to animate them.

The Scandinavian legend is, "In the beginning there was neither sky, nor sun, nor gelid wave, only a dark frozen mist. Then the cow, Adhumbla, licking the hoar frost, brings to light a man from whom the Giant Yemir was born, from his skull the vault of heaven was formed, from his brain the heavy clouds, from his bones the rocks, and from his flesh the earth."

The Chinese idea is not unlike the Scandinavian. It is, that a giant, after laboring for ages among masses of granite floating in a chaotic condition, chisels out a world, and when he dies his work is finished by the transformation of his dead body into the sky, and sea, and earth.

The cosmogony of the Aztecs is very remarkable, though almost puerile in its simplicity, as contained in their National Book, the Popol Vuh. "There was not

yet a single man, nor an animal, bird, fish, or crab, or wood, or stone, or ravine, or herb, or forest. There was only the silent sea and the sky. Naught attached itself to another naught that balanced itself, no sound in the sky, in the peaceful sea, the sea silent and solitary in its limits. Those who fecundate, those who give being, are upon the waters like a growing light. While they consulted, the day broke, and at the moment of dawn man appeared. Thus they consulted while the earth grew. Earth, said they, and the earth existed. Like a fog, like a cloud was its formation, as huge fishes rise in the water, so rose the mountains. At that time spake he who gives life, the Maker, the Moulder, Tepen Gucumatz. The day draws near, the work is done, the servant is ennobled. He is the son of light, the child of whiteness, the race of man is on the earth. Thought was in them. They perceived the world and the sky. Then asked the Builder and the Moulder, What think ye of your being? See ye not! your language, your limbs, are they not good? Then they looked and saw all that was beneath the heavens, and they gave thanks, saying, Truly, twice three times thanks, we have being, we speak, we understand, we think, we feel. Thanks to Thee, O Maker and Moulder, that we have been created, that we have being, Oh, our Grand-Mother! Oh, our Grand-Father!"

The Peruvians called the first pair Alpha Casmasca, *animated earth*.

Some tribes of North American Indians believed that the Great Spirit made two figures of clay, to which he gave life by breathing upon them.

The Otaheitans say that Toeroa, their god, made men of red earth. The Dyacks of Borneo have the same idea.

These traditions have been selected as from their origin, and the great distance which separates the tribes who retain them, they could scarcely have been borrowed from the writings of Moses, neither could Moses have compiled from them. There must have been a common origin for this similar and wide-spread belief.

Setting aside any claim to Divine inspiration, the Mosaic account is more probable and circumstantial, freer from puerilities and inconsistencies than any other extant. The antiquarian, the scientist, the philosopher, and above all, the theologian, will regard this antique gem as the most precious fragment of literature in existence.

We will now endeavor to ascertain if the contempt and discredit often thrown upon it is justified by a fair, critical examination of the text, "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth:" that is, at some point in that incomprehensible orbit, "whose centre is everywhere, and whose circumference is nowhere," the Eternal created the material of the universe. The great centre of our solar system, a speck in the vast unfathomable depths of space, balances and controls its hundred satellites, and with them whirls and circles through an orbit which takes twenty-four thousand of our years to complete; a solar year, an hour perhaps in the chronology of still greater spheres. A student in geology once asked a learned professor, "What was the probable duration of the Archaic Period?" The answer was, "Geology knows no age. The Silurian period, much shorter than the Archaic, as nearly as we can calculate, was *thirty-eight million of years!*" The ancient Hindoos had a better conception of time than we, for they calculated cycles, which were expressed by a unit and

sixty ciphers ; our finite minds falter in striving to reach such a limit. The Infinite alone can comprehend the æonic revolutions which have passed since the Beginning, when, by a direct act or the operation of a law of his own making, " God created the heavens and the earth."

For a period after the great solar year began " the earth was without form and void." The period here described has in former times been little understood. Confusion and darkness enveloped it, which it seemed could never be penetrated ; but the almost inspired genius of Sir John Herschell, and afterwards that of La Place, have made clear the meaning. They tell us that the form in which matter first existed was that of igneous vapor or gas of inconceivable attenuity. It was without form or outline, like a wisp of fog, and it was void as mist is, without substance.

If we peer through the cold vacancies of the sky, beyond the firmament of stars in which we are placed, we can faintly discern a few filmy or cloudy spots, which, unlike the flitting vapors of our atmosphere, are unchanging. Powerful telescopes reveal five thousand of these spots scattered throughout space. They are called *Nebulæ*, clouds. Some of them are proved by the spectroscopes to be firmaments of stars, like that in which our own solar system is situated, of which the Milky Way is the vast outer rim ; but others are shown to be gas in a state of incandescence, glowing so intensely that the light, after ages, has reached our earth. These gaseous nebulæ are supposed to be the crude materials of solar systems, incipient worlds in the same process of formation as that by which our own has attained

its present form. The attenuated mass was moved upon by some power or principle, perhaps electricity, the particles attract and repel, being suspended in free space; rotation is the consequence. Radiation of heat takes place and consequently condensation, the particles nearest each other are aggregated or gathered together, densest on the outer edge; a ring is formed as by the water thrown from a rapidly revolving grindstone; this ring of matter, still striving to keep up the rotation around the central mass, oscillates, and at last breaks, rolling on into a sphere, which continues to revolve about the original centre, and thus the first planet is formed; in its own limited sphere the same process goes on and a moon is produced, perhaps many are made before the parent planet is too cold and solid to throw off another ring. A great burning mass is at last left in the centre, a sun, and the solar system is now complete.

This theory is corroborated by the form and appearance of the nebulous spots before mentioned; some of them being almost without outline and apparently without motion, others so distorted and confused as to suggest the idea of an electrical shock, others are seen with regular rays as if preparing for rotation, some in spiral form, as if rotation was just established, still others are circular, one has a dense spot on the edge of the mass as if the first ring had broken and rolled into a sphere, and in another a condensation in the centre seems to indicate that the sun is forming. The planets Jupiter and Saturn are supposed by some astronomers to be still in the condition of our earth at that period when "the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The rings of

Saturn, still in a fluid state, will continue to revolve around it, till some outward conjoined attraction or internal convulsion unsettles them and they are rolled into additional moons.

Our Earth having been separated from the parent mass, and having thrown off her satellite, rolled on for ages, perhaps during Hindoo cycles, obedient to nature's immutable laws, slowly cooling and condensing, the fiery gas became a glowing substance, and smoke and flame were born. Here was the reign of "chaos and old night." As the condensation increased, a filmy crust was formed, the attraction of the heavenly bodies and the motion of the seething fluid beneath break and pile this crust unequally, and the ribs of earth, the germs of mountains and continents appear. "A scene of terrific sublimity now approaches. As the dusky atmosphere began to thicken, wisps of vapor crept along, the heavens growing thick and dark till an impending pall enveloped earth and sky, blotting out the light of the sun and moon for a geological age. Rain drops began to descend, but were scorched to evaporation. At length they reach the fervid crust, but only to be exploded and driven back to the over-burdened cloud which had an ocean to transfer to the earth. In the midst of this cosmical contest between fire and water, the voice of heaven's artillery was heard. Lightning darted through the Cimmerian gloom and world convulsing thunders echoed through the universe. A thousand years of storm and darkness have passed, the primeval tempest draws to a close, the clouds are at last exhausted, and the morning of another geological epoch dawns." <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. Winchell.

“The spirit of God had moved upon the waters ;” the decree went forth, “let light be, and light was.” “The Hebrew word, OR, translated light, expresses luminosity, and signifies besides the light of the sun, heat and electricity.”<sup>1</sup> The first aeon was completed. The evening and the morning was the first day, or as the original may be rendered, “The darkening and breaking forth of light were the first day.”

And God said, “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters which are under the firmament from the waters which are above the firmament.” “And God called the firmament Heaven ; and the evening and morning were the second day.” “*Rakiah*, Hebrew, translated firmament, literally means *expanse*.”<sup>2</sup> Geology indicates that at this period a portion of the waters, gradually liberated from the clouds, now rested upon the hot crust of the earth, which cooled and crumbled under the unceasing surges and gnawed away the rocky ribs of earth in preparation of the soil which was at a future era to make it so fair. Another portion hung suspended in the space above the waters : the atmosphere, with its argosies of floating vapor. By the heaving and surging of the melted mass within, by earthquakes and cataclysms of a violence inconceivable, mountains and continents were thrown up, and deep basins received the waters, “And God called the dry land, earth, and the gathering together of the waters called He seas.”

This was the period of the formation of the geological strata, in the first of which, the coarser materials of the detritus settling lowest, produced the granite, limestone,

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<sup>1</sup> Dawson.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

shale, sandstone, slate, and some of the coal measures of the earth; in the secondary formation, other coal beds, the green sand, white chalk, clay, etc., were deposited, and in the tertiary period the alluvium settled. These deposits, geologists argue, must each of them have been thousands of years in forming; and they sneer at the Mosaic account which would represent them as apparently coeval and limit their period to a day. They assert that the strata are so superposed that successive ages must have been requisite for their production. This may be true, or it may not be, one fact is worth a thousand theories. That learned men may be greatly mistaken, is proved by recent deep-sea dredgings, which show all the three formations in progress at the same time. At that era of violent convulsion, when the heavy materials were almost held in solution in the intensely heated water, precipitation may have been much more rapid than it ever was afterwards, and the different deposits then, as now, in ocean's bed, may have taken place simultaneously. But this is not probable. The word *day* has not in this account of the creation a limit of twenty-four hours. It means an indefinite period, an era, as we often use it, saying, "the day of our destiny," "the day of fate," "at that day." "If the word *yom*, translated day, means a civil day of twenty-four hours, how are we to understand the word in Genesis ii. 4, where it reads, "In the day when the Lord made the earth and the heavens." Is the day here mentioned intended to include the other six? The same word is used indefinitely in many other passages, "day of calamity," "day of wrath," "day of God's power," "the day of captivity." In the Psalms there is a remarkable passage which conveys the idea of a day of God, as very

different from a terrestrial day. "For a thousand years in thy sight are as yesterday when it is past;" and in Peter, "One day with the Lord, is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."<sup>1</sup> So also of the expression, morning and evening, we say "the morning of youth" and "the evening of our life," meaning no limited or definite period of time. Perhaps the "day" of Genesis may mean one revolution of cosmic material; that, while the mass was of great expanse and attenuity, would require ages for its completion as it condensed and the motion became more rapid, the time would decrease in compound ratio, till at the creation of man it might be but twenty-four hours. Astronomers assure us that from the time of Adam the length of the day has been steadily though imperceptibly decreasing.

Before this aeon was marked as the third day upon the horologue of God's eternity, the order went forth, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed and the fruit-tree yielding fruit, and it was so." Science declares that in the new soil, warm from earth's boiling centre, in an atmosphere loaded with carbonic acid gas, the very breath of vegetation, but in which no respiratory animal could live, there appeared generations of gigantic fern-trees, rushes and club mosses—a profuse luxuriance unparalleled in after ages. Dank savannas or meadows sustained rushes thirty feet high, single frondes of fern-trees were six or eight feet long, and the fluted trunks of club mosses were sixty or seventy feet high and five feet in diameter. Awful throes and upheavals from the unquiet internal fires, overturned these monstrous vegetable

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<sup>1</sup> Dawson's *Archaia*.

growths, and they were smothered and charred into what are now the coal-beds of the earth, where their gigantic forms may sometimes be seen in perfect outline. In each successive age the vegetable growth became less rank and more varied, as the atmosphere cleared from poisonous gases, preparing without haste for the introduction of animal life. As this protracted period drew to a close, the young moon looked through the now transparent atmosphere, the sun in all its brilliancy appeared, "and the evening and the morning were the fourth day."

But the moon and the sun had existed for ages. By the recognized laws of physics, the earth is younger than they; the Bible seems to state that the sun was made even after vegetation had appeared,—a patent absurdity. The word translated "*made* two great lights" is not the same word in Hebrew as that which signifies *created*, it is the same as that often used when the meaning is *appointed* or *constituted*, as it is said, "God *made* Joseph lord over Egypt," "God *made* David the head of the heathen." An eminent linguist would translate the words "Let there *be* lights," "Let there *appear* lights."<sup>1</sup> The sun and moon had long existed, but now shone for the first time through the purified atmosphere.

And God said, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth, and God created great whales." The word *tanninim*, rendered *whales* in this place, is sometimes construed *dragons*, and more properly signifies *great reptiles*.<sup>2</sup> Geology shows, from fossil remains, that huge reptiles, fowls and fishes, made their appearance at

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Geddes and Dr. Kitto.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. li. 37.

this age, which, by their peculiar constitution, were able to breathe the still imperfectly purified air, horrible creatures "clad in coat of mail, helmed in bony plates with long powerful spines and fearful conical teeth." The Ichthyosaurus, and Plesiosaurus which seems a cross between a swan and a serpent twelve or fifteen feet long, a hideous frog-like animal, named the Labyrinthodon, and a gigantic reptile bird whose rocky foot-prints measure fifteen or twenty inches. These fierce and frightful creatures roamed the vast continents or ploughed the seas from pole to pole for food, in uncouth gambols. The warm throbbing breast of young mother earth had then felt none of the frosts and chills of age and knew no Arctic zone. "The evening and the morning were the fifth day."

And God said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature, cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth after his kind; and God saw that it was good." Science confirms without demur this record of the order of creation. The consummation approaches: the fair, beautiful earth has been through untold ages perfected by the power of Omnipotence. It is a Paradise, a very garden of the Lord, all animate and inanimate nature awaits its Master. "And God said, 'Let us make man in our image,\* \* \* and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and the cattle and over all the earth, and over everything that creepeth upon the earth.'"

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."

"And God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone, I will make him a helpmeet for him,' and the

Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept, and he took one of the ribs and closed up the flesh thereof, and the rib which the Lord God had taken made he a woman, and brought her unto the man ; and the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

" Thus were the heavens and the earth finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made."

Science again confirms the word of Scripture, for it asserts that man is the latest creation, no new species having been added, though many have become extinct.

Thus tracing creation through successive days or eras, we perceive no discrepancy between the Mosaic account and the latest deductions of science. The order of the genesis is represented to be precisely what the most profound scientists believe it must have been.

There is a school of philosophers who denounce the Bible because it seems to represent the world as having been formed by distinct successive acts of creation. They speak wisely though very indefinitely of evolution, embryology, natural selection, etc.

No doubt, a machine so constructed, that by the self-adaptation of one grand primal force, it could maintain a continuity of creative offices, would be vastly more to the glory of the inventor than numerous machines each of which was confined to a specialty. Simplicity in complication is what man seeks in vain. In our Book it does not appear whether God created the world by independent acts, in successive stages, or infused into the material of the universe a principle or power which made it self-perpetuating and self-transforming ; in either case, it is proper to say " God made," whether by evolu-

tion or by direct agency. He was the Great First Cause, and that language is accurate and truthful, which represents God as the Creator of "the world and all that is therein."

Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, but he got from them no hint of the Nebular Hypothesis. Their cosmogony was in many respects fallacious and inaccurate, and geology is pre-eminently a modern science. Where then did he get such an insight into the ultimate results of scientific research? And more inexplicable still, how was it possible for him to guard his language so adroitly, that during the ages of darkness and ignorance it should seem consistent with the popular belief, no violence being done to the crude theories of the pious reader, and now, in the illumination of this century, it should be discovered that in these same few simple words he foreshadowed all that science has toilsomely unveiled? There is but one answer to these questions, MOSES WAS INSPIRED!

Our primogenitors, Adam and Eve, were highly honored by the preparation of such a stately and beautiful residence, where everything combined to please the taste and satisfy their animal wants; but a part of their dowry, yet to be mentioned, transcended every other gift—this perishable world was not to be their permanent home: "God breathed into Adam the breath of life, and *he became a living soul*," an immortal image of his Maker. This glorious but fearful birthright he has transmitted to his posterity, souls that will live when the "bright heavens shall pass away like a scroll, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat;" when all the works of man, so laboriously achieved, his ships and manufactories, canals

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and railroads, bridges and palaces, storehouses of treasure, and galleries of art, shall be burned up in a universal conflagration. All these shall vanish away into the cold realms of vacancy, and become again a misty nebula without form and void. But the soul of man, imperishable, immortal, will live on through the eternity of God, forever and forever.

Then while we perform the labor of the hour, the earthly toil which our hands find to do, let us listen with serious attention to the low voice of our immortal nature, "For through the deep caves of thought, I hear a voice that sings,"

"Build thee more stately mansions, oh my soul,  
As the swift seasons roll;  
Leave thy low vaulted past;  
Let each new temple, loftier than the last,  
Point toward heaven with dome more vast,  
Till thou at last art free,  
Leaving thine outgrown shell by Life's unresting sea."

## CHAPTER II.

### ANTEDILUVIAN MAN AND HIS ASSOCIATES.

“There were giants in those days.”

CREATION was finished, and, in the metaphorical language of Scripture, “God rested from his labor,” and the seventh day began; the day of the dwelling of mankind upon this lovely orb in which we and all our species are enacting the great drama of human life; a day which will close by convulsions of the elements, grand and awful as those that ushered in its dawn,—chaos, re-formation, and a new world into which sin will never enter.

Central Asia, it is probable, was the cradle of the human race—all the early emigrations were eastward or westward from a common Asiatic centre. Traditions of the most intelligent portion of humanity, the Aryan tribes, point to the western terminus of the Himalaya Mountains as the location of Eden. The largest rivers of Asia here take their rise, the Jaxartes and the Indus, (probably identical with the river Pison), the Djihon (Gihon) and Euphrates, two Bible names still preserved. To the west stretches a vast fertile plain watered by these four majestic rivers. “The land of Havilah, rich in gold,” is the country of Dadara, near Cashmere, celebrated for its riches, and is called Oudyana (Eden) to this day.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Anc. His. of the East.

In this beautiful land, very unlike our limited ideas of a garden, were placed the first human pair. They were called Adam—Man; and Chavah or Eva—Life. The climate of their lovely home was delicious—subject to no violent change; the productive soil yielded to their light labor, nourishing fruits and grains which satisfied their unvitiated appetites. Their perfect organizations knew neither disease nor fatigue; the lower animals lived in peace around them and acknowledged their dominion. There was no mutual fear, for there was no conflict, and tradition says that they all had the gift of speech. The obligations of religion, obedience and self-denial were as simple as their characters. There was no necessity for prayer. God had supplied every want; they had no pity to implore nor anger to deprecate; no sacrifice was required, for there was no sin to atone.

How long this life of innocent happiness continued we know not. God was revealed to them and the knowledge gave them happiness; but a dark day approaches, whose gloomy shadow is projected upon the fair blank of all future time. Another spiritual being visits the new world, malignant and evil, and knowing of the single prohibition God had made, and the dreadful penalty attached to it; under the form of a serpent, he accosts Eve, and persuades her that eating of the forbidden fruit will not be for their destruction, but “they will become as gods, knowing good and evil.” Eve yielded to the artifice of the Destroyer, Adam, without remonstrance or demur, joined in the transgression, and in one fatal moment a change passed upon the destiny of the human race.

It is useless to speculate upon the nature of the tree

of knowledge or the reason for the prohibition, the result of the trial and the consequence are what vitally concern us ; but a question which has always puzzled the thoughtful enquirer forces itself upon the mind : Why did God permit the temptation and allow sin to enter the world ? or when it had entered, why did he not at once put an end to it by the immediate death of the guilty pair ?

These pertinent questions have never been satisfactorily answered, but a few suggestions upon the subject may be pardonable.

Dr. Hallam profoundly remarks, " If man was made in the image of God, he was also made in the image of an ape. The framework of the body of him who has weighed the stars and made the lightning his slave approaches to that of a speechless brute who wanders in the forest of Sumatra. Thus standing on the frontier land between animal and angelic natures, what wonder that he should partake of both ! " This strangely endowed antagonistic complex being, without free will, would have been a slave ; without responsibility he could have risen to no true dignity or manhood, and with volition, in such a nature, came the ability and proclivity to sin.

We often confuse the ideas of innocence and virtue. Adam and Eve before the temptation were simply innocent, that is, without knowledge of sin. Now, virtue is that quality which enables men knowing sin and temptation, the fierce conflict between wicked impulse and conviction of duty, to rise above and triumph over all. " Only by the trial and the fall could confirmed virtue and permanent integrity of character be attained ! " <sup>1</sup> Among other sentiments of great beauty found in the

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1 Dr. Hickok.

pocket-book of the honored father of the writer of this volume after his death, was this—" Evil stands in the world, that men may grow strong by wrestling with it." The struggle and frequent fall we can all see, but the strength thus acquired, God only can know and eternity alone reveal.

Sin and its consequences are but too apparent ; with evil passion, sorrow, care, pain, sickness, old age, death and those horrors of human experience—murder, famine, pestilence and war, we are too surely acquainted, and we wonder that an Almighty Being should permit such guilt and misery ; but could we pierce the dark nimbus of human ill which veils the world of soul and character ; could our perceptions, dimmed by the mists of sin and mortality and narrowed by the near vision of temporal objects, but once comprehend our drift and bearing toward the spirit world, we might perceive the good of evil, and learn that in the glory of the triumphant virtue man has become grander and stronger than the archangels !

We have now to deal, not with the problem of the origin of sin, but its unhappy consequences. Adam and Eve have fallen, and as they pass in remorse and shame through the entrance of their home in Eden, and a barrier of flame forbids return, the first volume of Earth's history is closed ; innocence, happiness and Paradise have passed away forever !

According to an old Jewish tradition, the discord was so great between the unhappy pair that they lived apart for fifty years. The same legend states, that with the first born son, Cain, a twin daughter was born, named Achima, as one also with Abel, called Lebuda, and that by exchanging sisters they obtained wives.

These primeval men felt religious obligation, and offered to God a propitiation in the sacrifice of the fruits of their labor. The offering of Abel being more acceptable than that of Cain, evil passion filled his heart and prompted the murder of his brother. The penalty of sin was now apparent. Death, inexplicable horror! had entered the world. The wretched fratricide was driven from the companionship of his parents, a fugitive and vagabond upon the earth.

It is not to be supposed that there were but three men in the world at this time—Adam was at least 120 years old when Seth was born, soon after the death of Abel. Calculations have been made which show that there may have been thousands of inhabitants on the earth, descendants of the first pair. The statement that Cain feared he might be killed by some of them, and also that he soon after this built a city, justify the calculation. Adam lived 800 years after Seth was born, and had other sons and daughters, but the names and genealogy of Seth and Cain only are given.

In the tenth generation after Adam, according to our chronology, a terrible deluge swept away the greater part of the human race. The date of this remarkable event is uncertain. The Latin and English translations fix it in the year of the world, 1655. The Septuagint makes it 2000 years later. There is no certain method of computation; the adding together the lives of the patriarchs is unreliable, from the fact that in Semitic records only the names and ages of men of mark are mentioned, several generations in a family being sometimes omitted in their chronology. Frequently a dynasty is represented solely by the name of the founder.

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The longevity of the antediluvians, as described in the Bible, has been considered incredible by physiologists; but who is wise enough to pronounce upon this subject with certainty? There may have been influences in the earth and air at that early period, which, combining with the superior vitality of a newly created race, produced results in the physical nature of man impossible at the present time. We may also remember in this connection that the use of animal food and intoxicating drink is not mentioned until after the Deluge. The undue stimulus to the nerves and increase of arterial action consequent upon the use of meat, together with disease engendered by taking into the system the flesh of animals themselves imperfect in health, and still more the use of narcotic stimulants, may have greatly facilitated the process of decay and dissolution.

Under the exceptionally favoring circumstances of genial climate, fruitful soil, intense vitality and extreme longevity, it is highly probable that the earth, in the vicinity of Eden at least, was densely populated and its civilization greatly perfected. The reasons for this belief are numerous and conclusive. The fourth generation from Cain is spoken of as greatly advanced in the arts and in agriculture. In the wonderfully gifted family of Lamech, Jabal was the father of such as dwell in tents and have cattle; Jubal, the father of such as handle the harp and organ; Tubal Cain, the instructor of every artificer in brass<sup>1</sup> and iron. The inventions of this man were so important that his fame has been perpetuated in many nations. It is stated in the Phœnician

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<sup>1</sup> Bronze.

and Hindoo mythologies, that in the seventh generation two brothers were born who discovered iron and the forging thereof, and these nations had deities whose names signify heating and hammering. This great inventor was deified in *Vulcan*, the blacksmith god of Greece and Rome.

The Talmud says that the sister of Tubal Cain, Naamah, was the inventor of spinning and weaving. Was ever talent so concentrated in one family? renowned since the earliest ages as agriculturists, artisans, metallurgists, musicians, manufacturers!

With what gigantic strides the world went forward! How rapid the growth of the arts and sciences! Though there is no hint in the Bible of an antediluvian literature, it seems almost certain, inferentially, that such must have existed. A people so numerous and advanced in civilization, with a history of thousands of years, with but one mode of speech, with the social status consequent upon the consolidation of men in cities, must necessarily have used some kind of written language—and here tradition comes to enlighten us. It asserts that the patriarch Seth, foreseeing the coming destruction, inscribed upon two stone pillars the most important part of human knowledge; and books purporting to have been written by Seth and Enoch still exist in Asia. It is also said that Noah, when warned of the coming Flood, was commanded to write a history of the beginning, procedure, and consummation of all things, and bury it at Sippara. Chaldean history also mentions an antediluvian sage called “Aleton of Sippara.” This word Sippara signifies The City of Books! a flash of light thrown backward into the dark night of antediluvian mystery!

Progress must have been inconceivably rapid in that early time. Give a man a thousand years of mature strength in which to perfect his inventions, and who can calculate his achievements! In our little space, we toil and scheme and plan; but with ideas half developed, with designs half formed, with labor half accomplished, we pass into the land of silence and forgetfulness and our great interests perish! How ephemeral appear our manufactories, railroads, aqueducts, mines, agricultural operations, and political schemes! How our greatest enterprises sink into insignificance before the stupendous undertakings of those primeval days, when the vigorous young earth yielded her treasures to the energy of men whose strong hearts could beat on firmly for a thousand years! Yet let us remember all that has been accomplished since the discovery of this continent four hundred years ago, less than half the term of one antediluvian life, and this has been effected not by a few master spirits, who could, with unbroken health, direct their energies to one object for eight or nine hundred years, but by the ill-matching fragmentary efforts of thousands of inharmonious minds. The period was longer, certainly, between the creation of man and the Deluge than that since the Christian era, and when we reflect upon the inventions, explorations, colonizations and general progress of humanity since that time, we may arrive at some proximate calculation as to the probable condition of the world under the favorable circumstances before alluded to. It is not improbable that antediluvian civilization exceeded our own!

Traditions of the Fall of Man are almost universal in the human family. Dr. Kitto has collected some of the most remarkable.

“The Chinese believe that man was originally innocent, happy, and dutiful to the gods. But a desire for knowledge, or the temptation of his wife, overcame him, and he lost his self-control and spiritual life. The lower animals became his enemies ; his days, which had before been prolonged to an incredible length, were shortened, the spontaneous production of the earth ceased, virtue and happiness left the world.”

In the Hindoo religion we find some remarkable myths. Brahma made men free from guilt and with no need of religious observances. Their lives were careless, happy and instinctively pure. But, unhappily, Kali, which means Time or the Devil, infused into their nature the seeds of evil, their perfections were impaired, sin gained strength, and mortals became subject to pain. Then Chrisna, one of the incarnate gods, pitying the afflictions of dying mortals, fought the serpent monarch Kali Naga, who had poisoned the river of life, and after a prolonged and fearful struggle destroyed the monster. “It is a remarkable coincidence that the Sanscrit name of the serpent king is Naga, the plural of which Nacigs, and the Hebrew word used for the tempter of Eve is Nachash ;” and there is assuredly a striking similarity in the name of the incarnate Saviour of the Hindoo Chrisna and that of our Christ. The Hindoo sacred writings represent the tree of life as bearing fruit of fire, while its leaves distil the water of life. When men stole the fruit and learned the use of fire, the gods, enraged at their impiety, shortened their lives and subjected them to innumerable evils.

The Greek legend is, that man was created sinless and happy, but Prometheus stole fire from heaven and

men learned its use. To punish them for their audacity Jupiter ordered Vulcan to form a woman from clay, upon whom the gods bestowed every grace, but gave her an evil heart. Pandora came to earth, bringing with her a mysterious casket which she was commanded not to open. Man gladly accepted the divine gift, but disobeyed the command, and from the opened casket issued trouble, disease, grief and every evil, which became disseminated throughout the world. The gods, pitying the infirmity of man's nature, had placed one antidote to his misfortune in the bottom of the box—hope, which would sustain him in the midst of the greatest trials.

Apollo is sometimes represented as shooting the serpent Python with his arrows, and for this act was crowned in the vale of Tempe with a garland of the leaves or fruit of the forbidden tree.

It was also related that in a garden in the west (Hesperides), a dragon guarded a tree which bore golden apples. Hercules, a demigod, destroyed the serpent and gathered the apples. A garden was consecrated to his worship, and here, it was said, grew two remarkable trees, one of which distilled drops of blood. Women were excluded from this garden, and lions and a flaming sword were placed before the entrance to prevent the approach of the unholy.

There was a remarkable ceremony in the worship of Bacchus, where the god was drawn in a car by lions and other wild beasts, while men in attendance with serpents in their hands waved them around, shouting frantically, *Eva! Eva!*

Upon antique bas-reliefs and gems is sometimes seen

a man and woman standing naked and disconsolate under a tree, and at a little distance a grand looking person sits upon a rock strangling a serpent.

In the ancient Persian book called the Bundelesh is a story of the Fall of Man, through the temptation of a serpent, very much like the Mosaic account.

A traditional remembrance of antediluvian longevity is also preserved. The Chaldeans believed there were ten antediluvian kings whose lives were prolonged thousands of years. The Hindoo writings mention ten wonderful men as the ten fathers, whose lives were of incredible length. The Persian sacred books state that the Iranian or Aryan race began with the reign of ten men of the ancient law who lived on Homa, the pure water of life, and preserved their sanctity. The Chinese begin their history with the lives of ten divine men who were the first emperors. The Scandinavians believed in the ten ancestors of Odin; and the Arabs that ten kings ruled over the Adites, the primordial people of their country.

We have obtained, from the brief but most valuable material of our own sacred writings, and from corroborative traditions of many nations, a tolerably perfect idea of the condition and character of primitive man. We find him located in a genial climate, with all the requisites for a dense population, skilled in agriculture, raising domestic animals, advanced in the useful and fine arts, music and architecture certainly, with religion, and, from traditional hints, a literature, with cities and necessarily by implication, organized society, means of transportation and commerce and a chronology of many thousands of years. Let us make our humble obeisance to these grand

men of the olden time whom we have sometime in our ignorance imagined were half-clad savages.

We will now turn our attention to primitive man as exhibited by the science of geology, which conveys a very different impression with regard to the men of remote antiquity, and which has been supposed to be in irreconcilable conflict with the dictum of Scripture and tradition. The sincere inquirer for truth will desire to ascertain if there is any way to harmonize the apparent contradiction.

In comprehensive works on geology there are allusions to, and speculations on, primitive man and his imperfect civilization. Remains of human bones, weapons and utensils of stone and bronze, pointed axes, chipped flint sharpened for cutting or notched for sawing, are found in various parts of Europe and America, buried in alluvium, in sand deposits of caves, in dried up river beds and in other sand drifts. Near them are found the bones of enormous brutes, where they had been thrown after the flesh was removed; some of the larger bones are crushed as if for the purpose of removing the marrow. The flint weapons are encrusted with a white powder, a disintegration of their own substance, which proves their great age. There are conclusive indications that, at the period of the earth's development called the quarternary, some portions of its surface from a high temperature had suddenly become excessively cold. Various theories are advanced to explain this change. It is thought by some geologists, that uncommon volcanic throes, when the crust of the earth was less hardened than at present, temporarily raised the altitude of the continents to the line of perpetual frost. By others it is supposed that grand cosmical changes caused by the earth's position in the great cycle, called the

precession of the equinoxes, may, in some manner unknown, have produced these great variations in the earth's temperature, carrying it through warm or cold spaces. The latest theory is, that there have been since the creation many ice ages, the result of a double complication in the motion of the earth ; the oscillation of its axis, and a change in the form of its orbit round the sun ; these movements being caused by the combined attraction of the heavenly bodies, the slow adjustments requiring about twenty-four thousand years for their consummation.

An excess of water had frozen during the last cold period, and immense glaciers ground and thundered their way across the newly risen continents. A change to a more genial climate followed ; as soon as the slowly rising temperature would permit, a hardy vegetation was produced, and monstrous animals appeared, unlike any now existing : the megatherium, megalonyx, hipparion, mammoths, aurochs, enormous bulls and deer, gigantic cave bears, hyenas, and lions.

The savage men of whom we have spoken then appeared, dwelling in caves, and subsisting by hunting and fishing. Only two human skulls of this age have been found, one of them is of average size and fair cranial development. These men must have lived miserable lives, suffering greatly from cold and a precarious sustenance, depending upon the success of their encounters with the fierce carnivora around them which they sometimes decoyed into pitfalls and traps. Rough drawings of these strange animals have been found scratched upon slate, ivory, and bone, the work of primordial artists.

An advance in the civilization of these savage men is discovered in more finished and polished implements,

and rude attempts at ornaments found in peat-beds and mounds. Here are seen the familiar bones of our domestic and wild animals, the horse, stag, sheep, goat, wild boar, wolf, dog, fox, badger, and hare. The most interesting of these relics are the lake villages of Switzerland, Savoy, Italy and Greece. The lake dwellers drove long piles into the muddy bottom of the lakes and upon them constructed platforms and huts, from which they went in rafts or boats in the morning to hunt or gather fruits, retiring to them on the approach of night. The lakes under these villages have been carefully dredged, and in the debris of their households, beside bones and utensils, have been discovered fragments of rude pottery and even shreds of cloth. The scientific calculate from the known rate of sand and peat deposits that the most remote of these men must have lived tens, possibly hundreds of thousands of years ago. These facts and deductions confirm the disbelief of infidels and stagger the faith of literal Bible students, who understand that creation took place 6000 years ago, and that our book declares Adam to be the only man God ever made.

The conclusions of both are probably erroneous. We have seen that there is no Bible chronology, and no date is given by which any certainty can be attained; on the other hand, the calculations of geologists are also unreliable, for the rate of alluvial deposit at the present day is very variable, and in earlier ages, when geological changes were upon a grander scale, and affected by causes unknown to us, the formations may have been much more rapid or retarded, so that nothing definite can be determined, except that these primeval men did exist in very remote ages, that their mode of life was anomalous,

that contemporary animals were unlike anything known in history.

Allowing their era to be uncertain, whence came these prehistoric men? Unlike the antediluvians of the Bible, they were absolute savages. Were they of Adam's race? The Mosaic account is brief and not conclusive. It mentions but three sons of Adam by name. Abel was early lost, and the descendants of Seth and Cain only are catalogued. Cain was driven away from his early home a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth. In his remorse and terror, he may have wandered far from his friends, leaving in the vicinity of Eden his first son Enoch, the primogenitor of the highly gifted families mentioned. The children born to him after this time may have been the fathers of these wild nomads in Europe and America. Or the children of Adam born during the eight hundred years which he lived subsequent to the birth of Seth may have been the wanderers whose numerous progeny inhabited these far-off regions. There is nothing in the sacred writings irreconcilable with such a theory. Our book is not a history of the world nor a revelation of science; it records the dealings of God in the one particular family who were to be honored by the advent of the Christ. All that is written outside of this history is incidental and incomplete. Of course every syllable is precious, and we are at liberty to form any rational theory, which is consistent with the spirit of the text. One expression in Gen. viii. 21, 22, may have some obscure reference to these primitive men and the cold period: "And the Lord said '\* \* \* I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake \* \* \*' While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and

night, shall not cease," implying that such a miserable state of things had existed.

Setting aside these theories, it is possible that the primitive men of geology were *not* of Adam's race; if they were not, the authenticity of the Bible is not impugned, for it nowhere states that Adam was the only man God ever created, and the fact that we have so believed, certainly does not make it so. It is said that "He made of one blood all the nations of the Earth." That may have been true at the time when the statement was made, but it does not follow that it includes the primordial ages; there may have been Preadamite, as there may yet be Postadamite races on this earth, so in any event there is no necessary discrepancy between the Bible and geology in this respect.

The position occupied by these savage men and their era will probably be left a subject for harmless speculation forever; but there was *another* class of beings who inhabited the antediluvian world, and mingled in the affairs of men, of whom we have definite information, but of whose existence we have remained in profound ignorance. I allude to incarnate angels, who formed the most intimate connections with mortal women and left upon earth a progeny physically magnificent and spiritually corrupt, "the earth was filled with violence through them," until the endurance of a patient God was exhausted.

The most dreadful calamity recorded in the annals of the world is now impending; a cataclysm of extraordinary extent is to sweep away the vast population we have been contemplating, and all their wonderful works must perish with them! What could have moved a benevolent Crea-

tor to inflict such a tremendous punishment? We read in Gen., 6th chapter, "And when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all they choose \* \* \* There were giants on the earth in those days, and also after the sons of God came unto the daughters of men, they bore children to them. These were the mighty men, who of old were the men of renown" (revised version of the Am. Bible Union). "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thought of his heart was only evil continually" \* \* \* "and God said to Noah: 'The end of all flesh is come before me, for the earth is filled with violence through them, and behold I will destroy them with the earth.'" Here is the answer to our inquiry. As we have been taught, this means that the worshippers of Jehovah, the Sethites, had married the daughters of Cain, who, it is presumed, were ungodly persons. This explanation has not one word in the Book to justify it—it is far-fetched and absurd, and would make a merciful and benevolent Deity liable to the charge of gross inconsistency. Have not such marriages often taken place since that time? Is not the history of the Jewish as well as the Christian church full of the record of similar unions? And are they not common at the present time? And more, have there not been committed since the Deluge, crimes and abominations as horrible as the heart of man could devise, which, according to God's own law, are vastly more odious and deadly than any mere marriage could possibly be, and yet no such sweeping retribution as the great Deluge has followed? Let us lay

aside the theories of commentators, who are warping the text to meet a hypothesis or a prejudice, and try to get its meaning as we should if it were a story of the early history of England or France. The first thing to determine would be, who the sons of God were. In Job we read, "the sons of God came together, and Satan came also among them, etc.," and again, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." This last passage refers to the creation of the world, before man existed, and in both cases it evidently means angels; and in the book of Daniel, where the three men walked in the fiery furnace, a fourth form appeared who struck terror to the beholders because it "was like the form of a son of God," a supernatural, celestial being.

The "sons of God" who married the daughters of men it is apparent were angels, and their children were the giants, mighty men, wicked and violent, who filled the earth with superhuman crime and iniquity. This certainly is the common-sense meaning as it would strike the candid reader, but fearing it might be erroneous, and that some other interpretation might be found in the original writing, I consulted the eminent Hebraist, Prof. C. M. Mead, of Andover, whose opinion, kindly given, was substantially as follows: "The phrase 'Bne Elohim', sons of God," occurs in Gen. vi. 2, 4, and in Job i. 6, and ii. 1. In these cases the Hebrew is the same. In Dan iii. 25, the phrase "*son* of God" has the Chaldee rather than the Hebrew form. In Psalms xxix. 1, and lxxxix. 6, where the English reads "Oh ye mighty," the Hebrew is Bne Elim—no doubt the same as Elohim. In all these passages, unless we except those in Genesis, the phrase undoubtedly means *angels*. *There* it probably would have

been so understood but for the apparent absurdity. The feeling has been, that the marriage of angels with women was impossible, therefore the expression "sons of God" cannot refer to angels. There are, however, many among more recent commentators, who hold that we are to understand the phrase to have the same meaning as in Job, and I confess I belong to the latter class. The word *Ha Adam*, means mankind, the same word which is used in referring to the daughters of men, and the very antithesis, "daughters of men" and "sons of God," make it almost impossible to understand the latter as *of men*. The phrase *daughters of men* means simply women; there is nothing to suggest the meaning of *bad* women (Cainites). Further, it is difficult to see how the marriage of pious men with wicked women would have produced the consequences described. The giants, it is apparent, were the products of this union, and it is absurd to suppose such a result would be the consequence of an incongruity in the character of the parents; but we can readily believe such a progeny may have been produced if the marriage was a thoroughly unnatural one. It also seems reasonable that such a sweeping destruction as the Deluge should be necessary, in case of a corruption of both the physical and spiritual nature, rather than in that of simple spiritual depravity.

The statement, "the same became mighty men, which were of old, (the) men of renown," is easily and naturally explained by supposing it refers to mythological heroes and demi-gods, the progeny of gods in union with mortals.

The New Testament throws light upon this subject. In Jude vi. 7 we read, "And the angels, which kept not

their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them, in like manner giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire," also in 2 Peter ii. 4, "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment, and spared not the old world, bringing in the flood upon the ungodly, and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes."

It may be also observed that, if a forbidden connection between the descendants of Seth and Cain is implied in the text under consideration (of which there is not the slightest indication), it is very singular that there were no marriages between pious women and ungodly men. Such a one-sided connection is well-nigh inconceivable.

And again, how can we explain the expression "saw that the daughters of men were fair?" Is it likely that beauty was confined to the Cainites, wicked women? But the sense is made plain if it describes an unnatural course of angelic beings.

Looked at according to the ordinary and only safe rules of interpretation, we can understand this passage to mean nothing less than that the angels that kept not their first estate, left their habitation and went after strange flesh, and that the consequences of this un-

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<sup>1</sup> This theory throws light on the passage 1 Cor. xi. 10: "For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head *because of the angels.*"

natural union were wiped out by the Flood. The statement of our Saviour, that the angels neither marry nor are given in marriage, proves nothing more than that such is the normal and at present actual condition of angels. In Noah's time the rule was violated, and an exceptional punishment followed the exceptional sin.

A careful examination of the story of the destruction of the cities of the plain will, by showing the parallel drawn in these two passages, as also by our Saviour in Luke xvii. 26, 28, classing the Deluge and destruction of Sodom together, place this interpretation beyond a doubt.

This view of the subject clears up the mystery of the allusion in Isaiah xiv. 12, etc. : "How art thou fallen Lucifer, son of the morning ! \*\*\* For thou hast said, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. \*\* Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee and consider, saying : Is this the man that made the earth to tremble and did shake kingdoms, that made the world as a wilderness and destroyed the cities thereof ? that opened not the house of his prisoners ? \*\*\*\*"

"Prepare slaughter for his children, for the iniquity of their fathers, that they do not rise nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities." In this passage the punishment of Babylon seems compared with the fall and punishment of some angel who aspired to subvert the government of Jehovah. If the meaning of the word Babylon as given in the chapter on Ophiolatry is correct, it may be a generic name, not for one particular city only,

but used, as in the Revelations, to signify the kingdom of the Evil One.

We will again sound our historical bell and catch its faint vibrations. Numerous traditions confirm the statement of the Bible. The demi-gods of Greek and Roman mythology appear no longer impossibilities. They refer to the demi-celestials of the Mosaic writings. The oldest Persian books describe the great wickedness of the children of the Wicked One, who lived in the early ages of the world and who perished in an extraordinary rain-storm sent for their destruction.

The Aztec tradition is, that a race of giants lived on the earth before the Flood, who were exceedingly wicked.

The reputed writings of Seth, still existing in Asia, contain the story of the love of Star Spirits for the women of this world, by which a race of genii were produced. Fragments of the lost book of Enoch, translated into Greek, relate that two hundred angels came down to reside near Mount Hermon, (was this "the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north?") lured from heaven by the love of beautiful women. The names of some of them are still preserved: Urakarbarmiel, Sanyanza, Zamiel, Akbiel. A race of giants were the fruits of these marriages. The Apochryphal Book of Tobit contains a similar story of the love of Asmodeus,<sup>1</sup> an evil spirit, for Sarah, a beautiful and pious woman.

The views here advanced are in contravention of many of our old prejudices, but I believe they will be found in accordance with the truth for which we seek, and to whose majesty we must all sooner or later bow.

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<sup>1</sup> Asmodeus, literally, the spirit of concupiscence.

We can hardly conceive the appalling condition of the earth while under this perverted angelic sway! If the allusion to the ambition and fall of Lucifer in Isaiah is a reference to this strange period of the world's history, we there get a glimpse of the proud despotic cruelty which over-mastered the sons of men, and in its towering ambition aspired even to the partnership of God's everlasting throne, "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven; I will make my throne above the stars of God; \* \* I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High."

How bright and beautiful in form, how grasping in intellect and evil, must have been the sons of such a father! Lucifer, the light bearer! "Mighty men, the men of renown," Demigods! How vainly we strive to imagine the pursuits, achievements and adventures of their lives, the magnificence of their dress and equipage, the cities they built, the empires they wielded! and we shudder at the thought of their terrible capacity and power for evil! These are the men "that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms, that made the world a wilderness and destroyed the cities thereof, that opened not the house of their prisoners! The earth was filled with violence through them."

From this investigation we learn that no definite chronology can be determined from our sacred writings; that the age of the world at the time of the Deluge was much greater than has been commonly supposed; that a portion of the earth at least was densely populated and advanced in civilization; that probably the human race, from the migration of Cain or the later sons of Adam, was already scattered over the earth, far from their early home, and

the pre-historic men of geological discovery *may have been* their descendants. We have also learned that the sin which required such a tremendous punishment was of no ordinary character. Wicked celestial beings had descended upon the earth and subverted its government. Becoming incarnate, they walked the earth and mingled in its affairs. Their union in marriage with women produced an unnatural race and unnatural crime, which made necessary a dreadful extermination.

We have obtained a new idea of the spiritual world, and can more clearly comprehend the words of St. Paul: "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a *spiritual body*." Perhaps embodied spirits are even now permitted to visit the earth, but our vision, enfeebled like our vitality, cannot discern them, as the gifted antediluvians and their immediate successors, Abraham, Lot, Jacob and Elisha, could do.

The monstrous crimes and cruelties introduced into the world by the unnatural beings who possessed it at this momentous era have never been approximated, it is probable, even in the worst days of Sodom and Gomorrah, of decadent Rome, or revolutionary France. Powerful in will and intelligence, giants in physical strength, relying upon the aid of their immortal sires, abandoned to iniquity, with what intolerable tyranny would they oppress common humanity! How soon would all earthly power be subjected to their control! How easily bend all law to their desire, bear down all opposition and overwhelm the pious worshippers of Jehovah! Men had given up the unequal strife, and drifted with the stream of ungodliness. Perhaps they thought God was powerless or indifferent, and had abandoned the world to their sway. "For they say

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the Lord hath forsaken the earth, the Lord seeth not." If vengeance is coming, why the long delay? They forgot that in the execution of God's eternal affairs there is no haste for man's impatience and no delay for his despair. The machinery of the universe moved on; a few more revolutions, a few more years of triumphant and confident sin, and the gathered vengeance came—the unalterable decree was passed that sealed their doom: "Behold the end of all flesh is come before me, and I will destroy them with the earth!" One man alone had preserved his integrity, one man alone realized the danger, his solemn prophetic voice startled them from their security "Repent! Repent!" it cried, "before the thunders of insulted Heaven shall burst upon your guilty heads!" They laughed at his earnestness, they sneered at his fanaticism! The warning fell unheeded. Reckless and besotted they rushed on to destruction. "They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they married and were given in marriage," while the awful shadow upon the Dial of Eternity crept steadily forward to the hour of DOOM.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE DELUGE.

“ The area covered by the water, when compared with the huge bulk of the earth, would be but as a dent made by the thumb upon the rind of an apple ! ”

**A**T the period which closed our last subject were heard the mutterings of the overwhelming storm which was soon to burst upon a guilty world.

That portion of the earth nearest the cradle of the human race was densely populated ; the arts and sciences were greatly advanced, for the knowledge our first parents had obtained at so dear a price had produced abundant fruit ; but a strange transformation had come over the human family. A terrible race of beings, the offspring of angels and women, were filling the earth. They were physically powerful, “ there were giants in those days,” and they were of grasping ambition, intellect and energy, “ mighty men, the men of renown.” But they were powerful only for evil, their fathers were fallen angels and their mothers sinful women, and the children inherited a double portion of power, capacity, and proclivity to sin. Their nature was entirely corrupt, and they filled the earth with violence and wickedness, “ every imagination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil continually.”

In consequence of this anomalous and abominable condition of the earth, the Creator determined to destroy the impious race and all their works by a Deluge of water. He confided his purpose to one righteous man a hundred and twenty years previous to its execution, and commanded him to construct an immense floating vessel, which, buoyed up on the coming flood, should preserve the men and animals destined to repopulate the earth. This distinguished man was Noah; his name is taken from an *Aryan* root *Na*, which, in all the words derived from that ancient stock, indicates something pertaining to water; in the Greek, *naein* means to flow, *nana* water, *nachein* to swim. Neptune, the sea god, *Njord* and *Nichus* in the Norse mean water spirits. A Phrygian legend places the great deluge in the reign of King *Nanachus*.

The vessel he was to build, if we understand the specifications, was to be five hundred forty-seven feet in length, ninety-one feet wide and forty-seven feet high, three times the size of a British man-of-war. It was to be finished in three stories, with a door, and as we read in our version "a window," but that word does not occur in the original, the Hebrew word signifies "a transparency," or "translucency." Now the translators, who warped every word to conform to their preconceived ideas, and who thought of course the antediluvians knew nothing of the manufacture of glass, substituted the indefinite word "a window," though the original idea is that something was placed there which would admit the light, but exclude the water—glass or its equivalent. The word translated Ark is not the same as that used to designate the Ark of the covenant,

which is *Arun*—it is the word *Tebah*, and probably means something “very unlike the awkward chest we see in pictures of the Deluge.” This enormous vessel occupied more than a hundred years in construction, and must have exposed the builder to the incessant ridicule of the haughty people around him, who could see no use for such an unwieldy ship so far from navigable water.

As the memorable event which followed, so circumstantially described by the Bible, is one of the few in the world’s history from which chronology dates, it will be interesting to review some of the traditions of the Deluge, reminiscences of which are found among all tribes except the black race. This exception is significant.

The Greek tradition is one of the most detailed and beautiful. “The first age of the world was a Golden Age. After the fall of man came the Silver Age, when cold seasons, short days, and unfruitful grounds appeared. The Brazen Age succeeded, when men became savage of temper, and wars began. After this came the dreadful Iron Age, virtue left the world, and crime, dishonor, violence and rage filled the earth. At a council of the gods it was decided to destroy the inhabitants of the world. Jupiter was about to launch a thunderbolt upon the earth, but fearing so vast a conflagration might set the heavens on fire, he resolved to destroy it by water. He chained up the north wind, and let loose furious tempests upon the earth, the rain poured in torrents, Neptune heaved the land with an earthquake and dashed a mighty tidal wave over it. Then was everything living destroyed and all the works of man were swept away. One mountain-top, Parnassus, was left above the water, and there a pious man Deuca-

lion and his wife Pyrrha, who had been floating on a raft, were grounded. The north wind was let loose, the storms were driven away, the sea retreated. Deucalion then addressed Pyrrha, 'Oh, wife, only surviving woman, joined to me by marriage and still closer by the ties of a common danger, let us seek yonder temple and inquire the will of the gods.' They went to the dank slimy temple, and, prostrate on their faces, implored direction and guidance. The answer came confused as oracles always were: 'Depart with head veiled and garments unbound and cast behind you the bones of your mother.' Dismayed they sought the depths of the forest, to revolve the command of the oracle in their mind. 'We cannot,' said they, 'profane the remains of our parent.' At length Deucalion spoke: 'I think I understand, the earth is our mother, the stones are her bones, these we can cast behind us.' They joyfully made the attempt, and the stones cast by Deucalion became men and those cast by Pyrrha became women."<sup>1</sup>

The Lithuanians have a tradition that the god Pramzimas finding the earth grown wicked, sent the giants Wandu and Wejas (wind and water) to destroy it. They overturned everything in their rage, only a few men saved themselves on a mountain. Pramzimas, who was eating a nut of heaven, let the shell fall on the mountain, the men crept into it, and the giants dared not touch it. After the flood subsided, they all went away but an old man and his wife, who were childless. Pramzimas sent a rainbow to give them hope, and told them to dance on the bones of the earth. This they did nine times, and nine

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1 Bullfinch's Age of Fable.

couples being produced, from them sprung the nine Lithuanian tribes.”<sup>1</sup>

An old Sanscrit poem runs thus: “To Manu (this word means the intelligent being ‘Man’) they bring, in the morning, water to wash. As they bring it \* \* a fish comes into his hands. He spoke to Manu the words, ‘keep me, I shall preserve thee.’ ‘From what?’ said Manu. The fish said: ‘The flood will carry away all these creatures, I shall preserve thee from it.’ ‘How canst thou be kept?’ said Manu. ‘First thou must keep me in a jar; if I outgrow it, keep me in a hole thou must dig in the ground; if I outgrow this, take me to the sea and I shall be saved from destruction.’ He soon became a large fish. He said to Manu: ‘When I am full grown, in the same year the flood will come. Build a ship then and worship me, and when the flood rises go into the ship; I shall preserve thee!’ Manu brought the fish to the sea. \* \* And in the year which he had pointed out, Manu had built the ship and worshipped the fish. When the flood had risen, he went into the ship. The fish came swimming to him, and Manu fastened a rope to the horn of the fish, who carried him by it over the northern mountain. The fish said: I have preserved thee, bind the ship to a tree \* \* \* as the water will sink, thou wilt slide down. Manu slid down with the water, and this is called the slope of Manu on the northern side. Manu was then saved; the flood had carried all the other creatures away. Then he offered sacrifices to be the model for all future generations. By this sacrifice he obtained a daughter who became supernaturally the mother of humanity.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Kitto.

<sup>2</sup> Max Muller.

An ancient Parsee book states that the world having become corrupted by Ahriman, the evil one, it was thought necessary to bring over it a flood of waters that all impurity might be washed away. Accordingly the rain came down in drops as large as the head of a bull, until the earth was covered with water to the height of a man, and all the Kharfaters, creatures of the evil one, perished. The waters then gradually subsided and a new race was created.

The Chaldean story is very similar to that of the Bible, even to the sending of birds out of the Ark; it also mentions the wickedness of a giant race.

“The North American Indians believe that the Great Father of their tribes lived toward the rising sun. Having been warned in a dream of a coming deluge, he constructed a raft on which he saved himself with his family and some animals. After floating for many months, the animals who had the power of speech murmured against him. At last a new earth appeared, and he stepped down upon it with the creatures, who thenceforth lost the power of speech as a punishment for their complaints against their preserver.”

Perhaps the most remarkable tradition is that found by the Spaniards in Mexico preserved in a written form. “The first Age of the World called Atonatiuh or Sun of the Water was terminated by a universal deluge. A man named Coxcox and his wife with their children and many animals and seeds were saved on a raft of cypress wood,” (supposed to be identical with the gopher wood of the Bible). “When the Great Spirit Tezcatlicopa ordered the water to subside, Coxcox sent out a vulture which did not return, but remained to feed upon the dead bodies

scattered on the earth. He then sent out a humming bird who returned holding a branch in its mouth with green leaves upon it." Whence came those wonderful Aztecs, with a written account of the Great Deluge so far from the scene of the disaster and the supposed centre of civilization ?

"There was a story current among the Indians of Cholula, that the great Flood took place four thousand eight hundred years after the Creation. Before that event the world was inhabited by giants, and all who did not perish were transformed into fishes, except seven persons who were preserved in a cave." <sup>1</sup>

Noah as the preserver of the human race has been deified under many names. The rites and symbols dedicated to Osiris, Bacchus, Saturn, Uranus, Deucalion, Minos, Janus and the Scandinavian Boré, all indicate that the Patriarch Noah is the original character.

The most famous temple of Osiris was at Thebes in Egypt, which city was named from the temple. Theba is the word translated ark, and in this temple, as well as in all those dedicated to Osiris, there was placed a sacred shrine in form of a boat. The city of Apamana in Phrygia was formerly called Kibotos, The Ark, and a famous medal there evidently refers to the Deluge—the Greek letters Noe engraven upon it certifies the design.

In this traditional review of our subject we find a gratifying confirmation of the Mosaic account of this most memorable cataclysm ; we will now investigate the

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<sup>1</sup> Le Normant.

subject in its material character, and this will involve two most interesting questions. First, was the Great Deluge universal? did it encompass the entire globe with a depth of water sufficient to submerge the loftiest mountains? And second, what was the character of the convulsion and how was it effected?

The answer to our first inquiry has generally been in the affirmative, but modern science declares this to be impossible. Moses is, therefore, proclaimed to be an ignorant impostor. All the water connected with this sphere in earth and air, it is asserted, would not amount to such an incredible bulk. Now we must not limit the power of Deity; He certainly *might* have accomplished such a result by some means inconceivable to us, perhaps by driving the earth through some cosmite mass in a fluid state, but before we attempt to defend such an improbable supposition, let us examine the Mosiac record carefully, and we shall perceive that our Author does not intend to convey any such preposterous idea.

We have formerly shown that the original Hebrew text is liable to misinterpretation, that the early annotators and translators tinged the historical scripture with their own ignorant ideas, so that many mistakes and errors have been promulgated, for which the authors of the original writings are not accountable. Our version reads: "The water prevailed exceedingly upon the earth and all the high hills were covered, and all flesh died, *all* in whose nostrils was the breath of life of all that was in the dry land died." That seems conclusive, but the word here translated *all* is the Hebrew word Kol, the same that is used in speaking of the famine in Egypt, "and

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the famine was over *all* the face of the earth, and *all* countries came to Egypt to buy corn.”<sup>1</sup>

It is stated that *all* the cattle of Egypt died of murrain, and afterward that the hail destroyed all that was in the field of man or beast, and every herb of the field, and every tree, and after this even, it is stated that “the locusts did eat every herb of the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left.”<sup>2</sup> These passages are contradictory if we are to understand the word *all* as meaning the whole. Also we read: “This day will I put the dread of thee, and the fear of thee upon *all* the nations that are under the whole heaven.” Nobody would pretend that the Aborigines of North America or the people of Great Britain or the Australians or Chinese went to Egypt to buy grain, or were in dread of the Jews. The truth is, the word KOL, which in these instances is translated *all*, does not always signify a totality; it often just as clearly means, a *great part* or *many* as it does *all*. Substitute either of these words, and the sense of the passage will be entirely altered: “Many of the high hills were covered, a great part of flesh died, a great part of those in whose nostrils is the breath of life.” This last rendering, just as correct and truthful as the other, obviates all scientific difficulty, and we may therefore safely adopt it.

Our English text is another instance of the tendency to exaggeration in the early translators, “men who lived in a superstitious and unscientific age.”

There is other conclusive though indirect proof in the Bible that the Deluge was not universal. It is inti-

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. xii. 56, 57; Deut. ii. 25.      <sup>2</sup> Ex. chaps. ix. x. and xii.

mated very strongly that the excessive corruption of the Sethites, worshippers of Jehovah, was the sin which brought such a severe punishment. The descendants of Cain it is to be presumed were not included in this number, for "Cain went out from the presence of the Lord." We read that some of his family were living and increasing, separated from the Sethites.<sup>1</sup> Why are they not mentioned as included in the destruction? Our answer is, they were not guilty of the peculiar crime for which the greater part of the family of man were destroyed. It is a singular fact (before alluded to) that among the black races there is no tradition of the Deluge, though they have preserved a reminiscence of the Fall of Man. The mark set upon Cain may have been a black color, transmitted to his posterity like any peculiarity.

Another expression confirms the theory of their exemption. In speaking of Jabal, son of Lamech, son of Cain, it is said, "He was the father of such as dwell in tents." The precise meaning in the Hebrew seems to imply those who *now*, at the *present time*, dwell in tents (*i. e.*), when the author of the book of Genesis was writing. Of course if they were included in the diluvial destruction, none of the race would then have been in existence, as only Noah of the family of Seth was preserved.<sup>2</sup>

One more expression places the matter beyond a doubt. In speaking of the sons of Japhet immediately after the Deluge, it is said of Gomer and Javan, "By these were the *isles of the Gentiles* divided in their land."<sup>3</sup> The word *Gentiles* means heathen nations. Who were

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. iv.

<sup>2</sup> Le Normant.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. x. 5.

these heathens whose country the sons of Japhet took possession of? They certainly were not the family of Noah, for his children were not heathen! It is perfectly plain, "*all* flesh" was not destroyed. Moses incidentally mentions some who were excepted: he does not describe the Deluge as universal, although it included that immense portion of the human family who had remained in the genial climate of "the homestead of nations."

History places its seal of approval upon this theory. The ancient records of the tribes of Noah state, that when the family was broken up and dispersed by the confusion of language, the wanderers found people already in the countries to which they emigrated. The oldest Zend writers describe these people as having black complexions and short, crisp hair. The earliest Sanscrit Vedas call the land where the Solar Aryans settled *Hindu-stan*, *the land of the blacks*, from the color of the natives, with whom they struggled successfully for supremacy. And Egypt is spoken of as being "inhabited by impure beings." May not these be "the Gentiles" whose land the energetic sons of Japhet divided among themselves?

The large territory in which occurred the most terrible historical disaster was admirably adapted, by soil, climate, and water roads, to sustain a densely packed population. It extended westward from the terminus of the Himalaya Mountains, a vast fertile plain stretching across the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates to the Mediterranean Sea. Reaching to the sea on the north, the area was nearly as large as the continent of Europe, which at this day contains three hundred million souls; a capacity which will convey some idea of the probable

density of the population crowded upon that fertile portion of the earth's surface, soon to be the theatre of an awful exhibition of the power and wrath of offended Deity.

Having shown that the Great Deluge was limited in extent, we will now consider our second important question : How was the Deluge effected ? and was it supernatural in character ; that is, was it a miracle in the ordinary acceptation of the word, a violation of natural law, or was it the result of natural forces, directed by the Almighty Power in an unusual manner ?

This question must be answered not by any wild theories but according to strictly scientific principles.

There is a law or principle in nature, by which the material universe is kept in order and harmony ; without it, stars would shoot madly from their spheres, planet would dash against planet ; there would indeed be a "wreck of matter and a crash of worlds." This principle drives the sun one hundred and fifty millions of miles every year towards a point in the northern heavens through the arc of a circle so vast, that twenty-four thousand years must pass before it completes one revolution, and one precession of the Equinoxes be finished. It is the same law which keeps the earth true to her governor, circling round him for ages, in a helicoid or screw spiral with inconceivable rapidity and dragging her satellite along. It causes an oscillation of the axis of the earth inconceivably small in space, inconceivably vast in time, so infinitesimally graduated, so steadily performed that without tremor or variation it swings this vast globe backward and forward a few degrees only, once in twenty-four thousand years ! The other planets observe the same law, Neptune and Uranus wading through

the depths of outer space with a whirl and rush that our dizzy brains cannot calculate. The same law controls the far-off stars and the immeasurably distant Nebulæ, and yet so perfect is the conservation and correlation of force, so perfect the balance of gravitation, so inconceivably accurate the adjustment of this vast complicated mechanism, that the coming and retreat of these varied masses, their transit across each other's paths, their oppositions and conjunctions, can be calculated to a second, and with them, as with the mighty Being who controls them, "there is no shadow of turning."

In such machinery, "wheels within wheels," the smallest details must be perfected. The same general law suspends the mist that hangs over the brow of the mountain, and directs the flutter of the autumn leaf as it rustles to the ground; it regulates the flight of the comet, the heart beat of the lordly man and the melancholy grating of the cricket's wing.

All the material of the universe responds to this great law. When several planets or other masses of cosmic material are conjoined; that is, when they are in direct line and unite their influence, the equilibrium of the universe is affected, by no means destroyed, and certain unusual events take place. The result of these combinations upon our own globe are those of which we can speak with the most certainty.

The learned nations of antiquity believe that this world is periodically destroyed by deluges and conflagrations. The destruction by water takes place when all the planets conjoin in the constellation Capricorn, and that by fire, when the same event occurs in Cancer. Isaiah, Micah and St. Peter, in the Bible prophesy of a time, "when the

heavens being on fire shall pass away with a great noise and all the elements shall melt with fervent heat." I am not aware that just such a belief prevails in this age, but it is known beyond a doubt, that unusual convulsions which disturb earth and air are positively connected with certain positions and conjunctions of the heavenly bodies. For instance, when Jupiter, Venus and Mercury are in conjunction with the sun, as they are once in about 55 years, they draw heavily upon the earth's atmosphere, the electrical equilibrium is unsettled, convulsions ensue, we have unusually severe earthquakes, tempests, auroral phenomena, and uncommonly hot or cold seasons. When the moon in her rather eccentric circuit round the earth makes her nearest approach, the same disturbances take place and heavy rains and freshets prevail. The slightest variation may produce what seem to us tremendous results. These laws are becoming in some slight degree comprehended, and what little is known has already been of incalculable benefit to the civilized world.

Now in that far distant time of which we have been speaking, the crust of the earth was thinner than it is at present, the cooling and hardening process was not so far advanced, the action of the internal fires was more violent and extensive, the upheaval and sinking of the earth's crust during volcanic convulsion was consequently more extended and rapid, while attendant atmospheric disturbance was proportionally greater. With how slight a combination of cosmical forces could the Mighty Hand which controls the Universe produce, upon this insignificant spot in the creation, the most terrific results! A conjunction of planets provided for at the genesis by the All Knowing One, and coming into position at the hour

of doom, would cause the ribs of earth to heave and sink like the deep-drawn sighing of a man in mortal pain.

The Great Deluge, it is probable, was effected by such causes resulting in volcanic action; the gradual sinking and subsequent upheaval of the earth's crust.

The eminent geologist Hugh Miller clearly elucidated this theory in his last work, "The Testimony of the Rocks." Sir Charles Lyell long ago demonstrated that lakes or seas by the sinking of their barriers could flood the adjoining country, and that the vast low district bordering on the Caspian and Black Seas might easily be submerged in this manner.

"There is a remarkable portion of the globe beginning in Western Asia and stretching into Europe, nearly as large as the latter continent, whose great rivers, the Volga, the Ural, the Sihon, the Koor and the Amoor, do not fall into the sea or communicate with it. They are all, as it were, turned inward, losing themselves in the eastern part in the lakes of a rainless district and in the west falling into seas such as the Caspian and Aral. In this region there are extensive districts still under the level of the ocean! The shore of the Caspian is eighty-three feet beneath that of the Black Sea, and some of the great flat steppes have a mean level of about thirty feet beneath the Baltic. If the trench-like strip of country that communicated between the Caspian Sea and the Gulf of Finland was to be depressed beneath the level of the latter sea, it would so open the fountains of the great deep as to lay under water an extensive and populous region. One of these depressed plains, known as the Low Steppe of the Caucasus, forms no inconsiderable portion of the

great recognized centre of the antediluvian race. Two great mountains, on one of which it is supposed the Ark rested, rise within it; vast plains covered with salt and charged with sea shells show that the Caspian Sea was, at no remote period, vastly more extensive than at present. Now it is possible that this immense area, covered of old by a sea of the tertiary period, which we know united the Caspian with the sea of Aral, may have been again covered for a brief period, by the breaking in of the great deep. Let us suppose that the hour of judgment having at length arrived, the land began gradually to sink, as a tract in the Run of Cutch sank in 1819, or as another tract in the southern part of North America went down in 1821. Let us suppose that the depression took place slowly for forty days, at the rate of four hundred feet per day, which would have been apparent only by the persistent inward flowing of the sea, and that from the same deep-seated cause, and the settling of the vapors into the depressed region, heavy drenching rains continued to descend during the whole time. The rain-fall would have contributed only five or six inches per day to the actual volume of water, but it would have added greatly to its horrors and gloom, by swelling the streams and torrents rushing downward from the hills." The sinking of such an immense portion of the earth's crust would of course push away the melted mass beneath, which would find room under the adjoining ocean beds. "This depression, extending to the Black Sea and Persian Gulf on the one hand, and to the Gulf of Finland and the Mediterranean Sea, would open by three separate channels the fountains of the great deep. Thus an area of two thousand miles square would, at the end of forty days, be sunk in the centre sixteen thousand feet, sufficient to

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bury the loftiest mountain in the district, and yet, having a gradual declension toward the outer edges, the contour of the hills and plains would remain the same apparently. The doomed inhabitants would only perceive the water rising slowly along the mountain sides and one refuge after another swept away, till the last witness of the scene had perished and the last hill-top had disappeared. When after one hundred and fifty days the depressed land had slowly risen, and the Ark had grounded on Ararat, all that could have been seen from that point would be simply a boundless sea, roughened by tides flowing outward by a reversed current toward the distant ocean. The fountains of the great deep would thus be stopped and the water would return from off the earth continually.'

This theory, taken in connection with a clearer understanding of the Hebrew text, solves every scientific difficulty. The area covered by water compared with the huge bulk of the earth, would be but as a dent made by the thumb upon the rind of an apple, easily filled by the waters rushing in tremendous volume over the ruptured barriers of the deep, but extensive and destructive enough to drown hundreds of millions of human beings.

Alas! how powerless, how defenseless is man, when God's agents, the forces of nature, are arrayed against him! He boasts that he can make the elements the servants of his will, he chains the lightning and it flies to do his errands; he imprisons the fire and it toilsomely drags his burdens, or turns for him complicated machinery; but if he inspire one breath of living flame, the strongest man is worthless as the cinder at his feet: He builds great stately ships that come and go at his bidding, defying the roar of the tempest and the fury of the waves, but let

him drop for one moment beneath the surface of a quiet pool, and the minnow that starts in fear from the quick splash is stronger than he! Oh, God, Thou alone art mighty, we bow before Thy awful power!

The men of the old world defied God, violated His laws, scorned the preaching of His faithful servant, neglected his warning, and they must now die! Perhaps some of the more thoughtful are startled by the earnestness of the preparation around and in the enigmatical Ark. The strange docility of the animals puzzles them, the savage and gentle, by some unwonted impulse, go unresisting to their narrow quarters. The door of the Ark is shut, and for seven days of suspense an ominous and oppressive silence broods over all nature. What means this portentous calm? Their spirits sink "as water sinks in wells before the earthquake shock."

On the fatal eighth day, they perceive that water is rising round them. To their horror they discover that it is salt! Whence comes it? there is no sea near. Has the distant ocean burst its bounds? Is it possible that the monomaniac Noah was right in his terrible predictions? His words of fearful warning haunt their quickened sense, why had they not believed him? They were filled with remorse and self-reproach, but there was little time for reflection. The dreadful present absorbed every feeling. What can cause this suffocating heat, this stifling air? The heavens, which had been gathering blackness, now began to pour forth a deluge of water, while the "water upon the earth increased and prevailed exceedingly." Whence came this awful rush? How frightful the persistent roar!

They could no longer disregard it, speculation was

at an end. Awake at last to the imminence of the danger, all order was abandoned and all feeling lost in the instinct of self-preservation. "Let us fly," they shriek, "to the mountains! there, only, is safety!" Famished and exhausted they climbed the highest hills, they would fly to the distant mountains, but they seemed strangely distorted and unfamiliar; their sharply defined outlines were flattened, and oh, horror! their tops pointed, not upward but inward, like a menacing frown! In dismay they turned back, but the relentless flood enclosed them, the waters prevailed exceedingly, they swelled upward, till the earth was one unbounded ocean, in which the few hill tops looked like islands crowded with despairing wretches. Dead bodies, swollen and disfigured, floated past; the terrors of Death overshadowed the pale despairing faces which were upturned to the pall-like sky!

Was there no hope? Where were their high-born fathers powerful to save? Why came they not as in the days that were past, as the cry of despair went up from their beautiful wives?

In vain they waited, they knew not what we know now: "The angels who kept not their first estate, but left their habitation and went after strange flesh, hath God reserved in chains and darkness till the judgment of the Great Day."

"How art thou fallen, Lucifer, son of the morning!"

Forty days of doom rolled slowly away; the confusion of flight, the frantic struggles for safety, the howling of the terrified animals, the shrieks of fear, the groans of death, "the bubbling cry of some strong swimmer in his agony," had all ceased. The last survivor in the apathy of despair had sunk into the wave. The tempest-tossed

sky was again serene, the tranquil moon looked down upon the rippling water, and the pale corpses floating, floating, far out upon a boundless solemn sea.

“It slowly heaved with murmuring moan.  
The waters were calm and the sinners were gone.”

As the grand old Patriarch came forth from his five months imprisonment and his feet again pressed the bosom of a renovated earth from which old Ocean had washed away all stain of sin, the second Book of Earth's history was finished ! But before we lay the volumes aside upon the shelf of memory, let us briefly review our subject and sum up results. Our views of these far-off times must be changed despite the shock to our prejudices. We have found our chronology entirely faulty. The period between the Creation and the Deluge was undoubtedly not sixteen hundred, but thousands of years. The earth was more densely populated than we have believed, some portions of the human race having wandered to remote parts of Europe, Africa and perhaps Eastern Asia. The arts and sciences had made great progress. Cities and manufactories certainly existed in the earliest ages, that fact involves methods of locomotion, mechanical engines, commerce, co-operative labor and social organization. The resources of these primitive men were great as our own, and there were hundreds of years in one life in which to develop them.

Another startling fact has been revealed, the nature of the offence for which the world was destroyed. It was not the ordinary sin of mere mortals ; not only was the government of earth but of high heaven imperilled. Sin had entered the abode of angels. Unnatural marriages had

taken place on earth between celestial beings and mortal women, and the offspring of these strange unions, powerful and depraved, had subverted the government of the world. This was the crime which demanded the exceptional punishment.

We have also seen that the great cataclysm was not universal, that the author of the book of Genesis does not intend to convey the idea that it was, and with pleasure we perceive the perfect harmony between science and the Scriptures. The nature of the Deluge, it is plain, was volcanic, and only supernatural in that the Almighty brought the awful forces of nature, obedient to his unchanging law, to exert an influence in an unusual manner, and by earthquake throes and atmospheric convulsions of unexampled magnitude, produced the most terrible and fatal catastrophe which has ever befallen the human race.

The lessons conveyed by these investigations are many, but that which impresses us most deeply is the unchanging nature of law in the moral world. We all admit the irresistible force of law in material things, mechanics, gravitation, attraction, repulsion, cohesion ; we expect no latitude, their uniformity is never doubted ; certain causes produce uniform effects ; every motion we make, every breath we draw, every plan we form, depends for its success upon the fixedness of natural law ; we are sure no exceptions will be made in our favor. If we put our hand in the fire we expect it to burn ; if we drink poison we know we must suffer, no matter how inconvenient it may be ; but in that invisible, intangible world of spirit, impenetrable by physical sense, of which we have only abstract consciousness, and which is governed by

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spiritual law, we imagine the conditions are different. Let us not deceive ourselves, our Deity is not a God of irresolution and uncertainty, but of eternal order, and his moral, as well as his material law is unswerving, inflexible. In the contemplation of the subject now before us, our attentive souls can catch the distant reverberations of that awful law, whose thunders rolled through the antediluvian ages, unchangeable, inexorable. “*The soul that sinneth it shall die.*” No excuses or mitigating circumstances will divert the law from its course. Adam could plead the seduction of his wife, Cain might complain that “his punishment was greater than he could bear,” the antediluvians might excuse themselves by their unfortunate birth for which they were not responsible, by a wrong education, by innocent thoughtlessness, by vicious example—it availed nothing; they did not repent, and the majesty of the law was vindicated by their destruction. That law has never been annulled, and we may well tremble with the consciousness of guilt. But through the sacrifice of Christ the penalty has been modified, there was for the sinners of old and there is for us, an Ark of salvation provided by God’s mercy, a refuge to which we may all flee when another more dreadful catastrophe, an universal Deluge of fire, shall again sweep away every vestige of sin from this wicked world !

## CHAPTER IV.

CONFUSION OF TONGUES AND SEPARATION OF  
THE TRIBES.

“Two changes from the original tongue would be fatal to social unity.”

WE must now bid a regretful farewell to the antediluvian world ; its wonderful civilization, cities and manufactories, the astonishing longevity of the men, the fatal beauty of the women, the incarnate celestials and their mighty sons, the magnificence and impiety of their rule, these all fade from our vision in the dim mysterious ages, behind that black and hideous gulf whose resistless waters swept them away forever.

Our attention will now be given to a subject very important as a necessary link in the chain of investigation.

With the loss of a common medium for the transmission of ideas, diversities in religion were soon produced, the original truth revealed to Adam and his successors never having been entirely lost, but overgrown with error and superstition. Mankind ever feeling the necessity of some bond between the soul and God, clung to the slender thread of tradition, and, aided by the light of conscience, groped their way toward Him.

In consequence of the confusion of tongues, and the dispersion of the tribes as a result, varieties in race also appeared.

The events which led to these tremendous changes in

the condition and destiny of mankind, are thus related in the Bible. "The whole earth was of one language and one speech, and as they journeyed from the East, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and dwelt there." And they said, "Let us build a city and a tower whose top may reach to heaven, and they had brick for stone and slime for mortar, and the Lord said, the people is one and they have all one language, this they begin to do, and now no thing will be restrained from them. Let us go down and confound their language that they may not understand each other's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of the earth and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel, because the Lord did there confound their language and from thence did the Lord scatter them."

The land of Shinar in Semitic language means, "the land of the two rivers," and without doubt was ancient Chaldea. The two great rivers, the peculiar ruins and the traditions, as well as the superabundant clay used there for brick, and bitumen, a convenient substitute for mortar, all point to that locality.

The strange story evidently left in a very imperfect state in our text, a meagre outline of two very important events, is thus related by Berosus, an ancient Chaldean historian: "They say that the first inhabitants of the world, glorying in their own size and strength, and despising the gods, undertook to raise a tower whose top should reach to the sky, in the place where Babylon now stands; but when it approached the heavens the winds assisted the gods and overthrew the work upon its contrivers. Its ruins are said to be still at Babylon. And the gods introduced a diversity of tongues among men,

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who till that time had all spoken one language, and a war arose between Chronos and Titan. The place in which they built the tower is now called Babylon on account of the confusion of tongues, for confusion is called Babel by the Hebrews."

The story of the war between Chronos and Titan is further detailed by an Armenian historian, Moses of Chorine: "Before the tower and the multiplication of tongues, after Zisthuthrus (Noah) had sailed to Armenia, Zervan, Titan and Japhetos were the lords of the earth. Scarcely had they divided the world among them when Zervan made himself lord over his two fellows. Titan and Japhetos opposed him and made war upon him, for Zervan wished his children to reign over them all. In the conflict, Titan acquired possession of part of the territory of Zervan, but their sister Astlik made peace between them."

Japhetos is evidently Japhet. Zervan by another translation is found to be Shem, and Titan seems to be a Greek translation of Nimrod, or "the rebel," the originator of the Chaldean monarchy."<sup>1</sup> This name may signify, not a particular man, but the whole family of Ham, as is frequently the case in Eastern records.

The location of Babel is identified by an inscription found a few years ago in the great Pyramid at Borsippa, made by order of King Nebuchadnezzar. It is translated thus: "The tower of the seven stages. The Eternal House. The Temple of the seven Luminaries of the Earth \*\* which the first king built without being able to finish the work. Men had abandoned it

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<sup>1</sup> Anc. History of the East.

since the Deluge, speaking their words in disorder. The earthquake and lightning had shaken the crude brick work and split the burnt brick of the revetment. \*\* The upper stories had crumbled down into mere piles. Merodach, my great lord, inclined my heart to repair the building, which in a fortunate month and an auspicious day I undertook.” \*\* “ This inscription points out to us among the ruins which lift their heads around the site of ancient Babylon, the still gigantic remains of a monument which in the days of Nebuchadnezzar was believed to be the Tower of Babel. It is to this day called the *Birs Nimrod* and on the level plain looks like a mountain, a prodigious, shapeless mass of sun-dried bricks.”<sup>1</sup>

The Hebrews from the extraordinary events which took place in the locality, and the analogy between the sense and the alliterative sound, gave to the word Babel the meaning of confusion, hence our word babble, but in the Assyrian, Babel signifies “ *the gate of the god,*” or “the serpent God.”

The conical shape of the tower is indicative of Turanian origin.

The most common Assyrian name of the city was Borsippa signifying “the town of the dispersion of the tribes. “A symbol of the word Babylon, is discovered to mean the town of the root of languages.” These names “seem like medals struck in commemoration of the extraordinary events which then took place.”<sup>2</sup>

The name Peleg,—division,—was given to the “man in whose days the earth was divided.” This division has

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<sup>1</sup> Le Normant & Chevalier in *Anc. His. of the East.*

<sup>2</sup> Chevalier & Le Normant.

been supposed to refer to the appointment of the different countries to the sons of Noah, but the verb from which the name is taken implies a mechanical, rather than a political division, ploughing or cutting the earth by means of canals. "For in his days the earth was cut by canals." The remains of this method of partition can still be seen in the low plains of Mesopotamia, "The land of the two rivers," literal, *land-marks*, very convenient where there was no stone for walls and where drainage was so much needed. Peleg probably was a great engineer who benefited the world by his practical genius.

From the confusion of tongues and consequent disintegration of the family of Noah, events which took place so long after the flood, that there was population and architectural skill sufficient to undertake the erection of the largest building of which we have any knowledge, came most of the varieties in the human race, though learned men incline to make some exceptions. The children of Cain and the later children of Adam and Seth, may have been the primogenitors of the negroes and other exceptional races.

Ethnologists, who have studied the subject with unprejudiced minds, decide upon the unity of the human race. The causes which have produced such changes and varieties in one family, have been earnestly discussed. A solution of this interesting problem is found in the modifying influence of location, climate, food, education and intermarriage, upon the whole character and physique of man.

In the delicious climate of Western Asia, the most perfect symmetry and beauty of form, and brilliance of

complexion have ever been found, and this beauty disappears and is gradually lost as the race retrograde from the early home of the human family. We know from history, that the swarthy, black-eyed Hindoo, descended from a fair Iranian stock, and that the marvellous change has been effected during the many thousand years which have passed since a branch of the noble family of Japhet were driven by some necessity, obscurely hinted at in their ancient writings, across the Himalayas to the sultry plains of Hindustan. Both sceptical and Christian writers expatiate upon these modifying influences.

Buckle, the learned deist, has beautifully illustrated the effect of a tropical climate upon man, in his description of the valley of the Amazon. "The trade wind blowing on the Eastern coast of South America, reaches the land surcharged with the vapors accumulated in its progress across the Atlantic Ocean. These vapors on touching the shore, are periodically condensed into rain, and as their progress is checked by the gigantic Andes, they pour the whole of their moisture on Brazil, which is consequently often deluged by the most destructive torrents.

"This abundant supply being aided by the vast river system peculiar to the Eastern part of America, and being also accompanied by heat, has stimulated the soil into an activity unknown in any other part of the world.

"Brazil which is nearly as large as the whole of Europe, is covered with a vegetation of incredible profusion. So rank and luxuriant is the growth, that nature seems to riot in the very wantonness of power. A great part of this immense country is filled with a dense, tangled

forest, whose noble trees, blossoming in unrivalled beauty, and exquisite with a thousand hues, throw out their produce in endless prodigality. On the summits are perched birds of gorgeous plumage which nestle in their dark and lofty recesses. Below, their base and trunks are crowded with brushwood, creeping plants, innumerable parasites, all swarming with life. There, too, are myriads of insects, reptiles of strange and singular form, serpents and lizards spotted with deadly beauty, all of which find means of existence in this vast workshop and repository of Nature.

“And that nothing may be wanting to this land of marvels, the forests are skirted by enormous meadows, which, reeking with heat and moisture, supply nourishment to countless herds of wild cattle, while the adjoining plains, rich in another form of life, are the abode of the subtle and ferocious animals, which prey upon each other, but which it might seem no human power could extirpate.

“But amid all this pomp and splendor of nature, no place is left for *man*. He is reduced to insignificance by the majesty which surrounds him. The forces which oppose him are so formidable that he has never been able to make head against them.

“The whole of Brazil, notwithstanding its apparent advantages, has always remained uncivilized, its inhabitants, wandering savages, incompetent to resist the obstacles which the very bounty of nature has put in their way. The natives have never attempted to grapple with these difficulties, and they are so serious that during more than three hundred years, the resources of European knowledge have been vainly employed in endeavoring to get rid

of them. The progress of agriculture has been stopped by impassable forests, the harvests are destroyed by innumerable insects, the mountains are too high to scale, the rivers are too wide to bridge, everything keeps back the human mind and represses its rising ambition. The energies of nature hamper the spirit of man. Not one-fifteenth of the land is cultivated, and in a country where physical resources are most powerful, where the soil is watered by the noblest rivers, and studded by the finest harbors, this immense territory contains but six millions of inhabitants, while Europe, scarcely any larger, has two hundred and seventy-two millions of souls."

This admirable description gives an idea, though an extreme one, of the repressing effect of tropical influence upon the human race. To these circumstances may be added devastations by hurricanes, tempests, and earthquakes which incline the mind to superstition, render life and property precarious, discourage enterprise, and lead to that apathy which exclaims, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

In the polar regions a similar effect is produced by excessive cold. Here also agriculture is impossible. Shut up within snow-huts half under ground the greater part of the year, bundled in furs till they are almost motionless, breathing the smoky air of oil lamps and fires supplied with the blubber of the seal, gorging the stomach with the gross fat of marine animals, men inevitably became and must remain dwarfed in body and intellect.

The food required in cold climates must be highly carbonaceous to supply the extraordinary draft upon the vital heat of the system: in hot countries the oxygen

contained in the fruits and grains is equally necessary. Thus even the nature of the food has an influence upon the physical and intellectual development of mankind, increasing the average of muscle or brain, and combining, with atmospheric causes, to change the complexion.

“It is in the Northern Temperate Zone, in that middle region happily removed from either extreme, where nature exhibits in her varying moods enough resistance to stimulate but not overpower the efforts of man, that we may expect, and do actually find, the highest type of humanity.” In the *North* Temperate Zone, because two-thirds of all the land in the world is north of the equator, all continents point toward and dwindle to the south, so that the South Temperate Zone in America, Africa and Australia is insignificant in extent and area—Europe being altogether north of the Equator. The great civilizations of the earth have never originated in excessively hot or cold countries. The arts, sciences and philosophies had their birth in rainless countries, the valleys of the Nile, the Tigris and Euphrates, and on the borders of that wonderful inland sea, the Mediterranean. Here, in a climate which permits out-door life, the entire year, uninterrupted by rain, with a bountiful soil, continually moistened by the tremendous evaporation of the sea, with great rivers, inland seas, and gulfs communicating with the ocean, man has made his greatest architectural, military and intellectual achievements. Here, where all the gifts of nature encourage the accumulation of wealth and incite intellectual activity, the arts, letters, poetry, oratory, painting, sculpture, and music, had their birth and mature development.

But there are marked inequalities in the people of the

favored North Temperate Zone. "The greatest physical perfection is found in Asia, the greatest moral and intellectual activity in Europe,"<sup>1</sup> while America, made up of elements contributed from both continents, has, as yet, hardly a distinctive character, but, by all natural law, it should produce the most perfect, well balanced race upon the face of the earth; all the conditions are propitious; it is between the proper parallels, bounded by two vast oceans, the eastern shore indented by safe harbors, into which empty navigable rivers, while its inland system of lakes is the grandest in the world. There is great variety of climate, and it is best supplied with rain of any of the continents. Nature's endeavor is always to reproduce the best qualities, these are all given in the mixture of races here combined, and climate and soil favor the production of the necessary food for their ample sustenance.

Another circumstance rarely considered in judging of the disparities in nations is the greater or less extent of sea-coast afforded by the configuration of the continents, facilitating to a greater or less degree navigation and commerce. The advantages of an extensive sea-line are greatly increased when navigable rivers, lakes and inland seas still further encourage intercourse and community of interest.

Now, Africa has only one mile of coast to six hundred and twenty-three square miles of interior; Asia has one mile of coast to four hundred and fifty-nine of inland, though greatly favored by gulfs and large rivers; South America has one mile of sea-line to three hundred and

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<sup>1</sup> Anc. History of the East.

seventy-six of interior ; North America has one mile for two hundred and twenty-eight of land surface ; and Europe, more favored than all, has one mile of sea-coast for one hundred and fifty-six square miles of land. We can readily see how such an advantage would stimulate traffic, enterprise and commerce in the change of commodities, and, by acquaintance with other minds, enlarge the scope of ideas, quicken the intellect, increase the capacity of the brain, give animation to the countenance, improve and even alter the physiognomy.

We have all seen the marvellous change produced in some dull, awkward country lad by a good education and intercourse with the refined society of a large city. The handsome, elegant gentleman is hardly to be recognized by his old acquaintances. How much greater would be the change produced during countless generations in a race constantly subjected to elevating or repressing influences.

The tremendous effects of slight but persistent natural influences may be seen in the remarkable disparity between the North and South Temperate Zones. In the Southern Zone no advance has been made in civilization, the natives have remained in a savage state, and even colonies of enterprising natives have deteriorated astonishingly in a few hundred years. Witness the Dutch beoors of South Africa. It is supposed that the shortness of the summer in that Zone, it being eight days less than in the Northern, the great preponderance of water over the land, as well as magnetic conditions imperfectly understood, have contributed to, if they have not caused, this disparity.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Essay of Mr. Delafield, in *Antiquities of America*.

Perhaps enough has been said to show the effect of natural causes in modifying the character and physique of the race. We must not overlook another important and powerful agency,—I refer to hereditary transmission, sometimes so vital as to defy all other influences, as in case of the Chinese and Jews. We will trace its control in the races descended from Noah. I suppose we have all grumbled at the hard uncouth names and tedious catalogue of forgotten and unimportant men contained in the 10th chapter of Genesis, but the folly of the complaint almost amounts to sacrilege. In a historical and ethnical point of view it is probably the most precious document in the world. It gives us in the names of the immediate descendants of the Patriarch Noah the fathers of all the tribes of the civilized world. By the new science of Comparative Philology a mine of information has been discovered in this invaluable record. The name of Ham, the second son of Noah, signifies the “*sunburned.*” He was, no doubt, the darkest of the family in complexion, and his descendants have all been, like him, dark. His character, from the one act recorded of his life, was gross and deficient in delicacy, and this trait was also transmitted to his posterity, who, notwithstanding, have greatly excelled in the useful and mechanical arts. Energetic and enterprising, they were perhaps the first to push out from home and found great empires. Nimrod, “the rebel,” founded the great Chaldean empire. The Hamites settled Phoenicia, Ethiopia (now known as Arabia) and Egypt, though, in accordance with the prophecy of Noah, they were afterwards subjugated by their brothers, and have ever since been subordinate. The remnants of this race are known as the Nubians,

Abyssinians, Tuaricks and the Fellahs of Egypt, the lowest and least beautiful of the white races. The depravity of their father Ham has ever clung to them, and their religion has been the worst form of Materialism.

Almost simultaneously with the emigration of the Hamites, possibly even earlier, another large family left the common centre. They are classified sometimes as the Altaic family, because they came down from the Altai mountains, sometimes as the Scythic, but most commonly as the Turanians. The earliest Zend writings refer to a terrible and protracted religious war, between Iran and Turan, brothers of one family. The latter worshipped a great serpent, and attempted to force their foul religion upon the people they subjugated. The Iranians were of the family of Japhet, and, although the name of the father of the serpent worshippers is uncertain, it is probable he was Magog, second son of Japhet, father of the Turan mentioned in the old Zend writings. From the last name came the appellations, Turyas, Turks, Turcomans, Turanians.

This branch of the human family are spoken of in Scripture as Gog and Magog, in history as the Northern Hordes, the Scythians. They were a roving, warlike, terrible people, with peculiarities which isolated them from the rest of mankind. They overspread a great part of the habitable globe, carrying with them, strangely mixed, civilization and barbarism; and wherever they went we find traces of the worship of the serpent, the subject we shall consider in the next chapter. The remains of this people are found in Northern Europe Ugro Finns or Ogres, while another branch in Southern Asia are denominated Dravidians. The Turks, Hunga-

rians and Tartars are also included in this family. Recent developments render it almost certain that the aboriginal Americans, Chinese and Japanese, and dwellers in the isles of the Pacific, must be added to this enormous family; the Chinese alone number one-half the population of the globe.

The descendants of Shem were the next to emigrate. They spread eastward from the Mediterranean, conquering the Hamite and Turanian population. Asshur founded the Assyrian empire, which soon overshadowed the Chaldean empire of Nimrod, and was for ages the most powerful nation of the east. They were, however, the rulers only, the masses remaining as before. Nineveh in its arts and civilization also remained like Babylon, Turanian and Hamite. From Shem, through Eber, came the Hebrews, from Joktan, the most ancient Arabian tribes, who amalgamated with Ishmael, the eldest son of Abraham the Hebrew. From his second son Isaac came the Jews. Their dark glowing eyes and brown complexion are familiar to us all.

The name Japhet means "extension," and the prophecy that God would enlarge his family has been remarkably fulfilled. His sons, with the exception of Magog, were the last to emigrate. "By these," says our record, "were the isles of the heathen divided in their lands."

This family has colonized the earth, navigated its oceans, forwarded its greatest enterprises, and is now its dominant power. Beside the descendants of Magog the second son of Japhet before mentioned, from his eldest son Gomer, through Ashkenaz, was to spring the great Scandinavian or Gothic family of Central Europe, as formidable and warlike as their terrible brothers,

Gog and Magog. From Ripath came the Celts and Gauls who settled on the Carpathian mountains, till a later impulse sent them to France and the British Isles. From Togarmah came the Armenian tribes. Madai was the father of the Medes and Persians, of whom the Hindu Aryans are a branch—The children of Jubal dwelt in Colchis, the remnants still live in the Caucasian valley. Meshech settled in Phrygia, Tiberini, and Pontus, Tiras was the father of the Thracians, and Javan or Ioun of the Greek or Pelasgic tribes, who were for ages the lords of the earth, the Greeks and Romans, the most magnificent men the world has known since the flood; they had the greatest perfection of form, beauty of feature, fairness of complexion, and size of brain.

We of the Anglo-Saxon race are a mixture of Roman and Teutonic stock, all from the Aryan branch of Japhet.

By this review, we perceive the causes which have operated to modify or change the types of humanity. Climate, location, food, the aspects of nature, commercial advantages, hereditary transmission and, perhaps quite as much as any of these causes, intermarriage, have produced extreme varieties in one original family.

But, it is argued, such changes are almost imperceptible, the negro of Virginia to-day is nearly identical with his African forefather of two hundred years ago. Tens of thousands of years must have been required for such tremendous variations as now exist. This is certainly true, and is another proof of the inaccuracy of our chronological estimates.

The negro races are probably of antediluvian origin. The nations of Egypt, China, Assyria, India and Arabia were founded, at the very latest, seven thousand years

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ago, long after the Deluge and Dispersion of the Tribes. We may safely calculate that eight thousand years have passed since the Great Flood; and from the fact that, in the sculptured prehistoric ruins of Siam and India, are seen human figures of various representative types, as distinctly marked as at the present day, we shall be compelled to enlarge even this limit, and confess that we have been exceedingly narrow in our ideas of the antiquity of the earth and of man.

We will now consider varieties in language, which it has been supposed were all simultaneously produced at the Tower of Babel. There are two rival theories with regard to the origin of language: one is that Adam was from the outset endowed by the Creator with a complete vocabulary and perfect conversational powers, the other that he was as absolutely without words as any animal, and that language is a pure invention, the result of human needs. The truth in this case, as in many others, probably lies in the mean. "Man is man only by virtue of his power of speech, but, in order to invent speech, he must first be man. Other animals may utter sounds as articulate and varied as the click of a Bushman, but voice alone does not enable them to speak.<sup>1</sup>"

The Bible says, "God brought the animals to Adam, and, whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof." The most rational supposition is that the first man was created speechless as an infant, but with a mature ability to utter words at the instant an object or action required them. No doubt his vocabulary was very limited, confined to a few nouns and

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<sup>1</sup> Humboldt.

verbs at first. What necessity had he for scientific technicalities or philosophic abstractions ?

During the long succeeding ages, the number of words must have greatly increased with advancing civilization, but, until the revolution of Babel, there was but one form. Whether that form was then lost or retained by some portion of the human family we cannot determine.

It is extremely irrational to suppose that all the principal languages in the world were then produced. The historical growth, formation and decay of many languages now dead forbids so wild a theory—very probably no modern languages date so remotely. Linguistic science, founded upon the earliest traces of literature extant—the Zend, Sanscrit, and rock and brick inscriptions—indicates that the original varieties were not more than three or four, and were confined to the great families. The cause and manner of the change cannot with our present light be determined. Intelligible speech is dependent upon two sets of organs, those of hearing and those of articulation. The totally deaf cannot speak, for the simple reason that they cannot hear. If our hearing were properly educated we could understand any language, and could probably speak any, although some tribes of men, from dissimilarity in the vocal organs, cannot intelligibly utter the language of their neighbors, a change of the ten-thousandth part of an inch in the structure of the auditory or vocal organs will produce the most astonishing results. We have all witnessed the effect of a deaf cold or an excessive hoarseness. Some forms of disease will so change the structure of the vocal organs that the speech of the person affected

will be unintelligible. I have never seen a suggestion as to the manner of the confusion of tongues at the building of Babel but such a change might very easily have been wrought by the prevalence of an epidemic which would affect the auditory nerves of one family, and the vocal organs of another portion, while a third might be left intact. The parties similarly affected would at once come to an understanding, finding others making the identical blunders they themselves were unable to avoid.

Two variations from the original speech would be as fatal to social unity as twenty, and these would be subdivided *ad infinitum* after the disintegration, by the same influence which produced varieties in tribes.

Philologists have classified language under four heads. The Hamite, Semite, Turanian and Indo-European, the last two belonging to the family of Japhet.

The close resemblance between the Hamite and Semite languages leads to the belief that they were originally the same. The language of ancient Assyria Babylon, Egypt and Phonicia, it has been supposed, was Hamite; but the recent discoveries in the ruins of the Mesopotamian plains show that the cuniform and hieroglyphic inscriptions, though used by and in part the invention of the Hamites and Semites, during the ages of their domination in these countries, were but the readaption of a writing whose origin more remote and obscure, must at present remain the object of conjecture.

I hope in the next study, by means of the philological speculum to throw some light into the cavernous recesses of these dark ages, though the weak hand which holds the instrument may well tremble.

The last living remains of the language spoken by the family of Ham, are found among the Berbers and in the north and west of Africa.

The Semite tongues proper, are the Hebrew, Arabic, Aramean used in Syria, the Sabean and perhaps a few others. The Arabic, is the only one now spoken. By Mahomedan conquest and the general introduction of the Koran in the subjugated countries, this language has been perpetuated, "This group possesses no power of growth or change," it has lived, less than lasted.<sup>1</sup>

The Indo European languages of the family of Japhet, are like the nations who use them, the most perfect of their kind. The varieties, very numerous, are possessed of wonderful mechanism, elasticity and flexibility, and are capable of unlimited power and progress.

The eldest of this family, is the ancient Sanscrit, for ages the sacred language in exclusive possession of the Brahmin Priests. It is said to be the richest, most flexible and sonorous in existence. Its name Sanscrita, implies "that which is of itself perfect", it was called by those who used it "the language of the gods." For thousands of years, it has been the repository of the science, philosophy and religions of Hindustan, and its recent acquisition by western scholars has opened a rich mine of information upon many obscure and interesting subjects.

The next in age and importance of this family group is the Zend or Ancient Persian, that in which some of the rock inscriptions of Persia and the sacred books of

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1 M. Renan.

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Zoroaster are written. Neither of these languages have been spoken for two thousand years.

The Greco-Latin tongues are next in rank. The Latin bears marks of being the eldest. To this group belong all the ancient languages of Southern Europe. Their decomposition and mixture with the Teutonic tongues during the middle ages, gave rise to the modern Italian, Spanish, French, Portugese, Roumain and Germanic languages.

The next in this extensive group, is the Slavonian, the language of the Russian church, which is gradually taking possession of that vast empire.

There are two more branches from this prolific family, the Germanic, which is very extensive and rich in words, and the Celtic, much degenerated and gradually dying out in some of the French provinces, in Ireland and the Isle of Man.

Our own language, which takes its name from the Scandinavian families, the Angles and Saxons, is a mixture of Germanic, Celtic and Southern European tongues.

Another extensive and peculiar form of speech remains to be mentioned. It is used by the numerous tribes classified as Turanian. "Their early isolation from the rest of mankind and a strong tendency to permanence in character, has here preserved the most primitive form of speech; being, even now, scarcely beyond the monosyllabic development. The vocalization of these languages is smooth and harmonious."<sup>1</sup>

The Tartars, Finns, Mongols, Lapps, Turks, Magyars

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and some southern Asiatic tribes still speak this language, and I suppose we may also include the Japanese, Chinese, and perhaps the dialects of the North American Indians.

The Negro dialects have never been satisfactorily classified. Their exceptional structure seems to confirm the theory that the black race never belonged to the family of Noah.

I would gladly linger in this newly explored realm of science, where there is so great promise of rich acquisition to the store of human knowledge. I would fain trace the subtle but irrefragable chain of evidence by which these conclusions have been reached, but that would exceed the limit and object of this study.

An illustration of the importance of this new science, where a primitive idea is often fossilized in words is given by Max Müller in his exposition of the origin of the word Deity.

In the soul of man, the first idea of Deity is that of something mysterious, vast, unapproachable. The sky as the most imposing of natural objects, arrests the attention. Its profound depths, its varying color, the mysterious change from light to darkness, the majesty of the heavenly bodies passing calmly through its impenetrable depths, its life-giving warmth and rain, the fantastic shapes and colors of the floating or scurrying vapors, its swiftly changing mood from serene placidity to the scowling fury of the tempest, all these impress the simple understanding of the uneducated mind, and inspire wonder, awe, veneration. "Whenever I see the sun rise" said an aged woman in Finland; "I make my bow and wish him good morning, and when he goes away, I bid him good night." "There are people so ignorant,"

she naïvely added, "that they never do these things. They have no religion at all."

From veneration there is but a step to adoration, and thus the heavens and heavenly bodies were exalted into deities. The first expression of God in the Sanscrit is *Dyaus*, the sky. The same word appears in other tongues. In Greek, *Zeus*; Latin, *Deus*; Erse, *Dhiu*; Scandinavian, *Tiu*; Celt, *Tiu*; and Chinese, *Tien*; Modern French, *Dieu*, and English, Deity. All these words mean *the sky*, but this word signifying a simple object in nature, did not long satisfy the worshipper and to give a personality, the ancients added the word father. *Dy-auspiter*, *Deuspater*, *Zeuspater*, *Jupiter*, all meaning sky or Heavenly Father.

As I read these statements, a light like a revelation flashes from the (model) prayer our Saviour left us. Jesus was a Jew, he spoke the Hebrew language. The proper word with which to address Deity in that tongue would be Jehovah, Adonai or Eloi, Thou mighty One, that was the word which sprang to his lips in his mortal agony, but Christ was not a Jew except by the circumstance of his birth. He was the Saviour of the whole human race, he understood all languages and all hearts, and he knew that the largest portion of the human race then living or to be born afterward would think of God as the Sky Father. He knew that God was everywhere, not in the sky alone, but he yielded to the prejudice and began his prayer. "Our Father who art in heaven."

The preliminary part of our study is finished. To obtain a just idea of Primitive Religion, and its offshoots, we were obliged to examine somewhat critically

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the ancient writing which contains the most authentic story of the origin of the world and of Man.

We will for the present lay aside the Bible and examine the imperfect and distorted forms which the scattered tribes of men from this period substituted for the original true idea, and which have been very improperly called, The Heathen Religions.

## CHAPTER V.

### PREFACE.

TO most persons the subject of this article will be so strange and startling as almost to stagger credulity. The surprise of the reader, cannot surpass my own, when in a search for information respecting Devil Worship in the east, I stumbled upon unexpected and amazing facts which induce a belief that the worship of the Yezidis is but the fragment of a once universal adoration of the serpent.

Works upon this subject are very few, and rarely to be found outside of the largest Public libraries. Of some of these only one hundred copies have been issued.

I am under great obligation to Mr. Kernot of the publishing house of Scribner and Welford for very valuable suggestions and aid in this most interesting research.

The facts, data, and theory herein contained have never before, I believe, been given to the public by any one writer in our language, though there are works in German and French as yet untranslated, of which having never seen a copy I cannot speak. I have gathered from the learned writers, before referred to, the separate links of a wonderful chain of evidence, which I have put

together, I fear somewhat clumsily, and now submit to the public with much diffidence, but with the hope that thereby the attention of scholars may be aroused, that more profound research and investigation will be given to this unfamiliar subject and the truth be thus elicited, in which result, however it may affect this particular theory, no one will rejoice more sincerely than the writer of these pages.

#### OPHIOLATRY—THE WORSHIP OF THE SERPENT.

Is the story of Eden a myth ?

Preliminary to a review of the Natural Religions, we will carefully examine certain indications, amounting almost to proof positive, that there existed in the earliest ages of the world probably soon after the days of Eden, a horrible substitute for, or counterfeit of, the religion God had given to man, introduced by "that old serpent who is the Devil and Satan" which like a foul fungus, fastened itself upon the soul of man, blighted his nature, and left him a prey to degradation and despair.

The evidence which leads to this conclusion is four-fold : first that which is found in the religious ideas and practices of the stationary tribes of men, particularly the black race ; second the testimony of history and traditions ; third, corroboration from facts preserved by words in various languages and elicited by comparative philology : and fourth, religious ideas as discovered in architectural ruins and remains, relics of prehistoric times and people, traces of which have been found all over the surface of the habitable globe.

In this profound research, we must penetrate into

the dark recesses of the world's morning, even before the dawn of history.

Of ancient Egypt, China, Persia, and India, even of the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon there is a story ;—we can calculate their era with some approximation to accuracy ; but who will reveal the history of the mighty monarchies which once existed in the Arabian peninsula or describe the grandeur of the stately cities, now but heaps of dust and ashes, low mounds upon the desolate and silent plain ! The earthquake shock, the devastating flood, the furious cyclone, the attrition of the earth currents—agents of remorseless, all-devouring time—have destroyed every vestige of record ; not a rock inscription or a lettered brick remains to give a clue by which to penetrate the labyrinth of conjecture. The sun that now warms their embers, once gilded their pomp and bravery, the same moon looks placidly down upon the shapeless heaps, that once lighted their balconies and bowers, their palaces and temples ; the same breezes that wafted to their delighted senses “odors of Araby the blest,” now sigh through the vacant gloom ; but these witnesses of their lives, tell us no story ; it is written alone in that “sealed book which no man in earth or in heaven is able to open and read.”

Whence originated the obsolete types of architecture found in the interior of Siam and Java, the subterranean cities of India with powdering sculpture, the huge monoliths of the Pacific Isles, of Europe and Great Britain, no longer called Druidical ? Who worshipped the Persian Mithras in an artificial cave in Ireland where his emblems have been found ; or first lighted Baal's fire upon Norway's shore ?

And when we turn to the New World, in vain we wonder who built the strange effigies of the North and reared the massive structures of Central America rivalling in grandeur the Eastern ruins, monuments which evidence a knowledge of every architectural rule, an acquaintance with sculpture, painting and astronomy, and from their close resemblance to works found in the Old World lead to a belief in a common origin! "And how are we to determine whether the impression has been made from America to Asia or Asia to America! Who can account for the utter extinction of those great nations which preceded the Toltec and Aztec? Who can explain the tremendous deterioration which had assuredly taken place in the American races when the continent was newly discovered in our era?"<sup>1</sup> "Can it be conjectured that some extreme convulsion of nature, some earthquake rending asunder sea and land, such as is reported to have swallowed up the far-famed Island of *Atalanta*, has swept away the inhabitants into its vortex? Not a ray of tradition, no war song or funeral lay, can be found to clear away the dark night in which the earlier ages of America are involved."<sup>2</sup> Nought remains but the awful silence of a dead though mighty past!

But although so little is known of the origin, history and government of the earliest nations of the earth both in the Eastern and Western continents, incredible as it may appear, we may obtain an insight, dim but certain, into their religious ideas. Antiquarians have devoted the best years of their lives to this investigation. Their

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<sup>1</sup> Squier's Serpent Symbol.

<sup>2</sup> Von Martius.

studies have not been vague and general, but, as by common consent, they have assumed different stand points ; some giving their attention to the science of language to detect in its roots and structure, a history of its origin ; others have devoted themselves to the science of race, throwing light upon this great subject by comparing the characteristics of the various representative types of mankind. By others, the surface of the earth has been explored, each inquirer selecting his location or speciality, and all the remains and ruins of former ages, have been carefully scrutinized, to discover traces of past civilization, religion and art.

Let us cautiously sum up the result of this research :—

Its religious aspect is startling and leads to the overwhelming conviction that the oldest, most extensive and prevalent form of worship existing among the nations of antiquity was the adoration of the Sun and the Serpent !

#### FIRST TESTIMONY OF THE STATIONARY TRIBES.

We will examine the evidence of this astounding discovery as it is found in the practices of the savage tribes. These degraded beings have remained stationary during historic times, the African blacks being the most notable example. There is good reason to believe they are an antediluvian race, the descendants of Cain, inheriting the mark of their father's curse.

But the condition of savagery is not confined to the negro race. In various parts of the world, mostly beyond the extreme parallels of the North and South Temperate Zones, there are other tribes of men, who have

remained absolute savages. To this class belong the Esquimaux and other North American Indians, the Paraguayans, Patagonians and Terra del Fuegians of South America, the Vedddhas of Ceylon, the Dyacks of Borneo, the Hottentots of South Africa, the Australians and dwellers in the Pacific islands.

Most of these savages are small, ill proportioned in stature, stupid and truculent in expression, ugly in feature, with a dark complexion. Their intellects and moral perceptions are as stunted and imperfect as their bodies ; there seems to be in their constitution no element of progress, or capability of improvement. They have no faculty or taste for agriculture, indeed, most of them are so unfavorably situated in climates of pinching cold or enervating heat, that cultivation of the soil is impossible. Their vocabulary is so limited, their language so gross and indecent, that missionaries are obliged to invent words to convey instruction. Many tribes have no name for *God*, or *love*, or *virtue*. Polygamy and polyandria are allowed. Marriage as we understand the institution, scarcely exists, and is not associated with love or tenderness. Children, thought to be anything but blessings, particularly the females, are often killed for food. "Why should I starve," exclaimed an African savage, "while my sister has children to sell?" A Polynesian, being reproved by an injudicious missionary, with great severity for bigamy, in his anxiety to become a good christian, cut the Gordian knot of his perplexities by killing one of his wives and eating her!

The lot of woman in this wretched state of society is deplorable in the extreme. Both men and women suffer from the rigor of custom, which often compels them to

mutilate or torture the body. There are seldom any aged among them ; before a person becomes too old for active service, he proposes his own death, or it is forced upon him by his relatives, perhaps from a feeling that an infirm old age is undesirable for the man as well as for the tribe.

Some tribes appear wanting in any idea of God, or moral law, or a future state. A Christian gentleman asked some Hottentots if they had a God. They answered, they had never heard of any. He then instructed them that there was a Supreme Power who controlled the affairs of men. "If that is so," they responded, "tell us where he is, that we may kill him! Who but he brings on the storm and flood that do us so much harm?" Other tribes believe that a supernatural power resides in an object called a *Fetish*. This may be any unusual object, which they chance to find, or an image grotesque and hideous, of their own manufacture. The spirit supposed to reside in the *Fetish* is evil and must be propitiated by offerings of food or drink, anything they themselves prize.

This lowest form of idolatry is always accompanied by a belief in, and practice of magic, sorcery and superstition of such a dreadful character that it is no wonder death is sought and met with stolid indifference. Among these degraded and abject beings where there is no principle of progress, we may reasonably expect to find religious ideas stationary, and worship primitive.

We find actually nothing, deserving the name of religion, no bond between the soul and the Deity, but in its place a dark and terrible superstition, fetishism, sor-

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cery, and an almost universal reverence for, and worship of, the *Serpent*!<sup>1</sup>

“Mahommedanism and Christianity influenced and altered the rest of mankind, but the savage races, particularly the African blacks, still adhere to the old superstitions and in their country where serpents are large and deadly, it is practised in its oldest form and to the fullest extent.” The rites and ceremonies therewith connected may, without profanity, be called devilish.

#### SECOND HISTORICAL EVIDENCE.

History emphatically confirms the conclusions drawn from the practices of savage tribes, informing us that elemental worship was the underlying principle of all natural religion, even among the most enlightened nations. The sun as the most glorious object in nature, the productive and vivifying agent, has been worshipped by *all* the people of the earth in former ages. The sun was worshipped as *Serapis* or *Ra* by the Egyptians; as *Shamas*, *Bel*, *Baal* or *Moloch* by the Chaldeans and Phœnicians; as *Mithras* among the Persians; as *Suryas* by the Hindoos; *Odin* by the Scandinavians; *Apollo* by the Greeks; as *Baiwe* by the Laplanders, and as *Tezcatlipoca* by the Mexicans. *In all cases* he has a *serpent symbol* and was worshipped in that form.

The idea of productive power or energy, of which the Sun was considered the source, degraded by the depravity of the human heart, has given rise to institutions and rites called *Phallic*, the most abominable and

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<sup>1</sup> Deane—Serpent Worship.

gross which have ever defiled the name of religion. The antiquity of Phallic worship is extreme, as will appear when we consider Prehistoric Ruins.

A singular and plausible theory connected with the May day Festival of England and Northern Europe also indicates the remote date of these rites. This ancient festival is celebrated by the erection of a Phallus or pole entwined with garlands, around which the revelers perform a fantastic dance. This, it is believed, is but a reminiscence of a heathen Vernal Festival instituted at the time when the sun was first in conjunction with the constellation Taurus (the bull being also an emblem of productive energy, and worshipped as such,) which event, by a calculation of the precession of equinoxes, must have taken place six thousand years ago in the month of March, the date, according to our mistaken chronology, of the Creation. The wonderful ruin at Salisbury, England, named Stonehenge, *hinged stones*, was apparently a temple consecrated to the Sun Serpent, and there is no doubt, from the form and arrangement of the work and a remarkable coincidence which takes place at the moment of sunrise on the summer solstice that Phallic rites were once there performed at that hour.

The garlands of the May pole represent the serpent, as do the stripes upon the barbers pole, formerly associated with surgical practice. This serpent on a pole, was the insignia of Æsculapius, god of health and medicine, kept in ancient temples or carried by travellers as a protection from sickness.

The Jews also celebrated the Vernal Feast and "in Iceland the Vernal Equinox was called, 'the night of

Baal's fire !' and fires were lighted on the high places dedicated to his service."<sup>1</sup>

Fire and Heat as manifestations of the sun, have shared with that body in divine honors. With their worship was connected the rite of "passing children through the fire," as a means of purification, our word *purify* being derived from the Greek *Pur*, fire.

This custom is severely reprobated in the Bible.<sup>2</sup> It was not confined to the Baal worshippers of the East, for, according to Logan, the Highlanders walked through fire and carried it round their grain fields to propitiate Baal, the sungod.

"The serpent was a symbol of the sun and its worship may be traced wherever there exists a monument of civilization or humanity."<sup>3</sup>

"It seems to have been nearly universal among the primitive nations of the earth."<sup>4</sup>

"Inasmuch as it was by the temptation of the serpent man fell, so it was the device of the Devil that by the adoration of the serpent, he should continue to fall."<sup>5</sup> The belief in and fear of dragons, serpents and devils is interwoven with the whole circle of pagan idolatry.<sup>6</sup>

That this monstrous counterfeit of the worship of God, was substituted by the Evil One at the time our first parents fell before his temptation, appears probable from the fact that it is almost universally accompanied by divine homage given to trees ; there is unmistakably a connection between the two objects.

<sup>1</sup> O'Brien.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. xviii. 21.—Deut. xviii. 10.—2 Kings xvi. 3.—Jer. xxxii. 35.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Tod.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Squier.

<sup>5</sup> Deane.

<sup>6</sup> Upham.

The serpent is always represented as the wisest of beasts, the source of knowledge, the giver of health, riches and prosperity, a dreadful enemy, and homage was rendered through fear and admiration. Does not this all point to the story of Eden and there find a solution of the mystery? The tree of knowledge and the arrogant assertions of the subtle tempter? "And the serpent said to the woman: Ye shall not surely die, for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened and ye shall become as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food; that it was pleasant to the eye, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." An old Persian tradition is, that our first parents sacrificed to the Devas and thus became Darvands and "for this, they shall burn in hell till the resurrection."

Through the temptation of the Evil Spirit was Paradise lost! Is there not a new and revealing light thrown on the temptation of the second Adam? "Again, the Devil taketh Him into an exceeding high mountain and sheweth Him the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them and said unto Him, 'all these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and *Worship me!*'" Christ repelled the tempter and Paradise was regained!

The physical peculiarities of the serpent seem well adapted to the purposes of the deceiver. Its remarkable locomotion, gliding like water or fire, unaided by feet or wings, its wonderful power of changing its attitude, its intricate convolutions and contortions, its deadly embrace, and the sudden death from its poison, the beauty

of its color, and the fascination of its glittering eyes charming both man and animals, all seem to indicate supernatural power.

Into this exceptional beast, so well calculated to attract the attention and excite the fear of man, the arch enemy entered, to the ruin and degradation of the race, and in this form he has for ages received the homage due to Almighty God alone.

If, as we have supposed, Ophiolatry was of antediluvian origin and was practised by that abominable race for whose unnatural crime the Deluge was sent, the knowledge of it would be preserved in the family of Noah—a supposition warranted by an Oriental tradition which will be mentioned later. History and tradition attest the great age and extensive practice of this hideous idolatry. The family of Magog and the sons of Ham were the first to emigrate after the disaster at the tower of Babel. The Turanian branch of Magog was certainly the first white race which overran India, and we shall later see reason to believe they preceded their nobler brothers, the Aryans in Europe and America. The oldest Hindoo traditions speak of a race of serpent monarchs from whose shoulders grew the heads of snakes and who were the sons of serpent fathers. We catch occasional glimpses of these traditional monsters rearing their crested heads in that obscure period where the mists of mythology begin to retire before the dawn of history. They were called *Naga Rajahs*, serpent lords, and ruled throughout Southern Asia. Seeva, the Hindoo Destroyer, is depicted at this day, as one of these serpent monarchs. We read also of a cruel usurper who conquered ancient Iran, from whose shoulders grew two

voracious serpents, whose hunger would only be appeased with the brains of human victims. Therewith is connected the beautiful story of the blacksmith of Is-pahan. The name of this despot marks his character. Zohak, the last syllable of which, *hak*, means a snake. These cruel tyrants kept living serpents in tanks and lakes, and fed them with human flesh.

The Naga Rajahs were undoubtedly all Turanian kings who have at some period of the world's history held universal sway. The Assyrians, Persians, Parthians, Scythians, Chinese, Saxons and Danes, bore the form of a dragon on their military standards. In China the dragon is the national emblem, used in the decoration of temples and the royal robes, a very old Chinese book represents a god with the lower extremities like a serpent and serpent heads issuing from his shoulders. The historian Justin states that Turanian domination in Asia lasted fifteen hundred years, during which time a perpetually renewed religious war was in progress. The Spirit of Evil was worshipped in the form of a great serpent called *Ferusharabha* or *Afrasiab*.

The Hamites, who founded kingdoms in Chaldea, Assyria, Phœnicia and Egypt, practised the same abomination; they seem always to have been in sympathy with the Turanians. Asia Minor was so given to this idolatry that its symbol, often found on ancient coins is a female figure holding a serpent. The same was true of Syria and Phœnicia.

The Israelites for five hundred years worshipped the brazen serpent which Moses set up in the wilderness. At that time king Hezekiah "removed the high places, cut down the groves and brake in pieces the brazen

image Moses had set up, for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it, and he called it Nehustan,"<sup>1</sup> a thing of copper.

"Between the porch and the altar were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces to the east, and they worshipped the sun."<sup>2</sup>

We also read, "I will visit upon her, (the Jewish church) the days of Baalim, (the sun deities,) wherein she burned incense to them."

In the days of Elisha only "seven thousand were left in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal."<sup>3</sup>

It may not be inappropriate to discuss briefly in this connection, the almost inexplicable inconsistency that Moses, by divine command, should set up a bronze serpent as the means of recovery from the fatal bite of the serpents in the wilderness. Infidels assert that Moses, upon this memorable occasion, pandered to the idolatrous cravings of the Israelites and adopted the Æsculapian emblem of the pagans: a superficial view of the subject would justify such a conclusion, I may therefore be pardoned if I offer a *possible explanation*, as it has occurred to my mind.

There are mentioned in the Bible incidentally, and without explanation, certain mysterious beings or principles, the immediate ministers of the divine will, and expressions of His glory, under the name of cherubim and seraphim. They were known to Adam for it is stated "that cherubim and a flaming sword"<sup>4</sup> guarded the approach to the vacated Paradise. In Psalms, in

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<sup>1</sup> 2d Kings viii.4. <sup>2</sup> Eze. viii.16. <sup>3</sup> Hosea ii.13. <sup>4</sup> Gen. iii.

speaking of the majesty of God it is said "He rode upon a cherub and did fly. He rode upon the wings of the wind" and again, "Who maketh His angels spirits, flaming fire His ministers," (revised translation), Ezekiel describes minutely a glorious and wonderful appearance under the throne of God which he calls *Cherubim*<sup>1</sup>, and St. John in vision sees the same resplendent forms.<sup>2</sup>

These cherubim whose grandeur and majesty overawed the beholders may have been celestial beings, personal like the angels, more exalted and awful, or they may have been symbols, fourfold, of the elements, earth, air, fire and water, all of which are mentioned; or perhaps they were impersonations of natural forces or laws—electricity, gravitation, cohesion, dynamics. The whirlwind, cloud and fire, the elemental agitation, the rush and whirl, the roaring sound, the electric light and color, the dreadful wings and eyes, the wheels within wheels, the immensity of the terrible crystal firmament or atmosphere, the unvarying rapid motion going and returning, the absence of any volition of their own, the whole being impelled by the spirit's will, all favor the last supposition.

These incomprehensible persons or impersonations, were undoubtedly in one form, known as winged oxen. Ezekiel and St. John both speak of one of the cherubim as having the face of an ox or the face of a calf, and the same word *Carab* is from a radical which means *to plough*, and is used to designate oxen, ordinary cattle.

Now in the ancient Eastern pantheon are found winged oxen and bulls, winged lions, eagle-headed men, and other

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<sup>1</sup> Eze. 1st and 10th.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. iv.7.

unnatural monstrosities, griffins and sphinxes, which were made the objects of religious worship. These are all, no doubt, *heathen perversions of a primitive belief in actual existences*, agents of nature, demi-urges—a belief founded upon tradition, or original revelation, as they were certainly known to our first parents.

The seraphim were beings of a similar order and office with the cherubim, though we may suppose they were more exalted from their position *above* the throne.<sup>1</sup> They attend the majesty of the Deity, they have wings and hands, and voices so terrible that the posts of the temple shake at the sound. Their antiphonal anthem of praise is like that of the cherubim:—"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts."—Fire and smoke, also, accompany them, and terror seized the Prophet Isaiah, as it did Ezekiel when he beheld the vision of the cherubim.

But the form of the *seraph* was not the same,—there is good reason to believe that it was a *winged serpent*. The word *seraph* comes from a root which conveys the idea of something *burning* or *exalted*; it may have either or both meanings.

It is used in several instances to signify a *snake*,<sup>2</sup> and Isaiah himself uses it unmistakably in that sense. "The viper and fiery flying *serpent*"<sup>3</sup> *saraph*. "Out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying *serpent*"<sup>4</sup> *saraph*. The office of the seraph in Isaiah's vision seems to have been that of a minister of purification and cleansing, for when the Prophet cries out, terrified with the majesty of perfect holiness: "Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am

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<sup>1</sup> Is. vi. <sup>2</sup> Num. xxi.8. Deut. viii.15. <sup>3</sup> Is. xxx.6. <sup>4</sup> Is. xiv.29.

a man of unclean lips," one of the seraphim takes from the altar a live coal, and laying it upon the mouth of the sin-stricken man, says, "Lo! this hath touched thy lips and thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged."

From these indications we may infer that Moses set up, in the camp of afflicted Israel, *not* the Æsculapian symbol of heathendom, but the representation of a being or principle, which was the providential, cleansing healing or medicinal agent of nature; that, either from primitive tradition or direct revelation, he so understood the divine command and instructed his people accordingly, to stimulate an exercise of hope and faith necessary for their recovery.

The seraphic form may have embodied a personality, and the primeval pair, with preternatural insight may have been familiar with God's 'ministers of flaming fire,' the seraphim and cherubim. Satan perhaps more readily gained the ear of Eve because he took the serpent's body, thus "transforming himself into an angel of light"<sup>1</sup> a bright-winged seraph; and in succeeding ages, the great deceiver and counterfeiter perverted the cherubic hosts into the winged idols of Assyria and Egypt, and his own assumed mask into the emblem of health and prosperity.

A cock was the usual sacrifice to the god of healing. Socrates, the great philosopher and greater moralist, was not above the superstitious influence of his age, for his last request to his disciples was, that the cock he had promised as a sacrifice to Æsculapius might not be forgotten. Upham describes a similar ceremony at the

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. ii. 14.

death of a native Ceylonese. In the interior of the island, a traveller surprised a priest of the devil, in a dark forest, at midnight, sacrificing a black cock at the death-bed, with hellish sounds and awful mysteries.

The *caduceus* of Mercury, the god of cunning, thieves and liars, was a Phallic and Ophite emblem : a pole, two serpents and wings. The serpent wand or staff is often seen in the hands of apotheosized Egyptian kings. Living serpents were kept in the temples of Minerva, the goddess of wisdom ; and the deadly malignity of the serpent deity was represented in the head of Medusa with snaky locks, whose very glance turned the beholder into stone. Serpents of great size were worshipped in Greece and Italy ; and when the apostle Philip converted the Phrygians, a living serpent received divine honors.

It is supposed that the fable of the banishing of snakes from Ireland by St. Patrick refers to the conversion of the serpent-worshipping inhabitants. That of St. George and the Dragon may admit of the same interpretation. Christ, in giving His last instructions to the Apostles, says : " Go ye into all the world, preach the gospel to every creature. In my name they shall *cast out devils*, they shall speak with tongues, they shall *take up serpents*." And of the Messiah it is said, " Thou shalt tread upon the lion and *adder*, the young lion and *dragon* shalt thou trample under thy feet." " The seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject to thy name."

Turning from the Old World to the New, we find the same idea preserved in the history and traditions of America. Among nearly all the aboriginal Indians, ser-

pent worship, sorcery and incantations were practised, accompanied, as usual, with terrible cruelty, superstition, and degradation.

The god of the Aztecs was represented as a great snake with feathers on his head. One of his names signifies smoke, or obscurity. "When he descended upon the sacred mount, water and fire flowed from beneath his feet," reminding us of a passage in our Bible: "Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth from his feet—hailstones and coals of fire."

The god of the Toltecs was also a serpent deity.

The Spaniards reported that, before the conquest of Peru, "The people of that country worshipped a monstrous serpent, twenty-seven feet long, with a very thick body covered with scales, and small but fierce eyes, terrible to behold, no doubt the *jiboya* of Brazil."

"The snake was a conspicuous object in Mexican mythology. It was carved in various shapes and sizes. In one temple the stones of which the walls were built were cut like snakes tied together, and was dedicated to all the gods, but called the 'Serpent's Place'<sup>1</sup> One stone carved head was found in Mexico, twelve feet long."

The live snakes bred in cages strown with feathers, in the precincts of the Mexican temples, and described by the Spaniards as "horrible creatures, with something like morris bells at their tails," were the deadly rattlesnakes, considered sacred in America, as were the venomous asp and cobra in Egypt and India.

Among many ancient nations a belief was prevalent

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<sup>1</sup> Du Paix.

that an enormous serpent girdled the universe, or stretched through the sun's path. When an eclipse occurred, it was supposed this monster was about to swallow the sun. Hideous noises were resorted to, with the hope of frightening him, and sometimes sacrifices were offered to divert him from his purpose.

Perhaps the most repulsive form which this accursed idolatry has ever assumed, one in which Satan transformed himself into an angel of light, was the abominable blasphemy of self-styled Christian sects, the Nicolaitans, Gnostics and Syrian Ophites. They taught that the Ruler of the Universe was in the form of a dragon, that the serpent of Paradise was the author of man's knowledge, and that to him was to be attributed all wisdom. Manes of Persia taught that Christ was an incarnation of the great serpent, and certain Egyptians call their serpent god Cnuphis, Jesus Christ.

“ These sects kept a serpent in a chest ; From this covert they enticed him upon a table, with a piece of bread. When he had folded himself around the bread they broke it in pieces and ate it and all who wished, *kissed the serpent!* They then sang a hymn through the snake to the Supreme Father, calling this the Holy Eucharist—a perfect sacrifice!! ”<sup>1</sup>

This ceremony was a literal repetition of a Bacchanalian rite, except that, in the latter case, the votaries sang the concluding song to Python.

These blasphemous sects are referred to by St. John, speaking in the name of Christ, to the churches of Ephesus and Pergamos, “ so hast thou also them which

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<sup>1</sup> Deane.

hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate." <sup>1</sup>

"This abomination lasted till the seventh century, when Mahommedanism swept away a mass of parasites which had fastened themselves on Christianity." <sup>2</sup>

Serpent worship was accompanied by that most terrible form of propitiation, human sacrifice. Wrestling the truth to serve his lying purpose, the Evil One has always made it appear "that it is blood that maketh atonement for the soul," that "it is expedient that one man should die, lest the whole nation perish." If the death of one man did not suffice to bring prosperity or avert calamity the number was increased till sometimes hundreds and even thousands of poor wretches were compelled to yield up their lives, under circumstances of deliberate atrocity, too horrifying and disgusting to be described.

Human sacrifice to Obel or Baal the sun serpent, god of fortune, is frequently mentioned in the Hebrew scriptures. Balaam says to Balak, king of Moab,— "Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" <sup>3</sup> The church of Pergamos practised the rites of Balak.

"They sacrificed to devils not to God." <sup>4</sup>

"Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils." <sup>5</sup>

Mr. Prescott in the History of Mexico states that the yearly sacrifice of human beings among the Aztecs, was estimated from twenty to fifty thousand. At

<sup>1</sup> Rev. ii. 6-15.

<sup>2</sup> Deane.

<sup>3</sup> Mic. vi. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Deut. xxxii. 17.

<sup>5</sup> Ps. cvi. 37.—Rev. ii. 14.

the dedication of one temple seventy thousand perished at this infernal shrine, many hundreds of priests being employed for days in the slaughter. The Spaniards counted one hundred and thirty-six thousand human skulls, preserved in a building erected for the purpose.

At the grand annual sacrifice, a beautiful youth, who was for the previous twelve months in preparation for the event, being perfected in health and beauty and surrounded by all sensual delights, was led to the high altar, bound upon it, and the priest, having cut open his breast, tore from it the palpitating heart and held it, yet smoking, up toward the sun in heaven.

Cannibal feasts were prepared from the bodies of the victims, and lent additional horror to these atrocities, and, incredible as it may appear, high-born ladies participated in the loathsome banquet.

The Spaniards were also witnesses to a still more dreadful rite, where infants were bled to death, and the blood of these innocents, mixed with meal or earth, was eaten by the assembled company!

During the construction of some public works near Cincinnati, a sacrificial mound about twenty-five feet wide was cut through, and, amid marks of intense heat, were found remains of infant skeletons, showing that there had been perpetrated the most diabolical of Ophite ceremonies.

To what incredible degradation must the soul of man be plunged, when such inhumanity could be tolerated! We sicken when we fancy the social condition thus indicated!

At the Smithsonian Institute at Washington there is

a large mass of copper ore, oval in form, about five feet longest diameter, which was found in the region of Lake Superior. Indian tradition declares that it was used as an altar for human sacrifice. A little above the center is a place smoothed to receive the shoulders of the victim, and higher still, on one side, is a deep hollow, in size and shape like a quart bowl, the design of which is but too mournfully apparent; there are no marks of use—the pitying elements have washed away all stain.

The seed of the woman will at last “bruise the head of the serpent,” but it yet retains vitality. Ophiolatry still exists in Northern India, in Cashmere, and Nepaul, near the site of the Garden, where, no doubt, it had its monstrous birth. It also lingers in Egypt. There, live serpents still receive human victims, and sickness is believed to be cured by a serpent, which is taken to the bedside of the patient, coiled around the neck of a beautiful girl. It is found among all the African tribes, but upon the coast of Guinea it retains its most revolting features. Navigators who visit the western coast unite in testifying that ancestral worship and human sacrifice are the leading characteristics of the religion of Dahomey, and are practised to a frightful extent.

The *Triad* of this people consists of the earthly and the heavenly serpent, the cotton and the poison trees, (consulted in sickness) and Hu or the ocean. This name is probably the same as Hea of the Assyrians, and is certainly like the Hu of the ancient Britons, both serpent deities.

The earthly serpent, who has a thousand serpent wives, is worshipped with imposing ceremonies, and is the recipient of many gifts. His priestesses are young

girls trained for that purpose like the nautch girls of India. This deity returns answers to his worshippers by his children, the beautiful snakes of the western coast. He is supposed to be still on earth, enshrouded in mystery.

The heavenly serpent is the rainbow, whose image, a horned snake, is preserved in a jar.

The worship of Hu is very expensive and cruel. The high priest, who attains to the dignity of five hundred wives, appropriates the costly offerings, and it were well if the sacrifice ended in that way, but frequently a man must be taken into the sea and thrown to the ravenous sharks which infest the coast. When information is required from the spirit world, some poor wretch is hurried thither with the message. When a caboocer of Ashantee dies, a female slave is butchered at the grave under circumstances of heart-rending cruelty.

Wholesale murder attends the death of the king of Dahomey. His wives, servants and animals must attend him upon his last journey. After the death of the last of these kings, a few years since, enough poor victims were slaughtered to float a boat in the blood !

And yet nearer home, in this nineteenth century of Christian grace, in our own enlightened United States, the serpent still weaves his deadly folds and fastens his cruel poison fangs. Credible witnesses state that among the negroes of the South, Voudhooism or Obi worship is still secretly practised. Few whites have witnessed the rites, for being obscene and foul, they are performed in great privacy. Snakes and nude human beings figure in the vile ceremonies, and the civil authorities, always upon the lookout, interfere at a moment's warning.

The priests of the devil, while sometimes admitting that there is much trickery and fraud in their practice, declare that they are conscious of a powerful outside influence, which they can neither describe nor explain, but which, if they are converted, they regard with horror and loathing; some investigators believe this to be—in reality, diabolism—certainly the phenomena connected therewith is, at present, inexplicable.

### THIRD. PHILOLOGICAL EVIDENCE.

Having reviewed, though by no means exhaustively, the records of history in support of our theory, we will now introduce the testimony of language, evidence of the highest importance, for, like the precious papyrus rolls inhumed in Egyptian tombs, in the slight but tenacious envelope of letters, important historical facts have been preserved without decay or deterioration for thousands of years. The hand of comparative philology has skilfully separated the hardened husk from the kernel and offered for our enlightenment and instruction, the latent but still vital germs of thought, which, under the genial influence of scientific culture, have blossomed and borne golden apples of historical knowledge.

And here allow me to crave the patient tolerance of linguistic critics. If my interpretation of words seems far-fetched and fanciful, contrary to the exegesis of commentaries and lexicons, please to remember that discoveries in the East, during the last few years, the interpretation of rock and brick inscriptions, the deciphering of cuneiform and hieroglyphic writing, and the acquisition of the Zend and Sanscrit, have changed the

outline of history and altered the very foundation of language. Familiar objects have disappeared and strange forms have taken their places ; supposed facts have faded into fiction, and truths more wonderful have appeared in the vanishing mists. The much-disputed location of Ophir, it is decided must have been in India, because the names of the imports of Solomon from that country, "the ivory, apes, peacocks and almug trees," are found to have a Sanscrit form. The names Apollyon and Abbadon, formerly translated the Destroyer, are found to mean Serpent-lord—the old definition being merely a characteristic of the personage. Examples of like discrepancies, the result of the honest ignorance of a darker age, might be multiplied *ad infinitum* ; therefore, while I feel most painfully my own liability to error in this newly-explored field of science, and realize that the interpretations here given may not be ultimate, I humbly ask that the sentence of condemnation be suspended till further investigation elicits certainty.

Philology, the index of history, points with unerring finger to many a fact confirming our theory.

The malignant power of the serpent or spirit of evil, was designated by various names. In Persia it was called *Ahriman* ; in Hindustan, *Kaliya* ; in Scandinavia, *Midgard* ; but it was most commonly expressed by the syllables *Ob* or *Ab*, *Og*, *Ock*, *Ag*, and *On*. This last may have been a perversion of the highly sacred and mysterious *Om* or *Am*, supposed to be the name of the Supreme Deity, too sacred to be uttered. The most usual name for God seems to have been among Semitic nations *AI*, *El* or *All*, the mighty or strong one.

The syllables first referred to occur and recur in a

strange and startling manner in the most remote and disconnected places, and are a key which unlocks many a dark mystery.

“They had a king over them which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is *Abaddon*, but in the Greek hath his name *Apollyon*.”<sup>1</sup> With this text and the first and last monosyllables for guides, we may enter the labyrinth. We find the presence of this evil being in the words *Python*, *Typhon*, *Dagon*, the fish god or “dragon of Philistia, *Mammon* *Ammon*, *Rimmon*. The destructive power of the tempests in the China sea finds expression in the word *Typhoon*.

In Revelations we read, “I saw three unclean spirits come out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth to the kings of the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue *Armageddon*, and great *Babylon* came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.”<sup>2</sup>

Kings and priests often took the name of the deity they served. *Potiphera*, father-in-law of Joseph, was a priest of *On—Ra* being the sun and *On*, the serpent. In the story of *Sisera*, general of the Canaanites, defeated at the waters of *Megeddo* (*Armageddon*?) and afterwards slain by *Fael*, the names may also be significant. Pharaoh, *Ramesis* are examples of the introduc-

<sup>1</sup> Rev. ix. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xvi.

tion of the sungod syllable. Esarhaddon and Sihon, king of the Ammonites, were, no doubt, also priests of the sunserpent, the sacerdotal and kingly office being frequently united. The name of the god of many savage tribes begins with the syllable *On* or *Un*. The most ancient dynasty of Poland, the *Fagellon*, boasted descent from the devil, and his insignia appeared upon their arms.

An attempt to unite the honor of the opposing deities is sometimes perceived as in the word, *Ammon*, *Am*, being the concealed god of the Egyptians. *Babel* is said to mean in the Chaldean or Assyrian, "the gate of the god," so in *Babyl* (or *el*) *on* we discover "the gate of the god and the serpent" or "gate of the serpent-lord." The first syllable, however, may not mean "the gate" but may be *ab* with a prefix, and the name of the city a union of *ab* and *on*, as is seen in *Abaddon*, *Apollyon*; the same union occurs in *F-ag-elon* where *ag* or *og* takes the place of *ab*. The unendurable sin of Babylon, so reprobated and accursed in the Bible, may have been in this blasphemous union of words and worship. In the Apocrypha we read in the story of Bel and the Dragon; "In the same place was a great dragon, which they of Babylon worshipped," and in Isaiah we find the kingdom of Lucifer and Babylon denounced almost as one.<sup>1</sup>

The syllable *Og* is a synonym of *On*. The Etrusci, whose origin is unknown are represented by Lucian as having introduced into Gaul a very ancient idol called *Ogmios*. His image was that of a very hideous old

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<sup>1</sup> Is. xiv. 12:

black man, leading a vast multitude of men by chains which issue from his mouth and attach to their ears. In the "Myths of the Rhine" it is stated that *Ogma* in the ancient Celtic tongue signified wisdom and eloquence. This was probably a secondary meaning implying the persuasive powers and wisdom of the serpent.

*Ugronians*, or *Ugro Finnish Turanians*, were sometimes called, *Ogres*. Our English word *ogre*, means a hideous giant who lives on human flesh; in the Latin, the king of the infernal regions. The word *ogle*, to leer, is another derivation. A large river in Africa is called *Ogree*. *Og*, of the children of Ammon, the giant king of Bashan, was no doubt a priest of the serpent. The sixty stone cities of his kingdom, it will be seen later in this Essay, were in accordance with Turanian ideas of architecture. The principal city was *Ashteroth*, named for the *Astarte*, the *Venus* of the Phœnicians, in whose worship Phallic ceremonies were most prominent. *Heliogabalis* a conical black stone, a phallus, was their sun-god image.

*Ogyges* was the most ancient king of Bœotia; he lived about 1500 B. C. *Ogsola*, the ancient name of an island in the Mediterranean, by a strange revulsion is now called *Monte Christo*.

The mysterious name of God found among the Slaves, a remnant of the Scythians, which philologists have striven to reconcile with the derived meaning, is made plain by our theory. In Russ, it is *Bog*; in Tongu, *Bogdor*, the serpent *og* and the sun *or*, in Persian *Bhaga*, (where we trace the *hag* or *hak*,) cognate to the Sanscrit *Baga*, "good fortune or the sun," in cuneiform inscriptions it is *Baga*. From the same root come the words

bogies, bogarts, buggers, and the Sanscrit *Naga*. The North American Indians call a deity Oki, the same with the Phœnician Ogi.

Now, if we have obtained the true interpretation of the word *Og*, we may understand the *Gog* and *Magog* spoken of as exceedingly wicked in Ezekiel and Revelations to be the people of *Og*, that is, serpent worshippers, and that *Magog*, second son of Japhet, father of the great Turanian family, either received his name on account of his religious defection, it being an antediluvian word, or that his name was given to a worship which he primarily introduced. The story of Eden, the character of the worship, its connection with trees and groves, the powers ascribed to the foul deity, favor the former conjecture, an assumption confirmed by an Oriental tradition, which relates that the giant *Og* escaped destruction when the world was deluged, by wading beside the Ark, an Eastern figure which conveys the idea of the preservation of an antediluvian name and worship.

Although the monosyllable *Og* seems to be of the greatest antiquity, the word *Ob*, has perhaps been quite as extensively used.

Ancient tradition relates that the first inhabitants of Europe were partly human and partly dragon in form, in allusion to their Ophite origin. Bryant and Faber, two learned authorities, believe the very name, *Europe* was originally *Aur-ob*, the Solar serpent!<sup>1</sup> Is it not possible, *Arabia* is identical with this word *Aurob*? If this idea should prove correct, great light will be thrown on the prehistoric civilization of that wonderful land, the mounds

<sup>1</sup> The original word may have been *Ar ob*, *land* of the serpent, rather than *Or ob*, the *sun* serpent.

of perished cities, the rock hewn tenements of Bashan, and the fragments of dracontia.

The Scythians who were of the Turanian family, called their god, the sacred serpent *Ob*, and named their large river *Obi*, after him.

It will be remembered in connection with the protracted religious struggle which agitated Asia in the early ages after the Deluge, that a great serpent was worshipped, by name *Afrasiab* and *Ferusharabha*, the monosyllabic word being in this instance combined in a manner to us at present unintelligible. It is found in the most remote and disconnected places, the *Apaches* of North America keep live snakes in their temples, and *Obtala* is the vilest of the gods of Dahomey.

This name occurs frequently in the Old Testament; the words translated "witch" or "familiar spirit" are always "one that hath *Ob*,"<sup>1</sup> "a consulter with one that hath *Ob*,"<sup>2</sup> "a man or woman that hath *Ob*, shall surely be put to death." The witch of Endor was "one that had *Ob*," that is, she was a priestess of the sacred serpent. "All that do these things are an abomination to the Lord."

The Bulgarians call vampires and evil spirits *obours*; *lob-goblins* belong to the same family, *ogres* being their cousins german.

The word, *Ra-h-ab*, evidently combines the sun and the serpent deities.

"I will make mention of *Rahab* and *Babylon* to them that know me."<sup>3</sup>

"Thou hast broken *Rahab* in pieces as one that is

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xviii, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. xx, 27.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xxxvii, 4.

slain, and scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm." <sup>1</sup>

"Awake, oh arm of the Lord! awake, put on strength, as in ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut *Rahab*, and wounded the dragon?" <sup>2</sup> Allusions perhaps to the early religious wars before referred to.

The woman who protected the spies sent by Joshua to Canaan, and who was converted to a belief in the true God was originally a priestess of the foul deity. Her familiarity with the story of *Sihon* and *Og*, her name *Rahab*, her character, a harlot, and the scarlet cord her insignia, are sufficient evidence of her original office. That the color of the insignia of this polluted idolatry has not been mistaken, is made plain in Rev. 17. "Upon the forehead of the vile woman who is clothed in *scarlet* and purple and who sits upon the *scarlet*-colored beast is written a name, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

The Chaldean god *Bel* is probably *Obel*, the *Baal* and *Belial* of the Bible—*Baleazer* and *Ethbel*, Phœnician kings and *Jezebel*, daughter of *Ethbel*, the wife of Ahab, belonged to the serpent hierarchy.

We find these names in countries far separated; *Balak* lava in Russia, *Lab hak*, a ruined temple in South America—are a striking coincidence, and point to a common origin. *Ak* is identical with *ag* and means snake as in *Hakpen Koakdaemon* and *Agathadaemon*.

The Asiatic hordes, who first occupied Europe, name

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxxix, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Is. li, 9.

the Baltic Sea for this god, and the name is also preserved in *Bales Hangen* and in a fire festival called *Balders Bal*. Ob is the name the black races use to designate their serpent deity in Africa, and in our own Southern States at the present day, the negro sorcerers are called Obies, being, it is supposed, in communication with the devil. Poison, among the savages is called Obeah water, and those who sell and manufacture this deadly agent always have live serpents in their possession. Dealers in medicine may be startled to find that they also are called *apothecaries* and that they vend *drugs*, (*dragee's* French.)

#### FOURTH. EVIDENCE FROM PREHISTORIC RUINS.

If the evidence for the universality of the adoration of the serpent were to end here, we could hardly dissent from the theory of Mr. Deane's great work, that "The Serpent of Paradise is the serpent god of the Gentiles," but to all this ethnological, historical and philological testimony we are to add that of another class of witnesses, silent and speechless as the tomb but who will nevertheless tell us no doubtful story. I refer to the architectural ruins before alluded to, structures and edifices which lie slowly wasting beneath the touch of Time's corroding finger.

These prehistoric relics, found in every part of the habitable globe, have certain uniform marks and characteristics which point to common origin and design, and lead to an increasing conviction that the great Turanian family, the fierce and terrible Northern hordes of profane history, the Gog and Magog of Scripture, whose numbers were

as the sands of the sea, did, in the long forgotten ages, sweep with their irresistible armies across the habitable globe, carrying with them a wonderful civilization and the foul and cruel counterfeit of religion, which is the theme of our present investigation. They are thus alluded to: "Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog. Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou and thy bands and many people with thee. And thou shalt come from thy place out of the North parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, a mighty army."<sup>1</sup>

Of their ultimate destruction it is said: "Behold I am against thee, oh, Gog. I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord, every man's sword shall be against his brother, and I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood, and I will rain upon him and upon his bands, and upon the many people with him, an overflowing rain and great hailstones, fire and brimstone, \* \* \* and I will leave but a sixth part of them." This mighty and wicked people have perished, though perhaps a sixth part of them literally remain in the Turks, Tartars, Chinese, American Indians and other savages, but their defiling marks are still visible upon the bosom of the earth.

We have confirmation of the statement of Ezekiel that they came from their place in the North, by the fact that they are spoken of in profane history as the "Northern hordes." The Mohammedans in attempting to penetrate Northern Syria, found the crumbling remains of

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<sup>1</sup> Eze. xxxviii, 39.

immense iron gates and walls, built across the ravines, and defiles of almost inaccessible mountains, evidently intended for defence against some Northern enemy. Russia and Siberia are full of ancient names of the Serpent Deity. But more conclusive than this, is the fact that the oldest hieroglyphs, are not a southern invention, for they show the forms of birds and animals belonging to higher latitudes: it is also suggested that the wedge shaped (cuneiform) character is but a miniature phallus, to be classed with the pyramids, upright monoliths and obelisks, all of which it will be seen later are undoubtedly of Turanian origin. Professor Schlieman found in Asiatic Turkey, in the ruins of a city deep in the earth, supposed to be ancient Troy, some inscriptions strangely like Chinese character. They are a great puzzle to the antiquarian, but by the light of our theory the mystery is explained: the Turanians were here, as everywhere, in advance.

The pre-historic architectural relics we are now to consider, are various in character, countless in number, and are found in all habitable countries. Some of the most wonderful of these are found in India, on the islands of Salsette and Elephanta, on the coast of Coromandel, in Ceylon, Siam, Java, and the neighboring isles. They consist of underground cities, hewn from the bowels of mountains, extensive stone temples, colossal statues and reliefs of such tremendous proportions and admirable finish, that they seem to be the work of demigods or giants.

Mrs. Leonowens visited, during her residence in Siam, a desolate ruin, far inland, beyond tangled and pathless forests, which for extent and magnificence almost defies

credulity. This ruined city is supposed by the natives to have been the capital of a great Cambodian empire which bore sway for about four thousand years. Its capital, the royal city *Naghkon*, (significant in its first and last syllable, *Naga*, Sanscrit for serpent, and *on*, the Turanian serpent deity,) is connected with traditions of wild extravagance, but not improbable when we contemplate the astonishing grandeur of the ruins. "Its princes," it is said, "were without number, and paid tribute in gold, silver and precious stuffs. Its monarch commanded seventy thousand war elephants, two hundred thousand horsemen, and six million foot soldiers. The royal treasure houses covered three hundred miles of ground." The grand temple the *Naghkon Watt* is nearly three miles in circumference, the walls are from seventy to eighty feet high, and twenty feet thick. The form of the building is square, the architectural effect admirable. There are twelve superb staircases, some of fifty or sixty steps, each step a single stone. At each angle is a tower, also a central tower, higher than the others, besides galleries, chapels with gigantic idols, statues of colossal lions, and columns which rival the gigantic oaks of the forest. Five thousand three hundred of the columns were counted. The roofs of this magnificent pile were of solid stone, showing no mark of chisel or mortar, but joined so that the seam could scarce be detected, the surface being smooth as polished marble. The amount of hewn stone is prodigious, the mountain from which it was quarried is two days' journey in distance. The entire surface of wall, ceiling and column, is covered over with hieroglyphic inscriptions, and bold, beautiful alto-reliefs, in which battles are depicted, be-

tween men of various tribes and nations, in which the Hellenic type is prominent, wars of the gods, military processions, and peaceful scenes, women and lovely children, birds, flowers and animals; gods and warriors seem to hang between earth and sky, so sharply are they defined. Here figure largely the serpent and dragon. Some compartments are entirely filled with representations of the struggles between the angels and giants for possession of the snake god *Sarpa Deva*, or *Phraya Nagk*. Winged dragons draw the chariots, and in some places are seen men dragging the seven headed serpent in contrary directions. A four-faced colossal figure, supposed to be Buddha, is often repeated.<sup>1</sup>

This is but a glance at one of the buildings in this lonely wilderness of wonders.

Who reared this miracle of art and strength? Whence came the hosts of skilled artists with implements and machinery to effect such prodigious marvels? Whose was the master mind which conceived the original design? Alas! there is no answer to our questioning but a name, *Naghkon*, City of the Serpent-Lord! *Naghkon Watt*, Temple of the sacred serpent!

The subterranean excavations in India are hardly less wonderful than those in Siam. At Elephanta there is a temple with many apartments hewn from the solid rock, the principal of which is one hundred and thirty feet square. Here are gigantic statues of men, bulls and serpents twisted around the images, a Phallus enshrined in a recess and numerous inscriptions in an unknown character.

At Carli (Kali?) is another excavation, but the most

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<sup>1</sup> Cherub?

wonderful is at Ellora, where the work extends for six miles, under ground. Here are seen temples, courts, peristyles, bridges, staircases, chapels, tanks, porticoes, obelisks, columns and many colossal statues, ten or twelve feet high. As in Siam, there are sculptures of surpassing extent and beauty, many of which are painted with wonderful skill and brilliance; there are rows of sphinxes and giant elephants, and scenes from the lives of the gods.

On the coast of Coromandel is a wonderful ruin, called "The Seven Pagodas," a grand collection of temples, palaces, columns, porticoes and walls, cut from solid rock. These buildings extend far out under the sea, and it is supposed some terrible convulsion of nature engulfed them, possibly "the overflowing rain, great hail stones, fire and brimstones" spoken of by Ezekiel. Here, the presence of the carved serpent and a colossal image of a god sleeping upon the thousand headed snake, and the emblem of Generation, are significant of the ophite character of the lost city.

A description of the numerous ruins in India and Ceylon would exceed our limits. Although mixed with Brahmin and Buddhist ideas, they are undoubtedly marked by a civilization and religion older, more perfect and absolute, than any which have characterized Aryan supremacy in India.

Almost as imposing are the remains of stone edifices and cities, overgrown with forests in Central America, the relics of pre-Toltic and pre-Aztec civilization. There is increasing evidence that these ancient people were of Mongol or Turanian origin, and in all these ruins, the images of huge carved snakes in every conceivable

posture, colossal bulls and other Phallic emblems, stamp the religious idea as Ophiolatrous. The Spaniards who conquered Mexico speak of one temple, the entrance of which was fashioned like the wide extended jaws of a serpent; to them it appeared like the very mouth of hell.

The rock hewn cities of Petria and the black basalt cities of giant Bashan must be classified as belonging to the same type and people.

Besides these stone temples, palaces and tenements, there are in many countries, structures in the form of pyramids or cones, sometimes entire, sometimes truncated, and occasionally built in stages. Among the former, the famous pyramids of Egypt, and of the latter, the famous towers of Belus are examples. The Birs Nimrod is now a ruined heap, but descriptions of its original peculiar construction have been found in the Assyrian ruins.

There are also remains of conical temples, around the sculptured carvings of which are stretched the contorted images of huge serpents. Notable examples of these temples or towers have been discovered in Central America.

Another remarkable class of monuments, found everywhere in the Old World, in South America and the islands of the ocean, are erect monoliths, large and small, sometimes in single and sometimes in double or multiple rows, serpentine in outline and undulating in height, placed so firmly in the ground that they have withstood the shock of ages. The ruins at Stonehenge, Karnac, Abury, as also those in the Hebrides, are of this type. In many places an isolated stone, carved and inscribed, stands in solitary grandeur. The most perfect

and beautiful of these stones is that which towers skyward, and catches upon its gilded top the early rays of the sun, at the city of *Heliopolis*, where dwelt Potiphera, priest of On, and his daughter Aseneith, the wife of the Hebrew ruler Joseph.

Among savage tribes at the present time these objects of worship are often painted on the top a bright red, the color of the dragon.<sup>1</sup>

The ancient name given to these upright monuments (seen even in Christian burial places at this day) has fossilized the fact of their origin. They are called *Obelisks!*

A recent writer thus discourses of these mysterious objects: "Before every gateway in Egypt stood the obelisks, yet no one has shewn clearly what was their design. Their great antiquity, the wonderful carvings upon them, the reverence they inspired for three thousand years, all convince us of their importance. Abdalatif, the Mohammedan, writes of colossal sphinxes and countless inscriptions. Strabo, the Roman, of porticoes and halls, and Herodotus, the Greek, descants upon the wonders of Heliopolis, the city of the sun, but with regard to the significance of the obelisk, they are "all silent."

Now, strange as it may appear, the problem which Greek and Roman, and even the late writer just quoted, could not solve, by two little letters is made plain to us. The calcium flash of philology is thrown into the dark recesses of antiquity's night, and, by the sudden illumination, we read what the ancients vainly endeavored to decipher. Deeper and deeper into the gloom of forgot-

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xii. 3, xvii. 3.

ten ages may we pierce, aided by the chemistry of philology, and discover to our amazement, far, far beyond the cities of Cush and Mirza, the fierce, bright sons of Magog, restless, enterprising, imperious, with a wonderful civilization, with grandest of temples and palaces, and the Phallic emblem named for their serpent deity *Obelisk!* the insignia of a worship, cruel, obscene, damnable!! The horror grows, the conviction forces itself that God permitted them to obtain the wisdom and knowledge the serpent promised, joined them to their idols and left them alone to fill up the overflowing cup of his wrath which they, one day, were to drink. A solemn awe comes over us, as we contemplate the Obelisk, sacrilegious finger of scorn, impiously pointed upward to the heavens!

The last, and in some respects the most extensive and important type of ruins we are to consider are extensive solid earthworks, existing in various parts of the world, some of them over a thousand feet long, in shape a huge serpent. These mounds, when conical, are often flat on the top, with another elevation, where probably the fires were lighted and the sacrificial victims slain. They are the high places, altars of Baal, spoken of in the Bible. Hundreds,—it is nearer the truth to say thousands,—of these exist, with or without the serpentine earthworks. Some of them are so imposing as to deserve, and receive the name of hills, and are so extensive, that an eminent geologist, Professor Hitchcock, could not at first believe them the work of man, but deemed they were the result of fluvial or diluvial action, and that the layers of stone, clay and gravel were natural deposits. Careful examination, however, shews that the clay has been

burned, the stones shaped, and the gravel, charcoal and ashes lifted.

Mr. Squier's interesting work gives a description of the most extraordinary of these structures. "Christian temples," he remarks, "are often built in the form of a cross, so in primitive times sacred structures were in the form of predominant religious symbols."

Pausanias says, "In the road between Thebes and Glisas, you may see a place encircled by select stones, which the Thebans call the Serpent Head."

Stukeley says that "Dracontia was a name among the first learned nations for a very ancient sort of temples of which they could give no account, nor very well explain their meaning.

Some writers have not hesitated in asserting that the Python of Delphi, the Dragon of Colchis and the Dragon of the Hesperides were not fabulous, but real monsters, neither serpents nor dragons, but serpent temples and dracontia. It has even been suggested that the Dragon of the Hesperides was no other than the great serpentine temple of Karnac itself. In the same catalogue have been classed the reputed enormous dragons covering acres of territory. "Iphicrates relates that in Mauritania were dragons of such extent that grass grew upon their backs. Another was said to be about an acre in length, and of a thickness so remarkable that two persons on horseback, when they rode on opposite sides, could not see each other. One of the dragons in the neighborhood of Damascus, which according to Nonnes was overcome by an earth born giant, is spoken of as being fifty acres in extent."

These strangely outlined structures have been found

in Northern Africa, Western Asia, Europe and even America.

One of the most interesting examples yet remaining, is in Abury, England. It consisted originally of a grand circumvallation of earth, fourteen hundred feet in diameter, enclosing twenty-two acres of land; the embankment is seventeen feet high, surrounded by two double rows of massive upright stones. There is also a row of stones inside the earthworks. From two opposite sides of this great work, extend parallel lines of the same stones for upward of a mile in opposite directions. These form the body of a serpent, whose head, outlined by stones, rests upon an eminence known as Hakpen Hill. This name is a revelation, *Hak*, being the old Saxon for snake, (hence the word *hag*, snake-woman) and *pen*, enclosure. From the top of Hakpen Hill the entire structure is seen, extending backward with one coil for two miles. The huge mound encircled by the coil measures two thousand feet in circumference and one hundred and seventy feet in height. The outline of Abury forms a perfect hieroglyph, the very mark of the beast, which will be hereafter described.

But the most stupendous work of this kind yet discovered is the gigantic temple of Karnac in Brittany on the coast of France. It consists of seven parallel rows of huge upright stones, some of them now twenty-five feet out of the ground, and calculated to weigh one hundred and fifty tons each. These rows, sinuous in outline and undulating in height, like the body of a serpent in motion, can be traced for over eleven miles. The number of stones is estimated at ten thousand. The great mound which commands this work is partly natural and partly artificial, and is

called Mt. St. Michael. Tradition connects this immense temple, as well as the works at Abury and Stonehenge, with the worship of the ancient god of the Britons, Hu, styled by the old bards, "The glancing Hu, the gliding king, the dragon ruler of the world," and was no doubt the Hea of the Assyrians, and the Hu of Dahomey.

Mr. Palgrave found in Central Arabia, a work precisely the same in character, though in a more ruinous condition. The Arabs told him there were other similar remains.

Passing the less important structures in Europe, we will consider some of those found in our own country, where they are very numerous, over two hundred small and unimportant works having been discovered in the state of New York alone.

One of the most remarkable dracontia is situated on Bush Creek, Adams County, Ohio, and is described by Mr. Squier. "It is called the Great Serpent and occupies the summit of a crescent-formed hill. Conforming to the curve of the land, an embankment is built in the form of a serpent, its head resting near the point of the hill, and its body winding back in graceful undulations, terminating in a triple coil at the tail. The entire length if extended would be one thousand feet. The neck of the serpent is stretched out and its mouth wide open, as if swallowing or ejecting an oval figure which partially rests within its extended jaws. This figure measures one hundred and sixty feet longest, and eighty feet shortest diameter. On either side of the head are two triangular elevations ten or twelve feet broad."

There are smaller mounds of a similar character near the mouth of Bush Creek.

An effigy of an alligator occurs near Granville, Ohio. Structures in the form of animals exist in Wisconsin, and the extreme North-west. In St. Peters, Iowa, is a large conical truncated mound, sixty feet at the base and eighteen feet high. It is surrounded by a circle three hundred and sixty feet in circumference. Entwined around this circle in a triple coil, is an embankment in the form of a serpent, two thousand three hundred and ten feet in length, the body in the largest place being eighteen feet and its elevation six feet. This work is composed of blue clay, charcoal, sand and ashes.

Another extensive work in Iowa is one thousand and four feet long. These wonderful mounds are found in great numbers and extent throughout the entire West, unmistakably the works of men whose memory is blotted out from the records of the human family. Their skulls have been found in Asia, Europe, and America, in mounds of rough masonry called cairns, in earth-work called barrows, and in the deposits of caves. Recently the remains of a Pre-Aryan race have been found in Southern India and the valley of the Narbadda, and by the Abbé Richard in a substratum of gravel between Mount Tabor and the Lake of Tiberias in Palestine. In all cases the skulls are long-headed like the now existing Turanian tribes.

These monuments of the forgotten past, rock cut cities, towers, and temples, erect monoliths, solitary or in lengthened lines, and gigantic earth works, have been called Buddhist temples in the East, Druidical circles in Europe, and Indian mounds in America, *misnomers all*; they are everywhere Ophite structures erected in honor of the serpent, for upon some of them of every type is

impressed a strange character the serpent seal, the veritable mark of the beast, "The trail of the serpent is over them all!"

This sacred Symbol or hierogram is a peculiar figure representing a circle or globe from which issues one or two serpents, and in many cases two outspread wings. It is found engraved or sculptured upon the relics of antiquity in Persia, Egypt, China, Java, Hindustan, Greece, Italy, Asia Minor, Great Britain and America, and it is sometimes outlined by the dracontia.

The history of this emblem as given by Mr. Deane is startling: "The cross," he says, "is a very ancient and highly venerated symbol. Mr. Kircher believes it is antediluvian." The Egyptian Thoth, who is said to be the inventor of letters, introduced this sacred figure into the alphabet. After the death and apotheosis of Thoth, this letter was named for him Thau, in Greek it was called Tau, and it is our letter T. A circle or globe was afterward added to represent Deity, whom Trismegestus of Egypt (supposed to be Joseph the Hebrew) defined to be a circle whose centre is everywhere, and whose circumference is nowhere, the original cross being intended to represent the four elements.

It is thus referred to in the Bible, "Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry for the abominations that are done in the city."<sup>1</sup> The original character which is translated "a mark" is the veritable *Thau* in its old cruciform shape.

A remarkable passage in Isaiah distinctly refers to serpent worship and its peculiarities. "For behold the

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<sup>1</sup> Eze. ix. 4.

Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, the earth shall also disclose her blood and shall no more cover her slain." "In that day shall the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword, punish Leviathan, the piercing (or crossing like a bar) *serpent*, even Leviathan *that crooked serpent*, and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea \* \* \* when he maketh all the *stones of the altar* as chalk stones that are beaten in sunder, the *grove* or *the poles*,<sup>2</sup> and the (*sun*) *images shall not stand up.*"

This hierogram, altered and perverted by the ingenuity of the Evil Spirit, was adopted as his own insignia by the substitution of the serpent and wings for the arms of the cross.

This counterfeit brand is mentioned in Rev., "and he (the beast) causeth all, both great and small, rich and poor, bond and free, to receive a mark in their right hands and in their foreheads."<sup>4</sup> "The witnesses of Jesus who had not worshipped the beast neither received his mark on their foreheads, or in their hands."<sup>5</sup>

Recent atheistic writers whose unenviable specialty has been to drag into light vermin spawn and monstrous reptiles engendered and buried in the slime of the Euphrates and the Mokh of the Nile, for the express purpose apparently, of destroying religious faith, represent that the serpent has been ever worshipped as an emblem of the Great Creator, and that the original cross was the *Asherah*, or stem of a tree, united with the erect serpent forming a Phallic and Ophite emblem which Christianity

<sup>1</sup> Is. xxvi. 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Asherah*.

<sup>3</sup> Is. xxvii. 1 and 9.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. xiii, 16.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. xx.

has adopted. The facts as they appear to the common sense reader, indicate that the serpent was never worshipped as the Great Creator, the first cause, but always as the re-creator or secondary cause, and there are reasons to induce a belief that the cross, which is conceded by all to be of the greatest antiquity, was originally a *monogram of the cherub*, sometimes represented as the serpent and the pole—the four-fold mystery, earth, air, fire and water, and the *meaning* of Gen. iii. 24 may be, “The forces of nature were henceforth arrayed against the health and life of man, even electricity, the vital principal, became a death bearing element.” The death of Christ by the common mode of Roman crucifixion may not have been, what we term an accidental circumstance, but a token that the cherub was again brought into harmony with man; the venerable symbol, stolen and perverted by the evil one to the injury of the race which he hates, was restored by Christ to the race he loves, and its meaning is now as in the olden time, Life, Life, Eternal Life.

In the last pages of the sacred book, the objects seen in the Beginning reappear; we have a glimpse of Paradise regained, the Old Serpent is re-legated to his own place, his counterfeits are exposed, the dry *asherah* of the wilderness buds, the cherub frowns no longer, “the leaves of the tree of life are for the healing of the nations,” holiness and happiness close the world’s great drama of sin and sorrow.

The power of a malignant influence bent on destroying the soul of man, was never more apparent than in the history of Ophiolatry. Call it by what name you prefer, Ahriman, Apollyon, Abaddon or Satan, some

wicked spirit, malignant and cruel, has ever been dragging men downward to slavery, misery, moral corruption and death, substituting a loathsome and venomous reptile, his true image, for the Deity who is holy and benevolent, making the butchery of human beings, and other abominable rites, the sacrifice of expiation, which the serpent demands, and even converting the emblem of salvation into his seal of damnation. Let the wise atheist explain the presence of evil in the world more rationally than the Bible has done, if it is possible.

Our study of this interesting subject must now close. The evidence, drawn from many sources, is cumulative and convincing that the worship of the serpent has been prevalent from the islands of Java and Sumatra to the coast of Oregon, from Australia to the Hebrides and Iceland, for throughout this vast expanse, have his temples been discovered; and also, that at some unremembered period in the grey oblivion of the past, Turanian domination was universal, that the resistless hordes of that terrible family, like a mighty tidal wave, heaved by infernal throes, has rolled round the world, bearing upon its resistless breakers the elements of an extraordinary political power, a wonderful civilization, and a foul, cruel mockery of religion, an awful bondage to sin and death, ancient as the serpent of Paradise.

In the practices of the savage tribes, by the faint glimmer of myth and tradition, by the steadier light of history, by the electric flash of Philology, the ghastly spectacle is revealed; and in the crumbling ruins of a vanishing past, our horrified eyes can clearly trace the scar which the serpent's trail has left upon the bosom of our Mother Earth.

This device of the Devil has tainted the most exalted religions of mankind, corrupting the lofty Dualism of Persia, even during the lifetime of the great reformer, sapping the morality which Confucius and Gotama gave to the world, defiling the monotheism of the Hebrews and fastening its relentless fangs upon Christianity itself.

But while we shudder at the dreadful delusion under which the men of antiquity groaned, and turn with horror and disgust from the shrieks of the self-mutilated Yezdis, the obscene rites of the Obi sorcerers, and bleeding bodies of the human sacrifices in Dahomey, we should ask ourselves thoughtfully, does Devil worship end here? Listen to the voice of the French revolutionists at the close of the eighteenth century. "Adversary of the Eternal," prays M. Proudhon, "be on my side; Satan, whoever you may be, I will take your word, and ask for nothing more. Come, Satan, the calumniated of priests and kings, that I may embrace you, that I may clasp you to my heart"! And in the middle of this nineteenth century Feuerbach exclaims, "We adore the great, the all-powerful Negation. This Negation in its concrete form is evil, impiety, hatred of God, horror of men. It is what the Christian calls Satan, the personification and principle of division, that spirit of contradiction which leads to utter ruin and annihilation!" Satan came at the call of the French revolutionists, and amid fire and fury, on his high altar, the guillotine drank the blood of sacrifice. Are not our scientific atheists even now ruling God out of the Universe? "Oh my soul, come thou not into their councils."

And yet closer let us examine before we are certain

that the mark of the beast has not been received upon our own hearts. Is not Mammon as well as Moloch the agent of the Evil One? Was the craving in the men of antiquity for wisdom and knowledge stronger than the desire for the glory of this world, its riches and power, in the hearts of the men of this generation? Whence come the pestilent vapors which darken our moral atmosphere, and distort our mental vision, if not from the seething lake where the serpent has his home? When avarice, lust, hatred, envy and jealousy sway our hearts so that we are ready to sacrifice the fortune, reputation and happiness of another, do we not carry a human victim to the Devil's altar and spiritually perform the hellish rite? But while we confess with shame, almost with despair, that, like our first Mother, men still do listen to the whispers of the Destroyer, let us remember that the Love of Christ can triumph over the Hate of the Devil, in our hearts and in the world.

In the commencement of our investigation, we looked backward, through the receding perspective of past ages, to that strange, inexplicable event, when, in the form of a serpent, an evil being introduced sin and its fatal consequence into this beautiful world.

The story of the Temptation, as narrated in the first chapters of the Bible, has been condemned as a fabrication, a myth, an Oriental fable; but tracing the painful progress and history of Adam's posterity, through the long precession of the millenniums, we are convinced that the writer of the book of Genesis has narrated, not a poetical fiction but a literal fact, and we may with increased confidence believe in a prophecy of the final expulsion of the serpent from the world he has so long

cursed by his malignant machinations, which is contained in the concluding chapters of the same Book, and in which the mysterious words reappear :—

“I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the *Dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan*, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit and shut him up and set a seal upon him that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years be fulfilled, and after that he must be loosed for a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them, and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God which had not *worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark* upon their foreheads nor in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. \* \* \* And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, *Gog and Magog*, to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth and compassed the camp of the saints about and the beloved city, and fire came down from God, out of heaven and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xx.

## CHAPTER VI.

### SABAEISM.

#### STAR WORSHIP.

“ They deemed either fire, or the swift air, or the circle of the stars, or the violent water, or the lights of heaven, to be gods, which govern the world.”—*Wisdom of Solomon.*

THE great desert belt which crosses the Eastern Hemisphere, is broken by oases formed in the beds of the large rivers. One of these desert gardens, called in the earliest ages, the plains of Shinar, afterward Mesopotamia (“ the land of the two rivers ”), and at present Turkey in Asia, is watered by the majestic Tigris and Euphrates, which run through its entire length and empty into the Persian Gulf on the south.

To this semi-tropical plain, the family of Noah repaired, after the subsidence of the Great Flood. The sons of Ham (Cush, Mizraim, Phut and Canaan), at a remote period, occupied the greater portion of South-western Asia. Mizraim pushed forward into Egypt ; Canaan, who settled on the east shore of the Mediterranean Sea, was father of the Phœnicians and Sidonians ; Cush remained upon the plains, and there his son Nimrod (“ the rebel ”), a mighty man, founded the great Babylonian Kingdom, which was destined to rule the world for many generations. He built Babel, Erech, Accad and Calneh, and became a proverb, “ Even as Nimrod, the mighty hunter before the Lord.” From his appellation, “ the rebel,” and the names chosen for his cities, it is certain that he had defected from the God of his father, and was an idolater.

The sons of Ham were not the originators of the won-

derful civilization which flourished in the cities built by them upon the genial shores of the Mediterranean, and in the valleys of the Nile and Euphrates. They adopted, and, possibly, improved upon the ideas of a people who preceded them, and, long before their era, had crowded these gardens of the desert. Crumbling mounds, rock-hewn dwellings, temples and fortifications, words and allusions, sparsely scattered in Egyptian, Chaldean and Sanscrit writings, justify the belief, that here dwelt powerful nations, before whose grandeur and magnificence, those who succeeded them "pale their ineffectual fires." The Greeks were as ignorant of their origin as ourselves, although Herodotus and Agathias speak of the Sabeans, or Arabians, as the richest people in the world. Their houses, temples and palaces overflowed with silver and gold furniture, ivory and precious stones. Their household appointments were sumptuous beyond belief; even their roofs, pillars and porticoes were ornamented with gold and silver fret-work, and set with precious stones. Two colonies were sent off from this great hive of activity; one crossed the Red Sea into Egypt, and the other went northward into the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates.

Berosus, a Chaldean sage, who translated the annals of his country into Greek, thus relates the story of their advent:

"In the first year, there appeared from that part of the Erythræan Sea which borders on Babylonia, an animal, destitute of reason, by name Oannes, whose whole body was that of a fish; and under the fish's head, he had another head; with feet, also, similar to those of a man. His voice, too, and language, were articulate and human, and a representation of him is preserved unto this day

This being was accustomed to pass the day among men, and he gave them an insight into letters and sciences, and arts of every kind. He taught them to construct cities, to frame laws, and explained to them the principles of geometrical knowledge. He made them distinguish the seeds of the earth, and showed them how to collect the fruits ; in short, he instructed them in everything that could tend to soften their manners, and humanize their lives, And, when the sun was set, this being, Oannes, retired again to the sea, and passed the night in the deep."

The Oannes of this curious myth, may have been a priest of On, the fish god, or Dagon. His image is identical with that of the latter. Or, he may have been a navigator, thus described because he arrived upon their shores in a ship.

Who were the pre-historic people from whom Oannes came, unequalled in science, magnificence and luxury? We can hazard a conjecture, the wisest can do no more. They were called Rephaim, a word which signifies powerful, gigantic men ; also Enim, "the terrible," Zuzim and Zumzummim, "those whose language cannot be understood, from its buzzing sound." The word in Phœnician signifies "Manes," "the shades of the departed." Their kings were sometimes called Og. They may have been the remnants of an anti-diluvian people, or the sons of Magog, serpent-worshipping Turanians. The Hamites, already inclined to idolatry, may have adopted their religion with their civilization.

The nations descended from this family, were distinguished by great energy, intellectual force and inventive power ; in the arts, sciences, letters, in commercial en-

terprise, and everything that tends to wealth and material progress; they excelled their nobler relatives, the Semitic and Aryan tribes. The Phœnicians were sea-rovers; they founded a colony at Carthage, in North Africa, and explored the continent of Europe, even to the shores of Norway. The Sidonians and Syrians remained at home, to use and manufacture the rich materials which the Phœnician ships brought to their market.

The sons of Mizra, developed a wonderful civilization upon the banks of the Nile, and great Babylon became a synonym of power and wickedness. Some idea of the magnificence and dense population of Lower Chaldea, may be estimated from the explorations of Mr. Loftus, who discovered in a small area, the ruins of thirty large cities. The remote date of their era, may be inferred from the fact, that the oldest of these cities, Ur, was built at the mouth of the Euphrates where it entered the Persian Gulf; the ruins are now one hundred and fifty miles inland! the intervening country having been formed by deposits brought down by "the two rivers." With this fact before us, we shall no longer be staggered by the dates of ancient writers, so at variance with our orthodox chronologers. Mr. Baldwin remarks, "Christianity must certainly be of divine origin, or it would never have survived the bungling of its commentators."

The Hamites were devoted to astronomy and astrology; by persistent contemplation of the heavenly bodies, they discovered that the health and material prosperity of mankind depended largely upon their positions and conjunctions. Forgetting the Ruler of Heaven and Earth, they worshipped his creation, an idolatry which

is called Sabaeism—star-worship,<sup>1</sup> though all the heavenly bodies are included in this appellation, a religion only less cruel and immoral than Ophiolatry, to which it is closely allied. It is possible, that the one is only a modification of the other, their dark colors tinge all ancient religious thought.

The principal deity was Ilu, El, or Baal, “the god.” He was also named for his attributes Sed or Set, “the omnipotent,” Hadad, “the only one,” Moloch, “the king,” Shamas or Chamos, “the governor,” less frequently he was Jaoh, “the being,” or “the eternal” (Hebrew Jahve or Jehovah), and very often was worshipped under the plural name of Baalim. The sun is this deity, or his representative.

Below Baal was a triad, Ana, or Oannes, primordial chaos, Bel, the originator of the world, Bin, divine light. Then came Sin, the moon-god, and the five planets known to these astronomers, although suspecting the existence of others, they adored “the unknown one.” Adar was Saturn, Merodach Jupiter, Nergal Mars, Ishtar Venus, Nebo Mercury; beneath them countless inferior gods and genii. Great heroes were also deified; Nimrod and Asshur were among the most popular gods. This last name may be the same as the Aryan *Asura*, “a spirit.” Hence Ashtaroth, goddess of sensual desire, and Asherah, the place where her rites were celebrated with those of Baal, translated “grove” in the Old Testament. Most of these deities had a female counterpart or “reflection,” Anat, Billet, Taauth, Ashtaroth or Astarte, Thammuz, Shedath, Atargath

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<sup>1</sup> From Saba a Star, or Seba the son of Cush. Hence the names Sheba and Sabean.

Egypt and its religion, although belonging to the same family group, is from its great importance and distinctive character, treated in a separate chapter. These gods were acknowledged and invoked upon all solemn occasions ; inscriptions upon buildings often give them honor. " Bel Dagon, laid the foundation of my city," " Anat, prospers the work of my hand," " Bin, gave me good fortune," " Merodach my good lord, helped me."

The symbol of El or Ilu, is a ring or the sun's disc with eagle's wings and tail, sometimes a human head is added. Bel Dagon or Oannes, is represented as a fish with a human head inside his open mouth, and his lower extremities an eagle's tail. Bel is also found in human form, wearing bull's horns. Bin and Hea, were symbolized by a serpent. Many of the Phœnician and Assyrian symbols, probably derived, as were some of their rites, from the serpent worshippers, are too vile to be mentioned.

The towers of the Hamite cities, often built in seven stages and colored to represent the heavenly bodies, were always used, as were the pyramids, for astronomical purposes. Observatories were also attached to the palaces, and on their lofty heights, the priests scanned the clear and cloudless heavens, and from the situation of the stars, prognosticated calamity or good fortune, regulated the affairs of the nation, appointed the propitious hours for hunting expeditions, war, and other important events.

They also practised divination by the flights of birds, dreams, prodigies and the examination of the entrails of sacrificed victims ; they not only predicted, but, as was believed, controlled the future, by fasts, purifications, sacrifices, and enchantments. These priests were called Magi or Great Ones, hence our word magic. The Archi-

Magus was next to the king in power—and from his supposed ability to control destiny, held unbounded influence over the multitude. The priestly power and skill were transmitted from father to son, the tuition was commenced in infancy, and carried on in schools of divination; in this manner great perfection was acquired.

The idols of these nations were imposing and beautiful. Enormous winged bulls and lions with the majestic head of a man, were the most awe-inspiring. The Hebrew prophet says “It is a land of graven images, they are mad upon their idols.” I cannot resist the conviction, that these monstrous and unnatural forms were not images of their gods, but symbols or impersonations of the forces of nature, not the *person*, creator, reproducer, or healer, but the *principle*, generation, reproduction, recuperation, purification; the cherubim and seraphim of the Bible.<sup>1</sup>

Stones, particularly aërolites, extraordinary gems, obelisks and rough conical stones, were objects of adoration, “Mr. Movers, who has studied the subject scientifically says,” the religious system of the Phœnicians, was an apotheosis of the forces and laws of nature, and an adoration of the objects in which these forces were seen and where they appeared most active.” Round this system gathered, in the external and public worship, a host of frightful debaucheries, orgies, and prostitutions. The Canaanites were remarkable for atrocious cruelty in the worship and precepts of their religion. No other people rivalled them in the mixture of bloodshed and debauchery, with which they thought to honor the Deity. The celebrated Creuzer said, “Terror was the inherent

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<sup>1</sup> See Chap. on Ophiolatry.

principle of their religion, all its rites were blood-stained, all its ceremonies surrounded by gloomy images. When we consider the abstinences, voluntary torture, and horrible sacrifices imposed as a duty upon the living, we no longer wonder that they envied the repose of the dead. This religion silenced all the best feelings of human nature, degraded men's minds by superstition alternately profligate and cruel, and we seek in vain for any good it could have effected. The greatest atrocity perhaps, was the burning of infants. These barbarous sacrifices took place every year, and were frightfully multiplied in times of public calamity—at all critical conjunctures they were celebrated. In vain did the Greeks and Romans endeavor to stop these hideous immolations. Christianity alone succeeded in finally eradicating them.”<sup>1</sup>

Some of their unhallowed rites and symbols are of such an abominable character that Christian writers declined to describe them. Certain atheists however, have recently published works under the specious pretence of scientific investigation, with titles calculated to impose upon the unwary, in which they have exhibited an entire absence of such a delicate sense of propriety. One of these meretricious writers with shameless effrontery remarks, “The grossest form of worship, is compatible with general purity of morals,” “The existence of personal vice does not ruin a nation in its collective capacity,” “We rejoice to know that the causeless curse” (of Noah upon Ham) “never fell.”

Does this writer intentionally design to misrepresent, or does anti-christian bigotry blind his eyes to patent facts?

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<sup>1</sup> Anc. His. of the East, Chevalier and Le Normant.

It is historically true, that the "gross worship" of the Hamite nations, produced such a horrible social condition, such a prevalence of "personal immorality and vice," that enervation, subjugation, decay, and final extinction were the result. The curse of Noah *was* fulfilled; the only remnants of the family of Ham, are a few degraded tribes upon the north east borders of Africa, the "servants of servants." The corruption of the body politic, resulted in national death.

The Old Testament scriptures are filled with allusions to Ophiolatry and Sabæism; the Israelites are continually warned of the dangers of example and association. The prophets hurled anathemas and prophecies against the abominable idolaters, who are often spoken of, under the generic name of Babylon. The books of Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Nahum and Daniel will be interesting in this connection. The downfall of some of their great cities was minutely foretold when these cities were in the height of their power and glory.

Jeremiah 51 chapt. 31, 32, 37 verses, thus foretells the fall of Babylon. "One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end, and that the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted. And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant." Also Isaiah, 13 chapt. 17, 19, 20, 21, 22. "Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldee's excellency, shall be as when God

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overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged."

History teaches no more solemn and impressive lesson than that conveyed by the annals of the Hamite nations. "Waves of ungodliness are the sure precursors of convulsion,"<sup>1</sup> arrogance, avarice, luxury and immorality, inevitably herald destruction. Wealth, power, and numerical strength cannot save; *perpetuity exists in good alone*. These debauched and cruel nations have perished, but their science and inventions live on, and we are benefited by them this day.

We may also learn from this review, the perishable nature of mere material aggrandizement. Let us leave for a few moments our present surroundings, our petty cares and circumscribed interests, the sordid passions, strifes and emulations of our every day life, and in the dim twilight, gaze upon a crumbling mound, all that remains of Babylon the Mighty. Low hillocks, overgrown embankments, sluggish streams oozing over barren marshes, fragments of pottery and inscribed brick, mark the spot where temples, palaces, towers, aqueducts and paradises, lay under the beams of an unclouded Asiatic sun.

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<sup>1</sup> Froude.

“Is yonder huge and shapeless heap,”  
“What once hath been aerial gardens”  
“Rising height on height?”

Here a mass of rubbish indicates the palace of the great Senecharib, across the sunken marsh where the Euphrates once flowed in a walled channel, another mound marks the site of Belus' Tower, in whose lofty chambers, the subtle, imperturbable Magician read nightly in the vaults of heaven, the fate of men and nations. Did the silent stars tell him of this desolation? Where are mighty kings and captains, who, clothed in gold-embroidered robes, and mounted upon neighing war chargers, led their swarming armies through the brazen portals to distant war? Where the wardens of the hundred gates, and the sentinels who kept watch upon the dizzy towers? Where the fair women and sweet children, who gazed with delight upon the dazzling scene, or welcomed with songs and smiles, the pageant of the conqueror's return? Where the groaning captives whose unwilling toil raised these stupendous piles, and when the labors of the sultry day were over, “sat by the rivers of Babylon, and wept” at the remembrance of the home they were never more to behold?

Monarch and captive, seer and slave, infant and soldier, all crumbled to undistinguishable dust! A solitary stork, dimly outlined in the light of dying day, stands motionless upon a broken column, the jackal creeps forth with hungry cry, the owl hoots from the ruined battlements, the serpent rears his head, the bat flits by on unsteady wing. Indescribable gloom and sadness fill the heart and we mournfully sigh, “Is this the end of human aspiration and achievement, and must all our hopes thus

perish"? From the departed Magi comes no response, but to Baal, their god, who looks placidly down upon the ruin of his worshippers, the Christian may triumphantly say:

“What though beneath thee, man puts forth  
 His pomp, his pride, his skill;  
 And arts that made fire, flood, and earth  
 The vassals of his will;—  
 Yet mourn I not thy parted sway,  
 Thou dim discrowned king of day:  
 For all those trophied arts  
 And triumphs that beneath thee sprang,  
 Heal'd not a passion or a pang,  
 Entailed on human hearts.

Go—let oblivion's curtain fall  
 Upon the stage of men,  
 Nor with thy rising beams recall,  
 Life's tragedy again.  
 Its piteous pageants bring not back,  
 Nor waken flesh, upon the rack  
 Of pain, anew to writhe;  
 Stretch'd in disease's shapes abhorr'd,  
 Or mown in battle by the sword,  
 Like grass beneath the scythe.

The spirit shall return to Him  
 That gave its heavenly spark;  
 Yet think not, Sun, it shall be dim,  
 When thou thyself art dark!  
 No! it shall live again, and shine,  
 In bliss unknown to beams of thine;  
 By him recall'd to breath,  
 Who captive led captivity,  
 Who robb'd the grave of Victory,—  
 And took the sting from Death!”

Thomas Campbell's "Last Man."

## CHAPTER VII.

### CHINA AND ITS RELIGIONS.

“I am a transmitter, I only hand on.”

I N gazing down the receding avenues of past ages to that misty point where history and mythology are blended in an obscure twilight, we are frequently startled by abrupt turns, revolutions, and convulsions which change the aspect of history and the destiny of nations.

But in the subject we now propose to consider we shall meet with no such surprises ; our wonder will be given to that calm monotony, placid sameness, and unvarying repetition, which have made Permanence almost a synonym for China.

The name China, given to that country by western discoverers, is never used by the natives ; their country is Tsin or Sin. The ancient name was Tien-Hia, literally “*beneath the sky*,” that is, all the world, and they still believe there is very little outside their own domain, an insignificant remnant which they regard with profound contempt. And when we take into account the vast territory of the Chinese Empire, five million three hundred thousand square miles, its population of nearly five hundred millions, one-half that of the entire globe, its magnificent river system and coast line of twenty-five hun-

dred miles, its varied climate and productions, its perfect agriculture, its hoary antiquity, the lengthened chronology of its civilization and literature, and the permanence of its institutions, we can but acknowledge their right to boast superiority.

Old Egypt counts her dynasties, where other nations count the reign of individual monarchs, its millenniums where other nations mark the centuries ; but in the oldest tombs of that ancient land are found laid away among the shrivelled mummies, dishes of Chinese porcelain with the same letters, and same grotesque figures which are impressed upon their wares at this day. The oldest rock inscription in the world, it is supposed, is in the province of Shenshi ; it commemorates the wonderful achievements of the Emperor Yu. A written memorial is also extant which was presented to a Chinese monarch by a disaffected subject when Egypt had barely produced her first rude hieroglyphs.

Venerable China! We Americans, whose national infancy has barely attained its first century, we light ephemera, make our humble obeisance to you this day!

The Chinese are small in stature, but not ill-formed, with yellow complexion, oblique set eyes, and black hair. Their expression is lifeless and melancholy. They are very industrious, and some of the merchants are immensely rich. They are our antipodes in everything; the whole bent and structure of their minds, if the expression may be allowed, is the opposite of our own. "Westward the course of all other empires takes its way," Eastward the Chinese took theirs.

Their soldiers wear quilted petticoats, and attack the enemy in the night, with lanterns in their hands.

They pay their physicians during health, but the salary is suspended during sickness.

The needle of their compass points South instead of North.

Fire works, of which they are extensive manufacturers, are exhibited in the day-time.

A man doomed to death is often compelled to be his own executioner.

To punish an enemy, they will sometimes commit suicide on his doorstep.

Soldiers sometimes run from the enemy and afterward kill themselves to avoid punishment.

A young and beautiful woman is a slave, but when she becomes old and withered, she is a despot in her family.

They warm wine and fry ice.

Birds' nests, snails, puppies, rats, and the offal of fowl and fish are articles in their *menu*, but milk is rejected with horror.

White is the color for mourning, the principal piece of furniture a coffin, and the chief room in the house is devoted to their ancestors.

They are literal copyists, allowing their own judgment not the slightest latitude, a peculiarity which sometimes causes ridiculous blunders, as in case of the Englishman who sent an old coat to a Chinese tailor as a pattern for a new one. The garment came a perfect reproduction of the old one, *even to a three-cornered patch upon the elbow*. A lady sent out a cup as a sample for a tea set she wished manufactured, laying into the bottom of the dish a piece of paper, on which she wrote the direction. "Put a sprig of tea in here." What was her chagrin

when her beautiful cups arrived to find engraved in ineradicable characters in the bottom of each dish, *Put a sprig of tea in here!*

Ethnologists have been puzzled in trying to classify this peculiar people, but there are evidences in the structure of the Chinese language and religious idea which induce a growing conviction that they must be placed in the great Turanian family. The language is monosyllabic and of a very primitive form, the religion is atheistic in tendency, and the dragon is the national emblem, but the Chinese are in some respects antipodal to other branches of the Turanians as they are to the other nations of the earth.

M. De Pauer, an eminent French scholar, believes that a party of Tartar Scythians, who were of the Turanian family, guided by the mountain streams, crossed the high ridges of Tartary on the south, and descended into the fertile plains below, more than five thousand years ago. The earliest Chinese history represents them a wild horde, roving the forests at the foot of these mountains, without houses, fire or clothing, except the skins of the animals they had killed for food, adding to their fare roots and insects. Their chief at this time was Yoo-tson, who induced them to locate and build huts of boughs and trees.

It might startle us, if we had not been prepared for such a possibility, to learn that these wild nomads coming from Western Asia at such an early date found a people already in possession of the soil, with whom they had a long contest for supremacy.

The greatest of the ancient chiefs was Yu, the hero of the rock inscription at Shenshi, the engineering

genius who first controlled the rivers of China in their periodical inundations. After his reign the new kingdom advanced rapidly in civilization and importance, for they had brought with them from their native country, wherever that might be, the arts of agriculture and weaving, and from the first they raised grain, flax and mulberry trees for the silk worm. They possessed even then the elements of their present letters, had some acquaintance with astronomy, knew pretty accurately the length of the year, and understood the process of intercalation to prevent the dates of the season from getting into disorder.

They understood the use of the compass, and also the manufacture of gunpowder long before the western nations dreamed of them.

All these facts point to a Turanian origin, to the early art and civilization possessed by that strange family.

The laws, institutions and governmental machinery of China have endured for five thousand years, while the thrones and kingdoms of the rest of the world have been overturned and rebuilt again and again to perish.

The causes which have produced such exceptional stability deserve more than the passing notice our limits will allow. An ingrained and constantly inculcated reverence for the past, has exerted a potent influence. Respect for everything old because it is old, is carried to such an exaggerated degree that progress is deemed the most abhorrent evil, and is made an impossibility. The worship of ancestors, performed every day on household shrines by the pious Chinaman, is a constant reminder of his duty and danger. The writings of their

great philosophers, however they may differ in other particulars, are thoroughly in accord with regard to the duty of veneration and obedience.

This constantly enforced passiveness has produced in the native character, a pitiable servility which, while it sometimes provokes the injustice and tyranny of foreigners, more often excites a smile. Mr. Coffin relates that he has seen a feeble, withered old hag march boldly into a crowd of men and after soundly slapping one of them on the face, walk off leading him by the ear! The bystanders quietly acquiesced without a laugh or a murmur, for was she not his mother, and aged?

An oppressive police surveillance and a constant resort to the bamboo scourge in public places, adds to these repressing and degrading influences. Public meetings are not permitted except by order of the government, and the entire policy is to destroy individual independence, for the public welfare.

Their early chiefs who combined the office of ruler, benefactor and teacher, taught the people to look up to Tien, the sky, as a deity, but probably they looked beyond, for Tien is spoken of as having omnipotence, omniscience, and ubiquity, he is without substance or dimension; one of his names signifies the Root and Branch, another, The First and Last.

Reverence and honor to the Supreme Deity as dictated by conscience was recommended, and an annual ceremony of sacrifice and prayer was performed by the chief. The Chinese have never attempted any representation of the form of Deity.

Spiritism was early introduced by the worship of the Six Honored Ones, supposed to preside over the

elements of nature, as well as ancestral worship particularly that of departed emperors.

Immortality was inferable from this worship, but it was not distinctly taught. Heaven for the good was implied, but no hint was given as to the condition of the wicked after death. The Inferno of Buddhism is not of Chinese origin, but was taken from Brahminism.

An ancient Chinese book says: "The first happiness is long life, the second is riches, the third a sound body and serenity of mind, the fourth love of virtue, the fifth doing and receiving to the end the will of heaven." The only reward to be expected for the practice of virtue, is some benefit to future generations, the enriching of a son or grandson. Magic and divination have always been practised, the most frivolous rites are performed with the hope of penetrating futurity. These ideas pervade and color all Chinese philosophy and religion.

Their cosmogony, like that of other nations, gives evidence of primitive tradition; one of their authors says: "Heaven was formless, utter chaos, the whole mass was confusion. The refined particles united first, the thick and heavy more slowly. Heaven thus came into existence first and earth afterwards. From their subtle essence, the dual principal of Yang and Yin, male and female were produced and the putting forth of their energies gave birth to all the products of the earth.

The masses believe that Pwanku, a giant produced by the chaotic elements, labored for eighteen thousand years to chisel out a world from granite floating through space. The dragon, the phoenix, and unicorn were his companions, monsters, evidently, of the Mesozoic age. He

grew six feet every day, and at death his body was transformed into the covering of the granite-frame his labor had finished. This giant resembles the Scandinavian Bur and Lithuanian Wandu. After Pwanku, three rulers of monstrous form succeeded. Their names, the Celestial, Terrestrial, and Human, indicate the powers of nature.

The oldest philosophy is Taoism, of which Lao-tse (the Old Philosopher) is the exponent. He is accused of atheism, but though he has an indefinite idea of a personal deity, he reaches towards God.

"There is," says Lao-tse, "an infinite Being, who existed before heaven or earth. How calm it is! How free! It lives alone and changes not. It moves everywhere, but never suffers. We may look upon it as the Mother of the Universe! I know not its name, but to give it a title I call it Tao, The Way." After endless evolutions and involutions, Tao appeared as Nonentity, then as Entity, fell into the open mouth of a sleeping virgin, and after eighty-one years was born, an old man.

"Tao, The Way," "The First and Last," "The Root and Branch." When Jesus Christ used the same terms in speaking of himself, they were addressed to others than the few Jews who stood around him. Born in an obscure Judean village, he had never seen Chinese philosophies. "Whence had this man such wisdom, having never been taught?"

Lao-tse teaches a beautiful morality. Some of his maxims are worth remembering. "The Tao of heaven does not strive, yet conquers; does not speak, yet answers; is slack, yet plans well."

"Recompense injury with kindness."

“Who is the man that having a surplus, serves the world with it? It is he only who has Tao.”

“The sage does not lay up treasures, the more he serves others the more he has of his own.”

“If any man acts the executioner’s part, I say it is hewing out the Great Architect’s work for him, and such a man rarely fails to cut his fingers.”

The philosophy of Lao-tse is like that of all ancient Orientals, abstract, obscure, and incomprehensible to our methods of thought.

“The Tao is invisible, it returns into Not Being.”

“Being and Not Being are born of each other.”

“Not to act is the essence of all power.”

The philosophers of Greece and Germany have merely reproduced the ideas of Ancient India and China. The atheism of all rests upon the same foundation, the theory that creation is controlled by a principle, and not a personal Deity; pardonable, perhaps, in men who had so little of history and revelation to guide them, but more than inexcusable in this advanced age of knowledge.

The atheism of the Chinese philosophers and of the Buddha is peculiar to Turanian methods of thought, and forms one proof of the Scythian origin of the Chinese nation. Though Gotama was himself of Aryan stock, he engrafted many popular Turanian ideas upon his new system, which was in part the secret of its wonderful popularity and success both in India and the Chinese empire.

Mr. F. Clarke says: “The morality of the Buddha is generous, benevolent, humane, while that of Lao-tse is altogether selfish. Buddhism seeks to help others, while Taoism seeks its own for the sake of power.” But they

are alike selfish. Taoism seeks for power, Buddhism does all to obtain merit, the end sought by both is a state of bliss, called by one Tao, and the other Nervana.

Of course these abstruse metaphysics were beyond the comprehension of the masses, who adopted the morality, ethics and theory of reward and punishment, superadding magic, divination, and gross superstition.

A master greater than Lao-tse was born 549 B. C., Confucius, or Choo-tse, esteemed the greatest man China has ever produced. His father, prime minister of the kingdom of Loo, died while he was young, and he was educated by his mother and grandfather. A grave and precocious child, he was remarkable for reverence of his parents and the ancient sages. His early studies were history, morals, and politics. He married at nineteen, but after the birth of a son, he became divorced, and devoted himself to study. He was shortly after appointed to the office of superintendent of cattle, a position which he filled with so much success that he was soon promoted to be the Distributor of Grain. Here, as in the office he had held previously, great energy, efficiency and probity marked his career. He advanced rapidly in the confidence of his prince, and it was anticipated he would be made prime-minister. But successful virtue is always the mark for envy and detraction, his corrupt colleagues organized a conspiracy against him, which for the time drove him from power. For eight years he wandered through the empire, teaching and exhorting all who would listen to him. At the end of this time the true character of his maligners was proved, the prince recalled him, and gave him the office of prime minister, with almost absolute power. This he exerted

for the great advancement and prosperity of the kingdom, taking kind care of the people, regulating the finances, commerce and public works; repressing injustice, immorality and abuses, sometimes with a stern policy; freeing the mountains of robbers, which had long been the terror of the land, and making the province of Loo the model of the empire. Neighboring princes could not endure this condition of a court which was such a contrast and reproach to their own. Knowing the weakness of the Prince of Loo, they educated and instructed some beautiful courtezans and sent them as a present to the voluptuous sovereign. These dissolute women soon raised a strong conspiracy against the upright moralist and statesman, and at the age of fifty-seven he was again a wanderer, his enemies pursuing him relentlessly for twelve years, intent upon taking his life. He was preserved by concealment and disguise till his enemies were exhausted or dead.

“Man is immortal till his work is done.”

The great work of Confucius was at this time scarcely begun. His teachings and lovely character drew to him thousands of admirers and imitators. Seventy-two disciples attached themselves to him, but only ten, he said, were “truly wise.” With these last he retired to a peaceful valley, where he devoted his time to the labor of collecting and annotating all the ancient sacred writings of the Chinese, assisted by his devoted disciples. He passed the remainder of his eventful life tranquilly, and died at the age of seventy-three. Feeling death approach, he sighed, with a touch of poetry rare in Chinese character, “The great moun-

tain is broken ; the strong beam is thrown down, the wise man has decayed." One of his disciples asked him just before he died, if sacrifice should then be offered? Confucius replied, "I have already prayed."

Thus lived and died this wonderful man ; humane, humble, and just ; lightly prized during his life, but whose character and writings have impressed the minds of half the whole human family for twenty-three hundred years. He knew not God, perhaps, but God knew him. When one of his disciples lamented that he was not better known and appreciated, Confucius said, "Heaven knows me." His patient uncertainty and loving humanity remind us of a beautiful poem of Leigh Hunt's, which might have been written for Confucius.

"Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase)  
 Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,  
 And saw within the moonlight of his room,  
 Making it rich like as a lily bloom,  
 An angel writing in a book of gold.  
 Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,  
 And to the presence in the room he said,  
 'What writest thou?' The vision raised its head,  
 And with a look made all of sweet accord,  
 Answered, 'The names of those that love the Lord.'  
 'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'  
 Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,  
 But cheerily still, 'I pray thee, then,  
 Write me as one who loves his fellow men.'  
 The angel wrote and vanished. The next night  
 He came again with a great wakening light,  
 And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,  
 And lo ! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest."

Confucius was no impostor, he never pretended to inspiration ; but in such exalted natures there is almost

always a prophetic foresight, and Confucius certainly possessed it. When lamenting the imperfections of his own character and that of the men around him, he said, "I am a transmitter, I only hand on, the true saint will arise in the west."

His system can hardly be called a religion. He acknowledged that he knew very little concerning the gods, they were above the comprehension of men. The business of man was to do his duty to his fellow man, to the state, and to his departed ancestors, rather than to attempt the worship of unknown spirits. "Not knowing of life," said he, "what can we know of death?" This reticence of the great master with regard to a higher power and the future state of the soul, has left a melancholy doubt and obscurity upon the Chinese mind.

His moral wisdom is remarkably clear and pure, and will compare favorably with that of any western moralist even in the latest times. His ideas are expressed in short, terse, didactic sentences, impressive and easily remembered. They are found throughout China, in the form of inscriptions on paper or tablets, on the walls of all the temples, dwelling houses, shops and public buildings. A few are selected :

"If what we see is doubtful, how can we believe what is spoken behind the back?"

"Every man sees the faults of others, but cannot discover his own."

"If the blind lead the blind, both will go into the pit."

"A gem is not polished without rubbing, nor a man perfected without trials."

"Man contrives, but heaven decrees."

“Great humility is great honor.”

“It is only the naked who fear the light.”

“To see what is right and not to do it is a want of courage.”

“What I do not wish men to do to me, I also wish not to do to men.”

“If my mind is not engaged in worship, it is as though I worshipped not.”

“Riches and honor acquired by unrighteousness are as a floating cloud.”

Once, when Confucius was sick, Tsze Loo told him that prayers had been made to the spirits of the upper and lower world. He said, “My praying has been for a long time.”

“The five great relations are those that exist between emperor and people, father and son, husband and wife, between brothers, and between friends. The five virtues are Benevolence, Righteousness, Politeness, Wisdom, and Sincerity.”

The writings of Confucius and his disciples form the standard literature of China.

The sacred writings consist of the Classics and the Four Books. The first of the Classics are histories, the third is a book of Odes many of them composed by Confucius, and all of a moral character. The fourth is a book of ceremonies, in which the entire etiquette and rules of daily life are minutely prescribed, and to the influence of which, no doubt, the fixedness of Chinese custom is to be attributed. The fifth Classic is a history of the Kingdom of Loo, and an exposition of the political system, the last work of this great master.

The four Books compiled by the disciples of the

revered sage, contain his system of Ethics, doctrines and family sayings.

Confucius is worshipped according to the Chinese idea. Sixteen hundred and sixty temples have been erected to his memory. One of these covers ten acres of ground. Two festivals in his honor are held annually, at which seventy thousand animals are sacrificed and twenty thousand pieces of silk are burnt. The Emperor officiates as high priest upon these occasions. The service is like that performed in every Chinese house. A tablet is erected over an altar on which is inscribed the name and a few words of praise. The gifts are laid upon the altar with sweet smelling gums and incense sticks, flowers and fruit. The whole is then consumed by fire; a prayer or invocation or hymn closes the service. Except upon these occasions, this system is without a priest or public worship.

The family of Confucius, now numbering seventy thousand males, are the only hereditary aristocracy in the realm. An aristocracy of intellect and learning exists, elected from successful competitors, in colleges where the sacred books are studied. The discipline and study is severe, the literary standard, though confined to the works of Confucius and his disciples, is high. No person can fill a government office till he has passed a satisfactory examination, which is conducted in a just and impartial manner.

Buddhism was introduced into China soon after the death of its founder, by missionaries who fondly believed it would become universal. Its gentle, humane, atheistic doctrines fell into genial soil, and it became one of the state religions in the first century of the Christian era.

The religious ideas of the Chinese prevail in Japan, Thibet and Siam, whose people bear marks of a common origin. The remains of another and a very ancient religion are found in these countries called the Sintoo, very probably the original faith as the name would seem to imply. This almost obsolete religion, from what can be learned of it, was purer than any of the later forms. A remarkable feature was the distinct enunciation of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul and future reward and punishment.

The funeral rites of the Sintoo worshippers of Japan are very beautiful. "The most charming spots on the hill sides are selected for places of sepulture. The graves are carefully tended. At sunset a funeral procession in white robes, their only color for mourning, winds up the narrow path bearing the body of the dead, if a wife, she is wrapped in her bridal veil, which has been preserved for a shroud. If a husband or wife is to be buried, space is always left in the cemetery for the surviving partner, two pieces of bamboo are placed before the grave to hold flowers which are brought fresh every morning during the period of mourning. At this time the higher classes never appear in public, except when decorating the graves with flowers. They make no feasts and entertain no company till the mourning period is over." Mr. Coffin adds, "A thousand years before Plato discoursed upon the immortality of the soul, the philosophers of Japan talked of a future life. Conscience had entered their philosophy. Death was not a sleep; they had 'That dread of something after death.' In the month of August, the spirits of the dead are supposed to revisit

the earth. Tombs, trees, gardens, and houses are illuminated with lanterns of every hue. It is a joyful night—

“Then the forms of the departed  
Enter at the open door.”

On the second evening the spirits return to the shadowy land which lies somewhere beyond the sea. With much ceremony, little paper boats are borne to the sea side, lighted tapers placed within and the tiny craft launched upon the boundless sea.”

The Chinese on the contrary have no certainty about the future or the other world. They believe the spirits of the dead are always near, with all their former interests and wants, with no power to provide for themselves. This compels an onerous and expensive service, dictated no doubt by affection in case of recent bereavement, but mostly by a sense of duty and fear. Food and clothing must be offered, and as they cannot be used by spirits in their original form, they must be consumed by fire and made ethereal. There are three festivals annually, at which offerings are made for the dead who have no living relatives ; in this way many millions of dollars are wasted.

The air is peopled by invisible spirits, they are mischievous and must be propitiated. It is supposed that they only move directly north and south, so for the protection of the living against their restless encroachments, walls and fences running east and west are erected, often in the most inconvenient places. Baskets are also hung out of open windows on poles to catch the spirits who attempt to enter. Superstitious fear hangs like a pall over the entire land, high and low are its passive victims.

China is oppressed as with a perpetual nightmare.

Innovation is the deadliest sin; interference with the past would bring legions of enraged spirits to execute vengeance. Chained to the dead past, filled with superstitious terror, oppressed by the iron hand of a government which in spite of professions to the contrary is abusive and exacting, ever in fear of the public bastinado, the stocks, decapitation, or more horrible still, the order to perform the dreaded *Hari Kari*, (that is cutting open one's own bowels,) with no incentive to virtue but the hope of conferring some benefit upon posterity, no wonder that hope, courage and principle give way. Confucius mournfully exclaimed in his old age, "A perfect man have I not found, I myself have not attained perfection."

The subservient morality, the submissive veneration for the Emperor and ancestors, so apparent in the Chinese character are all superficial. Hypocrisy, jealousy and suspicion rankle beneath the outward cloak of virtue, repose degenerates into stagnation, and secret vice, gambling, licentiousness, and opium intoxication are the mistaken efforts of hopeless human nature to keep alive the consciousness of a benumbed vitality, but in the train of these degrading passions and appetites, stalk ever the fearful spectres, satiety, disease and despair.

The petty exactions, burdens and abuses of everyday life, the craving of base appetites which have lost their power of gratification, the perpetual shadow of gloomy superstition and uncertainty with regard to the future, render life intolerable, the instinct of selfpreservation is lost and relief is sought from hopeless ill by self destruction. In no other country is there such a terrible prevalence of suicide.

In writing of China, the mind assumes a grey monotone, the style becomes prosaic, every thought and word is direct and common place. Fancy falls asleep and poetry dies. In Chinese literature, there is nothing that deserves the name of poetry, every attempt is exaggeration and burlesque. The music of the Chinese, as well as the dancing, is of the most unattractive character, and is executed by hired performers: manly sports which might rouse their lethargic natures are considered relics of barbarism and unfit for Celestials. In dull prescribed routine, life drags its mournful, melancholy way.

“Slumber is there, but not of rest.”

The Chinese emigrants who are established in California and other of the States, are valuable laborers, being quiet, industrious, peaceable and devoted to their employers. They scrupulously abstain from defrauding those who hire them, but have been known to use their familiar acquaintance with buildings where they have been employed, for purposes of wholesale robbery, the very night after they were discharged. They are patient and loyal, but revengeful. The Chinese have been cruelly abused by the English in their own country, as also by Americans in California, the laws of that State affording them very little protection. Their only wish and endeavor is to control their gambling propensities sufficiently to get money wherewith they can return to “the land of flowers” and die.

Is there no hope for this great people? Must they forever grope and shiver by the pale taper of Confucian morality? Has the Saviour, who called himself “The Way,” forgotten those who are seeking the Tao?

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Keeping in mind the fact that the real name of China is Sin, we will read an old prophecy which is supposed to refer to that land. In speaking of those who will accept the salvation of the Messiah, it is said, "Behold these shall come from far, and lo! these from the north and from the west and these from the land of SINIM!"

Let us join with the prophet when he triumphantly adds "Sing oh heavens, be joyful oh earth, break forth into singing oh mountains, for the Lord hath comforted His people and will have mercy on His afflicted!" Is. xlix, 13.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### MEDO-PERSIA AND ITS RELIGION.

Mazdao : " I am who I am."

OUR present subject is in striking contrast to dull, prosaic, monotonous China—Persia! the very name calls up images of poetry and passion! Who was not with the Arabian Nights, or Lalla Rookh, for a companion, floated away to that land of dream and romance! Vales of Cashmere and Shiraz! where the fragrance of musk and amber, jessamine and roses, mingle with the song of the nightingale. Such loveliness inspired the genius of Hafiz, Saadi, and Ferdusi in ages long gone by.

But how changed is the Persia of to-day! Cold and barren plateaus, (though still there are warm and lovely valleys), dirty, ill built cities, a servile, degraded people, a dwindling population, retrogressive government, decaying religion and narrowing territory, this is all that remains of an empire that once shook the earth with the tread of her armies and conquered the world. While its neighbor, China, has calmly plodded on, passionless and changeless, during millenniums, Persia, like a meteor, rushed through a brief career of glory, leaving nothing but its embers scattered on the shores of Time. It is for the thoughtful enquirer to ascertain the causes which have produced such opposite results.

Religion, philosophy, and ethics are the heart, brain,

and nervous force of the body politic. In the constitution of China we found a sluggish torpor, conducive to extreme longevity; in that of ancient Iran we shall discover a restless activity, which, like a flame, its symbol, soon consumed the national vitality.

Preliminary to this inquiry we will trace its origin and briefly review its early history.

Subsequent to the emigration of the Hamites and Turanians (it is impossible to determine how long), a similar impulse was given to others of the Japhetic tribes, who had till then remained crowded in their early homes. At this time the family of Madai, third son of Japhet from whom Media takes its name, came down to the more genial plains of ancient Bactria.

The immediate cause of this sudden impulse of emigration was apparently one of those great cosmical changes which have at times taken place upon the surface of the globe. The first chapter of a very ancient book, called the Vendidad, speaks of the country as once a region of delight, created by Ormazd, the beneficent deity, and adds, "That Evil Being, Ahriman, full of death, created a mighty serpent and winter, the work of the Devas. Ten months of winter were there and two of summer. Cold as to water, cold as to earth, cold as to trees. There is the heart of winter, there all around falls deep snow, there is the worst of evils." The "mighty serpent" is probably the "Ferusharaba" of which Justin speaks. The statement that such a terrible change took place in the genial valley of the Aryas is corroborated by the fact that, as late as 1803, on the river Lena, in Siberia, the body of a hairy elephant was loosened from the ice, where it had lain for

ages, its flesh in such a state of preservation that it was greedily eaten by the wolves. Many similar remains have since been found in this region, where, no doubt, these monstrous beasts once roamed, and sustained their huge frames upon a tropical vegetation. The pious Zend writers ascribe this change to the will of Ormazd, who, they say, has made new homes for the people, and by this terrible catastrophe, forced emigration, otherwise all human beings would have crowded into this delightful valley.

When they arrived on the plains of Cambodia they encountered a black population, whom they describe as having short curling hair. They subdued these people, and became their masters. By a comparison of the roots of words common to the great Aryan or Iranian family, now classified as the Indo-European, of which the Zend, or Medean, and the Sanscrit, or Hindoo, are the oldest, we find that at this period these tribes all spoke one language. Comparative philology shows that they understood agriculture, and were rich in flocks and herds; they manufactured weapons of war, and articles in gold, silver, and bronze; they built houses, wagons, and small boats; they used salt, flour, and meat. Domestic relations were respected, they were monogamists, daughters and wives were loved and cherished.

Their name, Iran or Aryan, implies land owners or honorable men. They were in character noble, being temperate, active, hardy, free and pure.

Society was divided into four classes, warriors, priests, agriculturists and shepherds.

At this period the early Vedas and the Gathas were composed, hymns of praise and prayer, which seem to glow in the rosy light and dewy sparkle of the world's

dawn, "Where there is eternal light ; in the world where the sun is placed, in that immortal, imperishable world place me, O Soma ! where life is free, in the third heaven of heavens, where worlds are radiant, there make me immortal."

Their religion was simple monotheism, more perfect, spiritual and exalted than that of any ancient people. The name of the deity was Mazdao, meaning "I am who I am," apparently identical with the Jehovah of Moses, "I am that I am."

The dawn of Medo-Persian history is clouded by the mists of mythology. Through gaps in the heavy fog we perceive a few prominent figures moving in stately or terrible show. The first to which name is given is Djimshid, which may be either an eminent chief or a dynasty. Under this government great advances were made in civilization. Cities and temples begin to gleam in the morning light, though the ancient writers complain that the lustre of this era is tarnished by the introduction of idolatry. Perhaps this is the "mighty serpent" of the Vendidad, for the next figure which looms up before us, distorted and terrible, is the form of a monster, called *Zohak*, from whose shoulders two dreadful serpents grew, whose hunger could be appeased only by the brains of freshly slaughtered human victims. The myth of Zohak evidently refers to the conquest of Iran by invaders, who brought with them serpent worship and human sacrifice. The independent spirit of the Iranians soon revolted against this usurpation. The immediate occasion of the revolt is thus told in *The Ancient History of the East* :

"There was at Ispahan a man who had two young sons, very handsome in the face, and endowed with all

natural good gifts. One day these young men were seized without the knowledge of the father or the family, and killed, to feed with their brains the serpent of Zohak. The father's name was Caveh, he was a blacksmith, and was working at his forge in front of his house when he was told that his sons had been taken and put to death. He at once left his forge, and in his distress traversed the city, carrying the leather apron with which smiths protect their clothes from the fire. His cries and lamentations resounded through the city, and drew a large crowd of men around him. The inhabitants of Ispahan, tired of the cruelty of Zohak, rose in insurrection with Caveh, the smith, at their head, and hoisted the leathern apron upon a pole as their standard." The revolt was successful. Zohak was conquered, the foreigners were driven out, and a grandson of Djimshid, Ferudin, was placed upon the throne by Caveh, the leader of the rebellion. The leathern apron of the blacksmith became the palladium of the nation and its religion, and ever afterwards, upon all the most solemn occasions when the king took the command, this apron, encrusted with gems, was brought out as the national standard. It was sacredly preserved till captured by the Mohammedans at the battle of Cadesia, in A. D. 641, when, after a panic and utter rout of the Persian army, this invaluable trophy and a famous silken carpet, flowered with precious stones, belonging to the treasury of the effeminate Yezdegird, were cut up by order of the Caliph Omar, and divided among the followers of that fierce fanatic.

The rebellion of Caveh was the beginning of the most tremendous struggle known in the history of the world. It is spoken of in the old Zend writings as a

contest between hostile brothers Iran and Turan, synonyms perhaps of Madai and Magog, both sons of Japhet, one party being worshippers of the true God, and the other worshippers of the serpent. Allusions to this terrific religious war are met with in all the myths of that most ancient era, sometimes it is referred to as a "war of the gods." Before its tremendous proportions modern warfare "pales its ineffectual fires:" it lasted according to different historians from eleven hundred to fifteen hundred years. Like the endless waves of a mighty ocean, the formidable Scythians dashed their innumerable hordes against the borders of the more noble nations—who struggled to repel them with varying success till at length they seem lost on the continents of Europe and America. Some scholars believe that this great religious war was confined to the Aryan family. Certainly a struggle did take place between the elemental worshippers and the believers in Mazda, and was one cause of the emigration of that portion of the tribes which settled in Hindustan:—there may have been two wars of this character.

In the early ages of this momentous period lived Zarathustra or Zoroaster as he was called by Greek writers,—the great Persian reformer and apostle of the doctrine of Dualism. His era is very doubtful, scholars assigning him an antiquity varying from 6000 to 1200 B.C.

Very little has been preserved of the history of this wonderful man and everything related of his life is mixed with myth. Remarkable omens, it is said, attended his birth, which it is believed took place in Bactria during the reign of King Hystaspes. At an early age he withdrew to a cave in the mountains of Elburg where during

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twenty years of pious meditation he received the sacred fire which was never to be extinguished, and was favored with revelations of the divine will from Ormazd (the supreme deity) which he recorded in a book called the Avesta or Living word. At the time of the Macedonian conquest of Persia, Alexander ordered the destruction of these writings and many volumes were thus lost.

Zoroaster after receiving his divine mission repaired to the royal court which he soon converted by preaching and miracles, and the reformation spread rapidly throughout the kingdom. He was killed at the age of seventy-six during a Turanian invasion which resulted disastrously to his party.

The primitive religion of the Iranians had before the advent of Zoroaster become corrupted by Turanian and Chaldean association. The Medean priests, called the Magi or Great Ones, losing the spirituality of their fathers, had long practised star and fire worship, mixed with magic and divination. The enlightened soul of Zoroaster deploring this corruption of the old faith, wrought painfully amid the solitude of the mountains to solve the great problems of man's existence and his relation to his Maker. He perceived in all nature a constant antagonism and conflict. Night and day, darkness and light, sunshine and storm, cold and heat, alternately ruled. There were useful animals, ferocious beasts and deadly serpents—plants nourishing and delicious, and others noxious and poisonous. But in the life and nature of man there was the most inexplicable and deplorable conflict. Pain and pleasure, sickness and health, joy and sorrow, sin and righteousness, good and evil fortune, life and death, forever striving for mastery.

Unable to solve the dreadful mystery, impenetrable except by direct revelation, Zoroaster concluded that the world was controlled by two opposing principles or spiritual beings created by Ormazd the Eternal, who broods over and directs them both.

The good spirit, or principle, was Ahura, the giver of breath. He was the king of light, the author of truth, love, beneficence and goodness, and the creator of the world. The evil spirit was Ahriman, lord of darkness and sin.

The Eternal decreed that the world which Ahura was to create should last twelve thousand years, which time should be divided into four periods : the first three thousand years should be occupied by the work of creation ; the next period was to be a golden age, when man should live innocent and happy ; in the third Ahriman should begin and increase his terrible destruction ; in the fourth Ahura would slowly gain ascendancy, and after all things were purified by a general conflagration, he should reign alone in a recreated, holy world.

According to this decree Ahura began his beneficent work by the creation of a vast number of spirits—six of superior power to assist him in his labors—beneath them others who should preserve the balance of the universe ; then others still, called Fervers, who should watch all terrestrial objects, and of whom one was to be attached to, or guardian over every human being. These Fervers could be made great and powerful by the purity and holiness of their human counterparts. Ahura also made innumerable genii to assist the angels and men. For all this creation the wicked Ahriman made deadly and evil duplicates, with these he endeavored to rise from his dark

abyss to wage a war, but fell back blinded by the radiant glory of Ahura

Then with the aid of the Amshapands, good spirits, Ahura began the creation of the world. The work was done in six gahanbars, or epochs of time, unequal in length. In the first epoch Ahura says, "I made the heavens"; in the second, "I made the waters"; in the third, "the earth"; in the fourth, "the trees"; in the fifth, "the animals"; and in the sixth, "I have made man."

The Bundelush says, "Meshia and Meshiana, the first man and woman were pure and happy, and heaven was their destiny, but Ahriman, full of hatred and rage, knowing that his hour had come, threw himself upon the earth in the form of a serpent, and defiled everything existing upon it, even pure fire he tainted with vapor and smoke. With the help of the Devas, an army of evil spirits which he had created for this very work, he filled the earth with unclean animals and poisonous plants. He then addressed himself to the human pair, who before this had worshipped Ormazd and thanked him for all good things, but now says the old book, "the Lie entered their thoughts and altered their disposition, and said to them, 'It is Ahriman who has given you all things.' By believing this lie they both became Darvands, and their souls will be in the infernal regions until the resurrection of the body. Then the Deva who told this lie became more bold and offered them fruit, which they ate and became subject to innumerable ills, and all their blessings vanished but one."

Thus man is subjected to sin and its consequences. He stands between the two worlds of light and darkness, left to his own free will he would honor and love Ahura,

and assist him to fight Ahriman, but the Devas are near him night and day endeavoring to drag him down to darkness ; to aid him in his dangerous struggle Ormazd revealed his will to Zoroaster, and if he obeys his precepts, the Devas lose their power. The holy law was summed up in this command, "Think purely, speak purely, act purely."

The doctrine of future reward and punishment is clearly taught. Ahura has built a bridge from this world to the world of good spirits, which passes directly over the abyss Duyahk. Those who have obeyed the laws of Ormazd during life are called for by the good spirits on the fourth morning after death, and by them conducted safely over the dreaded bridge Chinevet, and enter the eternal world, where seated on golden thrones they participate in the enjoyments of heaven—but the wicked, unable to pass the terrible pathway, fall through and are dragged by the Devas into the dreadful abyss. Towards the close of the twelve thousand years Ormazd will send his prophet Sosioch, by whose influence the world will be converted—the dead will be raised and their bodies renovated. Then Ahriman in his fury will cause one of his comets to break away from its watchman, the moon, and plunge itself upon the earth. A general conflagration will immediately ensue, but the results will be very different from that which Ahriman designs, for the whole earth fused by the great heat into melted iron, will run down into the abyss Duyahk, and all the souls which the Evil One has there imprisoned will pass through it. To the righteous it will feel like warm milk, and they will rise to the regions of the just, but the sinners will be swept back into the burning gulf, where they will remain till all sin

shall be purged away and evil destroyed, then a beautiful and perfect world, shall arise from the ashes, righteous and eternal.

The two most important books of the Avesta still remaining are the Vendidad and the Yaçna; the first is a moral and ceremonial code, teaching man that he should avoid all sin and impurity, and showing how when committed, it may be expiated.

The Yaçna is a liturgy, being entirely composed of prayers and hymns, which though mixed with invocations to heavenly spirits and many puerilities, always places Ahura Mazda as Supreme.

“In the name of God, giver, forgiver, rich in love, praise be to the name of Ormazd, the God with the name,” “Who always was, always is, and always will be.” The heavenly among the heavenly with the name. “From whom alone is derived rule.” “Ormazd is the greatest ruler, mighty, wise, creator, supporter, refuge, defender, completer of good works, overseer, pure, good and just.” It is then added “all good do I accept at thy command, oh God, and think, speak and do it. I believe in the pure law: by every good work seek I forgiveness for all sins. I keep myself pure for the serviceable work, and abstain from the unprofitable. I keep pure the six powers, thought, speech, work, memory, mind and understanding. According to thy will, I am able to accomplish, Oh! accomplisher of good, thy honor with good thoughts, good words, and good works.” “I have entrusted my soul to Heaven” says Zoroaster “I will teach what is pure so long as I can. Teach thou me, Ahura, out of thyself from heaven, by thy mouth, whereby the world first arose.” I wor-

ship and adore the Creator of all things full of light. I invoke thee, oh Fire! thou son of Ormazd, most rapid of the immortals."

Zoroaster does not pretend to be a prophet or mediator, but speaks of a being who holds this character as Mithra. He is the guardian of men during their lives and their judge after death. He is called "the victorious" and it was he who drove Ahriman out of heaven. "I invoke Mithra the lofty, the immortal, the pure, the sun, the ruler, the quick horse, the eye of Ormazd." When Ormazd gave to Zoroaster the sacred fire to burn continually in the temples it was with these instructions. "Tell the nations my light is hidden under all that shines. Turn towards the Light and Ahriman will fly." This command was for ages faithfully observed; the Persians often protected the sacred fire at the expense of their lives. In consequence of this sensitive veneration of the element, they were unjustly called Fire worshippers and their sacred edifices Fire Temples. Ormazd was sometimes represented by fire, because that was of all elements the most ethereal and pure. Idolatry was held in abhorrence and images were not allowed. The religious service and ceremonial were exceedingly simple, consisting of prayers and hymns, the preservation of the sacred fire and the pouring out libations of the Homa, an intoxicating drink made from an acid plant. This ceremony degenerated in later ages into systematic intoxication. There were few blood sacrifices, horses being the favorite offerings upon such occasions. Animals were rarely killed, even for food.

The priests performed these services in the open air or in temples built on lofty mountains where the sacred

fire was kept constantly burning. The dead were left to be devoured by wild beasts as it was supposed that any of the elements would be polluted if corpses were consigned to them.

More than two thousand years after Zoroaster had written and preached the doctrines of the Avesta and had prophesied that Sosioch would come and convert the world, some of the Great Ones of this priestly order always gazing at the heavenly bodies, were attracted as is believed, by the extraordinary and unexampled conjunction of the most brilliant planets Jupiter, Venus, and Mars in the form of a magnificent star. Believing that this remarkable appearance of the heavenly bodies, indicated the advent of the expected Saviour, they travelled westward for many weeks guided by the declining position of the star till at last they found the wonderful child, a helpless infant cradled by his humble parents in the manger of a caravansary. Nothing daunted by these humiliating circumstances, they fell prostrate before him and offered their costly gifts and devout adoration. Let the faith of the Magi shame our unbelief and apathy.

The teachings of the Persian sacred books are in many particulars very much like those of our own scriptures. Their ideas of the Creation, the Fall, the Deluge, the coming of a Saviour, future reward and punishment, the destruction of the earth by fire and its recreation into a world of happiness and holiness are all very similar to those of the Bible. It is difficult for the human mind to conceive creation by the simple operation of natural forces and the Persians, in common with other nations, believed it was effected by means of subordinate deities.

The Zoroastrian oracles thus explain :

“Far in the whole world shineth a Triad over which a Monad rules.

All things are governed in the bosom of this Triad :

The Father mingled every spirit from this Triad—

All things are the progeny of one fire :

The Father perfected all things and delivered them over

To the Second Mind, whom all nations of men call the first.”

The radical morality of this faith, its commendation of diligence in business and the exercise of the social affections, exhibit the spirit of the New Testament.

Its disciples were to fight evil in every form thus assisting Ormazd in his good work. A perfect horror is expressed of impurity and lying. The moral code is of the greatest delicacy though there is no shade of asceticism ; material pleasures are allowed ; celibacy and fasting are forbidden and good health is believed to conduce to piety and holiness. The accumulation of property and enjoyment of domestic pleasures are commended. “He is a holy man,” says Ahura, “who has built a habitation on the earth in which he maintains his fire, his cattle, his wife, his children, his flocks and herds. He who makes the earth produce barley, who cultivates the fruit of the soil, cultivates purity : he advances the law of Ahura Mazda as much as if he had offered a hundred sacrifices”—a spirit totally opposite to that of the Hindoo Aryans whom they reproached saying “your gods are our devils.”

This religion, though mixed with some errors and much childish superstition, a peculiarity of all natural faith, is the nearest approach to God’s truth ever attained by mere human intelligence. We may even go further

and say that its great teacher was illuminated if not inspired. He lived a thousand years as is supposed, before God revealed his name Jehovah to the great Hebrew prophet, and yet he called Him by that name. "I am who I am."

Zoroaster failed in solving the great problem of the origin and existence of evil in the world, a secret that is still hidden in the Omniscient Mind.

After the death of Zoroaster, many corruptions crept in and Mazdeism declined. When Cyrus the Great conquered Media, he introduced a thorough reform among the Magi, and this, like other and subsequent attempts, convulsed Persia by long and bloody wars.

I would gladly trace the decline of Persian power and its peculiar religion, downward through the ages, but our limits will not permit. The greatest glory of the empire was attained under the kings Chorothes 1st and 2d, in the sixth century of our era. The latter of these sovereigns was most famous for his conquests and magnificence. His palaces, thrones, treasures, poets, musicians, fifty thousand Arab horses, three thousand beautiful women, the loveliest of all, Irene, who was a Greek and a christian, are the theme of a thousand songs.

The Arabs conquered the degenerate successor of these great princes in the seventh century and an exhaustive struggle for independence succeeded which lasted through many generations.

The scene of Moore's charming poem "Lallah Rookh" is laid in Persia during this period. Hafed, the hero, the Persian patriot, in making himself known to the beautiful Mohammedan maiden whose love he had unintentionally won, says.

“ Yes, I am of that impious race  
Those slaves of Fire, who morn and even  
Hail their creator’s dwelling place  
Among the glorious lights of heaven.  
Yes, I am of that outcast few  
To Iran and to vengeance true,  
Who curse the hour your Arabs came  
To desolate our shrines of flame  
And swear before God’s burning eye  
To break our country’s chains or die.”

But though many brave patriots were doomed to die, the struggle went on till, after two hundred years of Mohammedan rule, the Persian ascendancy was restored under the leadership of a native adventurer, and is still maintained by Nassurreidin the fourth Shah of the present dynasty.

Zoroastrian religion has almost entirely died out in Persia but there are about one hundred thousand Parsees or Persians in the province of Bombay in India who still faithfully adhere to the old religion. It is supposed they came into India with Darius Hystaspes when he conquered that country. They are very rich and are the bankers of the east. They live in stately palaces constructed so that passages running in every direction, always catch the cooling breeze. Their gardens are magnificent, combining every flower and tree of the temperate zone with the luxuriant productions of the tropics. These men bear a high character for integrity, energy, and moral excellence. They are elegant, courteous and refined, and are admitted to the best society of Bombay and London. They strongly object to the name of Fire worshippers and though they turn their faces towards some luminous object when worshipping

God, this is not considered indispensable. They confess to an indescribable awe regarding fire and abstain entirely from smoking, or extinguishing a light if they can avoid it. The devout Parsees pray sixteen times a day, their devotions are accompanied by some extraordinary and to us loathsome superstitions regarding the manure of cattle called the *nirang* which is supposed to be a purifier and is conscientiously applied to the person during religious ceremonies. These people who have for thousands of years clung to the truth and error of the great teacher despite the influence of Brahminism, Buddhism and Christianity by which they are surrounded, are generous, humane, and sympathetic. During our civil war, the Parsees of Bombay sent donations to the Sanitary Commissions, thus signifying their sympathy with the cause of Freedom.

They have lost the use and knowledge of the ancient Zend and repeat their prayers mechanically but have prepared in their present language a catechism for the instruction of children from which I will make an extract.

“ We believe in only one God, and in none beside him. The God who created all things in the two worlds. Him we worship, we invoke, we adore ; whoever believes in any other God is an infidel and shall suffer the punishment of hell. Our God has neither face nor form, color nor fixed place. There is no other like him. He is himself singly such a glory that we cannot praise nor describe him, nor our mind comprehend him. Our religion is the worship of God brought by his true prophet Zoroaster, who recorded his religion in several books. These books teach us to know God, to know the exalted

Zurthust (Zoroaster), as the true prophet, to believe the religion and the Avesta brought by him, to believe in the goodness of God, not to disobey any of the commands of our religion, to avoid evil deeds, to practise good deeds, to pray five times in a day, to believe in the reckoning and justice on the fourth morning after death, to hope for heaven, to fear hell, to consider doubtless the day of general destruction, and resurrection, to remember always that God has done what he willed, and shall do what he wills. To face some luminous object while worshipping God. Some deceivers with the view of acquiring exaltation have set themselves up as prophets and have persuaded the ignorant that if they commit sin they can intercede and save them, and thus they are deceived but the wise among the people know the deceit.”

These few worshippers are all that are left of the millions who by the light of Zoroaster's teaching have struggled through the darkness of sin toward eternal light and life.

When there was so much truth why should this religion die? I answer, the error only is dead, the vital germ endures though the husk is stripped away. Mazdeism still lives divested of error and we call it *Christianity*: but in its original form with its two eternal, opposing principles, it was too exhaustive for permanent continuance. Life with the pious Persians was a perpetual state of warfare, a never ending campaign; the contending spirits were equally balanced, the soldier must be ever on guard, no relief, no hour of rest, no tower of refuge; with tempests in the air, shudderings in the earth demoniac temptation in his soul, he fought on without help or any hope but the despairing one that

before his courage should fail, the fatal bridge should be reached and death end the conflict. No wonder that Mazdeism declined ; human nature could not endure the terrible tension.

The Christian, though all the powers of earth and hell combine for his destruction, enters the conflict knowing he shall be victor, his heart sustained with hope and peace that passeth all understanding. But while we triumphantly sing, "Thanks be to God who hath given us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord," let us also thank Him that before the fulness of His gracious time had come He gave to the inquiring world such a man as Zoroaster, who self forgetting and devoted, was willing to sacrifice wealth, position, social pleasure, even life itself, if by any means the world might be made better and purer. Grand and stately figure, towering above the wreck of time, Zoroaster "one of the few immortal names that were not born to die."

We will close this subject with the abstract of a Mazdean prayer or form of confession so humble, so searching, so self condemning, that we may well blush with shame as we compare it with the glittering generalities of our petitions.

"I repent of all sins, all wicked thoughts, words and works which I have meditated in the world, corporeal, spiritual, earthly, and heavenly ; I repent in your presence ye believers. O Lord, pardon through the three words.

I repent of the sins which can lay hold of the character of man, or which have laid hold of my character, small or great, which are committed amongst men, the meanest sins which I have committed for the sake of others, or others for my sake, or if the hard sin has seized the char-

acter of an evil doer on my account, such sins, thoughts, words, or works, corporeal, mental, earthly, I repent of with the three words, Pardon, O Lord !

The sins against father, mother, sister, brother, wife, child, against spouses, against the superiors, against my own relations, against those living with me, against those who possess equal property, against the neighbors, against the inhabitants of the same town, against servants, every unrighteousness through which I have been amongst sinners, of these sins repent I, Pardon, O Lord !

That which was the wish of Ormazd, the Creator, and I ought to have thought, and have not thought, what I ought to have spoken, what I ought to have done and have not done, of these sins repent I, Pardon, O Lord.

That which was the wish of Ahriman and I ought not to have thought, and yet have thought, what I ought not to have spoken and yet have spoken, what I ought not to have done and yet have done, of these sins I repent, Pardon, O Lord.

Of pride, haughtiness, covetousness, slandering the dead, anger, envy, the evil eye, shamelessness, looking at with evil concupiscence, stiff neckedness, discontent with the godly arrangements, self-willedness, sloth, despising others, mixing in strange matters, unbelief, opposing the divine powers, false witness, false judgment, idol worship, breaking of the midday prayer, theft, robbery, whoredom, witchcraft, worshipping with sorcerers, unchastity, tearing the hair, as well as all other kinds of sin, which are enumerated in this Patet, or are not enumerated, which I am aware of, or not aware of, which are appointed or not appointed, which I should have bewailed with obedience before the Lord and have not bewailed, of these sins

repent I, with thoughts, words and works, corporeal as spiritual, earthly as heavenly, O Lord, pardon, I repent."

To the spirit of this prayer let us all respond, For Christ's sake. Amen. Or else "the men of Iran shall rise up in judgment against the men of this generation, for they repented at the preaching of Zoroaster and behold a greater than Zoroaster is here."

## CHAPTER IX.

### BRAHMINISM.—CASTE.

“If a Sudra dare strike a Brahmin, he shall burn in hell a thousand years.”

**H**INDUSTAN, the birth place of the oldest philosophy and two of the most important religions, is a peninsula in Southern Asia lying almost within the Tropic of Cancer. It is densely populated and is the richest country in the world. Here rise the giant Himalayas crowned with perpetual snow, and below lie a grand plateau and deltas, of tropical fertility.

In consequence of this varied formation and climate, in this country are to be found numerous forms of animal and vegetable life, spices, gems and precious metals. There is also a great mixture of tribes of men, twenty one dialects being spoken. The Hindoos are well formed, graceful, subtle, and intellectual, of Aryan stock, and though now dark in complexion, they were originally white, so that it has been truly said “the same blood runs in the veins of the swarthy Bengalese and the English soldier, his conqueror.”

For ages this gem of the East encircled by the lofty bulwark of the Himalayas, lay hidden from the world while the great conquerors, swept over other countries in ruthless warfare. Once known, this garden of delights became a tempting prize to military ambition. Darius

the Mede first invaded India 326, B. C.; Alexander and other conquerors followed.

India has no chronology before the Persian invasion. No great consolidators like Yu in China, Menes in Egypt, and Nimrod in Chaldea, have left way marks in the long blank of her prehistoric age.

Her powdering rock inscriptions defy the acumen of the curious antiquary, though the methods of modern scientific analysis may yet wrest from them the well kept secret. At present we have only allusions in Zend and Sanscrit legends to long religious wars, and the terrible forms of the Naga Rajahs rear their serpent-crowned heads, for the sons of Magog preceded those of Madai and had introduced their wild civilization, and serpent worship, ideas which exerted a powerful influence upon the later religions.

After the Aryan tribes, of which there were two grand influxes called the Solar and Lunar branches, had at last asserted their supremacy and were firmly established in their richly endowed home, shut in on the north by a huge mountain bulwark and on the south by the Indian Ocean, in a climate where physical want was supplied by little labor, the tropical warmth ever inviting to repose, forgotten by the outer world, the Hindoo nation developed and matured and dreamed away the tranquil ages.

The philosophical and religious growth of this long period is embodied in Sanscrit writings, the Vedas, the Puranas, the Institutes of Menu and the Brahmanas, the oldest of which the Rig Veda, it is believed antedates the Hebrew writings of Moses. They were till recently in possession of a jealous priesthood, but are now open to western scholars and are attracting great attention from

the light thus unexpectedly thrown upon ancient times and modes of thought.

The names of the writers and their era seem to be carefully ignored, and the purely speculative philosophy therein contained, resolves itself into two grand themes, the first of which is, The Origin of the Universe. This they believe is a consequence of a propulsive power, uncreated and eternal identical with the soul of man, an influence which is called Brahm. Creation is thus described by a Hindoo. "Dissatisfied with solitude Brahma feels a desire to create worlds, then he sinks again into apathetic happiness while the volition his desire created, becomes an active principle called Maya or illusion; by this the Universe is formed without exertion on the part of Brahma who is like one asleep." This is the doctrine of *Emanation*.

There are three schools of Indian philosophy, the Vedanta, the Sankhya and Nyaya; they differ in the first great subject, the Vedanta declaring that Brahma alone is uncreated, the Sankhya that nature and soul are eternal, and the Nyaya, that God, soul and atoms are uncreated. Soul as an all pervading eternal power is named Atman or self. Modern atheism has simplified that of the Sankhya, by deciding that atoms alone are eternal!

The second great dogma of Hindoo philosophy is, that present existence aside from the eternal Brahma or soul, is only illusion and unmitigated evil and the practical question is, How can man be delivered from this thralldom? "Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" This mournful sigh is ever heard breathing through the deep recesses

of ancient thought; but alas, without St. Paul's triumphant answer! "I thank my God through Jesus Christ our Lord." The Hindoo philosophers striving vainly to solve the perplexing problem, finding that even prayer and good works were inadequate, concluded that *knowledge* only, will free the soul from its evil, illusive present state of existence. Their seers or prophets, were men who had obtained this knowledge or enlightenment which is not intelligence but consists in the annihilation of all passion and desire, the entire subjection of the body and mind, even the desire to become better or happier.

When once attained, man can exclaim. "I am free because I am the eternal principle, perfect, self existent." He is sinless, he has need of nothing, not even of virtue or holiness itself.

The Sankhya which strongly tinctures the doctrines of Gotama, the Buddha, is more atheistic than the other philosophies, though its morality is purer. It teaches that as the soul ascends by goodness, knowledge is attained and the result is the certainty of non-existence or Nirvana. This is undoubtedly the doctrine of Absorption—which Solomon echoes when he says. "Then shall dust return to dust as it was and the spirit shall return to God who gave it."

How inconceivable are these Oriental methods of thought to our practical minds!

Imagine a bustling New Englander, on a stormy winter day, hurrying against a zero snow storm to meet an important business engagement, or catch a flying railroad train, musing solemnly like these ancient philosophers. "I am Being, minus Not Being! Nature is

not what we perceive by the senses, but an invisible, plastic principle, which can only be known by the intellect! When essence becomes existence, when spirit passes into action, then it becomes subject to law." It is better to sit than to walk, better to sleep than to wake, but death is best of all." Discoursing after this manner he would be considered insane and his friends would send him forthwith to an asylum.

The Aryan Hindoos believing present existence to be only illusive evil and oblivion the only good, ignoring the past and present, have left no historical record or architectural remains, "no chronology to mark the mournful flow of life ever directed to inward thought." Their tombs were the funeral pyre floating from sight an indistinguishable nimbus, or the waves of the sacred river flowing, without return, to the illimitable waters of the ocean, forever and forever! But while all that pertains to the interests and affairs of their material existence, is unrecorded, they have left in the jewelled casket of their literature philosophical and religious treasures, the mementoes of their spiritual life, which will live on, when the tombs of the Pharaohs and the inscribed rocks of Schiraz, have crumbled to original dust.

To obtain a correct idea of the practical religion of those early days we must go back to the time when the children of Madia were driven from the high plateau of Western Asia by a sudden rigor of climate. These tribes possessed a remarkably pure monotheistic religion. Their priests the Magi, becoming corrupt, taught and practiced star and fire worship, magic and divination. Zoroaster affected a reformation of these errors and originated a new idea, the eternal conflict of good and

evil principles. A portion of the Magi would not accept the reformed religion and a violent schism and war was the consequence. A separation ensued, the pantheists, going south, crossed the Himalayas in the beds of mountain streams, and settled in a country which they called Hindu-stan "the land of the blacks."

The elemental worship which they brought to Hindu-stan, is the most beautiful of natural religions. The vast over-reaching sky, the glorious sun which wakes and warms all nature into life, the milder moon which rules the night, the furious storm that blots out the lights of heaven and shakes the very sky, the ghostly wind, the ever heaving sea, the subtle fire, by turns a useful servant or a pitiless master, all these elements of nature to the uninstructed soul, are mysterious, awful powers, objects of superstitious love or fear, are invested with personality, and as deities are to be propitiated by sacrifice and worship. Indra was the name given to the sunlight, Varuna was the dark sky, Marutz the storm, Agni the fire, Ap the waters. By degrees, all the elements and forces of nature were deified, even food and drink. There was at that early day no image worship.

The Rig Veda is composed of prayers and hymns, the word means, "Hymns of Praise." Sir William Jones calculates from astronomical allusions, that the Yagur Veda dates 1580 B. C., one hundred years before the birth of Moses. The Book of Job can be dated in the same manner, if the stars therein named can be identified with certainty. From local allusions it is believed that the Rig Veda was written in the vale of Scinde on the west bank of the Indus, immediately after the first emigration, five thousand years ago.

In this ancient writing we find the freshness and purity of the dawn of religious aspirations, reminding us of the poetry of the book of Job. Let us close our sophisticated senses to the sounds of the 19th century, the roar of commerce, the rush of railroad trains, the clanging of bells and scream of whistles, the buzz and clatter of manufactories, and listen to the melody of a tranquil Vedic morning. "In the beginning there arose the Golden Child! He was the one born Lord of all that is. He stablished the earth and sky. Who is the God to whom we shall render sacrifice? He who gives life, who gives strength, whose command all the bright gods revere, whose shadow is immortality, whose shadow is death! May he not destroy us. He the Creator of the earth. He the righteous who created the heaven. He also created the bright and mighty waters! Who is the God to whom we shall render sacrifice?"

Listen also to a prayer to Varuna the dark sky: "Let me not yet, oh Varuna, enter into the house of clay. Have mercy, Almighty, have mercy.

Through want of strength, thou bright strong God, I have gone wrong! Whenever we men, O Varuna, commit an offence before the heavenly host, whenever we break the law through thoughtlessness, punish us not, O God, for that offence. Do I say this to myself. How can I get to Varuna? Will he accept my offering without displeasure? I ask, O Varuna, wishing to know my sin. The sages all tell me the same, Varuna it is who is angry with thee! Was it an old sin, O Varuna, that thou wished to destroy thy friend? Tell me thou unconquerable Lord. I will quickly turn to thee, freed from sin! It was not our own doing, O Varuna, it was necessity or

temptation, an intoxicating draught, passion, dice, thoughtlessness. The old is there to mislead the young, even *sleep brings unrighteousness*. O Lord, Varuna, may this song go well to thy heart. May we prosper in keeping and acquiring. Protect us, oh gods, always with your blessing."

The first word spoken by Brahma was supposed to be OM or AUM. This mystic syllable expresses unity, and corresponds to the Jahve or Jehovah of the Hebrews. It could never be spoken except in prayer, and while temples and statues were erected to the personal attributes of Brahma, none were built for OM. The following verse from the Veda expresses the original idea.

"Perfect truth, perfect happiness, without equal, immortal, absolute unity, whom neither speech can describe nor mind comprehend, all prevailing, all transcending, delighted with his own boundless intelligence, not limited by time or space, without feet, moving swiftly, without hands, grasping all worlds, without ears, all-hearing, understanding all, without cause, the first of all causes, all-ruling, all-powerful. The Creator, the Preserver, Transformer of all things, such is the Great One Brahm."

This admirable definition of Deity is, according to our own ideas of truth, as perfect as any which can be given. Some of the earliest texts of the Veda are spiritual as the New Testament, and seem like inspiration. "Any place where the mind of man can be undisturbed, is suitable for the worship of the Supreme Being." Compare this with the words of Christ, "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, the hour cometh and now is, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem worship the Father \* \* \* true worshippers shall worship the Father

in spirit and in truth." Again the Vedas say, "The knowledge of God leading to absorption in Him is one thing, rites which produce enjoyment, are another." "May this soul of mine, which is a ray of perfect wisdom, pure intellect and permanent existence, which is the inextinguishable light fixed within a created body, without which no good act is performed, be united with the Spirit supremely blest and supremely intelligent."

Gladly would we linger in such a pure and lovely dream of the past, but stern visaged Truth rouses us and the Vedic vision is transformed. We have seen its most beautiful phase. Human nature was far from perfect in its childhood. "The greater part of the eight books of the Vedas are puerile, selfish, sensual." There was no love in the worship. Most of the prayers are for wealth, victory, animal gratification, health. The tiger in the forest might have joined in such prayers saying "Grant me health, a comfortable den, plenty of deer and cows, and strength to kill any intruder on my beat."<sup>1</sup>

A hymn to Pitu, (Food,) is an example in point "I glorify thee, Pitu, the great, the upholder, the strong. Savory Pitu, we worship thee, become our benefactor, and since we enjoy abundance of water and plants, therefore, Body, do thou grow fat. And since we enjoy Soma, the mixture with boiled milk and barley, therefore Body, do thou grow fat. Cake of fried meal, do thou become substantial, wholesome and nourishing, and Body, do thou grow fat. We extract from thee, Oh Pitu, by our praises, the sacrificial food from thee who art exhilarating to the gods, exhilarating also to us."

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<sup>1</sup> Rev Wm. Butler.

Soma, an intoxicating beverage extracted from an herb similar to our milk weed, is often the subject of adoration, "Oh Soma, thine inebriety is most intense, nevertheless thy acts are most beneficent. Savory indeed is the Soma, sweet, sharp and full of flavor. No one is able to encounter Indra in battle after he has quaffed the Soma. The stomach of Indra is capacious as a lake, the belly of Indra which quaffs the Soma juice abundantly, smells like the ocean and is ever moist like the ample fluids of the palate. Saints and Sages sing the holy strain aloud like screaming swans, and, together with the gods, drink the sweet juice of Soma. By thus drinking, they urge one another to drink, and find the copious draught the prompt giver of intoxication."

Alas, for the inconsistency of human religion.

"This is the teaching of the so called Holy Vedas. Men have had the impertinence, after knowing all this, to assume a patronizing aspect toward Christianity and inform us that however good and pure our faith may be in itself, it is not needed in India, because the Holy Vedas contain all that is necessary for the regeneration of that country. After a careful examination of this oracle of Vedantic Philosophy, we are shocked at every step, with the revelations of iniquity and sensuality, where saints and gods, male and female, hold high orgies amid the fumes of intoxicating liquor urging each other to deeper debasement, till decency retires and leaves them glorying in their shame."<sup>1</sup>

Certainly our sacred book exhibits no such disparaging inconsistency.

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. Wm. Butler.

The later writings, The Puranas, The Shaster and Institutes of Menu, exhibit a rapid deterioration. They contain the Hindoo system of social civil and religious duty. It is the oldest code extant, unless the Mosaic is excepted. The Hindoos say that it was given in the early ages to a child of the sun, who escaped from a great deluge and reigned over all the world. This person Menu Satyavatra, had three sons, Sherma, Charma, and Iyapiti, evidently the three sons of Noah. The story of the drunkenness of the king, which is called the act of destiny, the reprehensible conduct of Charma and the curse that followed, is almost precisely like that of Hebrew scripture.

The Code of Menu is unbearably unjust, exacting and cruel, defining minutely the duties of life : beginning with the dawn it directs every step through the day with such rigid detail, that we should suppose sleep from sheer exhaustion would overpower the harassed senses.

The ritual and ceremonies are frivolous and burdensome, past credence, and should fill our hearts with thankfulness for the liberty of the gospel "wherewith Christ has made us free."

The fundamental principle and special peculiarity of this law, is the *Caste* system. This word is of modern European extraction, and means literally *breed*. The Sanscrit word is Varna, color, a distinction primarily made between the black aborigines and the white Aryan conquerors. Caste is an institution of unmitigated evil, calculated to render one class indolent, despotic and self-indulgent, and the other, abject, deceitful, degraded and miserable, making men either monsters of cruelty, or beasts of burden.

The four castes are, first the Brahmins, or Priests, second, the Rajahs, or soldiers; third, merchants and Farmers; fourth, the Sudras, or servile class, the remnants of the black population. To these may be added the Pariahs or outcasts, and judging by grades of abuse and degradation, I should add, lowest of all, *women*.

No person can rise in caste, though he may possess the purity and intellect of an angel, he must remain what ever his father chanced to be. No man can eat, drink, smoke or marry, with one of a higher caste, he cannot sit in the presence of his superior, or ride in the same vehicle. The railroads in India are effecting a change in this last particular, as the English companies will have only two classes of coaches. To approach a superior while he is eating, necessitates a suspension of the meal, and if any utensil is touched by one of lower caste, it must be broken.

The slightest non-observance of the rules respecting Brahmins is a deadly sin, and sometimes a poor wretch loses his life on the instant, if he accidentally touches one. Minu says, "If a Sudra dare instruct a Brahmin respecting his duty, he shall have hot oil poured into his mouth and ear. If he speak with contumely of his caste, an iron style ten fingers long, heated red hot, shall be thrust into his mouth, but if he strike a Brahmin, he shall burn in hell a thousand years." The pains and penalties of this religion are endless. The Pariahs must dwell outside of the town, their sole wealth must be dogs and asses, their clothes the mantles of dead persons, their dishes must be broken pots. No one who regards his duty must have any intercourse with them. By day they may roam about for purposes of work, and

should always be employed to execute convicts." All this from no mental or moral deficiency, or fault of his own, but simply because he happened to be born a Pariah.

The Brahmin himself was subjected to a tedious and puerile ceremonial, particularly in his morning ablutions. Bathing in running water, repeating expiatory texts, sipping water without swallowing, plunging various times, praying at the same moment, breathing through one nostril, then closing both, holding his breath and repeating during this process, various mysterious words, breathing water through his nose and then throwing it to the north-west, after various genuflections and mummeries, he concludes his morning devotions by a prayer to the rising sun!

"He must not gaze at the sun while rising or setting, or when eclipsed, or reflected in the water, he must not run when it rains, he must not look at his image in the water, or draw the attention of any one to a rainbow, or wash his feet in a pan of mixed metal, or step over a string to which a calf is tied." In his old age, he must mortify all passion, and extinguish all desire. He should become a hermit, and live in the forest. If he fail to obtain food, he should not be sorrowful, If he get it, he should not be glad, and food must be taken but once a day. He must be in constant motion, but in the hot season should sit surrounded by fires, with the sun burning above him; in the rainy season should expose himself naked to the heaviest showers. In the cold season, he must wear damp clothing. He must increase the austerity of his devotions, by degrees, until by harsher and harsher mortifications he has dried up his bodily frame."

The Brahmin enforces his privilege over the lower castes with the greatest severity, but alas for the selfishness of human nature, there being none to compel, the code to him is a dead letter only as it is made the instrument of tyranny to others. None but the fanatic Fakirs pretend to practise these austerities and they only for self glorification.

It is upon woman that this abominable system falls with the most crushing severity, and the flight of time has taken nothing from the heavy weight of her servitude. According to the laws of Menu, "Women have no business with the Vedas, therefore having no knowledge of expiatory texts, sinful women must be as foul as falsehood itself." Unhappy victims of injustice! with the impossibility of holiness, they are made responsible for sin! No wonder the conscientious among them live upon the border land of despair.

While polygamy and concubinage are allowed though not approved or commonly practised, the Code says: "A wife who wishes to attain in heaven the mansion of her husband, must do nothing unkind to him be he living or dead. If he dies, let her emaciate her body, living upon pure flowers or roots, but let her not so much as pronounce the name of another man. Let her remain till death, practising the incomparable rules of virtue, forgiving injuries, performing harsh duties, and avoiding every sensual pleasure."

"When in the presence of her husband a woman must keep her eyes upon her master and be ready to receive his commands. When he speaks she must be quiet. When he calls she must leave everything to attend him. A woman has no god on earth but her husband.

Though he be aged, infirm, a drunkard, or a debauchee, she must still regard him as a god. Though he be irreligious, or enamoured of another woman, he must be constantly revered as a god." As compensation for such abject devotion, Menu says: "A wife who drinks any spirituous liquor, who acts immorally, who speaks unkindly or shows hatred to her lord, who is mischievous or extravagant, who is incurably diseased or barren, or whose children are dead or are all daughters, may be superseded by another wife." A man may marry another woman under these facile pretences, but the divorced wife or widow deprived of fine clothing, her ornaments taken away, is degraded to the most menial labor, is treated as if responsible for her misfortune, and can never so much as speak the name of another man; even a betrothed maiden can never marry if her intended husband forsakes her.

Betrothed at seven or eight years of age, the little girl thenceforward becomes the property of her husband, lives in his house, under the tutelage of his mother, who trains her, often very harshly, for her coming duties. From this time she can never be seen by any man except her own brothers or father. If any male member of her husband's family approaches the Zenana (women's quarter), she must fly as if her life was in jeopardy.

The awful rite of burning widows at the stake has been abolished by the English government, but the burdens of widowhood are so great as to make this change a doubtful blessing.

The funeral of a mother is a fitting close to such a life. If she dies too suddenly to be taken to the Ganges, or if too far from the river, the body is burned, and a

portion of the ashes is thrown into the sacred stream, the bones being left to be devoured by wild beasts. But if there is time after hope is abandoned, regardless of physical pain or mental anguish, she is taken from the home where she is no longer needed, and carried by servants to the banks of the sacred river. Her husband, to whom she is now of no consequence, does not attend her, but her son accompanies the bearers, and sits by his mother in the burning heat, wetting her lips with water or mud, till the fluttering pulses are stilled by death, and then taking the body by the heels he draws it into the water, and giving it a strong push outward, goes home as fast as possible from the distasteful scene, leaving his mother's corpse to be cast ashore, a prey to foul birds, or floating far to sea, to be devoured by marine monsters.

Compare this coarse brutality, this fiendish cruelty, with the sweet humanities of the Christian religion, the tender services and solemn respect given to the dying and dead, the deep reverence of our funeral rites and the sacredness of the tomb! Sympathy for the sick, the unfortunate, the weak, the aged, the infirm, to sum up all in one word—*Love* is the great certitude to Christianity. This universal humanity is notable in its influence upon the condition of woman, whose elevation always implies a corresponding exaltation in the character of man.

Mr. Butler, after a long residence in India, writes: "If there be any one thing short of salvation, in which America and India contrast most vividly, it is woman's high position in her home and man's consequent happiness as a result, as a wife living for the husband that she loves, as a mother making her abode a nursery for the

Eden on high, the friend and patron of all that is lovely, virtuous and of good report. In the presence of this excellence, everything beautiful on earth brightens. The holiest and happiest men in the world bask in this blessed social sunshine, thus sanctified domestic joy becoming a sign and promise of a felicity which will be endless in their heavenly home."

The women of India are gentle, affectionate and pious. Oppressed by the intolerable hardships irrevocably imposed upon their sex, it is not surprising that suicide and female infanticide are of common occurrence. Mothers frequently strangle or drown in the sacred stream their unfortunate little daughters, or administer a fatal poison with the first and last draught of nourishment they ever receive.

And yet Mr. Samuel Johnson, the laudator of Oriental Religion, says: "We find even a spiritual and social thralldom like *caste*, though bristling with insensate ceremonies and penalties, alive with the endeavor to subdue selfish desires. We see this alike in the implacable severity with which sensual appetites are punished, and in the benevolence which runs through the organism, forbidding wrath and revenge, and in its way anticipating the tenderness of the modern poet:

"He prayeth best who loveth best  
All things, both great and small,  
For the dear God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all."

If Mr. Johnson had said, *I* see all this gentle benevolence, no one could have disputed him, for with the lenses of prejudice and bigotry a man can distort outline and

confuse color, and see whatever he wills to see ; but when he says “ *We see,*” he presumes too much. The average common sense intellect can perceive in the Laws of Menu, only grinding oppression, intolerable tyranny, and implacable malevolence, with a hypocritical tenderness, *sub human*, it must have been brought from the bottomless pit by the Arch Enemy of mankind himself. “A Brahmin must strain the water he drinks through a cloth, lest he should hurt an insect.” Transcendental tenderness ! “If a Sudra insult a Brahmin he should have his tongue slit ; if he mention his caste with contumely, he must have an iron style ten fingers long, red hot, thrust into his mouth ; and if he strike a Brahmin he must burn in hell a thousand years.” Transcendental atrocity ! Is this forbidding wrath and revenge ?

“If a wife is incurably diseased or barren, or brings forth only daughters, or if her children are dead,” misfortunes for which she could not be responsible, “she may be superseded,” that is, doomed to a life of hard toil, disgrace and despair. Is this “anticipating the tenderness” of the gentle Coleridge ? Does it not rather make “Vice duty, and damnation heaven ?” God forbid that our spiritual vision should ever become so frightfully perverted as to see “unselfishness and tender benevolence” in this system, lauded and admired by the atheistic men and women of America ! and which I once heard described as “better and purer than anything to be found in our musty old book.”

Transmigration is another doctrine of Brahminism. All beings are subject to this law. The Gods themselves have their avatars and changes and sometimes appear in very unattractive forms. Vishnu has appeared as a turtle,

a monkey, and a hog! A man who has fulfilled the whole law, rises to the rank of deity in the future world, but the disobedient pass into the bodies of lower caste men, beasts, serpents or vegetables. The metempsychosis is almost interminable in the case of great sinners, they being transformed into loathsome reptiles and insects. This belief leads to a horror of destroying animal life; by stepping on a vicious looking spider, you may inadvertently slay your grandfather, and there is no calculating what horrible beast you may yourself become, to purge you from parricidal guilt. Poetical justice prevails in this world of transformation. "A man who steals grain becomes a rat, he who steals meat becomes a vulture, a sensualist has his senses made acute to suffer pain." The process is so gradual that it is virtually endless, the law so multifarious, circumstantial and impracticable, that exact obedience is an utter impossibility, and the danger of lapses so great, that hope in a conscientious mind must be debarred short of an Indian Kalpa—the time between the creation of one world and another.

Yet Mr. Johnson, who has made this religion a profound study says, "At most this Inferno of Transmigration with all its fantastic torments and inconceivable durations, has not so relentless a spirit towards the offender as is involved in the Christian dogma of endless punishment." Again he remarks "Brahminism and Buddhism have sought to provide ways of escape, as Christianity has also had its fine evasions of its own dismal lore of eternal punishment." "The theological hell of civilized races has been worked up with a refined vindictiveness, and a morbid exaggeration of moral evil under the name of

sin, that does not shrink from staining the eternity of God with blind, inexorable hate."

Mr. Johnson is doubtless a profound investigator, but in Christianity he has gone altogether too deep and discovered too much. Taking consequences into account, it is hardly possible "to exaggerate" moral evil in this present existence, and so far from "staining the eternity of God with *blind inexorable hate*" the simplest soul can discern in Christianity only infinite love, mercy and *salvation from sin and all its consequences*. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."<sup>1</sup> "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."<sup>2</sup>

No metempsychosis, no purgatorial fires, no weighing of good and evil actions, no painful sacrifice or penance even is required ; that has all been offered ; sincere sorrow for sin and a belief in Christ's willingness and ability to save, are the easy terms. Is this "blind inexorable hate," "a relentless spirit," "a fine evasion," or a wide open door perceptible to the feeblest vision, through which the sinful soul, wrapt in the mantle of Christ's righteousness may fearlessly pass direct to the Paradise of God ?

The power of penance and sacrifice are exaggerated in Brahminism. Bathing in the Ganges, eating or burning clarified butter, and repeating Vedic texts are among the simpler forms. "A man who can repeat all the texts of the Rig Veda, would be free from guilt even if he should kill all the inhabitants of the three worlds." Bodily mortification and sacrifices of various kinds persistently

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<sup>1</sup> Romans, viii., 1.

<sup>2</sup> Romans, x., 4.

practised, confer upon men a power which rivals that of the gods, and this, though the aspirant may be the vilest of mankind. Brahma himself became Creator in reward for a penance which lasted ten thousand years. One old sage of low caste was ambitious to become a Brahmin, a small but very improbable attainment. A long and horrible penance promised the reward, but the gods, determined to prevent it, sent a beautiful nymph to tempt him, he fell before her attractions, and the gifted Sakontala, celebrated in Hindu poetry, was their daughter, but afterwards ashamed of his weakness, he renewed his self punishment to such a degree, that he obtained power to create a new heaven and new gods, and had actually made a few stars, when the terrified divinities gave in and allowed him to become a Brahmin. The very demons by austerities and self torture attain almighty power. These self denying old monsters were awfully cruel and tyrannical; men and gods were sometimes severely tried before they were overcome by force or fraud. The curse of Kehama, by Southey, is founded upon this idea.

The penances prescribed by the laws of Menu, were greatly disproportioned to the turpitude of the offender. The repetition of the Rig Veda could atone for the wholesale slaughter of men and gods, but if a man should *kill a cow*—hear the penalty in such a case, “all day he must stand waiting upon a herd of cows, quaffing the dust raised by their hoofs, at night, having servilely attended them, he must sit near and guard them, free from passion, stand when they stand and lie near them when they lie down. By thus waiting on a herd for three months, he who has killed a cow atones for his guilt.”

In modern Brahminism, the nature worship of the Vedic age is superseded by the grossest forms of idolatry. Turanian ideas, at first abhorred, were gradually introduced, the simple offering of fruit and flowers, clarified butter, and soma, are now represented by blood sacrifices, even of human victims, with ceremonies too obscene and revolting to be described.

Ethics form no part of this religion, while serpents, monkeys, cows, peacocks, crocodiles and many other animals swell the Hindoo Pantheon.

The Hindoo Triad consists of Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Seeva the Destroyer, with their wives. Brahma receives little homage. Vishnu and his wife Lachema are worshipped with peaceful rites, though his Juggernaut car is dragged through the country in July and many persons are crushed beneath the ponderous vehicle. The myth of this god, seems like a prophecy of Christ. He is called *Chrisna*, takes the human form to save mankind from misery, angels with music announce his birth, he is saved, in infancy from death by flight, performs miracles and benefactions, signs in heaven and earth foretell his death. He is shot by an arrow in his foot, and ascends to heaven. He is called the Liberator from the Serpent of Death, and is pictured as bitten in the foot by a serpent or as treading upon the head of the conquered beast.

Seeva and his abominable wife Kali (Time,) receive the greatest proportion of homage and sacrifice.

Kali is a frightful monster with a lolling tongue which drips with gore, she wears a necklace of human skulls. These fierce deities love self-torture, their worshippers practice cruel and revolting rites, thrusting iron through

the tongue or flesh, whirling through the air upon a sweep suspended by hooks fastened in the muscles of the back, hanging head downward over a fire, jumping on knives, sticking themselves full of pins or needles.

The horrors of this worship may be imagined from the frantic invocation of the priests. "Hail, Kali! Hail, Devi! Hail, Goddess of thunder! iron sceptered, fierce Kali. Cut, slay, destroy, cut with the axe, drink blood, slay, destroy!" During the infernal orgies dedicated to her worship, the temples literally run with gore.

There are many inferior deities and all appear in various forms so that there are almost as many gods as worshippers. Most of them are monsters of vice, meanness and cruelty, the very contemplation of which is demoralizing.

Gloomy and repulsive shadows of superstition attach themselves to every object and motion, and so enslave the whole nature of man, that under such conditions, life would indeed be, agreeably to their philosophy, the greatest of evils.

This idea advanced by their sages, and made a practical verity, tends strongly to the commission of suicide. "While the Jew and Persian cling to life with great tenacity, the Chinese with unfaltering hand, rips open his own bowels or hangs himself, and the Hindoo walks calmly to the river bank, and stepping quietly into the deep stream, leaves behind him a world which is nothing but illusion and evil."<sup>1</sup>

The highly educated Hindoos of the present day, those who read Cicero, Dante, Shakespeare, the works

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<sup>1</sup> Max Müller.

of John Stuart Mill and Theodore Parker untranslated, are by no means pagans. They will not be what their tyrants, the English, call themselves, Christians, and are consequently Deists of the modern school. With the works of this class of writers, they imbibe a liberal and progressive spirit and begin to feel the want of educated female society. They therefore welcome the missionary ladies to their Zenanas and say to them, "Teach our wives any religion you please, if you will induce them to learn to read." Through the mothers of India we may thus hope to introduce Christianity into these "dark places of the earth, now full of the habitations of cruelty."

In the history of Brahminism is exhibited the wretched failure of a religious philosophy which practically transcends the power of our complex human nature. Its teaching that the welfare of the soul is of supreme importance, that eternity is of greater consequence than time, and that a right regard of these truths will induce man to subdue his animal nature, will be readily admitted by all serious minds, but the idea that the body is of no importance, that it must be neglected and even tortured, that present existence is such an unmitigated evil, that life may be abridged at the will of the possessor, is fatal error. Man has a double nature, and of this his immortal self should receive his greatest care; he should avoid the animal instinct which exclaims, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Yet the body must not be ignored, its health, comfort and general well-being are important. The perfection of manhood is "the sound mind in the sound body." Even our Master in his hurried three years of active life, seeing his disciples coming and going so busy that they had forgotten to take food

said considerably, "Come ye into the desert and rest awhile."

To produce a rounded character, a well balanced nature, a perfect man, nothing that pertains to the welfare of any part of his constitution, must be neglected.

Brahminism failed to meet this necessity, and the deplorable consequences are apparent in individual character and social policy. Theoretically the most spiritual and self-denying of all systems, it is practically gross and self-indulgent. The inevitable reaction which follows extremes, is here exemplified, where men vibrate between severe asceticism and base sensuality. Christianity avoids both extremes and preserves the golden mean.

The downward proclivity of all human systems is painfully apparent in the deterioration of Brahminism. It contains no principle of self-renovation and purification. The Vedas represent a religious and social condition vastly superior to that now existing.

Though the pantheism so deprecated by the Mazdeans is apparent in every page of the earliest writing, the deities were simply the powers of nature, not the monstrosities of later times. Woman at that time held an honorable position, she is spoken of as the light of the dwelling, and united with her husband in religious ceremonies. Monogamy was the general rule, and daughters were tenderly cherished.

Although the foundation of Caste was laid at that time, and the benefits of religion were limited to the three upper classes, there was none of the despotic pride apparent in the Code of Menu at a later day. A gentle self-deprecating piety breathes in some of the earliest prayers, which must have found acceptance with a gracious

God. Listen to the pathetic language of the worshipper as he offers fruit or flowers to Varuna (of what account is the name). "If I go along trembling like a cloud driven by the wind, have mercy, Almighty, have mercy! It was not our own doing, O Varuna, that we have gone wrong, it was necessity or temptation, an intoxicating draught, passion, dice, thoughtlessness, the old is there to mislead the young, even sleep brings unrighteousness!" Contrast these peaceful rites with the frantic shrieks and yells of the mob who drag the car of Juggernaut, the unavailing agony of the young widow, as the devouring flames consume her tender frame, and shudder as we enter the accursed pagoda in whose unhallowed recesses still more diabolical atrocities are perpetrated.

When we considered the Chinese philosophy, we seemed to be reading by a taper's light, it was dim and insufficient, but the taper was of pure wax and the artificial twilight was clear.

When we contemplated the Zoroastrian religion, we seemed to stand in the night, by a Parsee mountain fire, it wavered and flared with the rush of the restless elements, yet the light was bright though uncertain, and the dawn of coming day was in the sky!

But now we have been sitting in a close place where burns a smoking lamp, There is light even here, but the oil has grown impure with age, the thick atmosphere oppresses our breathing, our senses are offended by a nauseous odor, and the defiling smoke has settled over all things. Let us with grateful hearts, turn from this place of suffocation and joyfully walk through the ever-open door into the pure sunlight of our religion, which is perfect Love and perfect Liberty.

## CHAPTER X.

### BUDDHISM.

*“Enlightenment.” Nirvana.*

“But who to dull forgetfulness a prey,  
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned.”

MANY grave reasons combine at the present moment to render the examination of Buddhism a matter of unusual seriousness. Its tremendous proportions, greater even than those of Christianity, its humane and searching morality, its Decalogue so like the Mosaic, its ceremonial resembling and rivalling that of Rome, its aim at Catholicity and the ardent propagandism of its missionaries, all these startle the enquirer, and demand his serious thought.

In addition to these reasons, intrinsically important, is the fact that since the sacred books in the Sanscrit language have become the common property of scholars, writers have appeared who exalt Buddhism to the level of Christianity: they have published heavy tomes to authenticate theories which are certainly calculated to disturb and unsettle the minds of superficial thinkers, to which class a great portion of every community, especially the young, necessarily belong.

These ardent admirers of the doctrines of Buddha, have not yet set up his image in their houses or churches

to shape their devotions, but they certainly have done enough to make it the imperative duty of Christians to investigate thoroughly the principles of this powerful and attractive religion.

Buddhism usually dates from the life of Gotama, Sakya Muni, 550 B.C., but oriental scholars give it a much greater antiquity. An idea has prevailed in the East, from the remotest ages, that at immeasurably extended periods truth becomes incarnate in the person of a great sage, called *Muni*, teacher, or *Bud*, one who is enlightened. From the same Sanscrit root come our word *bode* and *forebode*.

The first of these perfect men were antediluvian and each influenced the world an incalculable period of time, called a Kalpa, which may be represented by a unit and sixty ciphers.

After the Deluge, others more or less perfect succeeded, one of which, the ancient Chinese Buddha, born 1029 B. C., was a Tartar warrior, Sakya Sinha, *Lion of the Moon*.

The last of these distinguished sages was Gotama, whose doctrines will prevail five thousand years, when another Buddha will appear with the final revelation. There are other indications, beside the prevalence of this belief, that Buddhism is older than Brahminism, with which it has always been in antagonism.

Peculiarities in its astronomical system indicate that it ante-dates that of the Brahmins which last is very similar to the Newtonian. The Ramayana, a Hindoo poem written more than a thousand years before Christ, five hundred years before the last Buddha appeared, distinctly alludes to the sect.

The oldest architectural ruins throughout Southern Asia indicate the great antiquity of the Buddhist belief. In the islands of Salsette and Elephanta near Bombay, at Ellora in Central India, on the coast of Coromandel, and in many other places, are wonderful ancient temples cut from solid rock, sometimes in the very bowels of mountains and miles in extent. Their majestic proportions, gloomy grandeur, magnificent pillars, carvings and tracery, paintings still brilliant, and inscriptions in an unknown character, cut in rock so hard as to defy the edge of ordinary steel, fill the beholder with speechless amazement. Here, among other colossal statues, are figures, evidently intended to represent the Buddhas of old. Some of these statues have short curling hair, and features and expression, like the giant rock-cut faces of Egypt. They are entwined with enormous serpents, while other Ophite shapes, Colossal Bulls and Phallic emblems constantly abound. Mr. Erskine says of the six miles of ruins at Ellora, "The magnificence and extent of the subterranean temples, astonish and distract the mind. The Empire, whose pride they must have been, has passed away and left not a record." But the light thrown upon these remote ages, by our newly acquired discovery of the prevalence of serpent worship, resolves the mystery. Here reigned with irresistible sway, the impious Naga Rajahs, and in these dark, unhallowed caverns wrought with superhuman toil, were performed the diabolical rites of the Serpent Deity.

With this insight into the antiquity and origin of Buddhism we shall better understand many conflicting characteristics of its more recent form, which greatly puzzle superficial investigators. In the early ages there

was a perpetual struggle between the Turanian and Aryan population, and at the advent of the last Buddha, Turanian influence was still powerful. It is even now perceived in the form of *Seeva*, who is represented with the serpent's head issuing from his shoulders. But before the appearance of *Gotama*, Brahminism had been for centuries the dominant religion. It had become greatly corrupted. Vedic purity and simplicity were totally lost. Caste distinctions, rigidly enforced, oppressed society intolerably, the Brahmin, proud and cruel, made the most and worst of his high prerogative; while a burdensome ceremonial, an immoral pantheon, and gross superstition, made up the heavy weight under which men sighed and staggered.

Humanity vibrates between extremes, and a sagacious observer could have calculated the form of reaction. The Buddhism of *Gotama* was not a reformation of Brahminism as is often erroneously asserted, but a recoil from, or protest against it; he adopted the philosophy of the *Sankhya*, not that of the *Vedanta* the two faiths are radically and essentially dissimilar. The Brahmins taught that all good came from the inner life, *Buddha*, that it consisted in good works. Brahminism theoretically an exaggerated spirituality, had degenerated into idolatry, while morality was ignored and humanity forgotten. Buddhism, attempting to correct these evils, went to the other extreme, levelled all social distinctions, abolished all gods and religious rites, and enforced a rigid and humane morality. Brahminism was all religion and no ethics. Buddhism was all ethics and no religion. *Buddha* engrafted upon his morality, says *M. Ferguson*, "three leading characteristics of Turanian faith, atheism,

metempsychosis, and hatred of caste." Thus drifting with the popular current, his success was unbounded. He forbade the worship of the Nagas, but the excessive superstition of the lower castes, was too strong to be overpowered.

From a mass of myth and fiction we gather something of the life of Gotama, who may justly take high rank among the masters of mankind.

He was the son of a wise and good king, who reigned in a populous province in Northern India. His mother, a great beauty, died early, and he was brought up by her sister. He was beautiful, accomplished and precocious, but thoughtful and inclined to solitude. The father, alarmed at these tendencies, married him early to the lovely Princess Gopa. The union was of the happiest, but the prince still pondered the problems of life and death. "Nothing is stable, nothing is real," he sighed. "Life is but a spark lighted and extinguished. We know not whence it came, or whither it has gone, like the sound of the lyre it passes to the unknown. There must be some supreme intelligence where man might find rest. If I could attain it, if I were free, I could deliver the world."

St. Hilaire, who has translated the life of Buddha from the Sanscrit, thus tells the interesting story of his conversion. "One day, when the prince with a large retinue was driving through the eastern gate of the city on the way to one of his parks, he met an old man, broken and decrepit. One could see the veins and muscles over his whole body, his teeth chattered, he was covered with wrinkles, bald, and hardly able to utter hollow and unmelodious sounds. He was bent like a stick, and all his limbs and joints trembled. "Who is that man," said the prince to his coachman. "He

is small and weak, his flesh and blood are dried up, his muscles stick to his skin, his head is white, his teeth chatter, his body is wasted away ; leaning on his stick he is hardly able to walk, stumbling at every step. Is there something peculiar in his family, or is this the common lot of all human beings !” “ Sir !” said the coachman, “ that man is sinking under old age, his senses have become obtuse, suffering has destroyed his strength, and he is de-  
spised by his relations. He is without support and use-  
less ; people have abandoned him like a dead tree in a forest. But this is not peculiar to his family. In every creature youth is defeated by old age. Your father, your mother, all your friends, will come to the same state, this is the appointed lot of all creatures.

“ Alas !” replied the prince “ are creatures so ignorant, so weak and foolish, as to be proud of the youth by which they are intoxicated, not seeing the old age which awaits them. As for me I go away ; coachman, turn my chariot quickly. What have I, the future prey of old age, what have I to do with pleasure ?” and the youth returned to the city without going to his park.

Another time the prince was driving through the northern gate of the city to his pleasure garden when he perceived on the road, a man suffering with illness, parched with fever, his body wasted, covered with mud, without a friend, without a home, hardly able to breathe, and frightened at the sight of himself and the approach of death. Having questioned his coachman and received his answer, the young prince said, “ Alas, health is but the sport of a dream, and the fear of suffering must take this frightful form. Where is the wise man, who, after seeing what he is, could any longer think of joy and pleas-

ure. So the prince turned the chariot and went back to the city.

A third time he was driving to his pleasure gardens through the western gate, when he saw a dead body lying on a bier and covered with a cloth. The friends stood around sobbing, crying, tearing their hair, covering their heads with dust, striking their breasts and uttering wild lamentations. The prince calling his coachman to witness this painful scene, exclaimed, "Oh! woe to youth which must be destroyed by old age. Woe to health which must be destroyed by disease. Woe to this life, where a man remains so short a time. If there were no old age, no disease, no death. If these could be made captive forever!" Then betraying his intention for the first time, he exclaimed, "Let us turn back, I must think how to accomplish deliverance."

A last meeting put an end to his hesitation, as he was driving through the southern gate to his pleasure garden, he saw a mendicant, who appeared outwardly calm, subdued, looking downwards, wearing with an air of dignity, his religious vestment, and carrying an alms bowl.

"Who is this man" asked the prince, "Sir," replied the coachman, "this man is one of those who are called mendicants. He has renounced all pleasure, all desire, and leads a life of austerity. He tries to conquer himself. He has become a devotee; without passion, without envy, he walks about asking for alms."

"That is good," replied the prince. "The life of a devotee has always been praised by the wise. It will be my refuge and the refuge of other men, it will lead us to real life, to happiness and immortality."

With these words the young prince returned to

the city. After having declared to his father and his wife his intention of retiring from the world, he left the palace on the night of the birth of his son, when the city was given up to festivity, and no one could suspect his intention. After travelling all night he sent back his ornaments and his horse by the groom who attended him, and went on foot to a Brahmin of great sanctity, hoping to find in his teaching deliverance from evil. Disappointed at this monastery he retired to a still more famous teacher, but with no better success.

He then sought the solitude of the forest, where he remained for six years, practising the severe penances of a monk. At last his patience was rewarded. Seated under a *Bo* tree, from which he had not moved for a day and a night, his soul was suddenly illuminated, and he received knowledge of the cause of change, and thereby his fear of it was destroyed. He now claimed the title of Buddha, or enlightened, and went forth filled with pity and love, to dispense to others the happiness which he had found.

“Thus did the young prince become the founder of a religion, which after more than two thousand years, numbers four hundred and fifty-five millions of the human race.”<sup>1</sup>

The Hindoos had no chronology, and the date of Gotama's advent is uncertain. It was said in India that Buddha had been dead one hundred and sixty-two years, at the time of the Alexandrian conquest. This would make his era the 5th century B. C., contemporary, according to Mr. Carpzow's reckoning, with the prophet Ezekiel, Josiah of Judea, Nebuchadnezzar, and Cyrus the Great.

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<sup>1</sup> Max Müller.

After his conversion he went to Benares, the holy city of India, and boldly preached his doctrines. His powerful family and many other rulers and prominent men were converted, and his followers became numerous. The Brahmins attacked him furiously, for he violated every rule of caste, and aimed at the overthrow of their entire system. Notwithstanding this opposition he labored with astonishing success till he was eighty years of age, when on one of his missionary tours, his strength suddenly gave way. He sat down beneath a tree in the forest, and calmly yielded up his life, being absorbed, as his disciples firmly believe, into the Nirvana he had revealed to man.

A beautiful life of self-sacrifice ended by a tranquil death.

To the average American mind, principles of Oriental religion and philosophy are incomprehensible. The Taoism of China, the Brahminism and Buddhism of India, are totally foreign to our practical methods of thought. Hindu philosophy could not have had birth in New England. Life with us is not *Maya*, illusion, but stern uncompromising reality! We cannot dream because we must act. If, longing for repose, we retire to the quiet hills on some mellow autumnal day, and "in the realm of leafless trees" we, with "the russet year inhale the balmy air," if, forgetting care and toil, we give ourselves up to the illusion of an Indian summer sunset, and while sense grows dim, we drift into the calm regions of abstract speculation, a rude disenchanting blast from Boreas rushes past, and with a shiver, suggestive of rheumatism and influenza, our dreams dissolve, and we hurry home to prepare fires and furs for "waiting win-

ter gaunt and grim." No Sankhya with poppy breath can lull us into forgetfulness !

This atheistic philosophy, as adopted and modified for the followers of Gotama, teaches that there are two uncreated principles, Soul and Nature, that existence is illusion, that sorrow and evil will cease if every affection, passion, and desire are eradicated, individuality or self absolutely renounced, and soul and body subjected to spirit. In this condition man no longer *exists*, he simply *is*. Nirvana is attained.

This idea, reduced to our modes of expression, would seem to be, if, by force of will and determined desire, a man can annihilate self, he will no longer be subject to the law of consequences, because he has passed into nothingness or "the void" he is *no thing*, that is, he has no longer a separate individual existence, but has become absorbed into the original universal soul.

An extract from the Pali sacred books of Ceylon will illustrate this extraordinary idea. The King said to the Sage, "Is the joy of Nirvana associated with sorrow?" He replied, "It is unmixed satisfaction, free from sorrow."

"Is Nirvana in the east, west, north or south, above or below?"

"Neither is it in the east, west, north or south, above or below, or in any of the infinite Sakwallas."

"Then if Nirvana has no locality there can be no such thing, and to say that one attains it, is a false declaration."

"There is no such place and yet it exists, it can be attained."

"When it is attained does it exist?"

“When it is attained, it does exist.”

“Where is the place of its existence?”

“Wherever the precepts are observed, it may be anywhere, as a man who has eyesight can see the sky from anywhere, or as all places have an Eastern side!”

Such a doctrine fills us with astonishment and incredulity. “What!” we exclaim, “has this attenuated idealism met the spiritual wants of millions of human souls for thousands of years? Is this the religion which to-day boasts control over thirty-two per cent. of the entire human family, a greater proportion than Christianity itself?”

Originally and theoretically Buddhism was not a religion in any sense; there was in it no bond between man and God, for it acknowledged no Deity. Soul and nature were the only eternal principles; this is blank atheism. But though not a religion it was a great social and political reformation. Gotama, a prince of the proudest race, the Solar Aryan, renounced royalty, became a mendicant, and struck at the foundations of the odious institution, Caste, which for ages had oppressed India. He combined the popular Turanian ideas, atheism, hatred of caste, metempsychosis, and the oriental belief in the incarnation of truth, with Vedic morality. His life was one of great purity, he inculcated the highest moral virtues, chastity, temperance, self-control, patience, humility, forgiveness, truth, respect for parents, family and home. He was gentle, persuasive, fraternal, forbidding slander and gossip. His ten commandments are a rigid moral code, with no religious acknowledgment.

“1st. From the meanest insect up to man thou shalt kill no animal whatever.

2nd. Thou shalt not steal.

3rd. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

4th. Thou shalt speak no word that is false.

5th. Thou shalt drink no wine or anything to intoxicate.

6th. Thou shalt avoid all anger, hatred, and bitter language.

7th. Thou shalt not indulge in idle or vain talk.

8th. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

9th. Thou shalt not harbor pride, envy, revenge, or malice, nor desire the death or misfortune of thy neighbor.

10th. Thou shalt not follow the doctrines of strange gods.

This absence of religious duty to a people exhausted by the polytheism and immorality of Brahminism and Ophiolatry, and the presence of an ethical code which would satisfy the conscience, rendered the doctrine of Buddha most grateful and welcome. Nirvana, or salvation from evil, contemplated virtue, knowledge, self-denial. The times were ready for the enlightened man, and he was received joyfully.

But upon sober second thought, the disciples of the new faith were not satisfied. There is an awful void in the soul when there is no God, and as soon as Buddha was dead, strange inconsistency, he was exalted to fill the vacancy! It has been wittily said, "God made man in his image and in all the natural religions, God is made in the image of man." Buddha became an object of worship, and the Nirvana which he had attained at once was localized as the Buddhist heaven. These deficiencies supplied, a place of punishment was afterward

added, which in its material horrors rivals the Inferno of Dante.

With these elements superadded to the original ideas, yielding to many popular prejudices, reforming abuses, and meeting the necessities of the age, Buddhism now swept through the Asiatic continent like a mighty flood. Its founders firmly believed it would become the universal faith, but "it has never crossed the European line." After a long struggle in the land of its birth, it was finally excluded from India, but proved a flourishing exotic in foreign soil, and it is now the prevalent religion in China, Japan, Siam, Thibet, Nepaul, Burmah, Tartary and Ceylon.

Its sacred books written originally in Sanscrit have been translated into the languages of all the countries which have adopted it. They are called the Triptaka or Three Baskets. The first of these treats of morality. The second and third contain the philosophy, metaphysics and discourses of Buddha. Many miscellaneous volumes have been added to the sacred writings, but I make no extracts, there being nothing in them of interest to the general reader.

The great literary geniuses who have blest the world with their immortal productions, have found inspiration in religious sentiment and aspiration, in the hope of immortality, in the passion of human love, the social affections, the realm of the supernatural, the romance of history and tradition; these with the varying aspects of nature are the substratum of the finest literature. But Buddhism, devoid of all such stimulating elements, ignoring God, denying passion and affection, teaching that existence is illusive evil, that passing

events are simply phases in the revolution of an eternal wheel upon which the atom man hangs helpless and irresponsible, could produce but a lifeless melancholy literature, in which objectless ethics and transcendental philosophy are the only possible themes. The glow of poetry and the fervor of passion are extinguished by the dreary vacuum. In a desolate atomic waste, measureless as its own Sakwallas, the aimless soul drifts in the elemental whirl, or floats in the darkness of uncreated infinite nature, "a speck of fog, vanishing in the azure of the past." \*

The same degeneration and change which mark the progress of all human institutions are apparent in that of the Buddha. The simplicity of the founder has disappeared. He enjoined no rites, worship, nor the building of sacred edifices, but his followers having exalted him to a Deity have multiplied large and stately temples.

The relics of Buddha, the bones saved from the ashes, after his cremation, are preserved, in topes or shrines. One of his teeth, a piece of ivory two inches long, now in Ceylon, and for the possession of which a war has been actually waged, is enclosed in six cases, the outer one being of solid silver and six feet in height. The ceremonial and ritual of this worship have become very much complicated and are like that of the Romish Church. The chanting of prayers, incense, candles, beads, the priestly robes, crosses, mitres, cope and chaplet, the worship of saints, fasts, processions, holy water, litanies and confessions, are so exactly like those of

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\* Prof. Tyndall.

Papacy, that the Jesuit priests, who first penetrated these countries as missionaries, declared in dismay, "That there was not a piece of dress nor a sacerdotal function nor a ceremony of the court of Rome, that the devil had not copied in this country."

The grand lama in Thibet is a high priest or pope. There are monasteries and nunneries organized for the retirement of devotees. The common priests take vows similar to those of the Roman Catholic Church, celibacy, poverty and obedience. The monachism of the two religions is also similar. According to their rules, "The professed Bhikkhu or monk was to shun all sexual intercourse of every kind, all home relationship was put away, he was to ignore the frown or favor of the world. His furniture was to consist of an almsbowl, a razor, a needle and a water strainer. His food should be only what he had received as alms, it should never be asked for, and always eaten before noon. He should never touch gold nor silver, and should avoid all luxury. His body was to be considered as a loathsome wound, his clothing simply as the bandages, and for this purpose, a piece of cloth cast up by the waves or blown away by the wind, or which had been used as a cover for the dead, was most desirable. He was to live in no substantial house, the most rigid were never to lie down, but sleep sitting at the foot of a tree, in a cave or cemetery.

It has been thought that this remarkable coincidence with Christian outgrowth, must have been the result of contact with the early Nestorian Churches, but there is a mass of evidence to prove that their institutions antedate Christianity." Some writers believe that China may be converted to Romanism, as the transition from

Buddhism will be very slight, and the Catholic priests are so persevering.

But the Buddhists are tolerant, they have no prejudice or hatred against those of another faith. "They have founded no Inquisition and only one religious war has darkened their history." One of their number told Mr. Crawford, the missionary, that he believed all religions of the world were but branches of the true one. Another sent his son to the missionary school, because he thought Christianity would be a help to Buddhism." Its humanity has had a very softening effect upon some of the savage tribes who have adopted it.

It teaches the transmigration of the soul. Buddha himself struggled through twenty five million, six hundred thousand metempsychoses before he attained perfect bliss.

The Buddhists burn their dead, but they have no bloody or cruel rites. Their altars are covered with flowers and leaves.

Travellers commend their kindness and politeness. Mr. Malcolm, Baptist missionary says, "that in morality and good temper, the Burmese boatmen are greatly superior to those on our western waters. He never saw a quarrel nor heard a hard word from them. He saw thousands of them together on public occasions, and never saw an act of violence, a case of intoxication, nor an immodest act. Family affection is strong, women are more kindly treated than among Mahommedans and Brahmans, fathers are quite as fond of their daughters as of their sons, and the children are reverent to their parents."

It is stated that during the construction of the eastern

portion of the Union Pacific Railroad, which was effected by Irishmen, nominally Christians, rows and riots were of frequent occurrence and also that one hundred murders were perpetrated; while on the western portion, where Chinese were the workmen, neither a riot nor a murder took place. This startling fact may give us food for thought.

Where there is such power of permanence and success there must be truth, and in the ethics of Buddhism we find it; eternal truth and adaptation to human want; but as a religion, it has two fatal defects. The first is the absence of a Deity. The Buddha or his image universally worshipped, is but a dull, sleepy, apotheosized man, born ages after the universe was created a god utterly inadequate to satisfy the soul yearning for an eternal, all powerful, benevolent Being, to whom it can appeal in the emergencies of life and upon whom it can repose in the mysterious hour of dissolution, an instinctive demand of our higher nature, which all the arguments of philosophy and facts of science cannot abnegate nor answer.

The second grave deficiency is the absence of all moral responsibility. The motive for practising the virtues and humanities, is a purely selfish one. "How shall I attain merit?" is the only inquiry. There being no obligation to God, the love of our fellow beings, their happiness or conversion, virtue, and charity, are intrinsically of no importance; they are motives of action, only as means by which Nirvana can be won. Faith, gratitude, benevolence, all the most exalted virtues are without incentive, but the base one of selfishness, which can never be depended upon to hold a man firm to good principles.

Thus we find there is no roof to this temple pointing to heaven, which we call faith in God, and responsibility to Him, no foundation deep in our nature, the love of virtue and holiness for its own sake, but only the bare upright walls and pillars of self-love and self-interest, which the tempest of misfortune or the earthquake of passion, may at any moment lay prostrate.

“The system of Buddhism,” says Mr. Upham, who has made it a profound study, “rests upon the ruins of a former edifice, from which it derives no strength. The doctrine of the Nirvana and everlasting fate are too subtle and refined, for the check or control of the hopes and fears, much less the vices of man, though there is in it a germ of intellectual motive, not “swallowed and lost in the wide womb of uncreated night,” which speaks of moral responsibility, and responds to the realities of eternity. Gladly does the soul turn from its feeble rays, to the bright efflux of all knowledge, the sun of righteousness, which has arisen to scatter the gloomy shades of superstition.”

Mrs. Leonowen, who was three years teacher in the harem of the King of Siam, has given in her writings, a striking illustration of the rule, that as men receive the truth so it moulds the character, in the contrast between the despotic monarch of that country, and its High Priest. Both were educated in a monastery, the King having remained in seclusion till he ascended the throne. But in him, every dark and ferocious passion tempestuously bore sway. Mrs. Leonowen says, “No one can describe the gloom and horror of the king’s harem, all natural feelings are repressed, silence, submission, self-constraint, suspicion, cunning and an ever vigilant fear,

take their place, with a constant terror of the tyrant who owns it. Here light and darkness are monstrously mixed, and the result is a glaring gloom, which is neither of day nor night, of life or death, of earth or,—yes, of hell! When once the King was enraged, there was nothing to be done but to wait patiently until the storm was exhausted by its own fury, but it was horrible to witness such an abuse of power in one from whom there was no appeal.”

She gives numerous instances of the cruel incarceration, scourging, and torturing even to death, of the helpless women in his harem, upon the most frivolous or false pretences. They are too harrowing and heart sickening to bear repetition.

This man was a priest of one of the most humane and moral religions in the world, but over his life it had no controlling power. Yet he was no religious bigot, like Philip the second of Spain, and James the second of England, who made religious zeal the excuse for barbarity. How thoroughly he understood and appreciated the doctrines of his religion, will be seen from the story he gave Mrs. Leonowen of the life of the High Priest of Siam; a character to whom we turn with pleasure, for here we perceive a life of rare excellence and beauty, resulting from a sincere desire for religious truth, and a conscientious following of the light that was given.”

The King of Siam said of the High Priest: “He was a man of royal birth and untold riches. In his youth he felt such pity for the poor, the old, the sick, and the wretched, that he became melancholy, and after several years spent in the continual relief of the needy, he in a moment gave all his goods, ‘*all* to feed the poor.’ At

thirty he became a priest. For five years he had toiled as a gardener, because he could thus obtain a knowledge of the medicinal properties of plants and be a physician for the poor. But his life seemed to himself imperfect, and so he became a priest. This was sixty-five years ago, now he is ninety-five years old and I fear he has not yet found the truth and excellence he has so long sought for. But I know of no man greater than he. He is great in the Christian sense, loving, pitiful, forbearing, pure. His life exemplifies these qualities, and he is great in the Buddhist sense also, not loving life nor fearing death, desiring nothing the world can give, beyond the peace of a beautiful spirit."

Mrs. L. continues: "More than eighteen months after this story was given me, I received a summons from the King one evening just as the sun was trailing his last shadows through the porches of the palace. Somewhat uneasy as to the nature of the summons, I resignedly followed my guides to the Monastery of Watt Rajah. The sun had set in glory below the red horizon when I entered the monastery which adjoins the temple. The pages left me seated on a stone step and ran to announce my presence to the King. A young man robed in pure white and bearing in one hand a small lighted taper, and a lily in the other, beckoned me to follow him, and as we traversed the long low passages that separate the cells of the priests, the weird sound of voices chanting the hymns of the Buddhist liturgy, fell upon the ear.

As the page approached the threshold of one of the cells, he whispered to me to put off my shoes, at the same time prostrating himself in abject humility before the door where he remained without changing his post-

ure. I stooped involuntarily and anxiously scanned the scene within. There sat the King, and at a sign from him I entered and sat down.

On a rude pallet about six and a half feet long and not more than three feet wide, with a bare block of wood for a pillow, lay a dying priest. A simple garment of faded yellow covered his person, his hands were folded on his breast, his head was bald, his slight remaining hair had been shorn from his shrunken temples and eyebrows, his feet were bare and exposed, his eyes were fixed in solemn contemplation. No sign of disquiet was there, no external suggestion of pain or trouble. I was at once startled and puzzled. Was he dying or acting?

In the attitude of his person, in the expression of his face, I beheld sublime reverence, repose, absorption. At his right hand was a lighted taper in a golden candlestick, on the left a dainty golden vase with white lilies freshly gathered. One of the lilies had been laid on his breast and contrasted touchingly with the dingy, faded yellow of his robe. Just over his heart lay a coil of unspun cotton thread, which being divided into seventy-seven filaments, was distributed to the hands of priests who crowded the cell. Before each priest was a lighted taper and a lily, symbols of faith and purity. From time to time one or another of that solemn company raised his voice and chanted strangely, and all the choir responded in unison.

First voice: "Thou excellence of Perfection, I take refuge in thee." All,—"Thou who art named either God, Buddha or Mercy, I take refuge in thee."

First voice: "Thou Holy One, I take refuge in thee." All,—"Thou truth, I take refuge in thee."

As the sound of the prayer fell on his ear, a flickering smile lit up the pale countenance of the dying man with a mild radiance, as though the charity and humility of his nature, in departing, left the light of their loveliness there. Riches, station, honor, kindred, he had resigned them all more than a half century since, in his love for the poor and his longing after virtue. Here was none of the vagueness, or incoherence of a delirious death. He was going to a clear eternal calm ; with a smile of perfect peace, he said : "To your Majesty I commend the poor, and this that remains of me, I give to be burned."

Gradually his breathing became more laborious, and turning with great effort to the King, he said : "I will go now." Instantly the priests joined in a loud psalm or chant, "Thou sacred One, I take refuge in thee." A few minutes more and the spirit of the High Priest of Siam had calmly breathed itself away. My heart and eyes were full of tears, yet I was comforted. By what hope I know not, for I dared not question it."

Ah ! have we not read our Bible through the distorting lenses of self-conceit and bigotry ? Let us remove them for a moment that we may see clearly.

"After this, I beheld and lo, a great multitude that no man could number of *all* nations, and kindred and people and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and with palms in their hands," and more impressive still, the words of our Saviour : "And they shall come from the East and from the West, from the North and from the South, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God."

A new light shines forth from these words "And

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they shall come from the East!" Yes, Zoroaster and Confucius, Gotama, and the High Priest of Siam "shall sit down in the Kingdom of God."

Oh let not the awful finale be added: "And you yourselves shall be thrust out."

## CHAPTER XI.

### EGYPT, (THE LAND OF CANALS.)

“ The Greeks are novices in antiquity.”

ABOUT fifty years ago a stone tablet was found in the Nile Valley with three inscriptions, one in the sacred hieroglyphs of the ancient Egyptian priests, one in the characters used by her common people, and one in the well known Greek letters. It was thought possible that these inscriptions might have one meaning, and with this slight lever to aid him, Jean F. Champollion, the French archæologist, opened the arcanum of Egyptian antiquity.

Shading our eyes from the kaleidoscopic whirl of this busy age, let us step within the petrified wilderness of wonders and gaze with awe down the receding corridors of time interminable, till the scene closes, in the dark night of a dreamless past.

We are in an unknown world. The great pyramids point upwards to the cloudless heavens, the mysterious obelisk glitters in the sun, giant Memnon sends forth his clinking music to greet the god of day, the awful forms of the sphinxes confuse and puzzle us, stony faces, sweet and solemn, look forth from the lofty rocks. Karnac, majestic in outline and delicate in finish, attracts us like a magnet. We sacrilegiously enter the temple, standing

beneath its forest of stately pillars, sculptured with strange devices, a spell comes over us, the sound of drums and trumpets is heard afar : we hide our diminished heads behind a gigantic column, as a crowd pours forth from the city of a hundred gates, bearing the sacred ark and offerings to Osiris.

The sound of sweet voices, the tinkling of cymbals, the music of harps, the odor of flowers and incense mingle with the tread of the soldiers and murmur of the mighty crowd, as they file in, under the lofty roof of the temple. They halt before the image of Osiris ; dark subtle looking men in flowing white garments issue from the recesses of the temple. Flambeaux wave in their hands, burning censers fill the air with intoxicating fumes, a musty odor of spices and decay is wafted from the city of the dead. Wild, unearthly voices are heard, they rouse an unnatural power, the water is changed to blood, the sticks upon the ground are changed to serpents, thunder and hail distract the air and fire runs along the earth. Our eyes are closed with horror, oblivion takes possession of the soul !

When we recover, the scene has changed, the golden rays of the setting sun stream over the landscape, a thousand men are dragging a huge stone from its native bed, the enginery thunders along the high causeway, swarthy laborers with irrigating machines raise the water of the Nile, which gently oozes over the grain fields, gay boats and light laughter float along the sluggish stream, the purple mountain fades, the lotus trembles on the water, and we remember that we are in ancient Egypt.

I said China was aged, but she seems now like a well preserved matron who sits in dignified passiveness, tranquilly sipping her tea and discoursing of the days of her

youth, for turning from her placid figure I behold a vision of old Egypt, hoary and "struck with eld," seated upon a granite rock of which he has become a petrified portion, and pointing downwards with stony finger to the ruins of ten thousand years!

There is reason to believe that when the wild Mongols scrambled over the mountains of Tartary and beheld the rivers and forests of Sin, which their descendants were one day to make so fair, another branch of the same strange family were already settled in Egypt with perfected civilization, arts and sciences, and as ever, with the abomination of Ophiolatry!

The earliest history of Egypt is that written by Manetho, a learned Egyptian priest, three hundred years B. C. His extraordinary dates were at first discredited, for they make the union of the kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt under a monarch called Menes to have been 5004 B. C.! But the deciphered inscriptions confirmed the accuracy of his chronology and table of dynasties. Statues have also been found which bear date 4880 B. C. The statues of a king and queen, as also one of a public officer, now in the museum of M. Mariette, in Egypt, are beautiful specimens of sculpture. They are of painted limestone, the individual character of the heads, (Caucasian in type,) and the anatomical accuracy of the bodies and limbs, compare favorably with the finest specimens of modern art. The daisies and pansies painted upon the carved ribbon which binds the queen's hair, are as perfect in color and shading as if done yesterday by the hand of a master. The eyes are a miracle of a lost art; they are set in bronze eyelids, are of colored crystals, with mosaic rays in the iris, and a diamond

or other crystal in the pupil, which gives them a lifelike sparkle. These wonderful statues are near seven thousand years old, but they do not represent the crude art of beginners. Judging from the progress made during historic times, ages must have passed before such perfection could be attained. Who possessed the skill that could achieve these models of sculpture? The artists were contemporary with Menes, or *Amon-ei*, as it is written, "one who walks with God." There are legends which may assist us in answering this inquiry. Before the days of Menes it is said, "Egypt was governed by the gods," and Sanscrit and Chaldean traditions speak of a mighty and highly civilized nation with powerful monarchs, whose kingdom stretched from the Indies, through the peninsula of Arabia and southward, through the Nile valley, which before its conquest, "was inhabited by impure beings." A great king, named Ait, overwhelmed the *Daityas* or evil beings and protected the *Devatas* or good people. A great monarchy flourished near the mountains of the Moon in which the Nile had its rise; the country was called the Moon land. The story of the early struggle is also preserved in the Egyptian myth of Osiris, the Judge of the Dead.

A very ancient Greek writer says he found the story written "in very old characters."

"Amon, King of Arabia, married Rhea, the sister of Chronos, King of Italy, Sicily, and Northern Africa. Afterward, Amon became the father of Dionysus (Osiris) by Almathea, and Rhea, his wife, left him, in jealous rage, and married Chronos, her brother, who then waged war with Amon and defeated him. When Dionysus was grown and educated, he espoused his father Amon's

cause, defeated Chronos, dethroned him, and placed his son, Zeus, in his place." Another account makes Dionysus himself the King of Egypt, and afterward, being killed by Typhon, the evil being, he was deified as Osiris, the Judge of the Dead. In these myths, where all the names are those of deities and are symbolic, we find reference to the period called "the reign of the gods," and to the great religious war carried on in their name, in the earliest ages after the Flood, perhaps the very war spoken of by the old Zend writers. It is stated in Gen. 10th that Ham had one son whose family were named Mizraim. Mizra was the most ancient name of Egypt, and from other names still preserved, it is certain that three of this family,—Ludim, Ananim and Naptuhim,—were the primogenitors of tribes in that country. The sons of Magog were always in sympathy with the Hamites, and it is probable they amalgamated with, or preceded them in this emigration, as it is certain they did in other countries. The skulls of the oldest mummies, it is said, show a mixture of African conformation, perhaps from a union of the serpent-worshipping Asiatics and the ophiolatrous negroes, "the impure beings" spoken of by the Sanscrit writers, who would naturally thus describe the hated idolators. The oldest Egyptian hieroglyphs are not the invention of a south people; the forms of the animals and birds are those of a cold country.

From these facts and traditions we may infer that the serpent-worshipping northern hordes had priority in Egypt as in Asia, Europe and America, and the wonderful civilization there as elsewhere, may have been the wisdom for which they bartered their souls. A war car-

ried on by the Aryan and Semitic tribes against these people would, in Oriental phrase, be "a war of the gods."

Geology attests the great antiquity of Egypt. Once an arm of the sea or a deep morass, the land has been slowly formed by deposits brought down by the Nile. The narrow valley where they have gradually hardened, is now but fourteen miles in width. A very thorough examination of this alluvium has brought from a great depth, brick, pottery, an image of burnt clay, a copper knife, and other relics. The uniform character of the mud makes it probable that the deposit has been also uniform, and that, for the last three thousand years, has been about three and a half inches in a century. A statue of King Rameses, set up 1260 B. C., has now nine feet and four inches of alluvium above the base. The deposit below is thirty feet, which would make the age of the valley thirteen thousand five hundred and fifty-four years, but from the greater pressure upon the lower strata, it is thought, the time of the first deposit was still more remote. Within four inches of the bottom, pieces of pottery indicate occupation by man. We may well believe what an old priest told Solon when he visited Egypt twenty-five hundred years ago: "You Greeks are novices in antiquity. You speak of one deluge, there have been many. You are ignorant of what passed in days of old. The history of eight thousand years is deposited in our sacred books, but I can tell you what our fathers did nine thousand years ago. I refer to their *institutions, laws, and brilliant achievements.*"

Menes, the first historical king, was, like the first emperor of China, a great engineer. He turned the Nile

into the middle of the valley and protected Memphis, by a dyke, from the annual floods. From the consolidation of the two kingdoms till the conquest by Alexander, there were twenty-six dynasties, some of them lasting six hundred years !

During the 15th dynasty, Egypt was conquered by a warlike people from the east shore of the Mediterranean, called Hyksos, or Shepherds. Their kings adopted the high title of former monarchs, *Phrah* or Pharaoh, "son of the sun." During this dynasty the Hebrews came into Egypt, and the king who "arose that know not Joseph," was a descendant of the native princes, who led a revolt against the usurpers and expelled them. The 19th dynasty was the most brilliant of Egyptian history. Their conquests were pushed into Asia and Ethiopia, they added to the wonders of Thebes and Karnac, built cities, carved the great Sphinx, and erected the giant statue of Memnon, which, it was said, emitted musical sounds at sunrise. The mystery is explained by the fact that the music was never heard before an earthquake which shattered the statue, and never after it was repaired. The heavy night dews of that rainless climate fell into the fissures of the stone, and the rapid evaporation caused by the hot rays of the morning sun, produced the sound which superstition readily converted into music.

The grandest monarch of this dynasty, the third after the expulsion of the Shepherds, was Rameses second, the Sesostris of Greek writers. It was during the brilliant reign of his son that Moses was born, and in the court of the proudest monarch in the world he was brought up as a son. What bitterness must Rameses have felt at the lofty demands of the foundling Hebrew,

once the pride of his court! and how great his humiliation at the signal defeat suffered by the combined science and magic of the most learned priests in the world, of which he was the worshipped head.

The scriptural account of the hardships of the Hebrews at this time is confirmed by a papyrus roll recently discovered, containing the report of Rameses' officer. It reads thus: "May my lord be pleased, I have distributed food to the soldiers and the Hebrews dragging stones to the great city, *Rameses-meia-mouni*. I gave them food monthly." In Exodus we find, "They built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pythom and Raamses."

Another papyrus says: "The people have erected twelve buildings. They made the tale of bricks daily till they were finished. In a picture the Hebrews are seen toiling under the lash of the owner, and putting straw into the bricks to give them tenacity. After millenniums of silence the rocks and tombs have spoken to authenticate our sacred record. While the Hindoos ignored the present as unworthy of thought, the Egyptians recorded, not only the great events, but most minute detail of every day life."

Cambyses of Persia conquered Egypt 525 B.C., and Alexander, everywhere triumphant, took possession of the country in the 4th century B.C. This sagacious monarch, impressed with the importance of Hellenizing Egypt, built at a convenient point near the Mediterranean and Red Sea, the city which bears his name. At his death this part of his kingdom was given to his General, Ptolemy Sotor, who founded the famous Alexandrian library and museum, finally lost to the world through the fanaticism of the Mohammedans. Cleopatra, the

beautiful Queen, was the last of the Ptolemys, for Cæsar took possession of Egypt 30 B.C., and it remained for three hundred years under Roman sway, and old Egypt after this foreign subjugation, declined and died.

The ancient religion of this marvellous country is without doubt Hamite in its origin. It combines and exceeds in an exaggerated degree, the nature worship of India and Assyria. Every natural form and principle of nature was an object of worship. The heavenly bodies, the earth, the river Nile, its water, mud and slime, man, animals, plants, reptiles, insects, all the forces of nature, animate and inanimate, were sacred, and were partakers of divine honors, and as if this were not enough, mixed and monstrous forms, winged serpents, winged bulls and lions, to which were affixed human heads, hawk headed men and other distorted shapes, swelled the bursting pantheon.

The Egyptians were the most pious people of history. Every day and every act was consecrated to religion. Their very letters were so full of sacred symbols that they could not be used for secular purposes, language had to be divided, the hieratic, or sacred writing, being used by the priests, and a common form called Demotic adapted to ordinary purposes. Religious duty was the one object in life. Sacrifices, rites, holy days, processions, fasts and festivals were incessant. The gods were innumerable; chief and minor deities; the same god in many forms; gods worshipped in some cities and neglected in others; gods known and unknown. "If you enter a temple," says Clement, "A priest advances with a solemn mien singing a hymn. He raises a curtain to let you see the deity, and lo! he appears, a cat, a crocodile, a snake, or

some other noxious animal. The God of the Egyptians, a wild beast wallowing on a carpet." It appears that the Egyptians in their intense anxiety to fulfil their religious duty had adopted every religious idea as soon as they obtained it from other nations.

The Doctrines of the Unity, Trinity and Incarnation are certainly represented in the faith of ancient Egypt, but monstrously mixed, distorted and overshadowed by gross idolatry. The educated priest believed in a concealed deity, the Absolute Spirit, who was supposed to have no form. To the people he was not an object of worship. All the other gods were emanations from this being. Herodotus mentions eight gods of the first order, twelve of the second, and seven of the third.

The first in rank was Am or Ra, apparently identical with the Assyrian deity of the same name. He represents the male principle of creation or the sun, or has a serpent symbol, Urei, or sacred Asps. His name was often assumed by the King, Ra-meses Pha-ra-oh, and by the priests as Potiphe-ra. His image, a ram's head, was painted dark blue. He was the presiding diety of Thebes and Heliopolis. The god Ptah appears to have represented the idea of fire and truth, supposed to have invented science, and was revered at Memphis. Num, or Nuf, was the generative power of water. Leb and his wife Nepthe, were time and space, their children were Osiris and Isis. Osiris the judge of the dead, was the most important diety, he married his sister Isis, and their child Horus represents air, or the mediator between creation and destruction. The myths connected with these deities evidently had their birth in the Nile valley. The emblem of Osiris is the sun, the vivifying power of the universe, he is accompanied by the ser-

pent, and Phallic emblems were introduced into his worship. He was the saviour and benefactor of mankind, and was destroyed by the malignant Typhon, but after death went to reside in the underground world, the region of the dead; here he receives the souls of those who have departed from the upper regions, and awards their fate, till at some future day he will overcome the wicked Typhon and rescue the world from his power.

Osiris was universally worshipped, and at Philæ, where he was supposed to have been buried, his rites were celebrated with the mysteries. His image is found on many tombs and monuments. Isis attends him. Horus, always a child, symbol of immortality, sits near him on a lotus flower, or on his sceptre. It was deemed profanity to utter his name, and the most sacred oath was, "I swear by him who was buried at Philæ." He is called the Lord of Life, the Revealer of truth, the Eternal Ruler. His priests were celebrated for great learning, and his worship ante-dates, hundreds of years, the visit of Abraham to Egypt.

Thoth, the Greek Hermes, was the inventor of the alphabet, astronomy, music and law.

Typhon, the spirit of evil, was the god of darkness and eclipse.

Neith was the highest goddess, and as the feminine principle of creation, reigned with Ra. She presided over wisdom, philosophy, military tactics and morality. Her city was Sais, and her temples exceeded all others in colossal grandeur. Her inscriptions were imposing. One of them is thus translated by Champollion, "I am all that has been, all that is, and all that will be. No mortal has ever raised the veil that conceals me. My offspring is the

sun." We recognize her name in the daughter of Poti-  
phera, Aseneith, wife of Joseph the Hebrew ruler.

To Isis, the wife of Osiris, was attributed all *the form* of good. She was greatly revered, and had thousands of titles, a favorite one was "The Potent, the Mother Goddess." Her symbol was an egg. She was a benefactor of man, and the goddess of the healing art. After death her soul was transferred to Sirius, the dog star, where she presides over the annual inundation of the Nile. Her festival and mysteries were celebrated at Memphis with pompous rites. Her most pleasing image was that of a beautiful woman, crowned with Lotus blossoms and shrouded in a blue veil.

Among numerous subordinate deities were Canopus god of waters, and Nilus the spirit of their river, Mokhitsslime, Kham and Ranno, who presided over gardens and vineyards, besides genii and spirits innumerable.

About fifty animals were sacred, among which, were the serpent, the cat, crocodile, ram, ape, hippopotamus, the ibis, the hawk, the scarabeus, or beetle, supposed to represent immortality. The cow, as among eastern nations, was most sacred; some of the gods were born of a cow. Isis was of this favored number. Apis, the sacred bull of Memphis, was a very important deity. His statue, a recumbent colossus, was eighty-five feet high! The sacred bull must be black, with a white triangle on his forehead, a half moon on his back, and a bunch like a beetle under his tongue. He was kept in a splendid temple, waited upon with more care than the king, attended by priestly pomp in his promenade, and when he died all Egypt went into mourning; his body was embalmed and continued to receive divine honors. The

embalmed bulls were called Osir Hapi, (Greek, Serapis,) and the place of their sepulture was called the Serapium. From some curious caprice, if the sacred bull did not die before twenty-five years he was killed. After the death of an apis, a new god was sought, and when the proper marks were found the people put on their most elegant attire and gave themselves up to the wildest joy.

The deification of kings after death was so much a matter of course that some of the Pharaohs celebrated their own apotheosis, thus realizing posthumous glory. The learned priests of Egypt probably saw in this universal worship, symbols of great though hidden truths, but the common people kept in ignorance for political purposes, were literal worshippers of the objects before them.

Priest-craft was never carried to a greater extent than in Egypt, where the priests were the highest caste, and their privileges were rigidly enforced, though not with the cruelty and despotism of India. They filled not only the sacerdotal offices but were the administrators of justice and the only physicians. They embodied the learning of the country. The King could not be anointed till he had become initiated into the subtle mysteries of the craft. They wore white linen robes when performing their official duty, and were compelled to observe most scrupulous cleanliness. They submitted to a rigid ceremonial, restricted themselves in dress, diet and indulgence of appetite, and labored assiduously in their duties. They lived in great simplicity, mostly upon vegetables, drank no wine and married but one wife.

The sacrifices were similar to those prescribed by the

Mosaic canon, and some animal was occasionally condemned like the scape goat of the Hebrews to bear the misfortunes of the country.

The year was filled with joyful and mournful festivals. The most sacred ordinances were the Mysteries, little understood outside of the priesthood. The initiation was protracted and severe, including a long fast and profound study. "Sublime pageantry dazzled the populace during the celebration of the mysteries, midnight suns, fiery serpents, visions of the gods," and those enchantments referred to in the Bible, exhibitions of the scientific skill of the learned and adroit priests, but Moses, thoroughly initiated into the craft, surpassed them, being aided by the Divine Spirit. Their knowledge of the mysteries of nature may have been greater than we at present possess, a knowledge of astronomy, chemistry, magnetism, electricity and mechanics, by which they practiced magic and divination, and seemed possessed of prophetic power, though the learned German commentator Kurtz, inclines to the opinion that an evil, supernatural influence was felt by all the ancient magicians. The priests of Egypt, unlike those of other countries, exercised their power mercifully. Egypt seems to have been a fairly happy, well governed country, and the people amiable and honest. The gods partaking, as in all the natural religions, of the character of the people, were also gentle and well disposed to men. Their images, when they have a human countenance, represent them serene, solemn, and sweet in expression; blood sacrifices were rare, and that of human victims almost unknown.

Lenormant sums up their religion so difficult to be understood, as "a strange and inextricable mixture of sub-

lime truths (vestiges more or less obliterated of primitive revelation) with metaphysical and cosmical ideas, often confused, always grandiose, a refined morality, an abject worship, and the coarsest popular superstitions."

The Egyptians, who, from many striking coincidences, must have borrowed from or bestowed upon the Hindoos their ideas, were like them, believers in the transmigration of the soul. The sacred books of Thoth, which contained the laws, science and theology of Egypt, have been destroyed, but a papyrus was recently found in a tomb which the most learned Egyptologists pronounce as being of the remotest antiquity and probably an extract from the Sacred Books. It is the Funeral Ritual, and is a minute description of the condition of the soul from the moment of death till the final judgment.

Immediately after death the soul holds a long parley with the gatekeeper of Hades, enumerating his own virtues, in which he is aided by the priest and good spirits. If his good deeds are insufficient he is refused admission and doomed to annihilation, But if he is accounted worthy, he receives from Osiris permission to pass the threshold. He then enters Kar Neter, the land of the dead, penetrates the subterranean region, and beholds the dazzling glory of its sun, sings a hymn to its supernatural light and sets out upon a long pilgrimage. To sustain the soul in this protracted journey he must have knowledge; this seems a Hindoo idea. An exposition of the Egyptian Faith is provided, so diffuse and obscure that before it ends, the original clue seems entirely lost. Then follow long prayers for his body which is in process of embalming, which process is supposed to facilitate his passage to the Elysian Fields, his final resting place.

After this he presses the sacred beetle to his heart, and enters the gloomy realm of Typhon, where a dreadful and exhausting combat ensues, from which he comes off victorious, and after a much needed repose, he journeys to the first gate of heaven, through which by divine aid he passes and experiences a most remarkable series of transformations.

After this trial the soul is united to the embalmed body, and with a guide book, given him by Thoth, conductor of souls, he reaches a subterranean river, and attempts to cross. Here the Typhonic powers again interfere and he has a fierce struggle before he can get into the right boat. When at length he is safely seated, the boatman examines him to ascertain whether he has knowledge enough to cross the Elysian Fields. "What is my name?" says the rudder. "The Enemy of Apis is thy name." "Tell me my name," says the rope. "The hair with which Anubis binds the folds of the wrapper." "Tell me my name," says the stake. "The Lord of the Earth is thy name." Arrived at the Elysian Fields, he finds a subterranean Egypt, a duplication of his old home, where everything is spiritually reproduced, where even Osiris is raising the heavenly grain for the bread of knowledge.

Now comes the last awful trial. By means of a clue the embodied soul enters a Labyrinth and after many windings penetrates to the Judgment Hall of Osiris who sits upon a throne; by his side stand forty two terrible assessors who are to try his character, and to each of whom he must give an answer to a test question and also give a strict account of his life, all his acts of commission and omission.

This Apology as it is called, shows a high moral standard and a practice of the deeper and severer virtues, as will be seen from the following extract in which the soul vindicates itself before the Judge of the Dead. "I have not afflicted any, I have not told falsehoods, I have not been idle, I have not murdered, I have not committed fraud, I have not injured the images of the gods, I have not taken scraps of the bandages of the dead, I have not committed adultery, I have not cheated by false weights, I have not kept milk from sucklings, I have not caught the sacred birds, I have not boasted or stolen, I have not counterfeited, nor killed sacred beasts, nor blasphemed, nor refused to hear the truth, nor despised God in my heart. Again he says he has "loved God, given bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, garments to the naked and an asylum to the abandoned." On one tomb of a king it is said, "I lived in truth and fed my soul with justice. What I did to men, was done in peace, and how I loved God, God and my heart will know." Another inscription says, "I was a wise man and my soul loved God. I was a brother to the great men, a father to the humble, and was never a mischief-maker." A king says in an inscription, "I invoke thee, O my father Amun, I am in the midst of a throng of unknown tribes and alone. But Amun is better to me than thousands of archers and millions of horsemen. Amun will prevail over the enemy."

After the protracted examination before Osiris is finished, the heart of the man is placed in the balances with truth, and if not found wanting, the joyful sentence is pronounced and the soul enters the realms of happiness, but if guilty of inexcusable faults, he is delivered into the

hands of a frightful monster. or decapitated upon the block of Hades. If his crimes are unpardonable, after terrible torment, he is annihilated.

The wanderings and trials of the accepted soul before it enters the place of bliss occupies a period of three thousand years.

This circumstantial belief in future reward and punishment, with a high standard of morality, induced a conscientious, humane, gentle and somewhat melancholy type of character in the ancient Egyptians. Even in their gayest moments, and when the revel was at its height, a skeleton crowned with garlands was brought before them, or the image of a corpse in a coffin, that for a moment they might pause and remember that they were mortal.

Their cruelty to the Hebrews during the latter portion of their stay in Egypt, arose from the fact that they came from the same country, and pursued the same occupation as did the usurping Hyksos, a jealous fear of their growing importance and numbers, induced the oppressive persecution.

In consequence of the belief that the progress of the soul through Hades would be facilitated by a careful preservation of the body. the process of embalming was adopted. This was done by removing the intestines and filling the cavities of the body with essential oils and spices and swathing it in linen bandages. The appearance of a mummy is revolting. The flesh is dried, shrunken and black, with hardly a vestige of humanity remaining. These mummies were laid in underground cells or rock chambers and in the Pyramids; often enclosed in beautiful coffins called sarcophagi. The

sacred animals were also embalmed. Belzoni found entire tombs filled with embalmed cats folded in red and white linen. The sacred bulls were magnificently entombed.

How strangely diverse are the ideas of the great human family. The Persians left the bodies of the beloved dead to be torn by wild beasts, the Hindus consigned theirs to the sacred stream or the devouring flame, the Christian reverently lays the mortal part from which the soul has fled upon the passive bosom of Mother Earth, and the Egyptian, with infinite care and expense, preserved the worn out frame, the cast off shell, and placed it in a mansion grander than that which it had occupied during its life.

I would gladly describe the wonders of Egypt, but that would fill a volume.

Who built the pyramids, mountains of masonry? One of them measures 800 feet square, and contains eighty five millions cubic feet of stone. Herodotus states that hills were levelled before they were raised, that stones were brought eight miles on a causeway fifty feet broad, and in some places forty feet high, one hundred thousand men were employed ten years in polishing and carving the stones for this causeway alone. Who raised the one hundred and forty pillars of the Hall of Karnac, or built the three thousand chambers of the Labyrinth so like the subterranean temples of the East? The great human headed lion, the andro-sphinx, is one hundred and eighty eight feet long and sixty three feet from the breast to the top of the head, it measures one hundred and two feet around the forehead, carved from the heart of a mountain, the fragments of which were

removed to augment its solitary grandeur? The earth in the vicinity of Memphis, old before Abraham visited Egypt, is pierced with catacombs or chambers of the dead for twenty miles, receptacles for the mummies of that city alone. Who built the avenue of Sphinxes, or the artificial lake which receives the excess of water during the annual inundation of the Nile? The Persians at the time of the conquest found twenty thousand books on literature alone, and some old tombs are sacred to the memory of the chiefs of books or librarians. The ink on the rolls, in many cases, is made of nitrate of silver, and the oldest dial found at Pompeii was calculated, not for that latitude but that of Memphis or Heliopolis.

The bright and busy inventors have passed away. The toiling thousands rest in the long slumber of the tomb. Hosea said truly, "Egypt shall gather them up, Memphis shall bury them." The prophecy of Ezekiel is fulfilled, "I will destroy the idols and cause the images to cease out of the land of Noph."

To the discoveries in this marvel of nations, there seems to be no end. The drifting sands of the desert have covered the wonders of the world; and the mysteries thus concealed, the puny men of this generation are toilsomely striving to unveil. From time to time we are startled at the report of some new discovery older and more wonderful than the preceding one, till we are ready to exclaim with the man in Richter's dream, "I will go no further, for the spirit of man acheth with this infinity, I will hide me from" the discoveries of the archæologist, "for end, I see there is none!"

It is difficult to form a satisfactory opinion of this anomalous country or its religion, considered so important

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that a separate class of scientists have devoted their lives to this specialty. Among the ancients who made Egypt a study, for it was old Egypt to them, are Herodotus, Juvenal, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Plato, Manetho, Josephus and the early Christian fathers, and among the moderns; Champollion, Lepsius, Mariette, Sharpe, Wilkinson, Bunsen and Brugseh, and many other eminent scholars, but notwithstanding all this research "the vast fabric of Egyptian wisdom, its deep theologies, its mysterious symbolism, its majestic art, its wonderful science, remain as its mummies and tombs remain, an enigma, exciting and baffling our curiosity."<sup>1</sup> Religions, like nations and individuals, have birth, development, maturity, decrepitude and dissolution, and their *duration* and *vitality* are proportioned in a great degree, to the measure of God's truth which they contain. In that of ancient Egypt, which perished more than a thousand years ago, there was no doubt much humanity and moral excellence, an idea, though fearfully overshadowed, of the omnipotent One, and a firm practical belief in the immortality of the soul, but the theological idea, well understood by the few learned priests, was hidden from the masses who were their dupes and victims. It was a system of deception and priestcraft doomed to final decay.

A candid review of the faith of ancient Egypt cannot fail to strengthen our conviction that the religion of the Bible is of more than human origin. The elements of vitality, perpetuity, progress and catholicity are nowhere else to be found. Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the

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<sup>1</sup> J. T. Clarke.

Egyptians, he could more than match them in divination, he understood well their theology, but the very first command he gave his nation was, "Thou shalt have no other God but Jehovah, saith the Lord. Thou shalt make no graven image or likeness of anything in heaven or earth, or the waters under the earth, to bow before, or worship." His moral code admitted no exemptions. The comprehensive "Thou shalt not" included all ages, sexes, and stations. "Thou shalt not bear false witness" was as binding upon learned priests, as it was upon humble serfs, and as it is upon every person who hears it, in this year of our Lord, 1876.

All that was true in Egyptian religion, lives to-day embodied in that of Christ, which in its universal applicability, its spirituality, all-embracing charity, and enforcement of truth, contains the germ of everlasting life.

The most attractive feature of the ancient faith we have been contemplating, is the clearly defined doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and its reunion with the body, though even here it falls short of Christianity. The Chinese leave the spirits of the dead in a dark, cold outer space, with all their former wants and cravings unsatisfied, except as the living by burnt offerings can appease them. The Hindoo dooms the soul to endless transmigrations through base degraded forms till sin is purged away. The Persian sends the weary warrior to struggle in the realms of Ahriman, till his mistaken ally, the comet, sets the world on fire, and his soul can struggle through the melted elements, to the region of rest and happiness. The Egyptian compels the soul to three thousand years of trial and conflict before heaven is attained. Moses is mournfully silent upon this important

subject, but our Divine Master, knowing the deep anxiety of the human heart with regard to the future, in his last moments drew aside the dark veil, and with dying breath spoke the words of promise and prophecy to his companion in dissolution; "To-day,"—he said, no distracting delay, no transmigrations or purgatorial preparation, "To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise!" If that blissful hope shall fill our hearts in the hour of death, what matter whether the body moulder to dust in subterranean silence or ascends to heaven on wings of flame?

The Egyptian mummies await the last trumpet which shall call the dead to judgment, no more sure of immortality than are the millions whose dust has passed (though not for purgatorial purposes) through countless forms of animal or vegetable life. The thoughts suggested by this subject find expression in the old poem addressed to a mummy in Belzoni's Museum.

"And thou hast walked about (how strange a story)  
 In streets of Thebes thousands of years ago!  
 When the Memnonium was in all its glory  
 And time had not begun to overthrow  
 These temples, palaces, and piles stupendous,  
 Of which the very ruins are tremendous.  
 Perchance that hand now pinioned flat  
 Has hob-a-nobbed with Pharaoh, glass to glass,  
 Or dropped a half-penny in Homer's hat,  
 Or doffed thine own to let Queen Dido pass,  
 Or held, by Solomon's own invitation,  
 A torch at the great temple's dedication!

I need not ask thee if that hand when armed  
 Hath any Roman soldier mauled or knuckled,  
 For thou wert dead and buried and embalmed  
 E'er Romulus or Remus had been suckled.

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Antiquity appears to have begun  
Long after thy primeval race was run.  
Dids't thou not hear the pother o'er thy head  
When the Great Persian conquerer Cambyses,  
Marched armies o'er thy tomb with thundering tread,  
O'erthrow Osiris, Horus, Apis, Isis,  
And shook the Pyramids with fear and wonder,  
When the gigantic Memnon fell asunder.

Statue of flesh, immortal of the dead,  
Imperishable type of evanescence,  
Posthumous man, who quitt'st thy narrow bed  
And standest undismayed within our presence,  
Thou wilt hear nothing till the Judgment morning  
When the great Trump shall thrill thee with its warning.  
Why should this worthless tegument endure,  
If its undying guest be lost forever?  
Oh, let us keep the soul embalmed and pure  
In living virtue, that when both must sever,  
Altho' corruption may our frame consume,  
The immortal spirit in the skies may bloom."

## CHAPTER XII.

### MOSES AND THE RELIGION OF THE HEBREWS.

#### Monotheism.

“Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”

**G**RANDEST of all the figures which still preserve a clearly defined and majestic outline in the receding vista of past ages, is that of the founder of the Hebrew nation and religion, Moses, the man of God!

The family of Jacob, the Hebrew, had been four hundred years in the land of Egypt, and had become a numerous and powerful tribe under the protection of an usurping Canaanite dynasty, called the Hyksos, who had been in power during this time.

A native prince now headed a revolt, the Shepherd kings were driven out of the country, their favorites, the Hebrews, fell into discredit and were reduced to slavery. It was prophesied that one of their number would rise to great power and trouble the nation; the general uneasiness with regard to foreigners increased to such a degree, that the reigning monarch issued an order that all male infants should be destroyed at their birth.

A boy of uncommon beauty having been born in the family of Amram, his mother determined to risk the royal vengeance and endeavor to save him by a stratagem.

Rameses, the king, had a favorite daughter, a princess of rare accomplishments and great influence at court, who often walked with her attendants upon the banks of the sacred river. The wife of Amram placed her infant son in a papyrus basket among flags, near the place where the princess went to bathe. She saw the forsaken, beautiful child, her heart was moved with pity, she adopted him and was thereafter called *Touer-maut* (Greek *Thur-mouthis*) "the great mother."

This princess was a woman of extraordinary ability, and when her warrior father left home on his military campaigns, she was made prince regent. *The boy of the waters*, as he was named, was treated as a prince of the royal blood, and it was said that his patroness intended to appoint him her successor. As he matured under the care of *Touer-maut* and his own mother who had been hired to attend him, his beauty came to be so wonderful, that passers-by stood fixed to look upon it, and laborers left their work to steal a glance. He was educated at Heliopolis, the city of the sun, and became a priest called *Osarsiph*, being named after the Egyptian practice, for *Osiris*, the Judge of the Dead. He learned arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, medicine and music. He invented boats and engines for building, instruments of war and hydraulics, hieroglyphics, and division of land. He was called by the Greeks, *Musaeus*, and by the Egyptians, *Hermes*. He commanded an expedition against the Ethiopians and founded the city of *Hermopolis*, it is believed, to commemorate his victories. He got rid of the serpents of the country by letting loose baskets of ibises upon them. He advanced upon the capital of Ethiopia and gave it the name of *Meroe* in

honor of his adopted mother whom he buried there. Tharbis, the daughter of the king of Ethiopia, fell in love with him, and he returned in triumph to Egypt with her as his wife.

In his earliest infancy he was reported to have refused the milk of Egyptian nurses, and, when three years old, to have trampled under his feet the crown which Pharoah had playfully placed on his head. According to the Egyptian tradition, although a priest of Heliopolis, he always performed his prayers according to the custom of his fathers, outside the walls of the city, turning his face towards the rising sun. The king was excited to hatred by his own envy, or by the priests of Egypt, who foresaw their destroyer. Various plots of assassination were contrived against him. The last was after he had already escaped across the Nile from Memphis, being warned by his brother, Aaron, he killed the assassin who pursued him.

Legends of the life of Moses, from which this story is gathered, have been preserved not only by Jews and Arabs, but by Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch, Artaphanes and Justin.

Strabo, the Greek geographer, says, "Moses was an Egyptian priest who possessed a considerable tract in Lower Egypt. Unable longer to endure what existed there, he departed into Syria and with him went out many who honored the Divine Being. For Moses maintained and taught that the Egyptians were not right in likening the nature of God to beasts and cattle, nor yet the Africans, nor even the Greeks in fashioning their gods in the form of men. He held that this only is God, that which encompasses all of us, earth and sea, that which we call

heaven, the order of the world and the nature of things. Of this being, who that had sense, would venture to invent an image like to anything that exists amongst ourselves? Far better to abandon all statuary and sculpture, all setting apart of sacred precincts and shrines, and pay reverence without any image whatever. Those who had the gift of divination were to compose themselves to sleep in the Temple, and if they had lived temperately and justly, they might expect to receive some good gift from God."

At the time of his flight from Egypt, Moses was forty years of age, in the prime of a magnificent manhood; of great personal strength and beauty, a scholar, a warrior, a polished courtier, and a fully initiated Egyptian priest. A favorite in the proudest court of the world, he was accustomed to command and was anything but a meek man. Though devoutly pious, he was rash, impetuous and violent. He looked upon the burdens of his countrymen and his hot blood rose as he saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew. He slew the offender and hid his body in the sand. He found the next day that his violent deed had been observed, his patroness was dead, and he was already an object of jealousy, so in despair he fled to the stony desert, entered the service of a chief, married his daughter, and lived the dull eventless life of a shepherd for forty years.

How galling must have been the inaction, the servile routine and homely life of the desert, to a man of his high spirit and breeding, when he looked back upon his glorious antecedents!

During the long years, how must his mighty soul have chafed against the invisible bonds which held him com-

panion to uncivilized Arabs, and servant to sheep and cattle! Yet religious faith sustained him, and in the rugged mountain Horeb, at length God revealed himself, and after enlightening Moses with regard to the nature of Deity, gave him his mission as the Deliverer of his people from their present state of cruel bondage. He immediately set out for Egypt, associated himself with Aaron, whom he met on the way, and having informed the Hebrews of his mission, boldly demanded of the king, his old companion, the privilege of leaving Egypt with his entire people. They were invaluable as laborers and the demand was promptly refused.

An extraordinary succession of terrible evils was then sent to afflict the valley of the Nile and force the Egyptians to compliance with the demand of Moses. These plagues "are such as from time to time occur in the climate of Egypt. What made them miraculous, was their extraordinary violence and that they followed each other with unwonted rapidity, at the call of Moses."<sup>1</sup> They were the effects of natural causes, exerted in an unusual manner.

The last dreadful catastrophe, the death of the heir apparent and all the first born of the Egyptians, compelled the obstinate monarch's permission, and after a residence of four hundred and fifty years in Egypt, the Hebrews who had entered that country but one family, now went forth according to Jewish history, six hundred thousand adult men who, with women, young children, the aged and a mixed multitude of disaffected persons, swelled the number perhaps to three millions. It is supposed

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<sup>1</sup> Anc. History of the East.

they crossed the Red Sea, at the narrowest point, many miles north of the present Gulf of Suez, just below "a tongue of the sea," now dried up. Here was a high sand-bar, over which a furious east wind had driven the water, leaving a causeway where the immense train crossed dry-shod. The Egyptians, repenting of their extorted consent, pursued, and while they were on the bar, a change of wind brought back the sea and vast numbers of the pursuers perished.

Rameses 3d, the reigning Pharaoh, was not destroyed, the Bible does not make the statement, and Egyptian history records his military campaigns after this event.

The date of this remarkable emigration is doubtful. German investigators believe it to have been about 1300 B.C. Dr. Milman coincides in this supposition

After crossing the Red Sea, Moses led this undisciplined mass of people directly into the stony Desert of Arabia. If they had followed the great military road to the north which would in a few weeks have brought them to the promised land, the Egyptians could easily have pursued and cut them to pieces, or barring that event, their sudden proximity to the Canaanites would have precipitated war, which must have proved disastrous to the undisciplined horde, or if they had made a peaceable alliance with these debased and abominable nations, still uninstructed in God's law, they would have plunged into the most corrupt Sabeism, then the religion of Canaan.

The Hebrews, it must be remembered, had been in a state of abject slavery for many generations, they had the servility, improvidence, cunning, cowardice and want of energy, which are the natural results of such a condition. They had but a dim perception of their relations to the

God of their fathers, they were without a code of laws or form of government except that of their oppressors. They had no military training or even warlike tastes, and were more or less tainted with the excessive idolatry of the Egyptians. The policy of Moses was to keep them isolated in the ungenial desert, where hardened by a laborious and simple life, disciplined in military experience by encounters with roving Arab tribes, instructed in religion and ethics and provided with a civil and social organization, they would be thoroughly prepared for the coming trial. The extraordinary events which had signalized his appearance among them, and the marvels of their deliverance, had given them a momentary confidence in their leader, but once away from the taskmaster, in the sterile desert, led *from* and not *toward* the land of hope, sighing for the comforts of productive Goshen, for the viands of Egypt and the filtered waters of the Nile, a murmur soon rose to rebellion. They exhibited a weakness common to human nature, that of "placing past evil and present good in a diminishing scale."

The story of the sojourn in the desert is familiar to all. The grandeur of the character of Moses culminates at this time of trial, during which his patience, firmness and governmental ability, stagger our credulity. He was prophet, ruler, arbitrator and military chief, over an unorganized, undisciplined mass of millions of recently emancipated serfs, wandering in a wild desert; a responsibility without parallel! Although he was confident of the grand result, he seems to have had light and guidance from God, only as it was necessary from day to day, a grand, overcoming faith alone sustained him.

An interesting story is told in the Koran of a heaven-

ly visitant, who came to him at this trying time, and taught him to receive without murmur the inscrutable decrees of God. Walking in lonely meditation on the sea shore, Moses met the Immortal or Perennial One and said to Him, "I shall follow thee, that thou mayest teach me that which shall be for my guidance." The Immortal One, replied, "Verily thou canst not bear with me, for wilt thou patiently suffer that which thou dost not comprehend?" "Thou wilt find me patient if God please," Moses replied, "neither will I be disobedient in anything." "If thou follow me," said the angel, "ask not concerning anything till I declare the meaning thereof."

They proceeded on their journey along the shore till they came to a vessel about to leave the port. The celestial being, unseen by any save Moses, broke through the side of this sound ship. Afterward he struck dead an innocent boy whom they met, and finally stopped to repair the wall of a city, in which they had been unjustly treated. At each transaction the impetuous Moses demanded an explanation of the seeming injustice, and is rebuked. As they return the explanation is given, "The vessel," said the Immortal One, "belongs to certain good men, and I rendered it unserviceable because there was a wicked sea king coming, who would take away every sound ship. The youth whom I slew, had he lived would have vexed his parents by ingratitude and perverseness. The wall I rebuilt in the inhospitable city, belonged to two orphan youths, and under it was hidden a treasure; their father was a righteous man, and the Lord was pleased that they should attain their full age and take forth the treasure, and I did what thou hast seen,

not by my own will, but by God's direction. This is the interpretation of that, which thou couldst not bear with patience." A lesson profitable for us, as for Moses, at this moment when the moral atmosphere is convulsed by unscrupulous mendacity and scandal, by deeds of violence and crime, so that we are tempted from the seeming injustice, the long delayed retribution, to believe that God has forgotten the world.

After Moses had been a few weeks in the wilderness, his father-in-law, Jethro, himself a believer in the true God, came to visit him. His sagacious eye perceived that his son-in-law was greatly overtaxed in the administration of affairs, and suggested that able men should be appointed to assist him. This wise and timely advice was immediately acted upon, with very happy results. "The idea is Arabian, the seventy men from the elders of the desert became the Jewish Sanhedrim, and the word almost identical with chief or sheik, has passed from Chaldee to Greek, and to the modern languages as presbyter, prester and priest."

In the third month of their journeying in the desert, they approached the imposing mountains of Sinai, "where one tall granite cliff towers upward like the huge altar of some natural temple."<sup>1</sup> They encamped at its base in anxious expectation, perhaps hoping that God would here reveal Himself. In what form would He come? Would their God resemble any of the hundreds of deified forms they had so often seen in Egypt?

The eventful day at last dawned. An awful tempest shook the mountains, there was thunder and lightning,

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<sup>1</sup> Stanley.

and more fearful than all, the tremendous voice of a trumpet. A dense cloud of smoke, mingled with fire, enveloped the summit, and a solemn voice summoned Moses, who alone went up the mountain and disappeared in the heavy cloud. Then was God revealed unto the people, not in any visible form, but by His eternal attributes. "The Lord, merciful, and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty."

His law was announced in the Decalogue or Ten Words. The first four of these commands related to religion or the obligations of man to God. They struck at the very foundation of their preconceived ideas of religious duty. They were totally opposed to all the natural religions of the world. They taught the unity of God, that he could be represented by no visible likeness, that he would punish those who were hostile to his government and would show mercy to those who loved him. His very name must be spoken with reverence. The seventh day of each week was to be observed as a day of rest and remembrance of his work of creation.

The last six laws were ethical, referring to the duty of man toward man. Respect for parents, regard for the life of others, chastity, a command not to take the property of others, a prohibition of falsehood, and of covetousness. The principles involved in these commands now form the basis of the laws of the civilized world.

What a surprise was this announcement to the anxious mass of listeners! An invisible God, a purely spiritual religion of which moral virtue was a necessary part, duty to man, only second to duty to God, and more

astonishing than all, no ceremonial! This fact increases in weight and importance as we reflect upon it. Religion is simply a condition of the soul. In the Decalogue not a rite or ceremony is suggested. In later days God reproved the Jews who were devoted to their ritual and ceremonial, saying, "I spake *not* to your fathers concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices, but this thing I commanded them, 'Obey my voice and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.'" Our Saviour simplified the entire code, putting it into one condensed sentence, "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself." "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

The civil and ceremonial law afterward elaborated for the Hebrew nation, which had been so long under Egyptian government, is in many respects similar to that in use among the Hindoos, Egyptians and Bedouins.

The sacrificial system prevalent among all nations since the days of Cain and Abel, was adopted even to the offering of human victims. Jephtha's sacrifice of his daughter was not an exceptional case as in Lev. xxvii. 28 and 29, we read, "No devoted thing \* \* \* shall be sold or redeemed, no devoted thing of *man* or beast, it shall surely be put to death," and it is added, "These are the commandments which the Lord gave Moses for the children of Israel in Sinai."

The white linen robes of the priests, the sacred tabernacle and gold and silver vessels, were like those of the Egyptians. The *Urim* and *Thummim* were evidently copied from the breast-plates of the Egyptian priests. Upon these latter were jewels and images of the sun-god Ra, and the Urei or sacred asps, the serpent emblem

on the sun's disk, also the image of Thmé, goddess of Truth or Justice. The sun in Hebrew is *aur*, truth is *thmé*. Philo, a learned Jew, says the breast plate of the priest contained images of the two virtues or powers. The Septuagint makes these singular words mean Manifestation and Truth. The cherubim of the Hebrews were winged oxen, and the seraphim winged serpents also emblems of heathendom, but with a very different application.

The travellers Lepeius and Laborde have recently discovered in the Desert of Sinai, the remains of extensive Egyptian metallurgic works, where it is probable the golden Apis of Aaron, as well as the sacred emblems and utensils of the tabernacle were manufactured.

Moses, learned in all the wisdom of the age, no doubt drew largely upon his wide stores of study and experience, readopting and remodelling old ideas for the use of the new nation, and his legislative and judicial rulings were afterward always considered authoritative and final, but in his code there are also many points of unmistakable originality which were not copied nor borrowed from any nation then existing.

The most striking of these, is its theocracy, government by the direct word of God. Other nations were under hereditary, monarchial and sacerdotal rule, but the Hebrews were to be governed by the word of God, sent through the mouth of prophets. No age, station, or even sex, was excluded from the privilege of inspiration. Any godly person might hope to become the honored medium. Miriam, Deborah and Anna, women, and Samuel and Jeremiah, children, did receive the divine afflatus. The-

ocracy lasted till the days of Saul, when unhappily the Israelites chose for themselves a human ruler.

The humanity of the new law was another peculiarity. The establishment of cities of refuge mitigated that wild spirit of revenge peculiar to rude and imperfect civilizations. Laws for the amelioration of the condition of slaves and servants, as even for the comfort of domestic animals, are noticeable in an age of almost unmitigated cruelty.

A remarkable exception to this merciful policy was made in the treatment of the Canaanitish nations. This debased, mixed population, practicing an abominable worship, were cruel, idolatrous and licentious; they had filled up the cup of iniquity, and the Hebrews, like the hordes of Alaric and Attila, scourges of God, were commissioned by the Almighty to exterminate them.

Mercy toward these reprobates was a crime, even powerless women and tender infants were not to be spared, their horses were to be mutilated, their cattle slaughtered, their cities and chariots were to be burned with fire, being, no doubt, covered after the fashion of those times, with vile emblems and insignia. But the conquest once achieved, the dangerous and corrupt inhabitants exterminated, "the Hebrews," says Milman, "were to subside to an unambitious republic with a simple religion, with equal administration of justice, with brotherly harmony and mutual good will, where industry, domestic virtue, purity of morals, gentleness of manner were to arise in the very vineyards, gardens, and corn fields which they had obtained by merciless violence."

Again, the absence of the doctrine of immortality which was taught with such minute and circumstantial detail in

the Egyptian religion, strikes us with a sad surprise. We cannot believe that Moses was not assured of immortality, but he certainly nowhere alludes to it unless in one passage in the Book of Job, the authorship of which is commonly ascribed to him: "I know that my Redeemer liveth and shall stand upon the earth in the latter days, and though after my skin, worms devour this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." There is a corresponding absence of the doctrine of future rewards and punishments. The penalties for sin are always temporal calamities, and the rewards of obedience, material blessings, children, wealth, victory, long life, plenteous harvests.

Mr. Froude suggests that perhaps the absence of this doctrine in the teachings of Moses, may have been intended to counteract the effect of its exaggerated abuse in Egyptian practice. Evils of government or social life were tolerated and lightly considered, because Osiris would right every wrong in the other world, while the cruel tyrant or immoral man, by offerings to the gods and expiatory acts of piety, could hope to keep the balance of the dreadful scales always in his favor. The Israelites were taught that they must live righteously in *this* life or punishment would be the immediate consequence.

The religion of Moses asserts its originality by its rigid monotheism and prohibition of image worship then universal, by its spirituality, its enforced purity and just ethical code, its humanizing and democratic tendency, its absence of hereditary privilege and caste. Yet with all this superiority when it is compared with the other religions of the world, we are forced to admit that it does not approach to the perfection of Christianity. "The

law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, in whom life and immortality are brought to light."

Beside the Sabbath and other minor days, Moses established three great national festivals, the Feast of Tabernacles, in memory of the life in the wilderness, the Feast of the Passover, a solemn reminiscence of the last eventful night in Egypt, and the Feast of Pentecost, celebrated at harvest time, a season of thanksgiving and joy. He added rules for the celebration of divine worship not intended for universal adoption certainly, as some of them would be impossible in a cold climate; he made important distinctions between the animals which were proper or unsuitable for food, a sanitary regulation intended for that latitude, and in some cases simply for the wilderness, as the animals mentioned were unknown in the land of Canaan.

Let such persons as would return to Ritualism and impose upon Christians the burdensome yoke of Judea and Rome, note these important facts and better comprehend what is meant by the command, "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free."

Soon after the promulgation of the law and organization of the new government, Moses sent twelve resolute men to reconnoitre in the land of Canaan. They returned laden with the rich fruits of the country, which they represented of extraordinary fertility, but said that its conquest would be impossible, as the inhabitants were warlike and of gigantic stature. The craven Israelites, alarmed by the report, revolted and begged to be led back to Egypt. Then Moses, by direction of God, declared that none of that generation, save Caleb and

Joshua, should enter the promised land, they should wander for thirty-eight years longer in the desert, till all over twenty years were dead.

And now forty years had almost expired, the faithless servile generation who had left Egypt were buried in the wilderness, and the death of the leader drew near, Moses, the adopted son of the proudest monarch of the age, the learned Egyptian priest, the writer, the law giver, the inspired prophet, the commander, the ruler, the grandest character in human history, with whom God conversed familiarly, "even as a friend converseth with a friend," Moses, not the *meekest* man, but as the word more properly signifies, *the enduring, the afflicted, the man heedless of himself*, self-deprecating always, "O Lord, I am slow of speech, how *can I* speak before Pharaoh?" His temperament appears desponding and melancholy, yet who ever had greater need of high spirits and buoyant hopes? But let us remember the balance of happiness is not determined by the adjustment of outward circumstances. The springs of joy lie deep within the soul. The worldly-wise acknowledge this truth in the proverb, "As a man thinketh, so is he." The Christian says, "Great peace have they who love thy law and nothing can offend them." Into the great heart of Moses, this principle had entered, and in the midst of crushing responsibility, care and superhuman labor, deserted by his friends, even by his wife, abused and maligned by the men to whose interest he had devoted all his energies, and for whose sake he had renounced the splendors of a royal court, doomed to die before he had tasted the fruits of success, he was patient, persistent, unselfish and happy in the peace of God, which passeth under-

standing, a joy which temporal vicissitudes "could neither give nor take away."

Moses was now one hundred and twenty years old; time and the eventful scenes of his chequered life had left his robust nature unimpaired, "his eye was not dim nor his natural force abated," he might without presumption hope to see the consummation of his labor and lead his nation into the promised land, but he had spoken rashly upon one memorable occasion and a stern decree had gone forth against him; when he prayed, "Oh Lord God, let me, I pray thee, go over and see this good land beyond Jordan!" God answered, it seems to us almost harshly, "Let it suffice thee, speak to me no more of this matter! Get thee up to the top of Pisgah and behold the land, for thou *shalt not* go over Jordan! Behold thy days approach that thou must die, call Joshua that I may give him a charge." With quiet submission Moses heard his doom, entrusted Joshua with the leadership, wrote out the words of the law, consigned them to the sacred casket, sang a beautiful prophetic song, went alone to the fatal mountain, "and died according to the word of the Lord and He buried him there and no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day."

But over his mortal remains, a mighty archangel stood guard, lest the archfiend should carry them away to the afflicted Israelites, who were as ready for his embalming and apotheosis, as were the Egyptians when mourning over the dead body of a Pharaoh. Mr. Kurtz thinks that the burial of Moses by Jehovah may imply a translation like that of Enoch and Elijah, and that Satan, "He that hath the power of death" contended for his prey.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvii.

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Jewish, Christian, and Arab tradition adds some touching incidents to the last scene. "Amid the tears of the people, the women beating their breasts, and the children giving way to uncontrolled wailing, he withdrew. At a certain point in the ascent, he made a sign to the weeping multitude to advance no further, taking with him only the elders, the high priest Eleazar and Joshua. At the top of the mountain he dismissed the elders and then as he was embracing Eleazar and Joshua, and still speaking to them, a cloud suddenly stood over him and he vanished into a deep valley."

"In one sense, the death of Moses might seem incomplete, disappointing, mournful, but in a higher sense, how fully in accordance with his whole career, how truly the crowning point of his life ; self-sacrificing, enduring, self-forgetting, always, his character receives its highest type and concentration of endurance in the last mournful scene. To labor and not see the end of our labor, to sow and not reap, to be removed from this earthly scene before our work has been appreciated and when it will only be carried on by others, is a law common to the highest character of history. But life did never to one man allow,

'Time to discover worlds and conquer too.'<sup>1</sup>

Moses died as he had lived, alone! a weeping infant, alone upon the waters of the Nile, a thoughtful student, alone in the grandeur of Rameses' court, a sad exile, alone in the land of Midian, alone in his leadership through the Wilderness, for even Aaron defected, and alone in death on the Mountain of Nebo, alone as far as

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<sup>1</sup> Bishop Stanley.

human companionship is concerned, but always then, and now forever with the Lord !

The great men of this world, those who have left their impress on the ages, and have, during milleniums, swayed the destinies of the race, have not been military geniuses, nor intellectual giants, brilliant or fascinating orators, nor even those men of extraordinary governmental abilities, which made them the monarchs of the world. The *Masters* of mankind, have been the *enunciators* of law, the sages who have renounced all mere temporal interest and have given their wealth of heart and soul to the advancement of mankind. While the empires of Nimrod and Rameses, of Alexander and Julius Cæsar, of Charles the 5th, and Napoleon, have crumbled to ashes, Confucius and Zoroaster, Gotama and Moses, Mahomet and Martin Luther, men of self-repression and self-abnegation, tower above the wrecks of time, still controlling the springs of action and every day life of millions of their species.

“These shall resist the empire of decay,  
When time is o’er and worlds have passed away,  
Cold in the dust the perished form may lie,  
But that which warmed it once can never die.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE SCANDINAVIAN RELIGION.

“Odin, all Father, terrible and severe.”

**T**URN we now from old Asia, the cradle of the human race, the homestead of nations, the laboratory of primeval art the nursery of philosophy and religion, in whose shadow history slumbers, guarded by myth and tradition, and direct our attention to another land over whose early existence the impenetrable night of oblivion forever rests. But in the obscure gloom, the archæologist gropes, and aided by the dim taper of science discovers beneath débris deposited by the surges of Time, the relics of human beings, savage and wild as the monstrous beasts with which they struggled for an uncertain supremacy. When they lived we know not, for how long we know not, but it is certain that here they roamed and fought giant animals, gathered the sparse productions of an ungenial soil, made themselves homes, loved and hated, hoped and feared, (for they were men) and here they died, leaving their bones to be petrified by the unconscious elements, to stimulate in later ages the curiosity of the antiquary. Their memory perished, their name was forgotten, “the spirit returned to God who gave it,” and the Omniscient eye alone watched through the silent hours of a long unbroken night.

Another morning dawns: in the early twilight a fierce, dark multitude are seen moving, a mighty army riding upon horses, with banner and lance, in martial array. From the far north of Asia they come, westward they press, whither their sun-god leads the way, onward they press, following the track of the serpent of the heavens. Through rifts in the morning mists, we perceive their majestic advance, their huge enginery, their gigantic structures; Karnac, with its sevenfold line of stupendous monoliths, stretching its undulations for thirteen miles, Abury in hierographic form, a blasphemous symbol, Stonehenge with shape and significance too vile to be contemplated, as at sunrise on the summer solstice, the altars reek with human gore, offered to gain from the serpent-god, fruitfulness in man and cattle and mother earth, material for war and labor and sacrifice! Listen! our hearing assists our failing vision. "*Aur-ob, Aur-ob,*" is the sound borne upon the distant breeze. The land takes a name—Land of the Solar Serpent. *Europe* receives its baptism of blood.

The Turanian wave sweeps on, westward ever, across the great ocean, perhaps over the treacherous volcanic bridge, the shattered remains of which are still to be seen, across to a new world, there to found other mighty empires, raise other gigantic temples, slaughter other human victims, and pass—we know not whither.

The Scythic wave has died away on the western shore, the European day grows brighter, the land will not long remain desolate. The fair-haired, blue-eyed sons of Gomer, peer over the Riphian Mountains, and survey the enchanting prospect which lies below. A land of hills and valleys, lakes and streams. Ripath leads the way.

The Celts, his children, were restless, inventive, eloquent, persuasive, versatile, insolent, amorous, eager for strife, infirm of purpose; characteristics still preserved in the French and Irish of our day.

Following Ripath came his brother Ashkenaz, eldest of the Gommerian family, with grander, sterner mien, slow to move, slow to love, chaste, serious, reserved, provident, persistent, gloomy, warlike, father of the grand Germanic family, destined to sway the future of the world. More powerful physically, as in moral and intellectual qualities, they pushed the Celtic tribes before them, and soon overran North Central Europe; even Gaul was finally conquered by a Germanic tribe—the Franks—who fixed its name, and Great Britain, also, became the possession of the Saxons and Normans.

Ancient Scandinavia, known at present as Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Germany, is a land of cold, cloudy skies, black, impenetrable forests, low, dangerous shores, but recently redeemed by volcanic upheaval from the domain of Old Ocean. The land with its ancient inhabitants has been so graphically portrayed by the French critic, Mr. Taine, that I cannot resist the inclination to transcribe it. “The blast of the north swirls down upon the lowland, wan and ominous, the yellow sea dashes against the narrow belt of coast, the wind howls, the seamen cry, the ships flee for refuge to the rivers, which seem as hostile as the sea. Above the mighty waste of waters, float the clouds, grey, shapeless daughters of the air, who draw up the water in their mist-buckets, carry it along laboriously, and again suffer it to fall into the sea, a sad, useless, wearisome task. Shifting sand and rocks obstruct the harbors. The first Roman

fleet, a thousand vessels, perished there, and to this day, ships sometimes wait a month before they dare to enter. Picture in this climate, amid hoarfrost and storm, in these marshes and forests, half-naked savages, Saxons, Angles, Jutes, Frisians, Goths, Huns, and Danes. Huge white bodies, fierce blue eyes, flaxen hair, ravenous stomachs, filled with meat, cheese and strong drink, these are the features the Romans describe, and these, climate and descent, has preserved till this day. They were pre-eminently adapted to seafaring life, and piracy was its most profitable form. They left the land to the care of the women, and dashed to sea in their two-sailed barks, landed everywhere, killed everything, and having sacrificed a tithe of their prisoners in honor of their gods, by the red light the conflagrations they had kindled, they went further on, to begin anew. Their sea-kings, who had never slept beneath the smoky rafters of a hut, or drained the ale horn by an inhabited hearth, laughed at the storm, and sang "The blast of the tempest aids our oars, the bellowing of heaven, the howling of the thunder hurts us not, the hurricane is our servant, and drives us whither we wish to go."—

As the young princes of this sturdy race, emerged into manhood, they were provided with a small fleet, and accompanied by their retainers, went forth to piracy and plunder. Their feats of valor were incredibly cruel but they were generous to a brave foe. A young man was considered unworthy to address a maiden till he had performed some deed of desperate bravery. Marriage was not allowed till the twenty-sixth year, and was inviolable. Their sense of honor was so rigid that a woman might lie all night upon the same couch with a man, un-

sullied in reputation, if a drawn sword was placed between them, a circumstance no doubt, often necessitated by their protracted and perilous military campaigns, which women accompanied as prophetesses, priestesses and physicians, sometimes taking part in the battles. Licentiousness was detested as enervating. The dreadful penalties of unchastity were unknown among the Scandinavian tribes, until they were introduced by the Romans, and to this fact no doubt, may be attributed the great fecundity and vigor of the race.

In such a state of society, woman was of course, respected. Her power over the men was so great, that after a terrible defeat of the Cimmeri by the Romans, the retreating army, being met by the women and reproached for the disgrace, the warriors, unable to endure the humiliation, fell furiously upon each other and completed the destruction which the Romans had begun. One hundred and twenty-five thousand men thus miserably perished.

War was both business and pastime. The government was singularly free. The king inherited his position, but his power was limited. In all important matters a general assembly was convened; the king first addressed the multitude, afterwards the great men were heard. Eloquence and persuasion were more effective in these gatherings than the influence of rank. If the assembly were displeased, there was a general murmur; applause was given by clashing of the lances. Military generals were chosen for their personal valor. Retainers rallied round the chiefs whose deeds they emulated in battle, and with whom it was their glory to die.

In a climate which roused all the energies of their

nature, they were full of poetry, piety and truth, but pitiless, reckless and desperately brave, valuing life only as an opportunity for heroic deeds, their greatest ambition was to die a violent death that they might, with their beloved chiefs, pass proudly to the halls of Odin. How unlike the apathetic Chinaman, the dreaming Hindu, the subservient Egyptian.

Some of the Vikings, or Sea Rovers, whose names and deeds are still remembered, were grand and noble men, cruel and ferocious undoubtedly, but in later times, and in a different state of society, would have been exalted and admirable characters, the benefactors of their race.

Some brave Norse sailors discovered Iceland in 860 A.D., following for a guide the flight of ravens which were thrown off from their small sailing vessels when in mid-ocean. A colony settled in that island, and sent out an exploring expedition to the south, which landed on the New England coast five hundred years before Columbus found the West Indies. The old stone mill at Newport is supposed to be a relic of the Norse voyagers.

The Icelandic colony became extinct, after an unknown period, from some unknown cause, and its memory would have perished but for the discovery in 1824 of memorial stones in Iceland, inscribed with Runic characters, which confirm the story of the settlement, as contained in two ancient documents on vellum, preserved in the library of Copenhagen.

The religious faith of the Scandinavian tribes is the subject of our special interest. Like all natural religions, its type was taken from the circumstances and character of its founders, congruous with the era and country of its

origin, and destined, as far as its errors are concerned, to die on the spot which gave it birth. It gives evidence of Aryan origin, resembling greatly that of Persia and India, preserving more of primitive revelation than the religions of the southern European nations, the descendants of Javan, or Ioun, another son of Japhet. They held the lofty idea of one supreme ruler of the universe, whom they named Esus, or Tout, and as his worshippers they were called Teutons, Teutsche and finally Dutch. The name Teut reminds us of Taut, or Thoth, the Saviour of the Egyptians, and is not the only point of resemblance between the religions of the two countries.

Drifting into pantheism, they made beneath and subordinate to the supreme God, other deities, principally impersonations of the powers of nations, fashioned after their own likeness, with the moral qualities of constancy, energy, truth, courage, valor and a cruel ferocity, which delighted in war and carnage.

Information upon this interesting subject is to be found in two ancient books, the prose and poetic Edda, a word which signifies grandmother, and also in the poems of the skalds or bards, written in an old Norse Dialect no longer spoken.

The language of the Edda is "God is the author of everything that existeth, the eternal, the ancient, the living and awful being, the searcher into concealed things, the being that never changeth, who governeth through the ages, directing all that is high or low. He lives forever, and made the heaven, the earth, the air. He made man and gave him a spirit which shall live even after the body shall have vanished. He has infinite power, boundless knowledge, and incomparable justice." Only the attribute

of love is wanting in this conception of Deity. To serve God with prayer and sacrifice, to do no wrong to others, and to be brave and intrepid, were the three fundamental doctrines. All who lived in the observance of them went, at death, to Valhalla, hall of the valiant, a land of bliss, where heroes spent their time in martial sports, being cut to pieces every day and restored every night, in order to feast upon the inexhaustible flesh of a celestial boar called Skrymner, and drink beer and mead from the skulls of the enemies slain in battle, the cups being presented to them by virgins of exceeding beauty. But the wicked went to Nifleheim, the dwelling place of Hela, or Death, a being whose looks struck terror to all beholders, whose palace was anguish, the threshold of her door precipice, her bed leanness, her table famine, the carving knife hunger, and her waiters expectation and delay." A still more dreadful place was provided for traitors and other sinners, whose character was particularly abhorrent to this chaste and truth loving race. It was Nastrond, the shore of the dead, far from the sun, the gates facing to the north, this was to endure forever. "Poison rains there through a thousand openings. There lie the carcasses of serpents, and there run fearful torrents into which perjurers and assassins are plunged."

Odin, or Woden, was principal of the subordinate deities, a name which signifies *all-father*. He was the terrible, the severe god, the father of slaughter, he who giveth victory and reviveth courage in the conflict, and nameth those who are to be slain. The warriors vowed to send the souls of such to him; if they died sword in hand he received them in Valhalla, where they were amply rewarded. His aid was always invoked in war, and he often

descended to join in the battle. Nevertheless, he was the all-father and creator, though, as in all natural religions, his worshippers had transferred to him their own ideal character. Wodensday, our Wednesday is named for him. His wife was Frigga, the goddess of love, pleasure and enjoyment. She gave name to Friday.

Besides Odin, were twelve deities called the Æsir, mostly sons and grandsons of Odin. Thor was the most valiant of these. He was the defender and the avenger of the gods: he carried a ponderous hammer, grasped with gauntlets of iron, whose force was irresistible. When hurled, it would return of itself to his hand! His girdle possessed the power of renewing his strength. Thor's name is perpetuated in Thursday.

The second son of Odin was Baldur—fair and bright,—he was wise, eloquent and amiable. Niord was third, he ruled the elements, and was invoked by seafaring people. Frey, son of Niord, presided over the climate and the material prosperity of men. Another son of Odin, by a giant mother, was Tyr,—wise, stout and bold. Another was Bragi, famed for wisdom, eloquence, and poetry. Heimdell was called the white or bright god. He was born in the beginning of time, on the boundary of earth; nine giant maidens were his mother. They were sisters, and he was nourished with the strength of the earth and the cold sea. He was the gate-keeper of the gods. Hodur was blind, but exceeding strong. Vidar was the son of Odin and the giantess Grid. His name signifies the iron shoe, and he was next in strength to Thor. Vali was stout in battle, and a great archer. Ull was a good archer, a rapid runner on snow-shoes, and the god of single combat.

Forseti, son of Baldur, was the arbiter of heaven and earth, and settled all the quarrels of gods and men. Loki was the spirit of evil, a traducer, and a scandal to gods and men, comely in aspect, but evil-minded and capricious. He was full of guile, always bringing the Æsir into trouble, and extricating them by his cunning.

By Angurboda, a giantess of Jotunheim, or the ice <sup>region</sup> ~~egion~~, Loki, the spirit of evil, had three remarkable children, the wolf Fenrir, Midgard's serpent, and Hela, the goddess of the dead. In the beginning Odin and Loki were foster-brothers, mingling their blood together. Here we have Magian Dualism, the good and evil principles coeval and coexistent.

After Frigga, wife of Odin, there was Freyia, the daughter of Niord, invoked in love matters. Idun, wife of Bragi, took charge of certain apples which renewed the youth of the gods. There were other goddesses, and numerous immortal virgins, three of whom, like the Fates of the southern nations, dispensed the days and ages of men. They were named Urd (the past), Verdandi (the present), and Skuld (the future).

The cosmogony of these races partakes of the wild character of the religion. "In the beginning," say the old Icelandic legends, "there were two worlds, Niflheim, the frozen, and Muspell, the burning. From the falling snowflakes the giant Ymir was born. There was in times of old, where Ymir dwelt, nor sand, nor sea, nor gelid wave, earth existed not, nor heaven above, 'twas a chaotic chasm, and grass nowhere. There was but Ymir, the horrible frozen ocean and his children, sprung from his feet and arm-pits, and their shapeless progeny, Terrors of the abyss, Frozen mountains, Whirlwinds of the

North, and other malevolent beings, enemies of the sun and of life. Then the cow Andhumbla, born also of melting snow, brings to light, whilst licking the hoar frost from the rocks, a man—Bur, whose grandson killed the giant Ymir. From the flesh of this giant the earth was formed ; from his bones, the hills ; the heavens from the skull of that ice-cold giant, and from his blood the sea. But of his brains the heavy clouds are all created.

“There arose war between the monsters of winter and the luminous, fertile gods,—Odin, the founder, Baldur, the mild and benevolent, Thor, the summer thunder, who purifies the air and nourishes the earth with showers.” This is apparently a myth of the Ice Age. “Long fought the gods, against the frozen Jotuns (ice giants), against the dark bestial powers, the wolf Fenrir, the great serpent, whom they drown in the sea, the treacherous Loki, whom they bind to the rocks, beneath a viper, whose venom drops continually on his face. Long will the heroes, who by a bloody death deserve to be placed in the halls of Odin, there wage a combat every day, and assist the gods in their mighty war. A day, however, will arrive, when gods and men will be conquered. Then trembles Yggdrasil’s ash yet standing, groans that ancient tree, and the Jotun Loki is loosed—the shadows groan on the ways of Hel until the fire of Surt has consumed the tree. Hrym steers from the east, the waters rise, the mundane snake is coiled in Jotun rage. The worm beats the water, the eagle screams, the pale of beak tears carcasses, the ship Naglfar is loosed. Surt comes from the south with flickering flame. Shines from his sword the valgod’s sun. The stony hills are dashed together, the giantesses totter, men tread the path of hell, and heaven is cloven. The

sun darkens, earth in ocean sinks, fall from heaven the bright stars, fire's breath assails the all-nourishing tree, and towering fire plays against the heaven itself." The same idea we find in our own scriptures: "The sun shall be darkened, the moon turned to blood, the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat."

In most heathen mythologies, we discover a reminiscence of Paradise in the united symbols of the tree and the serpent; it is not wanting here. The Scandinavians had a sacred emblem, called Yggdrasil or the Mundane Tree. It is a circular picture of great beauty and interest. In the midst stands the sacred ash, in rough water, upon which lies stretched, surrounding the tree at a distance, a huge coiled serpent, with his tail in his mouth. These figures are surrounded and covered with mystical devices, obscure and imperfectly explained. "The tree signifies human life, it is supposed; the ocean is to convey the idea that life is born of water; a swan swimming upon its surface, represents infancy; the eagle upon the branches, maturity; a hawk, perched between the eagle's eyes, internal sense; little snakes gnawing at the roots, are passions and vices; the squirrel, flattery, running between the passions and the mind; the deer denote folly, madness, terror, disquietude, they feed upon the green leaves and buds of thought. "But," says the Edda, "man often remarks not what enemies threaten his existence, and his stems rot on one side, and many a one dies before he attains wisdom; before the bird of his soul is seated amid the verdure of the Mundane tree."

These people practised divination and sorcery, by which they sought to penetrate the darkness of futurity,

particularly at the birth of children. There were two kinds of witches—the *Seid* witches could not only prophesy, but control coming events; they could prepare viands from serpents and reptiles—like the witches in Macbeth—or philters and potions to produce love or aversion, forgetfulness or wisdom. The *Galder* witches could compose runic rhymes of supernatural power, and compel the dead to speak—like the spiritists of the present day. Truly has Solomon said: “There is nothing new under the sun.” Human nature is always repeating itself; the necromancers of this century are merely practising the superstitions of their barbarian forefathers in the gloomy forests of the north. The *runes* were magical characters, written from right to left, and combined in certain ways, would work wonders.

In that wild climate, earth and air was believed to be peopled by strange fantastic beings, undines, ghouls, gnomes, elves, kobolds, pixies, nixen, killicrofts, and white ladies. The Ettrick shepherd thus introduces some of them:

“When the witches came to Lapland lone  
The Fairies were all in array,  
For all the Genii of the north  
Were keeping their holy-day.

The warlock men, the weird women,  
The fays of the wood and steep,  
The phantom hunters all were there,  
And the mermaids of the deep.”

The eldest of the Norns, a race of dwarfs, attended human beings, when dying.

Although the Scandinavians were firm believers in a resistless fatality, they supposed a man's life might be

prolonged, if another should die in his stead ; men were therefore, frequently slain, that Odin, content with a victim, might lengthen the thread of another's life. This sacrifice was often carried to a shocking extent when a king or illustrious warrior was in danger, even to the offering up of the lives of their own children. Upon the death of these eminent persons, their families and attendants, often voluntarily, were placed upon the funeral pyre, where the body was to be burned, and died, as they believed, to swell the grand pageant of their lord as it entered Odin's hall.

They had no doubts with regard to the immortality of the soul, or the certainty of future reward and punishment. Beautiful nymphs, Valkyrias, who attended the dying warriors, were supposed to question the departing soul, very much after the manner of the Persian and Egyptian reckoning, after death.

"Seola," they say "did you belong to a freeman or a slave?"

"Seola, did your master honor the gods and the priests?"

"Did he keep his pledged word?"

"Did he die like a brave man, without fear and with his face to the enemy?"

"Seola, did he ever fight against the men of his own blood and his own race?"

The soul, unable at that supreme moment to utter a falsehood, was judged according to its own words, and carried to Valhalla by the Valkyrias, or taken by Alfs, horrible fiends, to a place of punishment, graduated according to the nature of its sins.

The priests of this religion are supposed to have been

a branch of the Persian Magi. Roman writers assert that they came into Europe soon after the era of Abraham.

There was no hierarchy in Scandinavia as there was among the Celts, the sacerdotal power being confined to the offices of religion. In both nations the priests wielded a tremendous power even to the sacrificing of the king himself if it was deemed necessary to avert some impending calamity. The priestesses were more potent, if possible, than the priests, being women of wonderful strength and nerve; attending the armies, unfalteringly cutting the throats of prisoners and without trepidation drawing auguries from the appearance of their life-blood as it flowed into a brazen kettle. The priests practised great austerity of life, retiring to the recesses of groves or dark forests; in these solitary places they trained young men for life, teaching orally the doctrines and mysteries of religion and enforcing the virtues of bravery, loyalty, obedience and chastity. Without sacred writing before the time of the Edda, they had preserved by oral transmission the highest and purest doctrines of Persian Magism. They abhorred idolatry; had no images, and for a long time no temples, preferring the solemn shadows of sacred grove and gloomy forests, though in later times, probably from the necessities of climate, they built temples; some of them, particularly that at Upsal, of great magnificence, taking for models the interweaving arches of majestic trees, a style destined to be perpetuated in what is now called the Gothic. The temples were always built near a grove or some lofty tree upon which offerings were suspended after having been washed in a sacred fountain. These

offerings were at first simple fruits, but in time, goats, oxen, horses and human beings were devoted to sacrificial death. In these dreadful ceremonies, every convulsion of the dying, and variation in the appearance of the blood or vitals of the victims, were carefully observed as indications of the divine will. The altars, commonly built upon a mound or hill in the open air, were formed of three long blocks of stone, two of which were set upright, and the third was laid across the top for the victim; a hollow place received the blood which was sprinkled on the assembly with a brush.

These simple altars have been confounded with the *dracontia* of the Turanians, their predecessors in Europe, and all have been classed as Druidical remains. It is impossible to determine at this time, where the line of distinction between these relics should be drawn. Perhaps the *cromlechs* or *stone altars* were left by the serpent worshippers and appropriated by the Druids. I have never seen any account of their actual erection by Celt or Scandinavian, and the fact that under some of them enormous serpents bred, would seem to indicate that they were the remains of Turanian altars and their loathsome deities, left undisturbed by the superstitious fear of their successors.

The Romans, after the conquest, offered their gods to the north nations, but their strong natures scorned the weak voluptuaries. They bowed to the military power of Rome, but not to its immoral Pantheon. The Christian missionaries were more successful. One of the Christian bishops in passing through the streets of Rome, saw some captives standing in the court; their beautiful complexion, flaxen hair and pure blue eyes,

softened in expression by their misfortunes, arrested his attention. "Who are these men?" he earnestly asked. "Angles," was the answer. "Rather say *angels*," replied the good bishop in sudden admiration, and immediately interested himself in their conversion. Missionaries were sent out to the north, with the paraphernalia of the Romish Christian church, so calculated to please barbaric tastes, chanting the litany, holding aloft the silver crucifix and calling solemnly on Jesus and Mary.

The gospel words fell into good soil. Esus was already adored, the doctrines of immortality and salvation through sacrifice, future reward and punishment, self repression and purity were their own religion. Spiritual men were among their exalted and beloved sovereigns. It is related of Harold, first King of Norway, that when he was still young, he rose in assembly and uttered these memorable words, "I swear and protest in the most sacred manner, that I will never offer sacrifice to any of the gods adored by the people, but to Him only who has made this world and everything we behold in it."

When the Christian faith was offered to a popular assembly, A.D., 625, an old chief rose and said, "You remember oh, king, what sometimes happens when you are seated at table with your earls and thanes, a swallow flies in at the door and passing swiftly through the hall goes out again; the brief moment is pleasant to him in the kindly warmth—it is but for the twinkling of an eye, and he passes from winter to winter,—such methinks, is the life of man—it appears for a little while and vanishes; but what shall come after? what was before? If this new doctrine can teach somewhat of greater certainty, it is well that we should regard it." This advice was fol-

lowed. The new religion ran through the forests like flame through the stubble. Being filled with superstition, supernatural sights and sounds appalled their awakened souls.

Fishermen drawing in their nets, heard whispers in the breeze floating down the rivers, "Jesus, Mary." The same aerial voices were heard again and again near the largest cities softly breathing "Jesus, Mary." A Druid at the altar dropped the knife already suspended above the throat of the sacrifice, and trembling, cried out in words unknown to himself, "*Miserere mei, Jesus!*"

They embraced Christianity and never forsook it, though the superstition and customs of their forefathers retired but slowly before the new light. They had been accustomed upon grand festivals, to drink to the honor of the gods, and after their conversion they substituted the names of Christ and his apostles, for Esus and the twelve Æsir, shouting and cheering in their intoxication, greatly to the distress of the missionaries, who were powerless to prevent what seemed to them sheer blasphemy, but to the new converts, only the proper and pious course.

Specimens of the solemn and grand poetry of this transition period have been preserved. It bears the impress of both the old and new faith. The poet Adhelm sang thus: "For thee a house was built ere thou wast born, for thee a mould was shapen ere thou of thy mother camest; its height is not determined, nor its depth measured, nor is it closed till I bring thee where thou must remain, until I measure thee and the sod of the earth. The roof is built thy breast full nigh, so thou shalt in earth dwell, full cold, and dim, and dark. Doorless is

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that house and dark within. There art thou fast-detained, and death holds the key."

Under the guise of myths, stern truths were sometimes hidden, so awful and startling that we shudder as the meaning is revealed. The following is an example:

The mighty god Thor once went upon a journey, carrying with him the irresistible hammer. He wandered into the realm of a great giant, who entertained him royally. After a bountiful feast, Thor became boastful and challenged the giant to a contest. "Oh, ho!" said the giant, "thou wouldst display thy strength, mighty Thor! Thou canst not conquer the oldest of my servants." "Call in the old woman," he shouted. Thor threw a glance of lofty scorn, and was about to hurl his hammer at the giant, who had thus insulted him, when a hideous old woman sidled through the door. Her form was wasted and decrepit with age, her eyes were sunken and dim, her teeth had fallen out, her complexion was like parchment, and she shivered as the wind sifted through her scanty garments. "And is this my antagonist," exclaimed the irate war god. "Try her strength," laughed the giant. Thor threw his hammer, which glanced harmlessly from the old woman's bald skull. He then grappled her skinny form, expecting to crush it to fragments, but it resisted his power like steel; with losing strength he tried to throw her to the ground, but his utmost efforts were in vain. At last, after straining and struggling with all his power, he succeeded in lifting her once from the earth. Panting and exhausted, he leaned against the wall of the castle and gave over the contest, while the giant thundered forth, "Oh, ho! good

Thor, thou hast done better than I expected. The old woman thou hast fought is named DEATH!"

This redundancy of grim and melancholy imagery, is unequalled in any other language, the nearest approach is in an Arab couplet :—

“ The black camel named Death  
Kneeleth once at each door,  
And a mortal must mount  
To return never more ”—

and the vision of Job, where the formless image passed before his eyes, during the trance of midnight slumber, the unearthly silence, the solemn voice and the searching inquiry which caused the hair of his flesh to stand up.

In the constitutional tendency of the northern mind to solemn grandeur, were hidden the germs of genius which, in after ages developed the finest productions of our own or any literature—Shakespeare's dramas, Milton's "Paradise Lost," and still more congenial, that extraordinary allegory, Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress."

The modifying and ennobling influence of Christianity was never more apparent than in the conversion of the Scandinavian tribes; superstitious credulity was supplanted by Christian faith, piracy was changed to peaceful commerce, cruel ferocity disappeared, the exuberant energies of their large natures were redirected to beneficent and exalted purposes.

The finest literature, the most perfect governments, the largest philanthropy and best social organizations have emanated from this Christianized race, and, consequent upon these conditions, the greatest amount of human happiness.

The religion of the Edda has passed away, but the spirit of the Northmen lives, and their blood flows in *our veins*. Let us remember the proverb, "*Noblesse oblige*"—Nobility imposes obligation.

Says Mr. Wm. Blackwell, "This race, either pure, or mixed with the Celtic Roman blood, does now, and probably ever will, sway the destinies of the world. The Germans, recasting in a Teutonic mould the Hindoo and Hellenic philosophy, have arrived at the highest point of human intellectuality, and without these systems, modern civilization would be but a sensual refinement doomed to inevitable decay." The descendants of the uncouth barbarians who gazed with awe at the triumphant cohorts of Cæsar, are now the rulers of the world, the conservators of religion and progress, as they in reality have been almost ever since the Christian era.

At the close of the fourth century after Christ, Pagan Rome was mistress of the world, but becoming intoxicated with wealth and power, was given over to Atheism and every vicious and criminal abomination. Upon the immoral nations the hottest bolts of God's wrath have ever fallen. More grovelling than the brutes, more wicked than the fiends, she madly filled to overflowing the cup she was soon to drink. Then came Alaric, the scourge of God, with his irresistible Visigoths, and imperial Rome was swallowed up in a deluge of blood and flame—

"Across the everlasting Alps  
I poured the torrent of my powers,  
And feeble Cæsars shrieked for help  
In vain, within their seven-walled towers,—  
I quenched in blood the brightest gem  
That glittered in their diadem ;

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And struck a deeper, darker dye  
In the purple of their majesty.”<sup>1</sup>

Later came the fanatic Musselmen with torch and sword, sweeping the civilized countries of the world with the Saracenic besom of destruction. Christian Europe seemed lost, but lo! Charles Martel, a Frankish duke, holds up the rod of power, and the Mahommedan aggressor hears his doom: “Thus far shalt thou go and no farther, and here shall thy proud armies be stayed.”

The political despotism of old Rome was broken, but it was succeeded by that of Papal Rome. By ambitious and unscrupulous priest-craft, she enslaved the souls of her subjects, producing a moral eclipse throughout the world. Men groped in the gloomy realms of superstition and idolatry, through a thousand years of intellectual and religious darkness. The stifled cry of despair went up from the heart of oppressed humanity, and the Almighty Father again selected from the same nation the instruments of vengeance and deliverance.

Not now proud Alaric, with mace and battle axe, with fire and fury, bringing carnage and conflagration, but a thousand years after his body had been laid to rest beneath the bed of the mountain stream, Martin Luther, equally brave and resolute, armed with “the sword of the spirit, the word of God,” assaulted the powers of superstition and won the battle of freedom for all future time. The seed of religious liberty, although buried deep in the German soil, was warmed to life by the fervor of the great reformer, and shooting rapidly upward in that genial atmosphere became the noble tree “whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.”

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<sup>1</sup> Edward Everett.

This representative man may be considered as the ideal of Christianized Teutonic Force. When warned not to appear at the city of Worms, where he was to be tried for heresy, his fiery soul poured out sublime defiance. "I will go," said he, "if there are as many devils there as tiles on the roofs of the houses." "The Diet of Worms, where Luther was confronted by the emperor Charles the Fifth and the German princes, was the most remarkable assembly ever convened on earth,—an empire against a man. There he stood so lone and strong, with his great fire-heart, a new Prometheus confronting the Jove of the sixteenth century and the German Olympus—"Here I stand. I cannot otherwise. God help me! Amen!"<sup>1</sup> His eloquence was so overpowering that Melancthon said of him: "His words were thunderbolts." Another contemporary said: "He was a man to stop the wrath of God." "His thoughts had not only wings but hands. He was not only the tongue, but the sword of his time. He was full of the most awful reverence and of self-sacrifice in honor of the Holy Spirit. He had something original, incomprehensible, miraculous, invincible, such as we find in all providential men."<sup>2</sup>

Any one who has read the "History of the Reformation" and the "Thirty Years' War," who has held his very breath from intense interest as he watched the struggle of infernal bigotry with the heavenly spirit of freedom, who has traced the slow progress of humanity toward religious liberty, through seas of blood, must, I am sure, adore the transcendent wisdom of Divine Providence who created and disciplined a race for this great

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<sup>1</sup> Hedge's Prose Writers.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Heine.

purpose—a race endowed with such tremendous will, such disregard of self, such indomitable courage, persistence, such enthusiastic obstinacy!

And again religious despotism rears its standard, blazoned with the symbol of Christianity: even now it essays to crush out religious freedom and would doom men to another age of ignorance and priestcraft, and again Germania buckles on her armor and straightens her sinews to do battle with the prince of the power of the air. God defend the right. Amen!

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE RELIGION OF GREECE AND ROME— ANTHROPOMORPHISM.

“The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men.”

IN Southern Europe, as in other portions of the world, Cyclopiian ruins of massive stone masonry, aqueducts, viaducts, huge fortifications, temples, and dracontia attest the fact of occupation by a prehistoric race. The Etrusci, a people who had long been established in Northern Italy when Rome was founded 750, B. C., may have been the remnants of this race. Their fair complexion and blue eyes led to the supposition that they were a family of Celts, but there are strong indications that here, as elsewhere, the great pioneer Turan held sway. Like the pre-Aryan tribes in Asia and Central Europe, they possessed a remarkable civilization, ruins of their extensive public works exhibit characteristics of Turanian architecture and engineering. They had sacred books said to have been given by one Tages, who appeared as a boy with the wisdom of an old man, like the Tao of China, and more significant than all, they called a very ancient deity Ogmius.

Though according to tradition, at a later day colonists from Egypt, Phœnecia and Thrace settled in these peninsulas, they have been during historic times in possession of Aryan tribes, the Pelasgi and Hellenes, children of Javan or Ioun, son of Japhet.

These countries are the product of the last of twelve

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great volcanic upheavals by which the continent of Europe was formed. In the midst of a great inland ocean, of which the water is exceptionally salt and the evaporation so tremendous, that currents from the Atlantic and the Black Sea constantly flow into it, visited by warm south wind from the African desert, rarely bringing rain, but a moist and healthful vapor gathered during its passage across the great sea, with diversified scenery, fertile soil and extended coast line, these highly favored lands combine every condition bountiful nature can bestow, for the health, wealth, and progressive development of the human race. Under soft and genial but not enervating skies, delicious fruits are ripened, redundant harvests are gathered, and numerous flocks and herds sustained. The summer sun never scorches, the winter wind does not chill. The poets sang "The Greeks ever delicately march through pellucid air." There was no interruption to out-door occupation, no tedious and hampering preparation for changes of season, here every intellectual and æsthetic quality of the human soul expanded, all that was grand, profound or beautiful in architecture, sculpture, painting, poetry, philosophy or oratory flourished and was perfected. The owners of this happy land were gifted with great personal beauty, a magnificent physique, a remarkable tendency to longevity, an eminently martial spirit, energy, courage and firmness, all the requisites necessary to make them the conquerors and civilizers of the world, and such in fact, for ages, were the Greek and Roman nations. Their language, rich, elegant and adapted to every variety of expression, was only second to the Sanscrita, "the language of the gods, that which is perfect in itself." Though the

Greeks were inclined to piracy and the Romans to brigandage, under the favoring auspices before mentioned, the colonists rapidly increased, built large cities and founded governments fair and free like those of their Asiatic ancestors.

Their morning is enveloped in the haze of mythology. Then lived Homer and Hesiod, Danaus and Egyptus, Cecrops brought art and civilization from old Egypt. The Argonauts sailed in search of the golden fleece, the peerless Helen eloped with her enamored Paris, and thus became the occasion of the Trojan war, inspired the muse of Homer and Virgil, and was the subject of song and story without end. This was the age of Bellerophon and the Chimera, the Cyclops, the Centaurs and Harpies, the Syrens and Gorgons, the Lotos Eaters whose insane appetite overpowered all memory of friends and home. Then the twin boys, who were to found Rome, were nourished by a wolf, the Sybil offered her precious books, the mysterious Egeria revealed law and religion to Numa, the triplet Horatii and Curatii fought the five-fold fatal duel and Curtius Marcus leaped into the yawning gulf to save beloved Rome!

Gladly would we linger in this enchanted region of myth and story, where airy Zephyrus laden with odorous May blossoms and bearing the songs of birds and shepherds, breathes into our common-place and care-worn lives, a reminiscence of the thrill and glow which is experienced but once during mortal existence, in the fleeting hour of youth's first romance

But the religions of the ancient Greeks and Romans claim one present thought. In those we have previously

investigated, there has been found a strong tendency to the worship of the heavenly bodies and the forces of nature; they were founded upon fear and superstition, overshadowed with gloom and celebrated with cruel and sometimes obscene rites, though often made tolerable by lofty morals and philosophy.

In the beautiful clime of the Northern Mediterranean countries, although religion retained many of its Asiatic characteristics, a more cheerful view of life and duty prevailed. It was believed that the earth was an extended plain, in the centre of which rose Mount Olympus, the abode of the gods. In the far north and south were the Hyperboreans and Ethiopians, people happy and virtuous, exempt from disease, old age, toil and care. In the far west were the Elysian Plains and the Isles of the Blessed, where the beloved of the gods resided after death. Beneath the crater of an extinct volcano was Lake Avernus, and in a gloomy cavern upon its banks sit Grief and Care, Disease, Age, Hunger, Fear, Toil, Poverty and Death. Monsters fill up the dreadful group, the Furies, Discord, Hydras, Chimeras and hundred armed giants. A dark river, the Styx, flowed from this cavern to the infernal regions, and upon its cold waters an aged ferryman, Charon, plied his boat freighted with the souls of the wicked, who were to be punished till sin was purged away and the remembrance of their former life lost. If too wicked to be purified in this way, they were doomed to pass into the bodies of reptiles or animals, the Hindoo metempsychosis, till at the last rest would be found in the Elysian Fields.

The nations who held these ideas, worshipped deities made after their own image, immortal men and women

larger, stronger and more beautiful, but with wants, weaknesses and passions like their own. They ate, drank, slept, made love and war, cheated and circumvented each other even more than their worshippers, who excused their misconduct upon the plea that they must not be judged by the rules which regulate human society.

Saturn and Rhea, the oldest of the gods, were Titans, the offspring of heaven and earth which were formed from Chaos. Saturn, whose synonym, Chronos, means Time, devoured his children, but one of them, Jupiter or Zeus, married Metis (Prudence), who mixed a draught which caused Saturn to disgorge his prey. They then conspired and dethroned their father, dividing his realm among themselves. Jupiter reigned in heaven, Neptune in the sea, Pluto in the region of the dead; Juno was the wife of Jupiter and the queen of heaven; Iris, the rainbow, attended her. Vulcan, their son, was a wonderful blacksmith and forger; being born lame, his mortified mother threw him out of heaven, or his father kicked him out during a conjugal quarrel. Mars the god of war, was a brother of Vulcan.

Phœbus Apollo was the Sun god Diana, his sister, goddess of the Moon and Chastity.

Venus, goddess of love and beauty, sprung from the foam of the sea. Floating to the island of Cyprus, she was brought up by the Seasons and presented to the Olympic court. She owned the Cestus, an embroidered girdle which had the power of inspiring love. Swans, doves, roses and myrtles were sacred to her. She was married to Vulcan, the ill-favored and lame god.

Cupid or Eros, the son of Venus, was the god of

love, whose magic bow shot the arrows of desire into the hearts of gods and men.

Minerva, sometimes called Pallas or Athene, came from the head of her father fully armed. She was the goddess of wisdom ; the owl and olive were sacred to her.

Mercury was the messenger of the gods, the patron of skill and dexterity, even in the commission of crime. He had a cap and shoes with wings, and bought from Apollo the Caduceus, a walking stick entwined with two winged serpents, giving him in exchange a lyre which he had invented. In this myth we perceive the union of Sun and Serpent worship. Apollo being the sun, and the walking stick being the Phallus with winged snakes.

Ceres presided over agriculture, and was mother of Proserpine, goddess of the dead.

Bacchus was the promoter of law, peace and social enjoyment and the god of wine.

Hymen was god of marriage, son of Venus and Bacchus or, according to others, of Apollo and one of the Muses, a myth which significantly classifies marriage.

The Muses were nine, the daughters of Jupiter and Mnemosyne or Memory—Calliope presided over epic poetry ; Clio, history ; Euterpe, lyric poetry ; Melpomene, tragedy ; Terpsichore, dancing ; Erato, love poetry ; Polyhymnia, sacred poetry ; Urania, astronomy, and Thalia, comedy.

The Graces patronized social pleasure and art. They were Euphrosyne, Aglai, and Thalia.

The Fates were Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos, they spun the thread of human life and cut it at will with their shears.

The three Furies punished by secret stings and whips those criminals who escaped human justice. They were named Alecto, Tisiphone, and Megæra. Nemesis, the relentless, was the goddess of vengeance. Pan was the god of shepherds, the lover of rural retreats. The Satyrs were subordinate deities with bristly hair, horns and feet like goats. They lived in forests and fields. Momus was the god of merriment—Plutus of gold. The gods of the Romans were almost identical with those of the Greeks, with a difference often in name, sterner and more dignified, modelled after the Roman type of character. Quirinus was a war god, said to be the apotheosized Romulus. Belladonna, a war goddess; Terminus the god of land marks; Pales presided over gardens and pastures; Pomona over fruit trees; Lucina over child-birth. Vesta presided over the public and private hearth; six virgins tended the fire on her altars, which was kindled from the rays of the sun.

Janus was the porter of heaven. He is represented as two-faced, looking both ways. His temples were always open in time of war.

The Penates were household deities. The pantry was sacred to them. The Lares were the deified souls of ancestors who watched over the family prosperity.<sup>1</sup>

These deities did not command very much love or respect, in fact they were really unfit for respectable society. They sometimes visited the earth, grand and beautiful in form, occasionally bringing blessings to mankind, but oftener mingling in human affairs to their great disadvantage.

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<sup>1</sup> Summary of deities as found in Bullfinch's "Age of Fable."

Being powerful and irresponsible, they must be propitiated, and were accordingly worshipped with gorgeous pageants and other rites conducted in the open air of that delicious climate, or under the wide and lofty porticoes of magnificent temples. In the enclosed portion or *adytum* of these edifices, sculptured images of the gods were elegantly enshrined.

Upon these occasions, elected priests offered sacrifices of fruit, flowers, fragrant gums and libations, animals, and, more rarely, a beautiful youth or maiden. Prayer accompanied the sacrifice, and was almost universally offered morning and evening. The Spartan form was laconic, "May the gods grant whatever is honorable and good for us, and enable us to endure misfortune." The infernal deities were invoked with awful imprecations.

The Olympiads were general conventions held every fourth year, not unlike, but more comprehensive than our agricultural fairs.

During their celebration, four great religious festivals were observed, called the Olympic, the Pythean, the Nemean and the Isthmian. Another important festival was held every fifth year in honor of Minerva, the goddess of wisdom. Upon these joyous occasions, the people universally abandoned themselves to pleasure. Games and contests took place, horse, foot, and chariot races, athletes, poets, musicians, historians and philosophers strove for the simple chaplet of bay-leaves which conferred immortal fame.

Cavalcades of horsemen, gay processions, dancing, music and recitations, added to the interest of the entertainment.

The gods gave no written law or sacred books to

their worshippers, but sometimes revealed their will through oracles.

The most famous was that at Delphi, where a temple was erected over a fissure in a rock, whence issued mephitic gases. A priestess, called a Pythoness, inhaled this gas, and falling into a delirious state, uttered wild ravings, which the priests interpreted for the benefit of the inquirers. The oracle was generally vague and capable of various interpretations and much imposture was undoubtedly practised, but after all due allowance is made, the answers were often inexplicable. Some investigators believe that a clairvoyant condition was induced by the inhalation of the gas, and others that an evil spirit actually communicated with the priestess of the serpent deity Python.

Divination and magic were also practiced, a superstition inseparable from Paganism. A more exalted and spiritual faith was called "The Mysteries." They were of Egyptian origin, and were celebrated in a secret manner. Those dedicated to Ceres and solemnized at Eleusis, had reference to the expiation of sin and a future life. They were never made the subject of jest even by the most skeptical satirists. Those initiated, exhibited great calmness in the presence of danger and of death. During the midnight initiatory rites, thunders shook the temple, flashes of lightning revealed apparitions, the adytum blazed with light, the image of the goddess appeared in glory, and apparently supernatural pageants passed before the sight.

It seems that both Egyptians and Greeks understood the art of producing what is called in modern theatrical parlance, "transformation scenes."

One hymn to Jupiter, used upon these solemn occasions, has been preserved. It closes thus: "Oh, great Jupiter! giver of all good, that dwellest with the lightnings in the clouds of heaven, save mankind from dreadful errors, remove all shadows from our minds and enable us to understand thy pure and righteous law. Thus honored with knowledge of thee, we shall be fitted to return the gift in praises of thy mighty works, and neither mortal or immortal beings can be more blest than in praising thine immutable and universal law with everlasting hymns."

The poet Æschylus has a remarkable prayer in one of his poems beginning, "Oh Thou who reignest supreme above, whatever name thou deignest to bear, unblamed may I address thee, Jove."

The Mysteries of Bacchus were of a low and sensual character.

The principal religious festival of the Romans was the Saturnalia; during its celebration, distinctions of rank were abolished, business, war and executions were suspended, and the whole people given over to feasting and enjoyment. The pageants, fêtes, circuses, games and gladiatorial shows of the Romans were on a grander scale than those of Greece, and accompanied by brutal exhibitions, fights between men, between brutes, and between men and beasts, demoralizing entertainments which destroyed all the gentler sentiments of the human heart and produced a distaste for intellectual enjoyment or social pleasure, gradually transforming the most cultivated spectators into ruffians. In these brutalizing scenes, even the women joined, and were sometimes seen to give the death signal against the exhausted, sur-

viving combatant, by turning down their thumbs. Alas, a nation is doomed when its women lose their humanity.

The Romans were very liberal in their religious views, readily adopting the gods of the nations they conquered and allowing the fullest liberty to their worshippers when in Rome. The exceptional persecution of the Christians will be considered hereafter. The religion of both nations was mainly free and attractive, with little restraint and imposition, and to this cause may be attributed the intellectual elasticity perceptible in the people.

Mr. J. F. Clark says : " In that garden of the world ripened the master-pieces of epic, tragic, comic, lyric, and didactic poetry, the master-pieces of every school of philosophic investigation, of history, oratory and mathematics, the master-pieces of architecture, sculpture, and painting. Greece developed every form of human government, and in Greece were fought and won the great battles of the world."

This estimate is somewhat sweeping as far as art and philosophy are concerned, but the last assertion of the panegyrist is open to graver doubt. The most tremendous struggle of humanity for freedom of thought, the sharpest battle with tyranny and superstition which history records, took place in the sixteenth century, not in Greece, but in Holland, and was fought out to the glorious end, not by the gay Hellenic tribes, but by gloomy ponderous Teutons. Greek bravery, Roman firmness, and an awful devotion to principle, which towers far above either, appear in the men who won that stupendous victory at the cost of the lives of a whole generation !

In the early ages of Greece and Rome, virtue was honored. Polygamy was discountenanced, even prohibit-

ed by law in Rome. Women as priestesses, shared the highest dignities with men—a position which they lost when society became corrupt. In the decadence of these nations personal morality was almost unknown—a condition which is the sure presage of destruction.

In the anthropomorphism of these nations, in the unstable and immoral character of their deities there was no element of permanence such as is found in monotheistic religions. The antinomies so apparent in human life, and the moral government of the world, antagonisms which modern materialists ignore in their excessive zeal to establish the laws of physics, the ancient philosophers explained by the existence of a principle called Fate or Destiny—to this the gods themselves were subject—and before it they were powerless, an idea which tinged with hopeless gloom the substratum of Greek thought. Fate was an excuse for the most unnatural crimes, but gave the offender no exemption from punishment. The whips and strings of the Furies, or the avenging Nemesis, punished the crime for which Destiny alone was responsible.

Among people so intelligent were many men unsatisfied with the popular faith and disgusted by the puerility and immorality of the gods. The great enigmas, physical law, the origin of the universe, the conflict of good and evil, moral government of the world, and the mysterious connection of the soul and body, occupied their profoundest thought. It will be interesting to review the results, for we shall rejoice to find much of God's eternal truth in these speculations and discover that the revelation of his law is not confined to the Hebrew nation.

Orpheus, as was believed, brought from Thrace not only a knowledge of the Egyptian Mysteries, but the

doctrines of the immortality of the soul and of future reward and punishment. A maxim attributed to him thus describes the Deity: "There is One Unknown Being prior to and exalted above all others. He is the author of all things, the ethereal sphere and all belonging to it. He is Life, Counsel and Light, which three names all signify One Power, the same which drew all things visible and invisible out of nothing. We will sing that eternal, all-wise, all-perfect Love which reduced the Chaos into Order." This is not unlike the expression of St. John, 1st chap.: "In the beginning was the Word (Love) and the Word was with God and the Word was God. All things were made by Him and without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was Life and the Life was the Light of men."

Thales who lived 600 B. C. (one of the seven wise men) declared: "The most ancient of all things is God for He is uncreated." One of his proverbs is: "Be careful not to do that yourself which you would blame in another."

Pittacus, another wise man, said: "Do not that to your neighbor which you would take ill from him."

"Speak evil of none, not even of your enemies."

Pythagoras, 500 B.C., a man of great learning, purity of doctrine and of life, called himself, not a wise man, but a philosopher, a lover of wisdom "because," said he "none is wise but God." He believed, like the ancient Hindoos, that "there is one universal soul diffused through all things eternal, invisible, unchangeable in essence-like truth, in substance-like Light, not to be represented by any image, to be comprehended only by mind, not exterior to the world, but in himself entire, pervading the universal sphere. From this being eman-

ated all things and to the immortal source they finally return."

Xenophanus declared that "God is one eternal Almighty perfect being, living in eternity and existing in time." Empedocles that "God is an Almighty Being, related to the world as Love is to Discord. Evil is that which is out of harmony with Him."

Anaxagoras believed that "God is a Divine Mind, personal and distinct from matter which he controls by his power." Exposing the frauds of the priests, he was condemned to death. When informed of his condemnation he quietly remarked "That sentence was passed upon me when I was born."

Socrates, the greatest of Greek philosophers and moralists, possessed an extraordinary knowledge of truth, and conscientiously practised his own doctrines through a long life of self-subjection. Though his face was ugly and figure awkward, his great self-control, disinterestedness, voluntary poverty, his learning, affability, winning voice and fascinating conversation, attracted a host of friends and admirers. He devoted his life to reforming and elevating the youth of Athens. He did not deny the popular deities, but taught that there is One Supreme Being who is manifested in the works of creation and providence. Unlike the pseudo philosophers of the present day, he declared that "only a madman would impute success in life solely to human prudence." "The Deity sees and hears all things, is everywhere present, and takes care of all things. If men believed this they would abstain from bad actions, even in private." Socrates taught that the soul is immortal, because allied to the Divine Being by a similarity of nature, but not as eman-

ating from Him. Conscience is the true interpreter of the Divine will. He denounced the practice of swearing by the gods, and offered his disciples this form of prayer : " Father Jupiter, give us all good, whether we ask it or not ; avert from us all evil, although we do not pray Thee to do so ; bless our good actions and reward them with success and happiness."

His fearless reproof of vice and caustic exposure of fraud, the more dreaded on account of his great popularity, gained him enemies, who charged him with dishonoring the gods and corrupting the youth of Athens. He was now seventy years of age. The old story, then, as at the present time, was repeated. Successful virtue excited fear and envy in base natures, and persecution was the inevitable consequence. Socrates the pure, the patient and unselfish, the educator of the young and benefactor of society, was condemned to death by drinking poison. He spent his last days calmly discoursing with his friends upon the duty of obedience to the laws and upon the doctrine of immortality, closing with this remark as the fatal moment approached : " It is now time that we depart. I to die, you to live, but which is the better destiny is known only to the gods."

Thus tranquilly passed to his reward " the man," says Plato " who was in death the noblest and in life the wisest and most just."

This famous disciple of Socrates was more metaphysical than his master. Plato was in some respects a transcendentalist, arguing that love may be divested of passion and desire—a beautiful theory which has always failed in practice. With a clearer insight into truth, he asserted " it is hard to find the Maker and Father

of all, the best word to express his nature is goodness,"—the same which we now use in its abbreviated form, God.

Aristotle, a pupil of Plato, taught that God is supreme, but not that he is personal, or that the soul will have a future individuality. He adopted the philosophy of the Sankhya—the eternity of soul and atoms, emanation and absorption,—a dismal, dangerous belief which divests man of responsibility, robs him of the glorious hope of immortality, and reduces moral law to a temporary expedient, a conventional arrangement instituted simply for the convenience of society.

Zeno, father of the Stoics, who lived B.C. 300, believed the world and God himself to be "under the dominion of a supreme Law or Destiny. The existence of matter is as a moment in that of Deity. The earth will be burned and re-created, and the soul being mere warm breath will not endure till the general conflagration, unless its energy, strengthened by virtue, is unusually great." His doctrines are a reproduction of Hindoo ideas. "We must despise all our propensities and passions, then we shall be free, virtuous and intelligent."

"Live according to reason; in harmony with nature."

"Man must train himself to receive tranquilly the shocks of destiny and live above pain and passion."

"He must never relent or forgive."

One of his maxims to which we can all assent, is, "Sticks can only be straight or crooked, and very few sticks are absolutely straight."

When Zeno was nearly one hundred years old he fell and broke a finger; and taking this misfortune to be a sign that he had lived long enough, forgot his philosophy and committed suicide by strangling himself.

Some of the loveliest characters of antiquity were disciples of Zeno.

Of Marcus Aurelius, Emperor of Rome, at the height of its grandeur and power, it is said: "He was the most consummate production of ancient philosophy."<sup>1</sup> "The best and dearest of the line."<sup>2</sup> "Great in war, greater in peace, he was one of the ornaments of humanity,"<sup>3</sup> "as nearly a perfectly virtuous man as has ever appeared upon ~~one~~ <sup>our</sup> world." Tried by the checkered events of a reign of nineteen years, presiding over a society profoundly corrupt, over a city notorious for its license, the perfection of his character awed even calumny into silence, and the spontaneous sentiment of his people proclaimed him a god rather than a man. Very few men have ever lived, concerning whose inner life we can speak so confidently. His Meditations form one of the truest and most impressive books in religious literature."<sup>4</sup> "A golden book, though there are many things in it, which cannot be read without the deepest sympathy, for there we find this purest of men without happiness."<sup>5</sup> He scorned the seductions of wealth and power. His conscientious performance of the distasteful duties of a military leader, his searching self-examination, the severity with which he condemned himself, his tenderness toward others, even the vicious, excite our surprise and admiration, while his great trials, the vice, immorality and crime in his empire which he was powerless to prevent and which he knew were the precursors of its destruction, the infidelity of his wife, the depravity of his son, and many minor calamities which darkened his last days, fill us with profound and melancholy sympathy. We bow,

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<sup>1</sup> Merivale. <sup>2</sup> Smith. <sup>3</sup> Dr. John Lord. <sup>4</sup> Lecky. <sup>5</sup> Niebuhr.

not before the imperial crown and purple of Rome, but to the majesty of Stoic virtue, which may well bring the blush of shame to the cheek of many a professing Christian!

It seems almost inexplicable that the Christians should have been persecuted in Rome even during the reign of this humane monarch, but various reasons operated to blind the eyes of the emperor to the merits and beauty of doctrines which were so greatly in harmony with his own spiritual life. The policy of the Roman government had always been protective to the religious faith and practice of the conquered nations—their gods were more honored at Rome than in their original home, but anything that savored of heresy or rebellion was contrary to the principles of state, and was vigorously suppressed as incendiary and dangerous. The new religion was considered as a Jewish heresy, and more than this simple fact, it was of all others the most democratic and levelling in its doctrines, antagonistic to the despotism of the rulers, who were sagacious enough to perceive that its universal propagation would endanger *the supremacy of imperial Rome*, the one idea of Italian Government in the past, as also at the present time. In addition to these reasons was the fact that the idle, embruted, demoralized populace of Rome must be entertained. Every form of cruel exhibition had become exhausted. “The Christians to the lions” was a novel cry, their calm triumph over death in the amphitheatre, a new sensation. The increasing taste for blood was thus conveniently gratified, the persecutions were popular, the immense amphitheatres were thronged, hundreds of thousands of citizens and strangers rushed to witness the death of heroic men and

beautiful women, torn to pieces by wild beasts "to grace a Roman holiday."

The hour of doom hastened. All the advantages of climate, of physical perfection in the race, enormous wealth and power, universal dominion, a firmly established government, perfected civilization, art and philosophy, availed not to save from the dissolution inevitable to moral corruption. Rome, haughty, and as she fondly believed, invincible, though glittering with wealth and power, and guarded by veteran legions, fell before the ravages of half-armed, half-clad barbarians. Christianity came too late; while it was pure the lowly alone accepted it, after the conversion of Constantine, it became corrupt and lost its vitality. Roman paganism and Jewish rites were engrafted upon the original stock, encumbered thus it failed, and till it can be divested of these clogs, it will never put forth its inherent strength.

The crowded pantheon of Greece and Rome fell by its own weight, "a belief in no God, is a necessary consequence of an unlimited multiplicity of deities." The old religion was moribund in the reign of Constantine, the very language of old Rome was soon after lost or absorbed into that of its barbarian conquerers. Philosophy had six hundred years before established its seat at Alexandria in Egypt, all the learning in the world was there concentrated, the conceited Jew, the dreamy Hindoo, the subtile Greek, and the serious Magian, met in its magnificent schools and freely discussed their various beliefs and theories, but their combined wisdom failed to sustain suffering virtue, or the anxious soul in its endeavor to solve the great problems of life, death and eternity. "Under the shadow of the Pyramids, Greek philosophy was born, and after many

wanderings for a thousand years around the shores of the Mediterranean, it came back to its native place, and under the shadow of the Pyramids it died.”<sup>1</sup>

It died ; but Christianity received from its parting breath all that was worth preserving for the advancement of the human race. Nations may perish, the wisest political organizations fail, religions and philosophies pass away, but TRUTH is indestructible, it will live forever.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Draper.

## CHAPTER XV.

### MAHOMET AND HIS RELIGION.

“ La Ilah Illa Allah.”

WONDERFUL ruins in the peninsula of Arabia render it a spot of transcendent interest to the student of natiqity. Mounds of dust and ashes lying upon the deserted plains, and remains of serpent structures, mark the site of great cities, dwelling places of a people whose very memory is lost in the vanishing perspective of past ages. Vague Sanscrit and Egyptian myths, indicate that at an exceedingly remote period, perhaps more than ten thousand years ago, this peninsula was the seat of a mighty empire, which dispensed from its great centres, an astonishing civilization and wealth to Indian, Chaldean and Egyptian colonies. The oldest Greek writers speak of the spices, perfumes, gold, silver, rich cloths, magnificent buildings, and untold wealth of this treasury of the world.

The name given to this great empire may afford us a possibility of conjecture. In Sanscrit legends it is called *Cusha-dwipa*, the country of the Cushites, in Greek it is *Ethiopia* or *Arabia*, words which may mean *nations of Ob* or *land of Ob*. Again the philological lamp flashes its light across the folds of the great serpent.

Later in the world's morning here reigned the giants, Og, King of Bashan, and Og, King of the Amorites, remnants, perhaps, of former majesty. The ruins of their cities still fill the traveller with awe. They are hewn from the black basalt rocks, gigantic tenements gloomy as

grand, where stone doors still hang upon stone hinges, defying the strength of modern arms to move them. This is the land spoken of by the prophet Jeremiah, "I have sworn saith the Lord, that Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; all the cities shall be perpetual wastes. Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thy heart. Oh! thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rocks, that holdest the heights of the hill; though thou shouldst make thy nest on high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord. Edom shall be a desolation, every one that goeth by it shall be astonished." Thus said the ancient prophet, while the modern poet sings:

"Where arose in marble grandeur,  
The walled cities of the past,  
Solemn wailing winds now wander,  
O'er a ruined huddled waste,  
Riven is the palace splendid,  
And the owl in silence wings  
Over floors, where slave attended,  
Paced the sandalled feet of kings."

In the stony desert of Arabia are the ruins of metallurgic works, where the ancient Egyptians manufactured idols and ornaments, here the Hebrew nation was organized by Moses, and the immortal code of divine law was promulgated.

To this storied land, long centuries before the Exodus, came the Egyptian Hagar and her boy Ishmael, when the command was given, "Cast out the bondwoman and her child." Here the kingdom of Hedjaz flourished, to which the fainting Hagar fled, sustained by God's promise, "Twelve princes shall Ishmael beget, and I will make him

a great nation." The son of Abraham married the daughter of King Modad, and their twelve sons, increased in time to twelve tribes, subjugated the native race, and became the ruling power. The prophecy that "Ishmael should be a wild man, whose hand should be against every man, and every man's hand against him," is also fulfilled by the character and habits of the Arabs to this day.

Some of the early tribes lived in cities built in the rich, warm valleys of Arabia Felix, others led a pastoral, nomadic life. Such Bedouins were Job, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Lot. Others conducted caravans across the desert, from the great seas upon the borders of their country to the inland cities. Collisions between these rovers resulted in constant warfare. Revenge for deeds of blood was a sacred duty, tempered in practice by the rules of hospitality, which made a man's dwelling a safe place even for his deadliest foe.

The Arab was physically adapted to his mode of life, active, meagre, sinewy, his mind sagacious and brilliant, though not profound, his speech passionate and eloquent, his habits simple, temperate and hardy.

The Theism taught by Ishmael became in time mixed with Persian and Chaldean ideas; star worship and magic, the sacrifice of infants and even men, was introduced with other vile rites of Sabaeism. After the Christian Era, to these gross corruptions were added the most perverted ideas of Judaism and Christianity, many Christian monks having been driven, by theological distractions, to the deserts of Syria and Arabia.

It was at this crisis when the Arab tribes were degraded and disintegrated, that among them was born one of the mighty men of the earth, one of those giants of

intellect, genius, and tact, who was destined to revolutionize the eastern world, and upon whose teachings nine hundred millions of human beings have rested their hopes of salvation !

Mahomet the Great, was born at Mecca, one of the inland cities of Arabia, 570, A.D. Prodigies, it is said, attended his birth. The fire in the Magian temples was suddenly extinguished without apparent cause, the palace of the King of Persia trembled as if about to fall, and the Kadi in a night vision, saw an Arab horseman conquer a ferocious camel. It was prophesied that the newly born child would found an empire.

His parents, who belonged to an illustrious Arab family, died when he was very young and he was left to the care of his uncle Abu Taleb, who was the keeper of a sacred temple, built, it was believed, by Ishmael, near the fountain which saved his life when wandering in the desert with his mother. The angel Gabriel had inserted in the wall of this building a jacinth of dazzling whiteness, but tainted by the impure breath of worshipping sinners it had become the "black stone of Mecca." This temple, called the Caaba, with its sacred objects, made Mecca, the Kebla, or point of adoration, towards which the pious Arab turned during prayer, and to which pilgrims resorted during four months every year, to wash in the miraculous fountain, kiss the black stone, and make a seven-fold circuit of the Caaba which was filled with idols. The boy Mahomet, who constantly witnessed these ceremonies, thus came to regard religious duty as of first importance. When about twelve years of age, he accompanied a caravan across the desert, and halted at the hermitage of a Christian monk, who had retired to

the desert after the manner of the times. From the conversations of his uncle with this monk, upon the first and many subsequent journeys, Mahomet, who was a serious listener and who had a remarkable memory, obtained a very fair idea of Christianity. From Arab tradition and intercourse with Jews, he also became acquainted with the Mosaic writings, although he never learned to read. He grew up to manhood a handsome, intelligent, self-poised young man, full of energy and enterprise and having attracted the attention of a rich widow, who wished a shrewd business manager to take charge of a large property, he received from her a proposal of marriage which he readily accepted, though she was fifteen years his senior, and had already been twice widowed. To this woman, Kadajah, a person of remarkable strength and excellence of character, he was devoted and constant till her death which occurred twenty-one years after the marriage, when she was sixty-five years old. For several years subsequent to his marriage with Kadajah, Mahomet, now one of the richest and most influential citizens of Mecca, followed mercantile pursuits, and was so greatly respected for integrity that he obtained the name of Alamin, The Faithful. The intimate friendship of Waraka, his wife's cousin, who was once a Jew and now a Christian, turned his thoughts to the religious condition of his countrymen so sunken in gross paganism. He felt that a prophet was needed to effect a reformation, and withdrew to a cave in Mount Hara, where after long vigils and fasts he would pass into a state of hallucination, seeing supernatural sights and hearing supernatural voices.

On one memorable occasion after an unusually protracted fast in the sacred month Ramadan, as he lay un-

conscious upon the stone floor of the cavern, a voice roused him and he saw the angel Gabriel holding a silken scroll in his hand. "Read" said the angel. "I know not how to read," he replied. "Read," repeated Gabriel, "in the name of the Lord who created all things. Read in the name of the Most High who taught men the use of the pen, who sheds on his soul the ray of knowledge and teaches him what he knew not."

Then Mahomet, suddenly inspired, gazed upon the scroll and read there the decrees and will of God! The angel saluted him "Prophet of God," and vanished.

From this time Mahomet believed himself inspired, greater in authority than Abraham, Ishmael, Jacob, Moses and Christ, because to him was confided the final revelation.

The name given to the new religion which he promulgated was, *Islam* submission; its principal dogma, "There is but one God and Mahomet is his prophet," its two grand ideas are monotheism and fatalism.

Its prohibition of idolatry was so sweeping that no images or pictures of men or animals were allowed even in domestic architecture, a sentiment which in after years, found expression in the beautiful style of ornamentation called Arabesque, composed only of floral and geometrical forms. Mahomet taught the existence of angels and devils, of Paradise, a place of sensual delight, with perpetually renewed powers of enjoyment for the faithful, and Jehennam or hell, where the wicked were subjected to eternal remorse, despair and bodily pain. There was also a middle place called Alaraf, where infants, idiots, and those whose good and evil deeds exactly balanced were sent.

Faith in God, honesty, truth, almsgiving, charity, justice and humility, were enjoined. Falsehood, deception, trickery in trade, gambling and the use of intoxicating drink were forbidden. Slavery, human sacrifice and the cruel practice of female infanticide were denounced.

A form of prayers was to be used five times a day with prostrations of the body. Polygamy, the old rites of pilgrimages to Mecca, the circuit of the Caaba, kissing the black stone, and ablutions in the well Zem Zem, were permitted.

Friday was to be observed as the sacred day, and the faithful were to be called to prayer by men with sonorous voices, stationed upon the top of the mosques, the sacred buildings. These doctrines were delivered by Mahomet orally and committed to writing by his disciples, the book being named the Koran or Reading. The Mahomedan Bible is a marvellous jumble of truth and error, sublime poetry and illiterate vulgarity, sensual materialism and frivolous puerility. Its logic and science are ridiculous. The Deity is described as a giant, in terms repulsive and almost blasphemous. The crudest theories of an ignorant mind are advanced in explanation of natural phenomena. Meteors are celestial missiles shot from heaven at wicked angels, the dome of heaven is a perfect arch without a fissure. Throughout the Koran the ignorance and sensuality of Mahomet, grotesquely mingle with his poetic fervor; the incongruous result cannot bear any comparison with the pure harmonious spirit of the Book it was intended to supersede, though in some passages we recognize the true Semitic grandeur. The description of the last day is perhaps the best example.

“In the name of God all merciful, a day will come

when the sun will be shrouded and the stars will fall from heaven, when the camels about to foal will be neglected and the wild beasts will herd together through fear, when the waves of the ocean will boil, and the souls of the dead will be again united to the bodies, when the female infant, who has been buried alive, will demand, 'For what crime was I sacrificed?' The eternal books will be laid open, the heavens shall pass away like a scroll and hell will burn fiercely and the joys of paradise will be made manifest. On that day shall every soul make manifest that which it hath performed.

"Verily I swear to you by the stars which move swiftly and are lost in the brightness of the sun, by the darkness of night and the dawning of day, these are not the words of an evil spirit, but of an angel of dignity and power."

Mahomet evidently borrowed his best ideas from the Jews and Christians with whom he had come in contact, the absurdities, inconsistencies, and ignorance are original. One chapter of the Alkoran was entitled, "The bright yellow Cow," another "The Ant," one is called "Elephant," another "Smoke."

For three years the doctrines were quietly advocated; at the end of that time Mahomet had but forty believers: soon after a violent persecution broke out in his native city against the new sect, and his rich wife and influential uncle being dead, he was forced to fly to Yathreb, a city which thereafter was called Medina, the city of The Prophet.

This flight, or Hegira, the era, from which all Mahomedan chronology dates, took place A.D. 622, when the prophet was fifty-two years of age.

During these years Christian writers assert that por-

tentous omens in heaven and earth, frightful apparitions, monstrous births, and battles in the sky, proclaimed the advent of Antichrist.

Mahomet himself had in this interval seen visions and dreamed dreams, had ascended to the seventh heaven, received new revelations and had fallen into many trances ; and a vague apprehension seemed to agitate the civilized world that some tremendous crisis was approaching.

A mosque was erected in Medina, where the prophet preached at first humane and gentle doctrines. The duties of charity, humility, and prayer, he not only taught, but practised. Ayeshah, his favorite wife, once asked him, "Oh, prophet of God, do none enter Paradise but through God's mercy?" "None, none," he replied. "But will you, oh prophet, enter but by God's compassion?" "Neither shall I enter, except God cover me with his mercy."

The courtesies of life and the kindest fraternal affection he enjoined. His own household was conducted upon the simplest and most economical plan. His dress was plain, and he gave away all his property, reserving just sufficient for his immediate necessities.

But now a change passed over his spirit. His guardian angel Kadijah had left him. He adopted the polygamous practice of his countrymen, and increased his harem to fifteen or twenty women, although he allowed his followers but four wives. Ambition and revenge took possession of his soul, and he proclaimed that his doctrines must be propagated by the sword. All ethical scruples were laid aside, he resorted to tricks and artifice. If any of his followers died leaving a beautiful widow, or if an attractive infidel woman was captured, a convenient

visitant from heaven informed him that it was right to add these providential gifts to his harem. If it seemed desirable to attack a defenceless enemy during the sacred month, when all hostilities were to cease, if a treaty of peace proved troublesome, or if a rich booty could be procured only by means of doubtful honor, a new revelation smoothed the difficult way. Vengeance, war, plunder, treachery, were justified under the pretext of religious zeal. His followers were the faithful, all others infidel dogs, fit only for extermination. Death in the holy war would be rewarded by the forgiveness of every sin and eternal pleasure in the arms of black-eyed houris. Fatalism strengthened the lawless arm of power. No man would die till his appointed hour. "It is fate," says the pious Mahomedan, and thanks "God whose name he exalted," for enabling him to carry out his decree in robbing a defenceless traveller, or cutting the throat of an enemy. A favorite maxim was "Hope is a slave, despair a freeman." These sentiments made the warriors reckless and unscrupulous. Kaled, the renowned general, asked a captive what was contained in a package secured in his belt. "It is poison," he replied, "to destroy my life if you prove unmerciful." "The moment of death is fated," said Kaled, and himself swallowed the poison. A drenching perspiration and violent vomiting followed, and the life of the rash warrior was saved.

Mahomet himself began, with rapidly increasing power and numbers, to head military expeditions which differ very little from piratical or brigand excursions. His success was unprecedented. His curses and prayers seem to have been alike potential, his prophecies were

almost always fulfilled. His ranks were crowded by Arabs, always ready for war and plunder. No leader had ever lived like Mahomet, in the frenzy of battle, which his ringing voice would stimulate to the most incredible furor, the combatants would behold celestial warriors and women mingling in the fight. His military success is unequalled in the annals of history. That of Alexander, Julius Cæsar, or Napoleon, does not approach to it. The material of his army is catalogued in one word, enthusiasm, a sentiment which was exalted to ecstasy or inspiration.

The magnetic power of Mahomet and his captains seems magical, and their eloquence irresistible. "Fight and fear not," he would shout to the eager soldiers, "Paradise lies under the shadow of your swords." On his sword was inscribed, "Forward lies honor! Fear brings disgrace! Cowardice saves no man from his fate!"

Hear the fiery words of the warrior Kaled at the battle of Yermok, "Paradise is before you, the devil and hell behind, fight and you will secure the one, fly and you will fall into the other," incentives few men could resist.

The war cry was *Allah Achbar*, God is mighty. One of their most renowned warriors, in a dreadful battle which lasted all night, uttered this portentous cry each time his ponderous Damascus blade took off the head of an enemy. It was counted four hundred times during that awful night.

The fierce fanaticism blotted out all distinction of age, station, and sex. The women would stand by the battle inflaming the courage of the warriors with their chants. "Courage," they would cry, "sons of Abdaldar,

close with the foe, strike and spare not, sharp be your swords and pitiless your hearts!" Occasionally they would shriek out the names of the beloved slain.

A sister of Derar, Cauleh by name, having been taken captive with other women, organized a defence with tent poles, and maintained it until she unhorsed the Greek leader left in charge, who was slain when her brother came to her rescue. Cauleh led a band of valiant women successfully through many a bloody conflict.

Conversion, tribute, or destruction were the alternatives offered to a beleaguered city. The argument of the sword was unanswerable. When the Caliph Omar was once preaching, he remarked that there was no hope for a man whom God leads into error. A christian priest in the crowd exclaimed, "God leads no man into error." "Strike off that old man's head if he speaks again," said Omar. Of course he was discreetly silent.

After the capture of the Jewish city of Kaibar, Mahomet was poisoned by eating of roast lamb prepared for that purpose by a Jewish maiden. From its effects he never recovered, though he lived for four years afterward.

In the eleventh year of the Hegira, he had a severe accession of disease, and knowing he was about to die, was assisted to the Mosque, where he prayed and preached, and bade an affectionate farewell to his afflicted people. "No prophet" said he "has lived forever. I return to Him who sent me. My life has been for your good. So will my death be, remain united, expel all idolators, be kind to proselytes, practice the virtues I have taught you."

Feeling that death was near, he freed his slaves, gave

his money to the poor, and raising his eyes to heaven he murmured, "God be with me in the death struggle. Oh, Allah! be it so, among the glorious associates in Paradise! I come!"

So passed from earth on his sixty-third birth-day, in the eleventh year of the Hegira, the 632 A. D. Mahomet, one of the most extraordinary inexplicable characters of history. A poor orphan of an Arab tribe, a man who could neither read nor write, driven by persecution from his native city, became, in the brief period of twenty years, a great political and military leader, the founder of a religion and a mighty empire.

After the death of the Prophet, who left no son, one of his disciples, Abu Beker, succeeded to his place under the name of Caliph. He prosecuted the war against the Infidels, with vigor, but died after a brief reign on the day that the beautiful city of Damascus fell before his army. Damascus blades, Damask silk, and Damask roses still remind us of the richness and magnificence of that city. Omar, a grave, stern, inflexible man of primitive habits, was second Caliph. In the midst of his tremendous military campaigns, he frequently slept on the bare earth without tent or guard: when he went to receive the capitulation of the city of Jerusalem, he rode upon a sorrel camel, his equipage and commissariat consisted of a wallet filled with dates and parched grain, a leather water skin and a wooden platter swung upon the back of the animal. Yet during the reign of this plain man "thirty-six thousand towns, castles and strongholds were taken, four thousand Christian churches destroyed, and fourteen hundred Mosques were built. He founded cities, established war marts and channels of

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commerce, and cemented distant provinces into one empire.”<sup>1</sup>

He conquered Syria, Persia and Egypt, and it was his fanatic hand that applied the flames to the invaluable Alexandrian Library. Irreparable loss, lightly inflicted! “If there is truth in it,” said he, “it is already contained in the Koran; if there is not, then, of course, it should be burned.” Onward swept the fanatic iconoclasts across the north of Africa, across the Mediterranean Sea, through the peninsula of Spain, aiming at the heart of Europe. India, Persia, Syria, Palestine, Asia Minor, Egypt, Northern Africa and Spain, the richest and most powerful countries of the world, were helplessly trodden down beneath the feet of the Arab light cavalry. Deeds of daring and valor, more incredible than the wildest dreams of Oriental fiction, fill the reports of their battles. The civilized world lay humbled at their feet, but the All Powerful, had prepared a people more stern and persistent than the Arabs, and to them, He had entrusted the rod of power. Musa the able Saracen commander, whose sagacity displays itself in his famous proverb “A general should be doubly cautious after victory, and doubly brave after defeat,” met his more than peer at Poitiers, France, October 3d, 732, A. D. Charles, a Frankish Duke, illegitimate son of King Pepin, successfully checked the Mohammedan advance, and for his valor and good management received the name of Martel, or the Hammer.

This brave soldier was made king after his father's death, and was the grandfather of Charlemagne the founder of the Carovingian dynasty.

The great warrior, Musa, would still have persisted,

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<sup>1</sup> Irving.

but by the jealousy of his rivals, he was arrested at the head of his army, and ordered home, and Saracen aggression in Europe was ended forever.

Dr. Draper, in *Conflict of Religion and Science*, says: "Christendom found its safeguard, not in supernatural help, but in the quarrels of rival potentates." But can Dr. Draper decide with certainty, that the quarrel of rival potentates was not supernatural help?

With national progress the Moslems become the patrons of learning, the arts and sciences, and Christendom is indebted to them for mathematical, medical, astronomical, agricultural and domestic improvements, which Christian historians in their narrow bigotry, have attempted to conceal. They, with the Jews, kept alive the light of science and civilization through the dark ages, and while the rest of Europe relapsed into barbarism, Mohammedan rule in Spain and India, was characterized by progressive refinement. Their palaces and gardens in these countries were unsurpassed in elegance and luxurious appointments. Through the ventilated walls of their dwellings, ran pipes filled with warm or cold water, as the season required, while machinery produced a gentle current of fresh air, which was softly perfumed. They introduced the peach, apricot, grape, and many other fruits and vegetables into the west, for which we may thank them this day. Spain signed the death-warrant of her prosperity, when the edict was issued driving this enterprising people out of her territory.\*

The accumulated wealth of the ages was poured into the Mohammedan treasury. The accounts of the hoarded jewels and other riches of the conquered nations, particularly those of Persia and India, are incredible. A

silken carpet of the effeminate Yezdigird, which was cut up and distributed among the generals of Omar's army, was ornamented to represent a garden, with flowers of emeralds and rubies, and a fountain in the centre of pearls and diamonds. The architecture of the Moslem is airy and graceful. The most beautiful structure in the world, a perfect jewel of art, a dream of enchantment, is the Taj in India, a mausoleum erected to the memory of the loveliest and most pious Sultana of the east. Here panels of snowy marble are perforated in Arabesque lace patterns, and are set with precious gems, contributed by all the princes of the East. A garden, like the Eden of old, surrounds this marble miracle.

The simple Bedouin of the desert, who slept on the sand, whose wardrobe consisted of a single garment of linen or sheepskin, whose food was dates and parched grain, whose home was the saddle of his fleet steed, had become the most fastidious and luxurious aristocrat of the earth, and luxury and pride brought, as they always do, enervation and destruction.

It is often said that history repeats itself; in other words, the methods of divine providence are uniform. Sin and folly in nations, as in men, are always punished, for every individual life is but an epitome of history. The luxurious Babylonians yielded to the frugal soldiers of Cyrus, the effeminate Hindoos fell before the sturdy Greeks. When Greece lost her early virtues, the martial Romans became her masters. The Israelites, disciplined to moral and physical strength in the stony desert, exterminated the corrupt Canaanites, but becoming indolent and bigoted, forgetting God and rejecting his Christ, they perished as a nation at the hands of the Ro-

mans. In their turn, the Romans, intoxicated by wealth and power, drifted into atheism, and wallowed in abomination and crime. Then the sword of the ferocious Northmen received its order, "Arise and devour much flesh," and Pagan Rome went down in blood and flames. Christianity arose upon the ruins, but soon sunk into idolatry and fetichism. The spirituality, fraternal love, gentleness and purity which Christ had promulgated, were lost. Miracles and persecution were the means used to propagate the faith. Vitalized images, relics of the cross, bones of the dead disciples, the grave clothes of Jesus, the linen of the Virgin Mary's chemise, more horrible than all, a bottle of *the milk of the mother of God!* blasphemy inconceivable! these were among the objects of religious worship and miracle workers. Literature was abandoned, scientific pursuit was more odious than crime, the humanities and ethics of Christianity were entirely ignored, while the church was torn and distracted by dissensions respecting unimportant dogmas. "Bishops were concerned in assassinations, poisonings, riotings, adulteries, treasons and civil war. Patriarchs excommunicated and anathematized each other in their rivalries for earthly power, bribing eunuchs with gold and royal women with episcopal love. Legions of monks carried terror into imperial armies, and riot into large cities, clamoring for theological dogmas, but raising no voice for the outraged ~~rites~~ <sup>rights</sup> of mankind."<sup>1</sup>

In the Orient, the monotheism of Abraham and Ishmael had lapsed into grossest paganism. Then arose Mahomet, with his banner inscribed "God is one. Down with the idols. The sword is the best persuader," and

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Draper.

before the storm of truth and fanaticism, effeminate Greek, luxurious Persian, wrangling Christians and corrupt Jews were driven like chaff before the whirlwind !

The career of Mahomet has always been a puzzle to philosophers and historians. He was a handsome, grave, dignified, self-poised person, with a smile of remarkable sweetness ; his habits were abstemious, simple and frugal. Living in a polygamous and profligate community, he was, through the prime of his manhood, the continent husband of a woman fifteen years his senior, and while she lived his character and acts were consistent with his pretensions as a prophet. His intellectual qualities were of a high order, and although he could not read, he had wonderful resource, an excellent memory, quick apprehension, great invention, tact and magnetism, his voice was remarkably musical ; but these qualities he possessed in common with thousands who make no mark in the world. He promulgated enough of God's truth to satisfy the conscience of men accustomed to corrupt and vicious living ; he made an artful appeal to the inherent desires and tastes of Arab character ; he strenuously enforced simplicity and temperance among his followers, and he possessed an eloquence which, in moments of excitement, blazed forth and inflamed every listener ; but even here we do not discover the mystery of his astonishing power. He was in some respects as weak and infirm as ourselves : very human, often wicked, sometimes foolish, sometimes sick, and like the common herd he, too, must die. What then was the secret of his marvellous success and achievement ?

The fact is unaccountable, unless we admit the idea that such as Mahomet are providential men ; that the

world requires their presence, and the Almighty Governor sends His servants to do His work in His own way. He gives them the keys of the kingdoms. "They open and no man can shut, they shut and no man can open." He that can debase one and exalt another, "works in them to will and to do his own pleasure."

With this explanation, the mission of Mahomet is no longer inexplicable, it has been fulfilled, its purpose is accomplished, and it is now passing away.

Mohammedism has in its doctrines two fatal errors: the first is the idea that woman is merely the slave of man or the instrument of his pleasure. Women are held in so little esteem among the Mohammedans that an Arab proverb says, "The threshold weeps when a daughter is born." An eastern traveller recently overheard a sweet little girl describing something exceedingly small to her companion; with unconscious pathos she said, "It was as little as the joy of my father on the day that I was born!"

Mahomet forbade female infanticide, and endeavored to control the lawlessness of sexual intercourse by permitting polygamy and concubinage, but the weak compromise was so inefficient, and productive of so much jealousy and dissension, that stern old Omar, unwilling to asperse the wisdom of the prophet, declared that "the greatest evil in the world is woman, and the worst of all is, that she is necessary." We can imagine the state of his own domestic affairs before such a remark would be wrung from his lips. Mahomet fell short of the wisdom of Jesus; when the subject of polygamy or divorce was presented to him. "Moses," said he, "permitted these things on account of the hardness of your hearts, but in the beginning it was

not so." After a long series of experiments, men have discovered that there can be no improvement upon the marital arrangement God made for Adam in the garden of Eden.

The second fatal defect of Mohammedism is an erroneous idea of the deity, which resulted in the doctrine of fatalism.

Mr. Palgrave, whose exceptional opportunity to study this religion constitutes him the best authority, says, that in "the sentence" '*La Ilah illa Allah*—There is no God but God,' is implied, not only the denial of polytheism, and an assertion of the unity of God, but also the idea that God is Himself personally the only force, act or motive in the universe, the one cause of all good and all evil, that men before Him are simply His abject, powerless tools, which He crushes or benefits, dooms to truth or error, to happiness or misery, honor or shame because He wills it. When God," so runs the tradition (I had better have said blasphemy), "resolved to create the human race, He took into His hands a mass of earth, from which all mankind were to be formed, and in which, after a manner they all pre-existed, and having divided the clod into two equal parts, He threw one-half into hell saying, 'These to eternal fire and I care not,' and projecting the other half into heaven added, 'And these to paradise and I care not.' These two states are totally independent of love or hatred on the part of deity, or of good or evil conduct on the part of man, for the very actions which we call right or wrong, wicked or virtuous, are all of and from the all-regulating will of the Great Despot, who arbitrarily assigns and imputes them. In a word He burns one individual through all eternity, amid red hot chains and seas of molten fire, and seats

another in the plenary enjoyment of an everlasting brothel, amid forty celestial concubines, just for His own good pleasure and because He wills it."

In this terrible doctrine were contained the germs of paralysis and early death. Man was divested of all responsibility. Fatalism nerved him in times of danger to incredible feats of courage, but it rendered him equally apathetic in the hour of defeat. It seared his conscience when violating every moral law, and excused him when in the commission of crime. "*Kismet*" was unanswerable. "It is fate that we triumph. It is fate that we are routed. It is fate that this man should die by my treachery and his gold be mine. I am without sin. God's will be done!"

The Moslems took the sword to force their religion, and nationally they perished by the sword. They were better than the men of their times, but in their doctrines there is no inherent vitality, no elasticity, no element of progression. The Paganism which prevailed universally, even in the nominally Christian churches, was overturned by the uncompromising dogma. "There is but one God," but that One was an unreasoning tyrant or temporizing vacillator, meeting emergencies by expedients. Mohammedanism checked the frightfully increasing evils of monasticism by admitting polygamy, but by degrading woman it lost its morality. By teaching that any act or policy was justifiable in the propagation of the faith, it warped the entire moral nature of its believers, so that the deceit, treachery, and dishonesty of the Arab is proverbial. Submission to God, its fundamental doctrine, is not the cheerful obedience of a confiding child, but a despairing assent to the inflexible

decree of an inexorable tyrant. The Koran of Mahomet dwindles to insignificance before the Gospel, the Crescent pales, and wanes in the sunlight glory of the Cross of Christ!

CHAPTER XVI.  
CHRISTIANITY.

SUNRISE.

“The people that sat in darkness saw a great light,” “Arise and shine for thy light is come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon thee!”

“WHAT is Truth?” said Pilate, and to-day, as through the rolling ages, we hear the echo “What is truth?”

The canonical answer of the fathers no longer satisfies the anxious soul, increasing light has disclosed weak spots and dangerous pitfalls in the religious platform, infidelity exaggerates their proportions, and the enquirer, unable to perceive beneath the decaying planks of orthodoxy and church canon, the granite rock of Eternal Truth, cuts loose from the old moorings and plunges without rudder or compass into the shoreless, beaconless ocean of Atheism.

Shuddering at such a possibility, we have endeavored from the standpoints of all the ages and nations, without fear and without prejudice, to discover religious truth, God’s eternal law.

We have now to examine another and final religious system, one which numbers among its believers a large proportion of the civilized people of the earth.

The founder of Christianity has given a direct unequivocal answer to Pilate’s inquiry, “And Jesus said, I am the Way and the Truth.” *Can this assumption be sustained?*

The study of this religion as an extensively received faith is a matter of profound interest, and the practical results of our estimate of it, involve for each of us personally the most tremendous consequences ; let us then lay aside all church dogmas and creeds, and learn, from the original source, its character and right to the lofty claim of being an embodiment of divine truth.

Unlike that of other great religious teachers, the life of Christ was brief. Moses lived one hundred and twenty years, Zoroaster and Confucius died at seventy-six, Buddha at eighty, but Jesus was only thirty-three at the time of his execution and his ministry had been but for three years. The magnitude of the work accomplished in that brief interval, and the permanence of the results are the greatest miracles of Christianity.

His advent had been foretold by the seers of all ages, particularly the Hebrews, and he announced himself as the Messiah. His mission began with an immediate amelioration of the physical suffering around him, his teaching, with a call to repentance and a free offer of salvation to all who would accept his doctrines. He denounced the hypocrisy and formality of the Jews, abrogated their ceremonial law, disparaged their undue reverence for sacred places and edifices and made the spirit and motive of the actions of men, the criteria of religious condition. He taught that any outward act of piety was nothing, except as an indication of the inward spirit. His religion was a vitality like the germinating element in a seed ; spirituality the underlying principle, sorrow for sin, and faith in Christ, the first indications.

By its influence, a new element would be infused into the moral nature of man, and a marvellous modification

of character would result. Truth and piety, charity and selfsubjection pervade every doctrine and precept of the New Testament. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, Blessed are the meek, those who mourn for their sins, the pure in heart, the peace makers." "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself." "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another."

It was to be a religion of liberty no less than of love and self-subjection. "The truth," said its founder, "shall make you free ;" free from the burden of sacrificial rites, free from the bondage of superstition, free from the heavy yoke of sin, from fear of death. "This freedom does not authorize license, for in personal morality, self-restraint is liberty, and self-indulgence is slavery."<sup>1</sup> The apostles of Christianity use this language, "The creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God." "Brethren ye have been called into liberty : only use not liberty for an occasion of the flesh." "As free and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness." "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Its constraint is upon the animal appetites and evil passions of men, and in consequence there is an augmentation of moral and mental power which imparts intellectual freedom, notwithstanding that certain retrograde philosophers, (who imagine themselves advanced) use the terms religion and superstition, as synonymous. The apostle Paul distinctly says, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."<sup>2</sup> The superstitions of the natural religions did indeed creep into the Christian church with the Paganism of

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<sup>1</sup> Fronde.

<sup>2</sup> Thess. 5, 21.

Rome, but they form no part of the teachings of Christ who reproves its spirit. When they told Him of the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices and those eighteen men upon whom the Tower in Siloam fell, "Think you," said he "that these men were sinners above all others, because they suffered these things? I tell you Nay." <sup>1</sup>

The religion of Christ is democratic in its tendency. Its founder alone is "High Priest and King forever." He organized no privileged classes, no ecclesiastical government. Jesus said, "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles, (or heathen) do exercise dominion over them, and they that are great, exercise authority upon them, but it shall not be so among you. Whoso will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." "God is no respecter of persons;" the lowly, the poor, women, little children, are upon the same level with the lordliest man, "for he looketh not upon the outward appearance," but upon the moral nature. All worldly distinctions are ignored. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." <sup>2</sup>

"The advent of Christ brought good tidings of joy to a portion of the human race to which the world had hitherto given nothing but contempt and wrong—the slave, the pauper, the woman and the child." <sup>3</sup> Its benign influence has been so marked in elevating the condition of women, that we should suppose an unchristian woman at

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 13, 1-5.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 4, 18.

<sup>3</sup> S. B. Gould

this age of the world, would be an anomaly, a bye word and a reproach.

Another peculiarity of the Christian religion is its unmistakable enunciation of the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body. The future state of man, as presented in the natural religions, is gloomy and repulsive. Even in that of the semi-enlightened Hebrews, it is vague and indefinite. But Christ permitted his disciples to see Moses and Elias return to earth and converse familiarly with him. By a story he gives us a glimpse of Lazarus in heaven and Dives in hell. He said to his disciples just before his death, "In my father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you." And to the penitent thief, expiring by his side, "*To-day* thou shalt be with me in Paradise." Finally he appeared to his disciples in his own body, which had been crucified and raised from the dead.

The rites and ceremonies which he enjoined are few and exceedingly simple. Prayer, preaching, baptism and the celebration of the Lord's supper are commanded, and the marriage ceremony was sanctioned; but he constantly reproved the formalism of the Jews, who tithed the very herbs of their garden from legal zeal, "but forgot justice, mercy, and the love of God." "I spake not to your fathers concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices, etc." And yet our Saviour, knowing there would be men so constituted that they must have forms and rites, added, "These things ye should have done, and not have left the other undone."

But more deeply concerning us than the theory of Christianity, is the practical question, what is the effect

of this spiritual religion upon individual character? does it make men better and happier?

The speculative Greeks were always much exercised with regard to the nature or essence of the soul, and one of their philosophers, Plotinus, in a moment of illumination, believed he saw his own soul. It was considered a great miracle, but it is just such an one as every man experiences whose mind is illuminated by spiritual Christianity. *He sees his own soul!* and it is not an agreeable sight. He sees there selfishness, sensuality, hatred, revenge, jealousy, envy, detraction. They are ugly, forbidding, malignant qualities. He recognizes them at once. He has often seen them before, *in other people!* The thought of God's omnisciences troubles him, despite of unbelief; conscience whispers of a judgment to come. He is sorrowful, repentant, and then, with joy, he remembers that Christ died for just such souls, and he accepts him for his Saviour.

Now he is a Christian, by no means a perfected one. Christian grace in this hard, ungenial world is of slow growth, but the man is conscious of new aspirations, and new motives of action. He is aware of a gradual transformation of character; he is more charitable, patient, forgiving and less selfish, envious, unrelenting, less anxious to remedy all the evils of the world himself, and more willing that God should do it in his own way, even if it does take a little longer. He comprehends, by slow degrees, perhaps, that money and power are not man's best possession; that *love*, human love, and God's love, outweigh them even in this life; so his grasp upon the world is gradually slackened, not wrenched off suddenly, as when a Godless man dies. A calm happiness which

enjoys all the good things in his possession, takes the place of the tempestuous, undisciplined pleasures or griefs of his former life. His individuality is not lost, his characteristics are not destroyed; they are only modified. If he was mirthful, humorous, he will remain the same, but will not be boisterous nor unfeeling in his wit. If he was gloomy and morose, religion will not make him a light-hearted, gay man, but it will lessen the clouds of ill-nature, and render him more cheerful and agreeable. If he loved money and business, he will not become improvident and indolent, but his motives and aims in accumulating a fortune will be elevated and better directed, and he will guard against unscrupulous avarice. Whatever his native temperament, he will carry always in his hand a silken cord, and through the tortuous labyrinth of mortal life it will conduct him safely, till, perhaps to his own surprise, he looks up some happy day to find that it has led him safely to the Paradise of God!

We are often mistaken in our idea of the effect of personal Christianity. *It does not transform; it modifies the character.* "The Apostle Peter was a rash, impetuous man after his conversion, as John was gentle and loving before his." <sup>1</sup>

There are no doubt many self-deluded hypocrites in the Church, and their condition is extremely perilous. They attend to the prescribed duties, sing and pray with God's people, understand and believe all the doctrines, belong to charitable associations, and devoutly thank God that they are not as other men are. Yet they are ready to overreach in their bargains; they envy their neighbors, their happiness or good fortune; they hate men

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<sup>1</sup> Max Müller.

whom they think have injured them ; they slyly speak ill of them ; they are *full* of selfishness ; they are *empty* of charity. Now, if we find here a portrait that we recognize as our own, oh let not self-love persuade us that God will make any exception in our favor "when he shall make up his jewels."

And there are also many unconscious Christians. They have never been admitted to the church, the doctrines are not made clear to them, election, the perseverance of the saints and other church dogmas are so obscure that they suppose themselves deficient in the spiritual discernment professing Christians speak of ; but they have a feeling of dependence upon a higher power, and sorrow when they offend the laws of God ; they realize that their salvation depends upon the mercy of Christ. Do they pray ? They hardly know themselves, they long for peace with God, and sometimes this feeling bursts forth in imperfect utterances. It has been said,

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,  
Uttered or unexpressed,  
The motion of a hidden fire  
That trembles in the breast."

Yes, these persons pray, perhaps unconsciously. They strive to do their duty to their neighbor, sympathize in his grief and joy, they deal honestly, keep their promises, scrupulously speak the truth. These are the unconscious, unrecognized children of God, who should let nothing deter them from acknowledging Christ in the simple ceremonial he enjoined at the Last Supper. Sorrow for sin and faith in Himself are the only requirements Christ ever made.

Modes and methods are as diverse as minds. In some, religious conviction is gradual as the dawn of morning, in others it is sudden as the electric flash that prostrated the persecuting Saul. In some temperaments religious light is never perceived save through a weeping nimbus, while in happier natures it is felt like the bright sunbeams, irradiating the whole life. Yet in both cases the true light shines! No man should judge of another's religious status from his own stand-point.

St. Cyprian has left a beautiful picture of the christians of the third century. "In their dress, their food and manner of life, they follow the customs of the country, and yet they are distinguished by a remarkable way of living. They take part in everything as citizens, and endure everything as strangers. Every country is their native land and in every country they are foreigners. They live in the flesh but not after the flesh, they dwell upon earth, but they live in heaven. They love all men, though all men persecute them, when they are cursed they bless, when they are killed they hail the day of death as their true birthday."

But it may be objected that Christians (nominal) have often been among the most cruel and relentless of mankind, and with the advancement of christian religion for their plea, have perpetrated the most shocking enormities that have ever blackened the annals of humanity. The eminent historian Froude has clearly and forcibly expressed the causes of this phenomenon, this apparent inconsistency. He says "God gave Christianity to the world, the devil brought Theology. The Founder of Christianity when he sent forth the Apostles gave them a singular warning. They were to be the bearers of good

news to mankind, and yet He said in mournful prophecy 'He was not come to send peace on the earth, but a sword, The son would deliver up the father to death, the brother, his sister, the mother, her child.' The strongest ties of natural affection would wither in the fire of hate his words were about to kindle. This prophecy, which referred in the first instance to the struggle between the new religion and Judaic bigotry, has fulfilled itself continuously in the history of the church. Whenever the doctrinal aspect of Christianity has been prominent above the practical, whenever the first duty of the believer had been to hold certain opinions on the functions and nature of his master, and the second, to obey his Master's commands, then always with a uniformity more remarkable than is obtained in any other historical phenomena, there have followed animosity, dissension and bloodshed. Christianity as a principle of life has been the most powerful check upon the passions of mankind, as a speculative system of opinion it has converted them into monsters of cruelty."

This gives the keynote to the frightful discord of religious persecution, and discloses the monstrous character of bigotry (whether in the church or out of it), which is so antagonistic to the spirit of true Christianity.

The test of this spirit in any society or individual, may be found in the 5th chapter of Galatians, "For all the law is fulfilled in one word. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murder, drunkenness, revellings. But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace,

long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." In St. John's Epistle we read, "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. If any man say, I love God and hate his brother, he is a liar."

Another important question arises, Can this be a heaven-sent religion, so simple and easily reduced to the principal of Love to God and man? May it not have been the invention of Jesus, to be placed upon the same level with the morality of Confucius or Buddha which it so much resembles? The popular answer to these questions, is a reference to the miracles of Christ as his high credentials. The argument, drawn from the historical records of his disciples is inadequate, and liable to historical criticism. However satisfactory to a believer, sceptics will point to similar reputed events in the lives of Buddha Mahomet and the saints of the middle ages.

An infidel writer, in an anonymous work denying the possibility of miracles and a revelation, says, "We gain infinitely more than we lose in abandoning belief in the reality of Divine Revelation. Whilst we retain pure and unimpaired the treasure of Christian morality, we relinquish nothing but the debasing elements added to it by human superstition" Curious paradox! ultimate morality, taught by a liar and impostor; (for Christ claimed a divine origin, "I came out from God,") an inconsistency far more difficult of reconciliation than any contained in the revelation theory. This writer adds, "Let no man, whose belief in the reality of a Divine Revelation is destroyed by such inquiry, complain that he has lost a precious possession and that nothing is left but a blank. Revelation not being a reality, what he has lost was illusion, that which is left is Truth. \* \* \* \* The limit of thought once attained,

we may well be unmoved in the assurance, that all that we do know of the regulation of the universe being so perfect and wise, all that we do not know, must be equally so. Here enters the true and noble Faith which is the child of reason."

This writer, who belongs to a school of scientific bigots, very numerous at the present time, relegates from the constitution of humanity, its soul—If there be no soul, if man is merely a vital machine acted upon by brain power, which power for convenience sake we denominate intellect, a force which will find another development when the material of the brain changes form after death, then we may adopt the melancholy philosophy of the writer just quoted, and sink in the despair that has always accompanied atheistic belief, but even then we cannot assent to the assertion that "all we know of the regulation of the universe, is perfect and wise far from it—the indiscriminating rage of the natural elements, sin, crime, vice, disease, misery, death, are not perfect and wise, we cannot "be unmoved" in their contemplation, they are evil, horrible intolerable, we cannot "rest at the limit of thought," attained by this writer. But if there be a soul, of which conscience as well as intellect is a quality, we shall feel that sin and vice and crime, the great sources of evil, involve responsibility to a power more perfect than any human government. Faith born of reason alone, lacks vitality and will starve; as its near relative, credulity, the offspring of superstition, must perish of surfeit. The "true and noble Faith" may be defined *assent* or *belief founded upon conviction*: it is the child of reason and conscience, and when its clear far-seeing eyes first open upon this mys-

terious universe, it looks upward to find a God, who will right all wrong and conciliate the antinomies so apparent in the regulation of the world.

John Stuart Mill, most candid of atheists, if indeed he was such, in his last work, published after his death, thus speaks of Christ and Christianity. "The most valuable part of the effect on the character which Christianity has produced, by holding up in a divine person a standard of excellence as a model for imitation, is available even to the absolute unbeliever and can never more be lost to humanity. For it is Christ, rather than God, whom Christianity has held up as the pattern of perfection. It is the God incarnate, more than the God of the Jews, or of nature, who, being idealized, has taken so great and salutary hold on the modern mind. And whatever else may be taken away from us by rational criticism, Christ is still left; a unique figure, not more unlike all his precursors than all his followers, even those who had the direct benefit of his personal preaching. \* \* \* Who among his disciples, or among their proselytes, was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospel? \* \* \*

About the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality combined with profundity of insight, which, if we abandon the idle expectation of finding scientific precision where something very different was aimed at, must place the Prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in his inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of proba-

ably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity ; nor would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than the endeavor so to live that Christ would approve our life. When to this we add that to the conception of the rational sceptic it remains a possibility that Christ actually was \* \* \* a man charged with a special, express and unique commission from God to lead mankind to truth and virtue, we may well conclude that the influences of religion on the character, which will remain after rational criticism has done its utmost against the evidences of religion, are well worth preserving, and that what they lack in direct strength as compared with those of a former belief, is more than compensated by the greater truth and rectitude of the morality they sanction."

Then when we ask, Is the Christian religion of divine origin? let us remember that the life of its founder was not written by himself, but by his disciples, honest though fallible men, according to their own showing, they do not claim inspiration even—I accept their record as true, if another does not, let him pass the miracles for what they are historically worth, and in candor, question reason and conscience. Is this a religion of universal adaptation? does it meet the moral and religious needs of every human soul? Is it expansive, elastic, progressive, adjustable to all ages, sexes, conditions? Is the individual or community that adopts and lives by its principles, purer, freer, happier, more exalted? This is the real test, and

if we can answer these questions in the affirmative we may reasonably believe in the truth of its founder—no mere man could have contrived it, Christ was sent into the world by God.

Notwithstanding the broad conclusiveness of this argument there may be persons still puzzled by the phenomena of the miracles.

Certainly some of the acts attributed to Jesus Christ are apparently direct violations of natural law, which we will allow is inflexible. I do not mean to assert that the Power, who made the law, cannot change or vary it at his will, but for the sake of a fair argument, I will admit, that *this never does* take place, that God "Moves on through all eternity, His undisturbed affairs."

Certain naturalists having summed up the results of their own investigations and that of enquiring minds who have preceded them, tell us the reputed miracles of Christ are such violations, and consequently that the instantaneous curing of disease, the restoration of cripples, the stilling of the tempest, walking on the water, feeding thousands with a handful of food, and raising the dead to life, are absolute impossibilities. Must we then discredit these acts? By no means, they are violations of natural law *as we understand it*, but it is possible that *Christ was more thoroughly initiated into the mysteries of nature* than his scientific critics themselves are; who will take the responsibility of declaring that he was not?

Then before pronouncing upon the impossibility of the so-called miracles, let unbelieving materialists explain the wonders taking place every moment around us and within us. Let them tell us what heat, electricity, magnetism and galvanism are. What is instinct? What is

strength? What is digestion? When food is placed in a properly formed elastic sack, subjected to the exact chemical properties of the gastric juices, and supplied with the requisite heat and motion, why is not digestion the result? Because, they answer, there is no nervous force in these artificial conditions.

What then is nervous force? What is vitality? What is death? "Prof. Smith of Edinburgh, Sir T. Melear and Prof. Pearson, all eminent astronomers, while watching the transit of one of Jupiter's moons across the disk of the planet, saw it disappear for twelve minutes, and then, to their utter amazement, it reappeared *on the same side of the disk*. It was visible for four minutes and suddenly vanished."<sup>1</sup> What caused this apparent retrograde movement, as contrary to known law as the backward motion of the dial of Ahaz, or the suspension of rotation at the command of Joshua? When they answer these questions satisfactorily, and explain the phenomena taking place with every breath they draw, and which they have the amplest opportunity to investigate, then perhaps we can explain how Jesus of Nazareth fed five thousand with a small basket of bread and fish, how he walked upon the water and quelled the tempest, and even restored the dead to life and health! Our most learned men are children in the science of nature which is infinite. Its records are as full of exploded theories as of established facts. Moses understood these laws better than did the Egyptian magicians or the experimenters of to-day. Christ understood them *perfectly*, and by his superior, we may say divine knowledge, he could in reality produce uncommon

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<sup>1</sup> Proctor's astronomy.

effects, as easily as the electrician can *simulate* life in a dead body by galvanism.

The results were unusual, *unnatural* if you please, but not supernatural, in the sense that they were *violations* of God's law. They were applications of such law by methods impossible to our ignorance.

"Miracles" are no part of Christianity, nor is a belief in them necessary to become a Christian. Our idea of miracles depends upon our idea of Nature, a name given to our limited experience, our knowledge of law. As our knowledge of nature advances, the miracle of one age becomes the science of another. The mistake is, to say that the miracle is a violation of the laws of nature. Some higher and unknown law may hold the known law in suspense, as when a ball is thrown up into the air, the law of gravitation is not destroyed, but overcome for the moment by another law. The universe is full of law, and it may be that the ascending series extends where knowledge of the law is not possible to our finite minds. Each event of fact is a miracle till seen from its own standpoint." <sup>1</sup> Man lives surrounded by mysteries, to the Deity nothing is miraculous. But it may be said, no such unusual applications of natural law are seen at this age of the world. Our answer is, none are now required, the leading-strings of infancy are withdrawn, the world has attained a highly educated manhood—why should the present ruler of Egypt be informed in dreams of a coming famine when meteorologists can calculate for droughts and freshets, earthquakes, storms and gales of wind? Reason and experience must now be our guide in the physical realm, but alas! in the moral existence of

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. H. Stebbins.

the race there is no such gratifying progress to be recorded; women to-day are foolish as Eve and men are weak as Adam, still children who require spiritual miracles to preserve the life of the soul, and by that subtile influence which is called prayer, such intervention may be obtained. The mistake which materialists make, is in applying the laws of physics to psychology. Mr. Froude makes the nice distinction, in speaking of the fatal battle in which James 5th of Scotland lost his kingdom, and, as a consequence, his life. "The folly of venturing such an expedition without leader or order, may account for the failure, but who will account for the folly."

The rational summing up is, miracles (so called) were once performed by an unusual exercise of natural laws, they have now ceased, because no longer required for the welfare of man; they are still effected in the spiritual nature, because the soul still requires the intervention of God for its salvation.

The doctrine of the Incarnation, or the actual embodiment of divine truth, in the person of Jesus, is the one assumption of Christianity, the most difficult to believe, the most impossible to prove. It finds its best defence, not in historical evidence which is but corroborative, nor in Church dogma, which is liable to be fallacious, but in the necessities of humanity. God, the Awful, the Absolute, the Concealed, exhibits his reality in his works as the Irresistible, the God of Power, the Terrible, Incomprehensible, Unapproachable One. St. Augustine, the learned Latin scholar and lovely Christian, relates that "he was once walking on the sea-shore absorbed in the attempt to comprehend and define the idea of God. As he passed and repassed, his attention,

was attracted to a beautiful little boy who was bringing water from the sea in a cockle shell and pouring it into a small hole in the sand. Surprised at the child's persistence, he inquired what he was doing. "I am trying to empty the sea into this hole," was the reply. "That is an utter impossibility," said Augustine. "No more impossible," said the child, "than it is for you to get the idea of God inside of your skull;" and, saying this, he disappeared. How shall man comprehend the Incomprehensible? He can have no relations with such a Being. "God out of Christ is a consuming fire."

But man ever gropes for and cries out after God, "Oh that I could find him." The universal instincts of human nature are *prophecies* which are always fulfilled. The wants of our animal nature are a promise of their gratification, the restless desire to better our condition is a prophecy which finds its fulfilment in what we call progress. Alas! that the unalterable nature of law should here also be proved in the perverse and depraved action of our desires, the lust of sensuality, the greed of avarice, the thirst for power and revenge. Our instinctive horror of annihilation is a prophecy of immortality, and the universality of the religious sentiment, a yearning of the soul for some means of approach to the Supreme Power, is a guarantee of its possibility. This universal sentiment has in all nations and ages resolved itself into the expectation of reconciliation through an Incarnation.

In almost all the natural religions we find the belief in "a Son of the Sun, who is above all the gods, except the Supreme Unity." This tendency to materialize Deity is apparent in the Old Testament. "The Triad"

of the Gentiles are shadowed forth physically in the persons of the Trinity. The Father is typified as Fire, the Son as Light, the Spirit as Air, a rushing, mighty wind.<sup>1</sup> Not the Hebrew seers, and Confucius, Zoroaster, Balaam and Virgil only, believed in the coming of a benefactor and saviour who should be more than man. In China he was expected and called Fo-hi, in Thibet Schaka, in India Chrisna, Osiris in Egypt, Taut in Phœnicia. Hermes or Hercules was the saviour in Greece, Odin in Scandinavia. In Central America he was called Quetzalcoatl, and in South America Manco Capac. He is always represented as the teacher of men bringing useful arts, and the true religion. In many of these myths, the son is destroyed by the evil powers, and it is predicted that he will reappear upon the earth after the decrees of the Father are fulfilled.

In this *universal expectancy* we find the prophecy and possibility of an Incarnation. It furnishes an argument which seems indisputable, in the self-evident truth of the absolute necessity for, and the perfection of, the mission and office of the Son. All the antagonisms of law are conciliated in the idea of Christ. Philosophy and religion, justice and mercy, law and love, reason and feeling, self-love and benevolence, God and the world, here meet, blend, harmonize and unify in what otherwise is an impossible reconciliation. Without this revelation, the human soul must grope as it has ever done in Pantheism, Deism, Atheism, or belief that a blind despotic power, like the fate of the Mohammedans and destiny of the Greeks, controls the universe; but that which "kings, and prophets waited for, the desire of all nations," the

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Cary, Orthodox.

enigma "which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men,"<sup>1</sup> is made plain in the person and mission of the man Jesus Christ, "God being through him reconciled to the world." "I will utter," said Christ, "things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world."

The universal expectancy of, and the absolute necessity for, an Incarnation, authenticate its verity. "What must be, will be."

And now one quest is finished; we have sought among the ruins of past ages, as also in the methods of later times, to learn from the religious ideas of mankind what is immortal truth. While governments have been subverted, religious forms swept away and phases changed, certain underlying ideas have survived the wreck or their deep buried germs have shot forth anew from the desolate Eden of lost faith. These indestructible elements are eternal Truth and can be briefly summed up. They are, belief in a Supreme Intelligence or Deity who is the Creator and Governor of the Universe; the possibility that his will can be revealed to man; consciousness of sin and estrangement from this Being; the hope of pardon through sacrifice and a final reconciliation through the advent of a Son of God. These ideas are so common to all mankind in all ages that they may justly be called universal.

Is the Jewish Christ "he that should come, or look we for another?" Certainly in his life and doctrines we find embodied all those ideas which have survived the wreck of time, and over their stern features He has

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Col 1, 26.

thrown the soft mantle of all-embracing, everlasting love!

“It may be demonstrated,” says Le Maistre, “that all ancient traditions are true, that all paganism is but a system of displaced verities.” Baring Gould says, “Christianity is the re-integration of all scattered religious convictions.” By Christianity, is meant *the doctrines which Christ taught*, not orthodox theology, which Matthew Arnold calls “an immense misunderstanding of the Bible,” and which, resulting in bigotry, our Saviour refers to when he says, “If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness”—a darkness which “overtook” the church “unawares,” notwithstanding the warning of its founder. Towards such theology we are sometimes disposed to feel as did an eccentric person who prayed that “men might abandon Christianity and adopt the religion of Christ.”

Although in reviewing the religions of mankind, we are horror stricken in view of that monstrous substitute offered by the Evil One to satisfy the religious cravings of man, which modern science has so unexpectedly unveiled, we have been comforted to perceive that the original idea revealed to the primogenitors of our race, has never been entirely lost. “The word of God is not bound,” it has not been confined to Jew and Christian only. Aided by the light of conscience, there have always been, certainly a few, and we may hope very many men who have earnestly sought for God, who lived conscientiously by the truth they possessed and are now in a perfect enjoyment of the light which shone but dimly for them in their mortal life. “And I saw a great multitude that no man could number of all nations and kindred and people and tongues stand before

the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and with palms in their hands.'

But among the masses, the purity of the original truth was soon corrupted, and a mistaken ideal created, which soon became debased, immoral and cruel. The Sabaism of the tribes of Cush and Turan, degenerated into the grossest worship of man's lower nature; it cannot be compared with a religion which accounts the man blessed who "is pure in heart."

We saw a pure, dim, uncertain light in Confucism, but *there* was no God, and if the enquiring soul turned from its every day morality, it shuddered at the shapeless objects which seemed to float in the outer darkness, and a monotonous despair often made life so unbearable, that death self-inflicted, was preferred.

Christianity with as perfect a morality as that of the great Chinese philosopher, reveals a heavenly Father, a happy future life, and spirit world into which, although greatly desired, we may not go uncalled.

The believer in the heroic religion of Zoroaster perceiving only the eternal conflict between good and evil, fought hopelessly on, sure only that death, implacable foe, would be his conqueror, and the fierce struggle be continued in after ages.

But the Christian warrior with his heaven forged armor, knows he will be victor, that death, the last enemy, will be vanquished, and that rest and a conqueror's crown await the issue of the struggle.

In Brahmanism, we saw the mind of man strained to a point of speculation and spirituality impossible to be sustained, and a degeneration to the grossest idolatry and sensuality was the inevitable result.

The spirituality of the Christian religion is simple and practical, so interwoven with the ordinary events and duties of life as also with its far-reaching speculations, that while the most grasping intellect can scarce explain it, "the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein."

The atheism of Gotama, resulted in a glittering ceremonial, unworthy of the immortal mind; denying God, it has deified a man, teaching of an impossible future. Nirvana, or Nothingness, it now depicts a material hell, more horrible in its details of torture, than that of the mediæval church. The morality of Buddhism is beautiful and practical, but the motive for its practice is purely selfish. Virtue is enforced, not for its own sake, but to save the body countless dreadful transmigrations.

How much more exalted the Christian motive, how speedy and satisfactory his reward; while in all the mournful or joyous events of life, he perceives the guiding hand and beneficent spirit of the Father of all.

In the anthropomorphism of Greece and Rome, we perceive the demoralizing influence of a belief in human gods: even in the most intellectual and refined nations, immorality and atheism, decadence and destruction must ensue, where the gods are more lawless and depraved than their worshippers: and yet the craving and necessity which has always been felt for an incarnation of Deity, is met and satisfied in the person Christ, spotless in character, a perfect example.

Though in the religion of the Northmen we find such germs of truth, chastity, and self-repression, as rapidly transformed it to an heroic christianity, the original exhibits a ferocity and savage cruelty which appals and repels us. It could never have become the universal faith.

And in the portentous glare of the Mohammedan crescent, we discern, not the light which shall pervade and bless the whole world, but a lurid flame which gave the fierce fanatic Arab sufficient illumination to scourge into a sense of duty; wrangling, polytheistic christians, unbelieving, bigoted Jews and besotted Persians. It answered for the hour, but it was not for all time.

This brief survey includes the principal religions of the world. Many of them have passed away and of those remaining, all have declined or degenerated. The world for ages groaned under their gloomy despotism. It almost despaired of help from heaven, though the necessity for such an event had become an expectation and prophecy. Adam the first man, knew that the sin he had introduced into the world would be annulled by one of his posterity. Confucius said, "the true saint would arise in the west," and Zoroaster that "Sosioch would come and convert the world." Balaam, the renowned Chaldean seer, in prophetic vision saw "a Star arise out of Jacob and a sceptre out of Judah." The Jewish prophets foretold the coming of a Saviour with a wonderful accuracy of detail, and even the Latin poet Virgil has one poem which seems almost a paraphrase of Isaiah's prophecy, "at last," says he, "in God's time, the long expected Christ, the desire and hope of the world, the Incarnate Son of God appears."

Such an august personage or such a tremendous mission, would of course be attended by all the pomp and majesty that earth and heaven could combine. Celestial guards would visibly attend him and the very earth be shaken by his tread. But God's ways are not like ours. Christ's kingdom was to be within the hearts

of men, in that spiritual world which will endure when all earthly pomp and grandeur, yea, the earth itself, shall vanish away.

Our King holds his court in the grandest palace, in the humblest hut, amid the hurrying throngs of the city, in the quiet shadow of the sick-chamber, for in all places he knows his own, and "he abides with them." This is the religion of universal adoption, that satisfies every longing soul. From the first rude fisherman who left his net to follow Jesus, to the last enlightened man of this century who has accepted him as his Saviour, there has been given the same pardon for sin, the same strength to overcome it, and the same "peace which passeth understanding."

These assertions are not poetic license or speculative theory, but every day fact, as all can testify; and how greatly Christian virtue contributes to human happiness, let our own experience decide. When are we happiest and best satisfied with ourselves? Is it when the fierce passions of envy, jealousy, hatred, anger and discontent, are poisoning all the springs of life and joy? or when peace, love and the gentle unselfish sentiments enjoined and fostered by Christianity fill our hearts? Is there one who doubts that Jesus of Nazereth is he that should come, that this is the heaven-sent religion, and that it will lead us safely through the troubled dream of present existence? Is there one who will from obstinacy, apathy, perverseness or any other infatuation, reject this priceless gift? Forbid it, Almighty God!

Are we to have another revelation? Certainly there is yet much evil and darkness in the world. Christianity does not hold that influence in the hearts of men its in-

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trinsic power and merit indicate that it should. What has given the check to Christianity? demands the thoughtful enquirer. Perhaps, as in the ages past, God may yet send a prophet to answer this important question—to cement the bonds of christian union, to abrogate all religious sects and free from the errors of Paganism and Ritualism, that great and powerful branch of the Christian Church which claims catholicity, and which is *not* as has been often argued, the beast of the Apocalypse. We have at present light enough for our salvation. The Sun has risen indeed, but clouds obscure its brightness. The present time is described in the prophecy of Zachariah, “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night, but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.”<sup>1</sup> “Then shall the wolf also dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.”<sup>2</sup> Another prophet may usher in the bright evening of Time.

We have in this course of study watched the genesis of the world, we have seen this lovely orb, our earth, transformed from chaos to beauty, and made ready to receive her coming Lord, the calcium light of philology has flashed into the recesses of antiquity, a ray which has illumined for our inspection the pre-historic past, we have marched through the ages to the solemn roll of history’s martial strain, we have paused breathless beneath the vaulted temples in which man has vainly endeavored to enshrine the Deity, and have often refreshed our travel-

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Zach. 16, 6-7.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 11, 6.

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worn soul in the sunlight of God's eternal truth streaming through rifts in the clouds of error, till the sunlight of the Gospel has beamed upon us, and shall it be said at the last, *in vain*, IN VAIN?

We have seen that change is the universal law of nature, looking backward we saw the formation of this world from chaos, and looking forward we know that another great change must surely come. "When the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and all the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth and all the works that are within shall be burned up." Oh let us from this very hour cherish within our souls this heaven-sent faith, this germ of spiritual life, that it may modify and exalt our characters, raise us above the vicissitudes of time, and when the new heaven and earth shall appear, ensure our transformation into the regained Paradise, where all the mysteries of this present existence will be solved, where the leaves of the tree of life will heal the sins and sorrows of the nations, "where there is neither Greek nor Jew, barbarian or Scythian, male or female,<sup>1</sup> bond or free, *but where Christ is all and in all!*"<sup>2</sup> AMEN!

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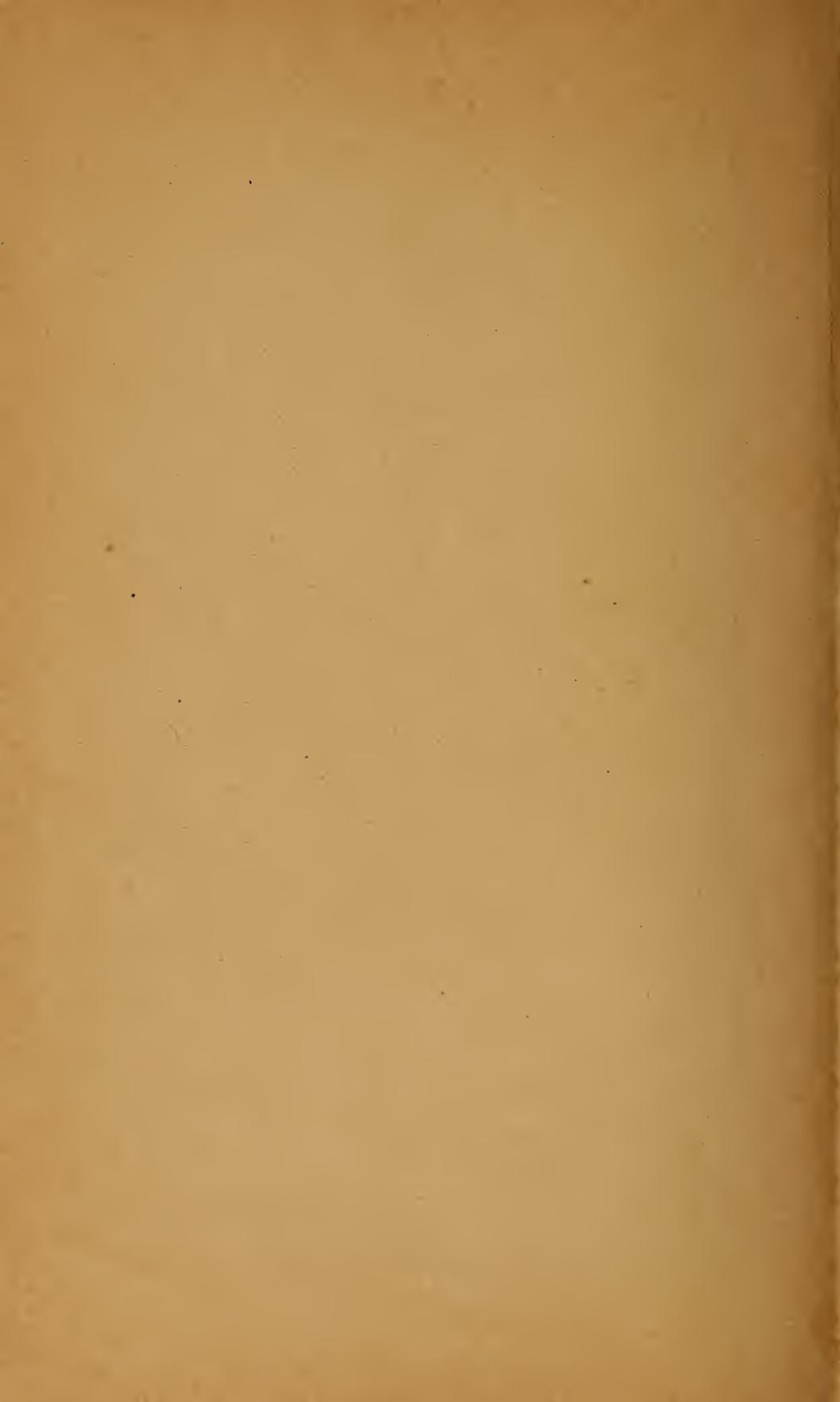
Gal. 3, 28.

<sup>2</sup> Col. 3, 11.















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